

HCA meeting 01/30/2023

**AGENDA:**

1. Briefing from ADF&G Sportfish with Mike Booz covering the potential upcoming changes in rockfish regulations and doing a quick Q and A. (Mike Booz)
2. IPHC Annual Meeting Summary and discussion of new halibut regulations. (Garrett Lambert)
3. Welcome new Board and new President. (Brian Ritchie) Finalizing new Board Positions. (Avery Ault)
4. Licensing and Renewal for HCA. (Brian Ritchie, Clay Duda)
5. Any other urgent business (open)

**In attendance:**

Brian Ritchie  
Billy Hayden  
Cory Decook  
Avery Ault  
Clay Duda  
Josh Wickboldt  
Mike Boos, ADFG  
Karl Thomas  
Angie Thomas  
Genine Gillespie  
Patrick Matushak  
Mackenzie Bindas  
Allie Kintner  
Chuck Winston  
Garrett Lambert  
Jeffrey Franks  
Tyler Delay  
Corey Loos  
Eric Lehm  
Daniel Donich  
Corey Jellicoe  
Mike Benoit

**Call in:**

Chelsea Schmitt  
Greg Sutter  
Jim Hasskamp  
Andre Lovett  
Faith Hayden  
Jesse Lindall  
Ben Martin

- A. **Briefing on Halibut Derby** -- (Brad Anderson, Executive Director of Homer Chamber of Commerce) “Big fish” derby during the month of June. Anglers will be able to purchase tickets online thru QR code and designated website. Charter operators won’t have to do anything. Tickets must be purchased by 7 a.m. each day (not set in stone). There will be a released fish category: Captain can take a picture, document that it was released, and the angler will be entered for a chance at a \$2,000 price. Looking into doing tagged fish again. Will host a “Big But Ball” at Elks Lodge in early June to kick things off. Music, beer/wine, fish and chips. Solstice event on June 21 by deep water docks w/ deckhand skills competition.
- a. Avery Ault -- Asked if some of the money from ticket sales could benefit the HCA. Anderson said they were open to something like that, maybe funding research or educational events or other causes that ties in . Asks HCA to help come up with ideas.
  - b. Feedback pretty unanimous -- 7 a.m. deadline for ticket sales is too early, may push back to 8 a.m.
1. **Information on potential changes to rockfish limits** -- (Mike Booz, ADF&G) ADF&G has been slow on preseason king salmon restrictions, should have regulations finalized within the next 2 weeks.
- a. Big thing right now for the state is the upcoming Board of Fisheries meeting for Lower Cook Inlet finfish. Meeting will be in Homer in December 2023, but the deadline for proposals is April 10. (link)  
<https://aws.state.ak.us/OnlinePublicNotices/Notices/View.aspx?id=209306>
  - b. Information on rockfish harvest data (handout). ADF&G collects harvest samples from charter boats at the dock to assess fishery.
    - i. Pelagic rockfish harvest has gone up in recent years. Charter harvests account for 70-80% of total rockfish harvests. Charter logbook info is used to extrapolate non-guided harvest levels. Increase in rockfish harvest is primarily black rockfish, over the past 3 years has been about 36,000 annually in Lower Cook Inlet.

- ii. Annual average length and age of black rockfish has been declining a bit since 2014. Juvenile rockfish have been comprising most of the harvest in Lower Cook Inlet. Seeing fewer older black rockfish in harvest, which may be because of big juvenile class or fewer mature fish. Hard to tell from data. They don't do independent assessments (not out sampling rockfish) other than harvests taken at the dock. Since 2018 a large portion of black rockfish harvests have been juvenile.
  - iii. Decreased rockfish limits are not definitely going to happen, but it will likely be brought up at the upcoming Board of Fisheries meeting. They're not sure if the board will move on that management action to reduce rockfish harvest, but it's a possibility. ADF&G says data shows it needs to happen to maintain the fishery moving forward overtime.
  - iv. Reducing to 4 rockfish limit is a 20% decrease, obviously, but anglers on charter usually limit on rockfish 50-60% of time, so would be a reduction in harvest by about 15%. Going to a 3 bag limit would be a 30-35% reduction.
  - v. Large class of juvenile rockfish are about to enter intermediate life stage (9 years), so hopefully a new large juvenile class will show up once they hit breeding age.
2. **IPHC annual meeting summer** -- (Garrett Lambert) Same regulations as last year, but had to extend closures to 7 Tuesday (June 20-Aug 15) in addition to all Wednesday being closed. We're heading down a road of lower abundance over the next few years and we're likely to see more cuts. "Latent capacity" -- number of permits being used has increased a lot in the past ~10 years, which has increased fishing intensity.
3. **Welcoming new HCA board members and finalizing board positions** -- (Brian Ritchie, Avery Ault) Brian is stepping off the board and taking on more of a Directors role with Clay Duda. Nominates Mackenzie Bindas to take his place, Garrett seconds. Mackenzie introduces herself: Deckhand in Homer 2018-2020, now in final year of law school in Vermont with a focus on fishery law and management, currently lives in Homer working as an intern for Salmon State.
- a. Board positions nominated and approved unanimously:
    - i. Avery Ault, President
    - ii. Billy Hayden, Vice President
    - iii. Lindsey Kenton, Secretary
    - iv. Clay Duda, Treasurer
    - v. Daniel Donich, board member
    - vi. Mackenzie Bindas, board member
    - vii. Garrett Lambert, board member
    - viii. Eric Lehm, board member
4. **Licensing and renewal for HCA** -- (Brian Ritchie, Clay Duda) Finishing up some housekeeping over the next week or two to get HCA back on track. In process of

transferring access to bank account and other HCA assets to the new board, and filing some outstanding paperwork with the state. Once that's done in the next few weeks, we'll look at updating membership, collecting membership dues, and revamping website and donation platform to be more user friendly.

- a. Clay is working on updating email list for new and past members, pending access to HCA email account.
  - b. New HCA web url: AKhomercharterassociation.com (currently redirects to Facebook page)
5. Open discussion --
- a. Garrett Lambert -- We should start thinking about who will represent the HCA now that Brian Ritchie is off the board, because the next 3 years are really important for our industry (facing further cuts in allocation).
  - b. Daniel Donich -- It'd be good to have an HCA meeting in the first part of October ahead of the Halibut Management Committee meeting later that month (part of the NPFMC process). That way the committee would have a heads up of where everybody wants to go with potential regulation changes year-to-year.