

Appendix 1: Significant milestones in California halibut fishery management

Don Schultze, retired California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG); Paul Wild, retired CDFG, Stephen Wertz, CDFG; Travis Tanaka, CDFG; Adrienne Vincent, former CDFG

California halibut is managed by the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) in state waters (0-3 nautical miles (nm) from shore and including the waters of Monterey Bay). In federal waters, called the Fishery Conservation Zone (3-200 nm), state laws and regulations apply, except that a maximum of 150 pounds of halibut may be possessed for any commercial vessel having a federal groundfish trawl permit.

1876- The proto-trawl net, known as the paranzella net and which is towed by two boats, is introduced in San Francisco.

1880s- Entangling nets, including trammel nets, are introduced in California.

1911- Trammel nets are prohibited in state waters.

1913- Trammel nets are permitted but required to be pulled within 6 hours.

1913- Trawl nets are prohibited in state waters off the coast of Los Angeles, Ventura, Orange, and San Diego counties. Trawl nets are prohibited within Monterey Bay.

1915- Trawling is prohibited in all state waters.

1915- California halibut less than 4 lbs (1.8 kg) in the round cannot be bought or sold.

1925- Legislation is changed to allow trawling off the coast of Santa Barbara within state waters.

1931- Commercially-caught California halibut less than 3.5 lbs (1.6 kg) dressed with the head on or 3 lbs (1.4 kg) dressed with the head off cannot be bought or sold (Recreationally-caught halibut may never be bought or sold). Up to 30 lbs (13.5 kg) of underweight California halibut can be retained by a commercial fisherman for personal use only.

1936- Market category for California halibut is established on landing receipts to distinguish from Pacific halibut.

1953- Waters off the Santa Barbara coast are closed to trawling again and trawling is prohibited in all state waters.

1968- Trawl nets are authorized between Point Sur and Cape San Martin in waters not less than 1 nm from the mainland shore. Trawl nets are also permitted between

Point Arguello and El Capitan Point in Santa Barbara County in waters not less than 25 fathoms (fm) or 1 nm from shore.

- 1971- A minimum size limit of 22 inches total length (TL) for all recreationally-landed California halibut is established.
- 1971- A recreational bag limit of three fish north of Point Sur and five fish south of Point Sur is established.
- 1971- The California Halibut Trawl Grounds (CHTG) are established in southern California (Fish and Game Code sec. 8495).
- 1971- A 4-month trawl closure within the CHTG is implemented from February through May to protect spawning adults.
- 1972- A minimum mesh size of 7.5 inches is established for the cod end of trawl nets used within the CHTG.
- 1973- The 4-month trawl closure within the CHTG is changed to 15 March to 15 June.
- 1975- A minimum mesh size of 4.5 inches for the mesh of any part of a groundfish trawl net is established. This still applies to federal waters where halibut fishing occurs.
- 1979- A minimum size limit of 22 inches TL for all commercially-landed California halibut is established. For any licensed commercial fisherman, up to 30 pounds of halibut per day below minimum legal size may be possessed for personal use if taken incidentally in commercial fishing.
- 1985- Minimum mesh size for gill and trammel nets used to take halibut is increased to 8.5 inches (216 mm) between Point Dume (Los Angeles County) and Ragged Point (San Luis Obispo County).
- 1985- The number of halibut less than 22 inches total length that may be possessed by commercial fishermen for personal use is reduced to four fish.
- 1989- An 8.5-inch (216 mm) minimum mesh size for gill and trammel nets used to take halibut is adopted statewide. Gill and trammel nets are prohibited in Santa Monica Bay.
- 1989- The definition of the CHTG is amended and the 25-fm clause is removed.
- 1994- The Marine Resources Protection Zone is established by legislation: it prohibits the use of gill nets within 3 nm of shore south of Point Conception and within 1 nm from shore or 70 fm (whichever is less) around the Channel Islands.

- 2000- An emergency closure is established in waters less than 60 fm from Point Reyes to Point Arguello for the use of gill nets to take halibut.
- 2002- A permanent closure is established in waters less than 60 fm from Point Reyes to Point Arguello for the use of gill nets to take halibut.
- 2004- Senate Bill 1459 gives the Fish and Game Commission (Commission) authority over the management of the California halibut bottom trawl fishery.
- 2004- No halibut less than 22 inches total length may be taken, possessed or sold.
- 2004- SB 1459 closes all state waters to bottom trawling, with the exception of the CHTG. This includes historic trawl grounds for halibut within state waters of Monterey Bay which are greater than 3 nm from shore. However, the Monterey Bay trawl closure is not enforced until 2006.
- 2005- Due to SB 1459, 13 percent of the CHTG are closed to bottom trawling. These are the only state waters to date in which bottom trawling is allowed.
- 2006 A California halibut bottom trawl vessel permit is required for any commercial trawl vessel to land halibut taken in state waters, and in federal waters for landings exceeding 150 pounds
- 2008- Due to SB 1459, an additional section of the CHTG is closed to bottom trawling.
- 2009- Commission establishes regulations defining "light touch" trawl gear as the only trawl gear allowed within the CHTG.