

Gulf of Alaska Halibut Salmon Committee

Draft Research Recommendations

August 23, 2022

General Discussion Regarding Categorizing Requests

- Bycatch as defined in the administrative order
- Avoidance Strategies
- Mortality Reduction
- Keeping Score (Information Technology and Ground Truthing of Data)

General Bycatch Research Priorities For Committee Review

- Develop state bycatch research priorities, possibly across departments, to share with funding entities that would help identify and acquire research funds.
- Implement strategies to encourage and facilitate industry/agency cooperative research to reduce bycatch and associated mortality.
- Create methods, such as an annual workshop, to collaborate with other research entities to better track bycatch research proposed or funded, along with collaboration opportunities and findings of funded research.

Alaska Department of Fish and Game

To be submitted by the dept.

Salmon Bycatch Research Priorities Recommended

Julie Bonney Alaska Groundfish Databank

- Continued funding for Dr. Katie Howard's work on ocean survival studies
- Better understand the interactions and impact of hatchery salmon, including pink and Chinook (from all areas) on wild-run Alaska salmon and ways to determine amount of hatchery salmon bycatch

Recommendations through general discussions

- Additional funding for ecosystem studies
- Support funding that continues annual genetic reporting of Chinook salmon for the Gulf of Alaska Trawl fisheries
- Support funding that continues age class assessment of Chinook salmon in the Gulf of Alaska Trawl fisheries
- Continued study/assessment of trawl speeds relative to salmon/halibut bycatch rates
- Research, identify and promote funding sources for innovative modifications to fishery methods and means that will reduce bycatch

Halibut Bycatch Research Priorities Recommended

Rebecca Skinner-Alaska Whitefish Trawlers Association

Julie Bonney, Alaska Groundfish Data Bank

Chris Woodley, Groundfish Forum

- Discard mortality rate studies need to be continued for halibut
- Better information is needed on total removals in the Gulf of Alaska, including bycatch (wastage)
- Collect and analyze data on sex and size of halibut bycatch and wastage (all sources)
- Increase tagging studies to better understand movement between areas
- Investigate halibut diet and growth rate to better understand changes in length at age
- Studies on size limit and trade-offs (ongoing at IPHC and report due in October 2022)
- Gear modification research including studies on using pots for halibut in the GOA
- Determine relative fecundity of halibut based on size and age, and estimate impact on halibut stock of removals from all sources

Jim Martin-Alaska Charter Association

- Research Gulf statistical areas to update/revise closed areas for trawling to reduce bycatch
- Continued Habitat studies for fishing effects

Recommendations through general discussions

- Continued study/assessment of trawl speeds relative to salmon/halibut bycatch rates
- Research, identify and promote funding sources for innovative modifications to fishery methods and means that will reduce bycatch