

# IPHC Regulations Proposal Submission Form

Proposal Title: Prohibit Tagging of Halibut except by IPHC or appropriate state/provincial government agency.

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Year Proposed For: 2008

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Submission Information (Please print or type)

I.P.H.C

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## 1. What is the definition and objective of the proposal?

The regulation would be to prevent an individual or company (non-scientific) tagging halibut. This would prevent unqualified individuals inserting tags into halibut. At least one charter lodge has been tagging halibut in the meat portion of the fish recently. This practice is likely causing an increased mortality of halibut released, destroying the meat of the fish by creating a large wound around the tag that makes a portion of the meat unusable to the fisherman whether commercial or sport that harvests and keeps that fish. We believe that fish should only be tagged for a scientific purpose by trained personnel from IPHC or appropriate state/provincial government agencies.

The rogue tagging of halibut is illegal in the State of Alaska under 5 AAC 75.055 but to date this has not prevented the rogue tagging from occurring in Alaska.

*5 AAC 75.055. Possession or marking of live fish or live fish eggs. Except as provided in 5 AAC 75.026, or under the terms of a permit issued by the commissioner under 5 AAC 41 or AS*

*16.05.930(a), it is unlawful to possess, transport, and release live fish or live fish eggs, or in any way mark any live fish before release.*

Other State of Alaska regulations that might apply include:

*5 AAC 75.060 Molesting of Fish. Molesting or impeding spawning or the natural movement of fish contrary to the lawful methods and means of sport fishing is prohibited.*

*5AAC 75.065. Waste of Fish. The intentional waste or destruction of any species of sport-caught fish is prohibited.*

## 2. Impacts: Describe who you think this proposed change might affect (include fishers, processors, agencies, and the public).

### 2a. Who might benefit from the proposed change?

The only halibut that would be tagged would be from IPHC or appropriate state/provincial government agencies for a scientific purpose. This will cause less confusion about whether the tag in the halibut allows a commercial halibut fishermen to keep an undersize fish on board or a sport fisherman can have over the legal limit on board. The current IPHC regulation encourages that tagged halibut be kept and turned in for the information, while the regulation within the section states it is only a halibut with an IPHC tag that can be kept the information on the inside back cover encouraging fishermen to keep and retain tagged halibut does not specify IPHC tagged halibut is all that is legal to be kept.

**2b. Who might suffer hardships or be worse off?**

We don't believe that this regulation will cause any hardships. It will cause charter operators and lodges that are tagging halibut to stop the practice but we can find no justification for the current practice of tagging halibut.

**3. Are there other solutions to the problem described above? If so, why were they rejected?**

Two other solutions were considered:

- 1.) Require IPHC approval for any tagging of halibut; or
- 2.) A regulation that only allows tags by individuals to be inserted in the fins. This would prevent the destruction of the meat but still causes confusion about who inserted the tag and whether it is legal to have an undersize tagged halibut onboard a commercial vessel and still will likely create additional handling mortality to the resource.

Please attach any other supporting materials. All items submitted by **November 15, 2007** will be considered at the IPHC Annual Meeting. ***Remember to include contact information and signature.***