

Pacific halibut fishing off Columbia River closes Saturday

by Bend_Weekly_News_Sources

NEWPORT, Ore.â€” Fishery managers announced Thursday that preliminary estimates and projections indicate the spring quota in the Pacific halibut fishery off the Columbia River will be reached by Sunday and the fishery will close effective Saturday, May 26 at 11:59 p.m.

The decision by Oregon and Washington fishery officials and NOAA Fisheries closes the recreational fishery for Pacific halibut between Leadbetter Point in Washington and Cape Falcon in Oregon.

The spring fishery opened on May 1 and was scheduled to be open through July 15 or the harvest of 14,264 pounds of Pacific halibut, whichever came first.

A second Columbia River season is scheduled to begin on Aug. 3. This season opens the fishery Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays through the combined harvest quota of 20,378 pounds from both seasons or Sept. 30, whichever comes first.

Opportunities to fish for Pacific halibut remain open in other areas of Oregon. Between Cape Falcon and Humbug Mountain (near Port Orford), anglers may fish for halibut inside the 40-fathom line seven days a week through Oct. 31 or attainment of the harvest quota for that fishery. The all-depth halibut fishery is open May 24-26, and 31, and June 1-2 and June 7-9. Additional days may open in June and July if the quota has not been met and a second season is scheduled to begin in August. The high-relief area of Stonewall Bank, west of Newport, is closed to all halibut fishing.

The area south of Humbug Mountain is open in all-depths for Pacific halibut through Oct. 31, seven days a week.

Days on which Pacific halibut fishing is open will be announced on the NOAA Fisheries hotline (1-800-662-9825) and posted on the ODFW Marine Resources Program Web site at www.dfw.state.or.us/MRP. More information on regulations can be found in the "2007 Oregon Sport Ocean Regulations for Salmon, Halibut and Other Marine Species" booklet.

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