

## Pacific halibut sport seasons set

by Bend\_Weekly\_News\_Sources

NEWPORT, Ore. — Pacific halibut seasons will open May 1 in all-depth waters north of Cape Falcon and in nearshore waters (shoreward of the 40-fathom curve) off the Oregon central coast. The all-depth halibut fishery for Oregon's central coast between Cape Falcon and Humbug Mountain will open May 10.

“This year's sport halibut quota is more than 260,000 pounds for Oregon,” said Don Bodenmiller, sport halibut project leader for ODFW. “That's about a 3 percent reduction from last year, but more than double the quota allowed in the mid-1990s.”

The all-depth fishery north of Cape Falcon (north coast) to Leadbetter Point, Wash., will be open seven days a week until that area takes its quota of 14,264 pounds or July 15. There will be a second summer opener starting on Aug. 3 and continuing on Fridays through Sundays until the combined quota for the spring and summer season of 20,378 pounds is reached or Sept. 30.

The area south of Humbug Mountain runs from May 1 through Oct. 31, seven days a week.

The spring all-depth season dates for the central coast area from Cape Falcon (30 miles south of the Columbia River) south to Humbug Mountain (south of Port Orford) are May 10-12, 17-19, 24-26 and 31; and June 1-2 and 7-9 (Thursday-Saturdays). If quota remains the fishery will resume on June 21-23 and July 5-7, 19-21 or until the 170,242-pound quota is taken. Open dates will be announced on the National Marine Fisheries Service hotline (1-800-662-9825) and posted on the ODFW Marine Resources Program web site.

The central coast all-depth fishery summer season opens Aug. 3 and is scheduled to be open every other Friday-Sunday until the season all-depth quota of 226,989 pounds is taken or Oct. 28. The possibility of a second fish to the bag limit could occur after the Labor Day weekend if the catch is low, Bodenmiller said.

The high-relief area of Stonewall Bank is closed to halibut fishing to reduce incidental catch of yelloweye rockfish and canary rockfish. Both species are considered over-fished and must be released immediately. The closed area is defined by latitude and longitude waypoints, which are available on the Marine Resources Program web site.

The daily bag limit is one fish and there is no minimum length for Pacific halibut. The possession limit is one daily limit at sea and three daily limits on land. The annual limit per angler is six fish.

Sport anglers are reminded possession of groundfish is not allowed north of Humbug Mountain when a Pacific halibut is aboard their vessel during all-depth Pacific halibut dates. The exception is sablefish (black cod), which may be retained with halibut between Humbug Mountain and Cape Falcon. Both sablefish and Pacific cod may be retained north of Cape Falcon. Other non-groundfish species, such as tuna and salmon during authorized seasons, may be possessed with halibut on open all-depth Pacific halibut days.

More details can be found online

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