

HASA



Humboldt Area Saltwater Anglers

Survey results on 2016 Pacific halibut season structure





Background

- The PFMC will be adopting a 2016 Catch Share Plan in which 4% of the non-tribal Pacific halibut allocation would be provided to California.
- This allocation represents an increase from 1% in 2014 (approximately 6,200 lbs), but no increase from 2015 (25,220 lbs based on 2015 IPHC Catch Limit).
- CDFW will again be enforcing harvest restrictions in 2016 such that actual 2016 harvest does not exceed this new allocation. Based on 2015 season structure (Option 1) resulted in an August 13 closure.
- CDFW does not wish to modify the 2016 season structure from Option 1 unless there is a substantial change in Area 2A allocation (WA, OR, CA) from IPHC (970,000 lbs in 2015)
- Therefore...



Objectives of Survey

- Better inform the HASA Board so we can better understand and represent north coast Pacific halibut anglers in our season structure recommendations in coming years
- 92 responses received (87 responses received last year)



Three potential season structure strategies developed for survey based on input at end of 2015 season:

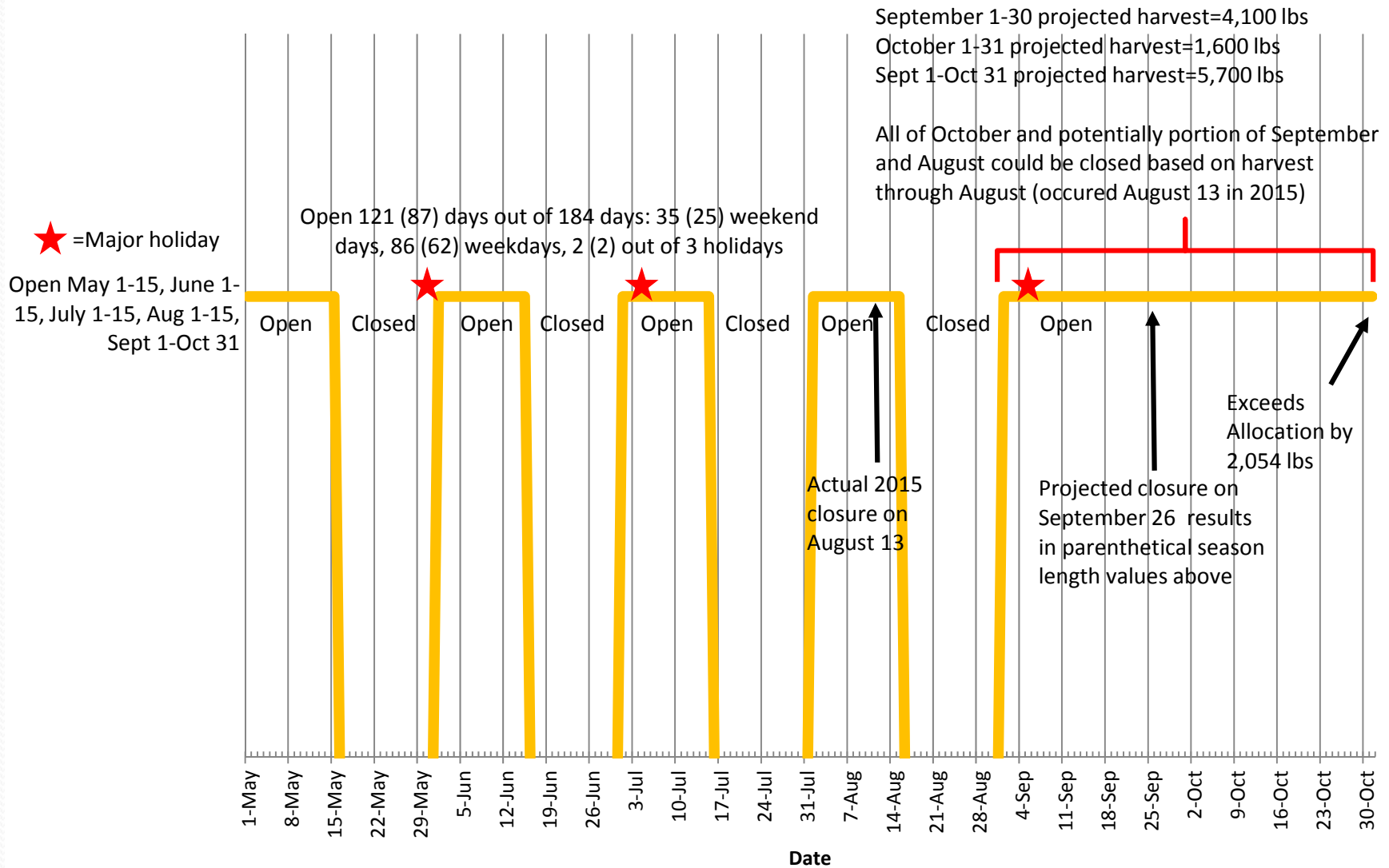
- Option 1: Open May 1-15, June 1-15, July 1-15, August 1-15, September 1-October 31 until quota is reached (Status quo from 2015).
- Option 2: 80%-20% split staggered over season, open May 1-14th, June 1-14th, July 1-14th, and August 1-14th until 80% quota reached, then open September-October continuously until remaining 20% quota reached.
- Option 3: 80%-20% split, open May 1 continuously until 80% quota reached, then open September-October until remaining 20% quota reached.

Assumptions on monthly harvest rates:
 used the average of the two highest years for
 each month to try to account for effort shift
 and anticipated increased effort in 2016

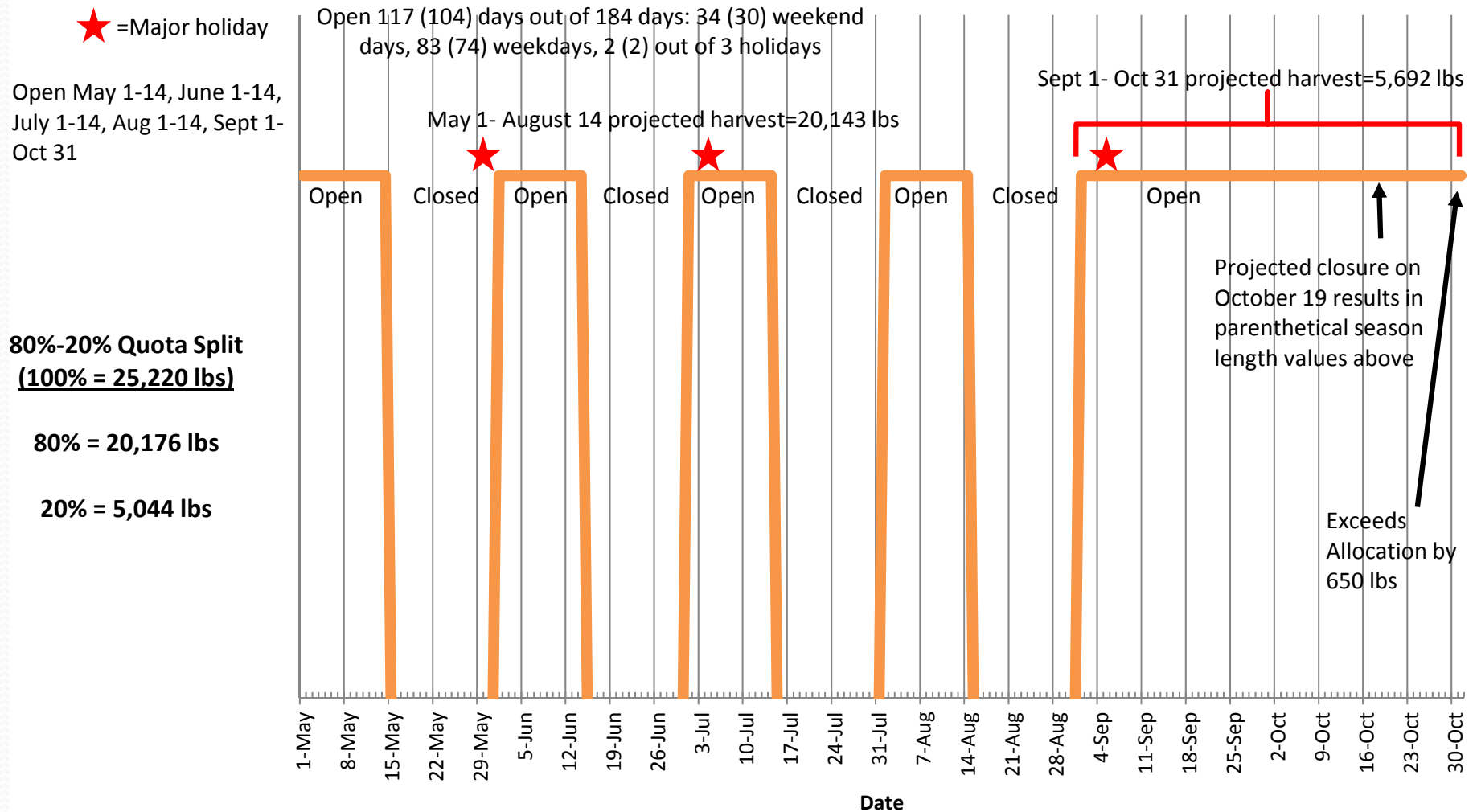
Adjusted Estimated Monthly and Yearly Recreational Pacific Halibut Catch in California

Month	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
May	1,384	638	2,608	2,716	1,523	1,282	4,795
June	1,977	11,652	2,513	3,154	4,119	5,419	2,779
July	3,326	11,548	10,347	1,347	5,369	12,446	20,124
August	5,743	11,758	10,918	5,170	12,306	19,179	0
September	1,611	4,862	2,202	2,663	3,270	2,554	3,293
October	0	149	0	801	856	2,374	235
Total	14,041	40,607	28,588	15,851	27,442	43,254	31,226

Option 1: Open May 1-15, June 1-15, July 1-15, August 1-15, September 1-October 31 until quota is reached (Status quo from 2015).



Option 2: 80%-20% split staggered over season, open May 1-14th, June 1-14th, July 1-14th, and August 1-14th until 80% quota reached, then open September-October continuously until remaining 20% quota reached.



Option 3: 80%-20% split, open May 1 continuously until 80% quota reached, then open September-October until remaining 20% quota reached.

★ =Major holiday

Open 137 (125) days out of 184 days: 39 (35) weekend days, 98 (90) weekdays, 3 (3) out of 3 holidays

May 1- July 15 projected harvest=20,171 lbs

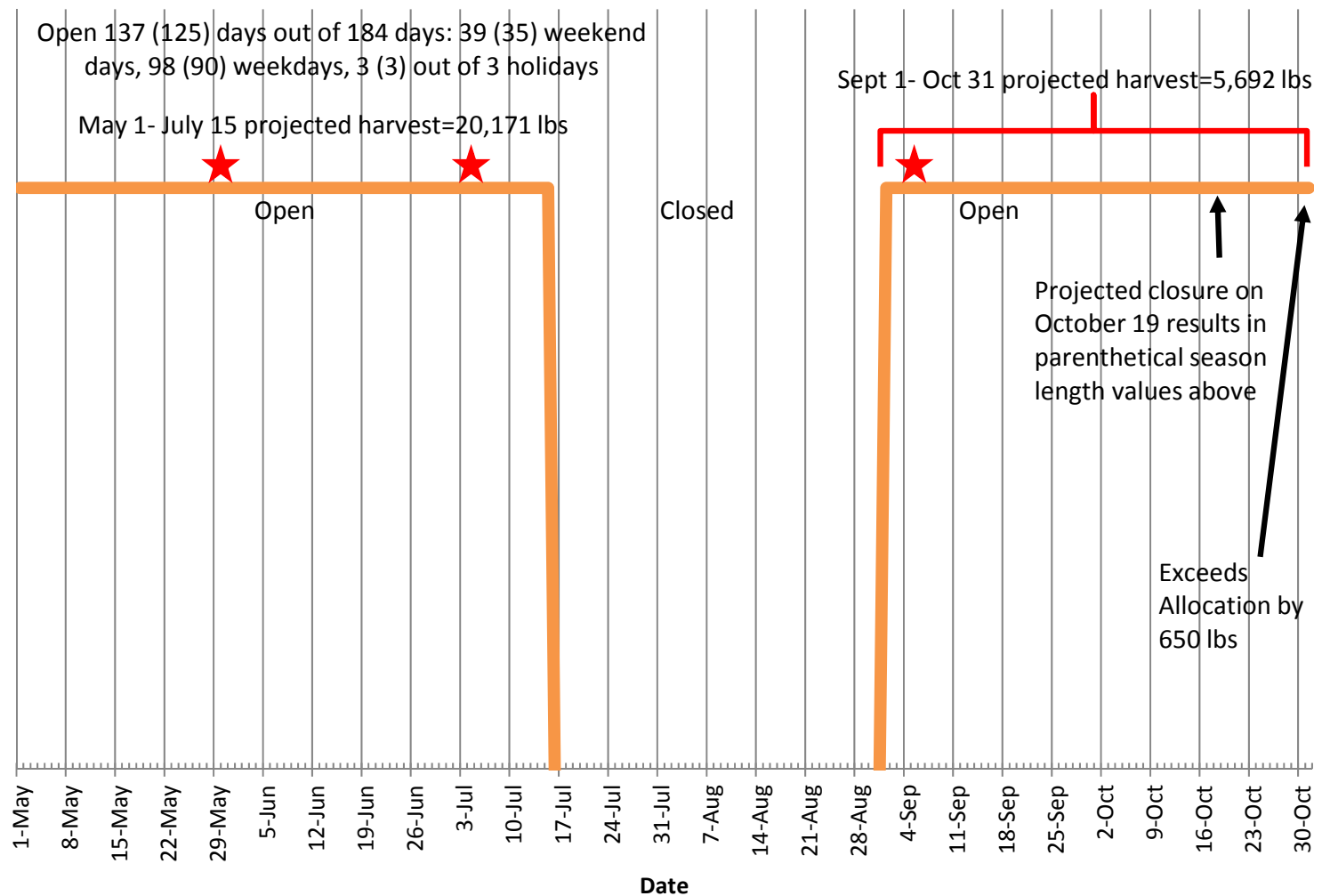
Sept 1- Oct 31 projected harvest=5,692 lbs

Open May 1 until 80% quota reached, Sept 1-Oct 31 until remaining 20% quota reached

80%-20% Quota Split
(100% = 25,220 lbs)

80% = 20,176 lbs

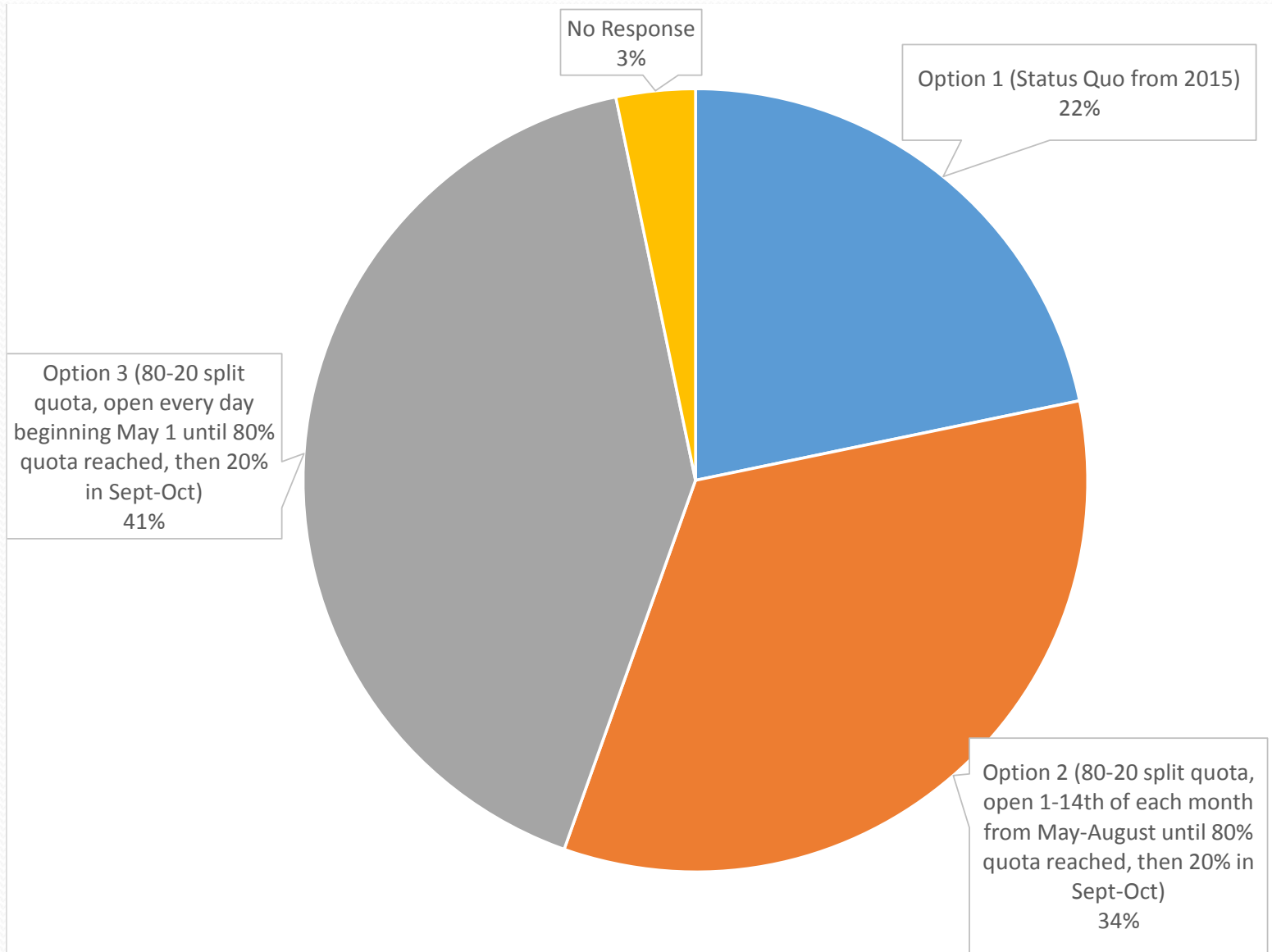
20% = 5,044 lbs



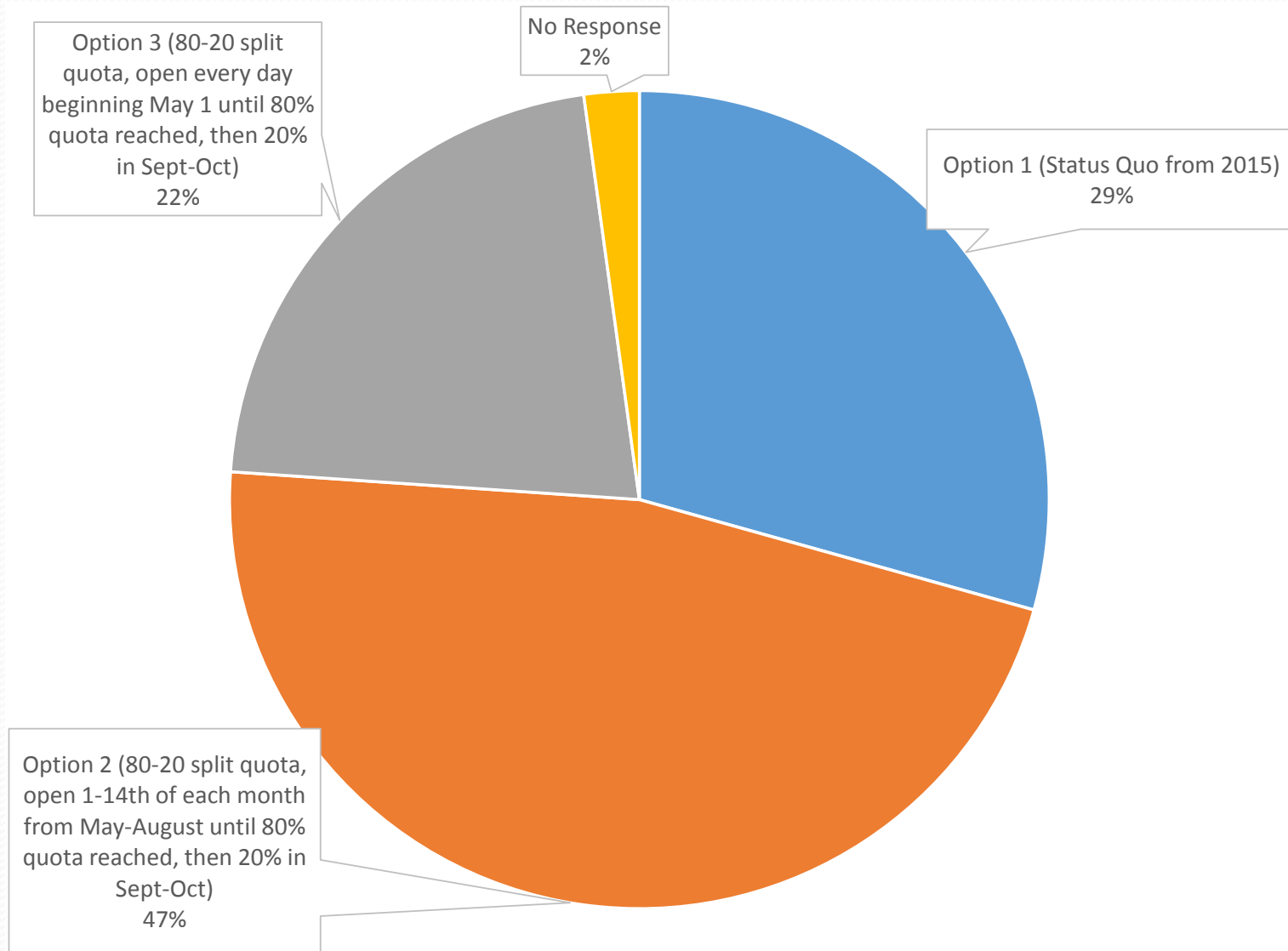
Projected closure on October 19 results in parenthetical season length values above

Exceeds Allocation by 650 lbs

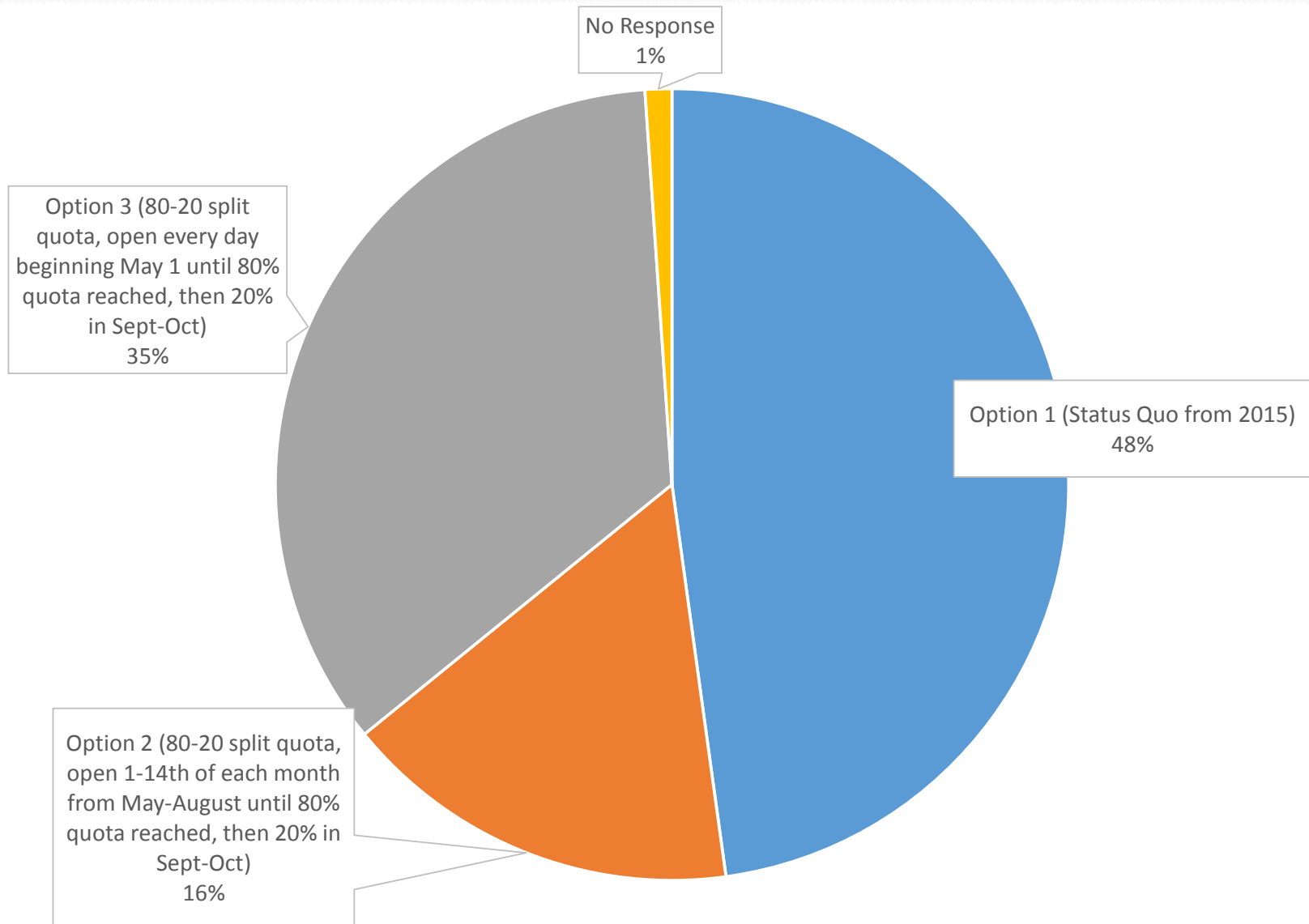
Question 1: Which Option do you prefer the MOST?



Question 2: Which Option do you prefer the SECOND MOST?



Question 3: Which Option do you prefer the LEAST?



Question 4: Any other comments you would like to provide?

- 2015 season was not fair to north coast halibut anglers. Only being able to fish from the 1st to the 15th makes no sense.
- Because of work, my fishing days are mostly limited to weekends, and I don't like to fish for halibut unless the ocean conditions are pretty nice. Therefore my days on the water are very limited, so the more weekend days the better. It is nice to have halibut to fish for later in the season after salmon is closed. Ultimately, I would prefer a punch card system, otherwise fewer people will catch more of the available fish.
- Better way to effectively and more accurately count the true catch quota, method used now is highly inaccurate and not conclusive.
- Change the catch amount to what will sustain the halibut at healthy levels. I believe that is about 100,000 lbs a year
- Due to the increasing likelihood of a rough ocean after Labor Day, I would expect option 3 to leave a portion of our quota unharvested.
- How can we believe these options when the 2015 was closed approx. 10% short of quota??
- How many pounds does CDFW owe us from last yr. Due to early closure. Fish counters indicated not a lot of fish to count.
- I never got a chance to fish for Halibut in 2015 because of the structure of the season.
- More time on the water is better and safer for the fleet

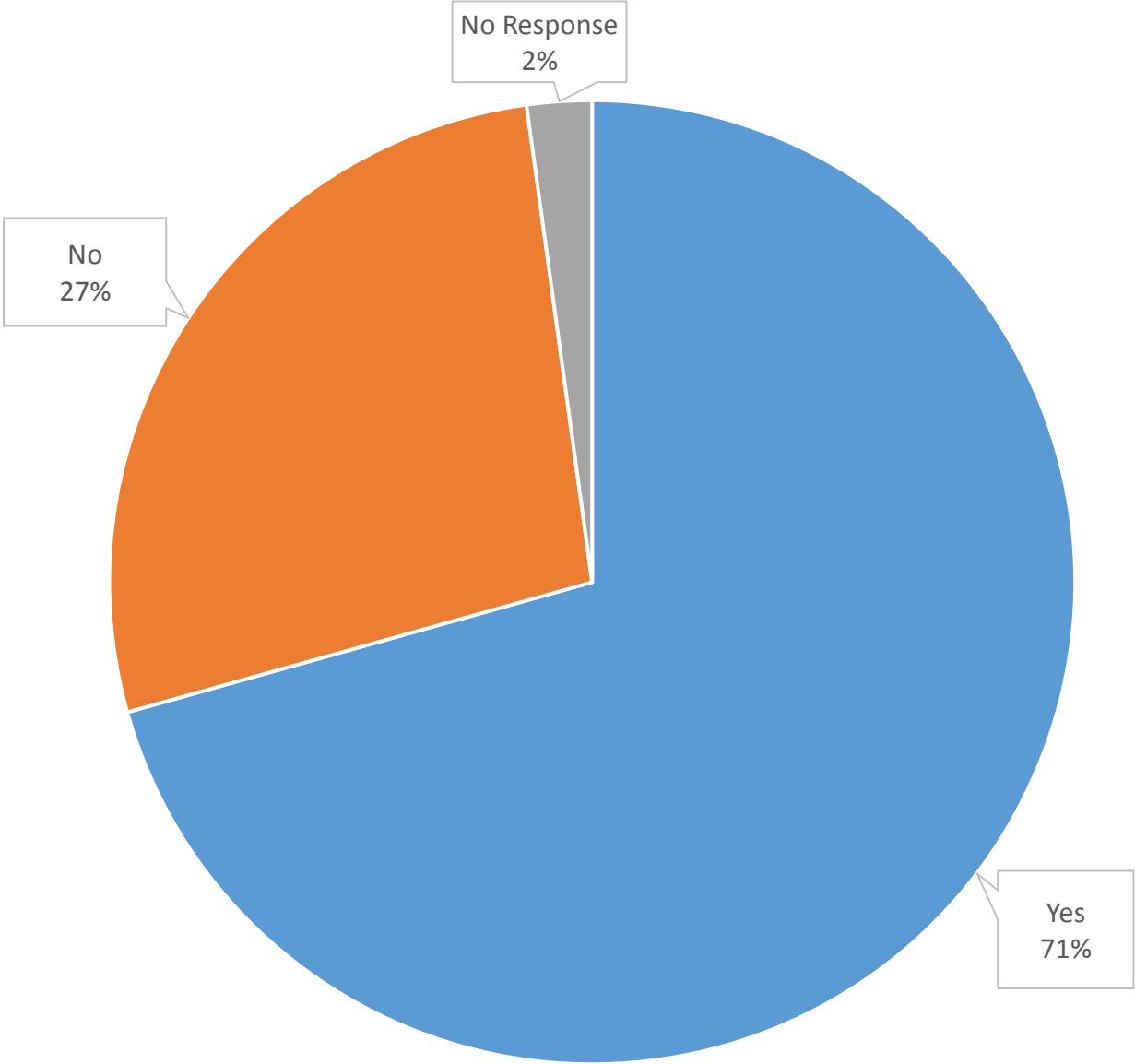
Question 4: Any other comments you would like to provide?

- I don't believe that the second or third option would result in more days on the water, fish and game guesstimates based on days fished (even if they don't see any fish) not on real success.
- I personally don't care that much about Sep, and definitely not October. I don't like having 20% allocated to those months, I'd rather use that 20% earlier in the season. I would have preferred to have seen the days of the week open/closures that was presented as an option for 2015. Also, conceptually, it's very difficult for me to understand how the "projected" fishing days are actually going to be up to 50% greater (87 versus 125) for options 2 and 3 over option 1. Given how quickly we ran out of quota last year, I'm not seeing how it's possible to add 40 more days of fishing.
- I still think a punch card that allows an angler 3 to 5 fish per season is the best way to go. There are greedy fishermen that fish as hard as possible and kill dozens of fish....that is not fair IMO.
- I would rather see a tag/report card so you can go when the weather is safe vs a race to the bottom approach
- Option 2 would be most beneficial to everyone. The closure for 2015 took away folks chances to catch a halibut, who could not get out fishing till later in the year
- Our representatives worked hard on last year's season. Staying the course could generate a data base that could benefit the CA recreational halibut fishery in future years

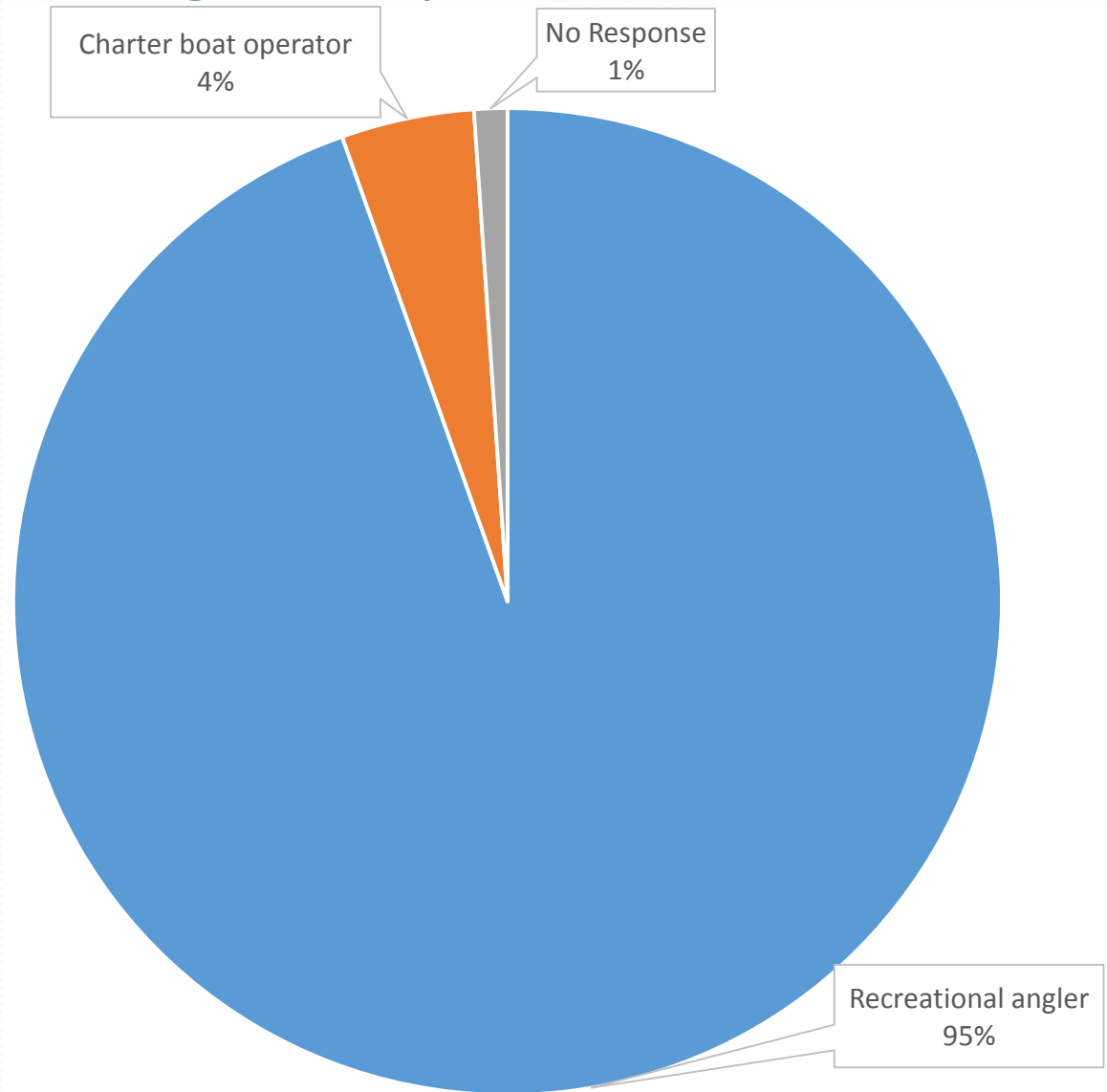
Question 4: Any other comments you would like to provide?

- Our weather patterns prevent small boats from fishing. The larger boats take up the catch. Maybe we need to go to a tag system for it to be fair for all anglers.
- Please lobby for raising our allocation above 4% in addition to increasing the number of potential days on the water. Option 3 is preferred in my opinion because of uncontrollable weather conditions which could inhibit angling during the first half of each month. Thank you
- Punch cards would be nice so we can fish for halibut when we have time.
- The 15 days open period should be set to guarantee 3 weekends in each period.
- The survey MUST continue so our fish are included in the coastwide quota. We must find a way to get quota credit for our fish in OUR area. Adding our surveyed fish to the coastwide quota only creates overfishing in northern areas and underfishing available resource here.
- Under last season's status quo I was only able to fish halibut one or two days, because of either weather or other factors, I am also disgusted with the method they determine how much weight or fish has been taken, as a Pacific halibut fisherman I find it hard to believe we have a shortage of these fish for sportsman like myself.
- We need a punch card system with a season limit. 2015 was my worst year for halibut fishing and I think the DFG calculations were way off. We need a more accurate count. Also we need to fight for a bigger percentage of the Halibut take on the west coast. My thanks go to the HASA folks for getting us a halibut season.

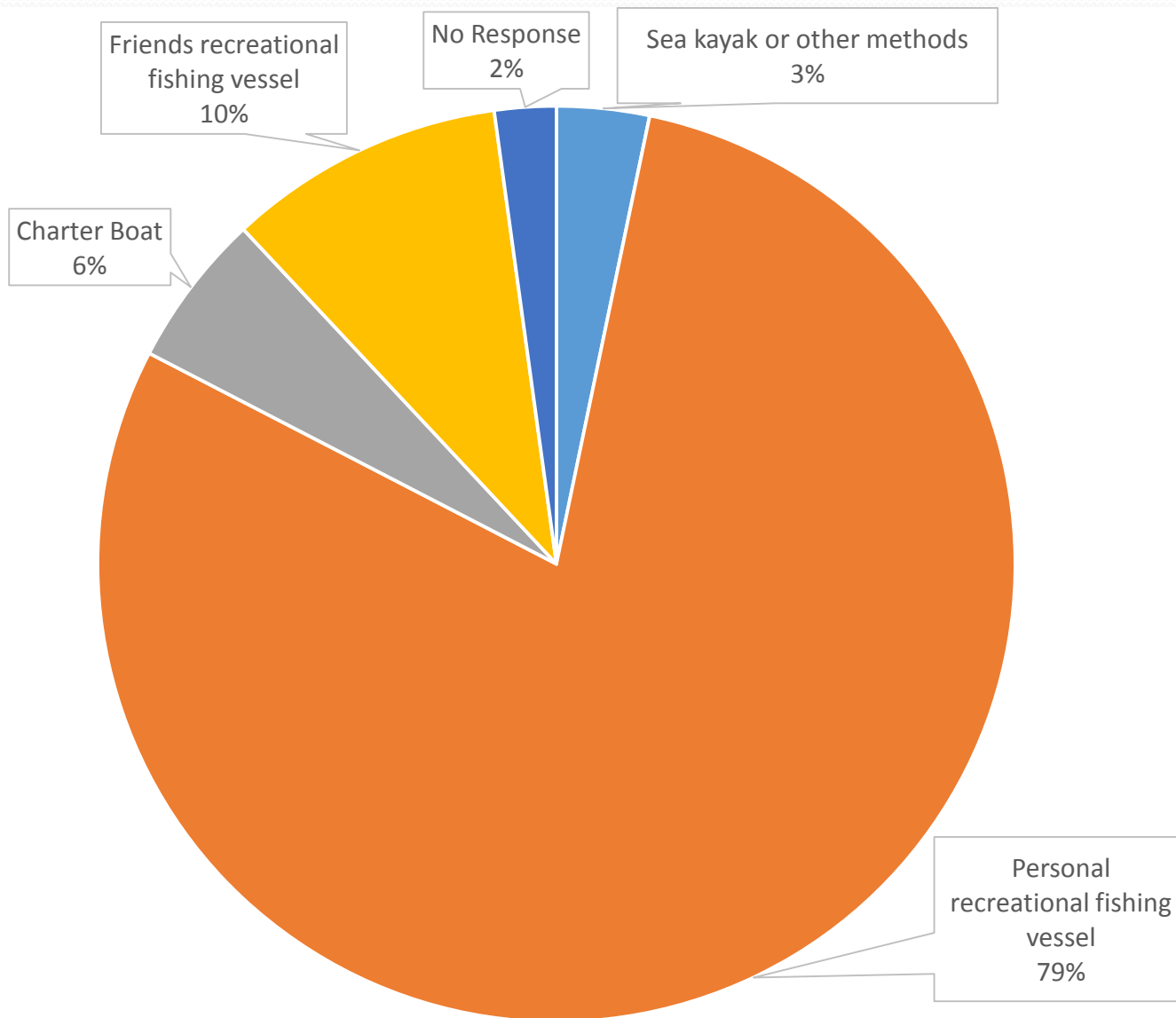
Question 6: Are you a HASA member?



Question 7: What type of angler are you?



Question 8: How do you typically fish for Pacific halibut?



Question 9: How important is Pacific halibut to you compared to other species (salmon, rockfish)?

