

American Fishermen's Research Foundation News

AFRF Directors Meeting: Since we will not have a live general meeting this spring the AFRF board will meet online between now and June to conduct business. May 1 is scheduled for the first directors meeting. WFOA will have to elect new AFRF directors for 2018-2019 and the processor's segment of AFRF will have to elect their board members as outlines in the bylaws. There have been some changes and a vacancy on the board for a processor seat. We will publish actions of the board in the next newsletter.

Albacore Archival Tagging Program: Update From Stephanie Snyder - Tag Data Project: April 10, 2018 – "We've come up to speed and have analyzed all the tags that have been recaptured. Also, we've completed a program overview and have submitted that to Fisheries as well. I have put in two abstracts (one on catchability from tagging data and another on the albacore archival tagging program) for the tuna conference but have not heard which I will be presenting as a poster or a talk. Currently, I am working on revisions on a submitted manuscript on albacore migration cues (this is past work and is in addition to the contract) and am still working up the results on the catchability manuscript (use of tagging data to determine catchability in stock assessments) which I will have for you in May."

Vessels for Tagging: AFRF is requesting boats that qualify to ask for a new simplified application so we can gather a list of potential boats to draw from. At this time we have a few boats on the list but can always use more as backup.

Vessels will be needed for one or possibly two charters that could be up to two weeks long, but probably shorter as tags are placed. They will be conducted off WA, OR, and CA, most likely in late August or September.

Vessel Requirements for Archival Tagging of Albacore: (SWFSC Requirements)

1. Carry and maintain live bait (anchovies and sardines) for up to two weeks. Supply crowders, scoops, and water supply on deck for bait (technician will provide hand scoops and bait bags for chumming and baiting hooks if needed).
2. Water-level access (such as a rack) for transferring hooked fish into a hand-held sling or a suitable alternative for transferring hooked fish to the deck without damage to the fish. Fish cannot be lifted out of the water by the hook and leader.
3. A minimum of two crew members in addition to the captain, at least one of which is experienced in live bait fishing (rod & reel or lift poles).
4. Provide an accessible location near the stern rail to accommodate a tagging cradle (36" long x 20" wide x 12" high) for surgery (see figures below) and a relatively dry area for recording data.
5. Dry storage on deck for toolbox, surgical box (24" long x 12" wide x 12" high)
6. Provide a deck hose that can be adapted to a garden hose with adjustable pressure for irrigating the gills of the fish.

AFRF DIRECTORS '2018'

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Bornstein Seafoods
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NMFS /AFRF will supply any equipment necessary to complete the project. The NOAA/NMFS technician will carry insurance. The vessel and alternates will be selected by June 30, 2014 by AFRF and SWFSC personnel.

UPCOMING MEETINGS and EVENTS:

69th Tuna Conference Lake Arrowhead, California May 21-24, 2018: Note from the Conference Organizers - We'd like to remind you about the 69th Tuna Conference, which is being planned for May 21-24, 2018, at the Lake Arrowhead Conference Center in California. This year's theme will be "Climate variability and ecosystem considerations in management of large pelagics". Variability in the ocean environment drives changes in the distribution, feeding behavior and reproduction of pelagic fishes. This can result in altered stock productivity and availability to fishing fleets, with subsequent impacts on fishing communities. Climate variability and long-term change can therefore challenge traditional assessment and management frameworks. To maintain resilience of populations of large pelagics and limit socioeconomic impacts, future fishery management advice needs to be robust to climate-driven biological responses. This will require improved understanding of species ecology across life stages, of the structure and function of the ecosystems they rely on, and of methods for including these factors in assessment and management. However, as always, we welcome all presentations on tuna and tuna-like species whether or not they conform to the theme.

Information is available at www.tunaconference.org

Stephanie Snyder will be doing a poster presentation on the Tagging Program at this event. AFRF science rep David Itano will also be attending.

MANAGEMENT STRATEGY EVALUATION (MSE): This process began on albacore as a species with no stock or overfishing issues, in the NP two years ago and is moving forward. There was a workshop in LaJolla, CA held March 28th, and a followup listening session online April 18th. Bluefin have now been added to the discussion. The overall goal is to set references points and possible harvest control rules or a path to them with industry input. At the October 2017 N P Albacore MSE workshop in Vancouver, Canada, it was explained that the goal of the October workshop was to get performance indicators for the initial running of the albacore MSE model that would "work" for all the Nations around the North Pacific that harvest NP albacore. Industry would like to start working on evaluating the performance standards from a standpoint of how the US industry would be managed for the different performance standards.

Albacore MSE Workshop, LaJolla, CA - March 28, 2018 -Douglas Fricke (Representing the PFMC)

The MSE Workshop presented by Desiree Tommasi, PhD on 3-28-18, was an introduction that covered three species, sardines, albacore, and swordfish. I am not reporting on sardines and swordfish as obviously our interest is in albacore. The workshop was designed to give an introduction to the MSE exercise that is designed to model performance metrics for various Harvest Control Rules. It was quickly pointed out that SW Science Center is actually intending to complete two MSE models for albacore. The MSE model for albacore that was introduced at the workshop is intended to only consider the albacore in the California current. (See Below) For this model, the California current is basically the Eastern Pacific (EPO). There is another model that the S W Science Center is working which is intended to be used across the entire North Pacific.

Even though the Workshop was intended to deal primarily with the California Current, there was considerable discussion about the international North Pacific albacore(NPA) MSE model. On the NPA MSE model, the interesting Management Objective that was not included coming out of the Oct. Workshop in Vancouver is there is no economic return to the individual fleets in the management objectives. The reason this will be important in the future is that it

would not be fair for a HCR that reduces one country fleet 10% and another country fleet 50%.

The schedule for the international NPA MSE is that the ISC, the ISC albacore Working Group, and the NC will review the initial run of the model this summer. I am hoping that the PFMC HMSAS will have a briefing at the June PFMC meeting. Then this fall or early next spring there will be another workshop like the workshop last fall in Vancouver, Canada.

North Pacific Albacore Example - Management Objectives

1. Maintain spawning biomass above the limit reference point
2. Maintain depletion (fished biomass / unfished biomass) around historic average depletion
3. Maintain fishing impact by fishery at historical average
4. Maintain catches by fishery above average historical catch
5. Change in total allowable catch between years should be relative gradual
6. Maintain fishing mortality (F) at target value

TIMLINE for NP ALBACORE MSE:

<u>Dates</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Task</u>
October 2017	ALBWG:	To discuss MSE framework and Operating Model for MSE testing
May 2018	ALBWG:	Discussion and review of preliminary MSE results
May 2018	SAC of IATTC:	Review of preliminary MSE results
June 2018	ALBWG:	Discussion and review results of initial MSE
July 2018	ISC18 Plenary:	Review results of initial MSE
August 2018	SC14:	Report initial MSE results
September 2018	NC14:	Present initial MSE results to managers
Late 2018 – Early 2019	4th ISC	MSE workshop (tentative)

CALIFORNIA CURRENT MSE: Peter Flournoy attended the March 28th session in LaJolla and did a detailed writeup for the AFRF Board with references to the slide presentation by SWFSC. Below is just a summary of his writeup. Contact AFRF for further information.

“... This project is funded by a 3 year grant which was actually applied for before the WCPFC-NC tasked the ISC with doing a study on a Management Strategy Evaluation for North Pacific Albacore. I do not believe anything undertaken in this project is meant to conflict with or contradict the work the ISC is doing. The name of the project is “Understanding Climate Impacts on Fish Stocks and Fisheries to Inform Sustainable Management in the California Current Large Marine Ecosystem. This project is limited to the U.S. and Canadian fisheries for NP albacore, and does not include those of Taiwan, Japan, China or Korea, since as far as we know those fisheries do not occur in the California Current. This project defines the California Current as extending out west from the coast of the United States and Canada about 1,000 kilometers. The project will emphasize the projected impacts of projected climate change, and projected changes in temperature, pH, oxygen, salinity, upwelling and the overall ecosystem.

There is a whole section on the U.S.-Canada albacore Treaty. It is irrelevant to the MSE process since those “management measures” were based on politics, and not science. This is an area that I believe has to be watched closely since in the past the PFMC has taken positions which have not always been in the harvesters best interests. Depending upon how this project develops it could provide a basis for the PFMC to come to believe they needed to manage the NP albacore fishery unilaterally, which could be very damaging to the fishermen.

A good addition is that this project will attempt to include socio-economic factors which the ISC MSE study will not. Clearly, these factor can be important in how the fishery is managed.

All and all this seems like a very ambitious project, but one that may be very helpful in terms of its scientific output in terms of factors which may influence the fishery. . .”

THE FISHERIES INNOVATION FUND RFP has been released and can be found at:

<http://www.nfwf.org/fisheriesfund/Pages/2018rfp.aspx> , and an application Tip Sheet can be found here.

Pre-proposals are due May 14th!

Priorities include the following activities targeting specific geographies listed in the RFP:

Promoting full utilization of Annual Catch Limits and minimizing bycatch of overfished species and/or endangered, threatened, and candidate species
Developing and implementing market, research, training, or strategic planning measures to build capacity and improve sustainability of U.S. fishing businesses and communities
Supporting improvements to recreational fisheries conservation and management
Supporting implementation of marine aquaculture. We will also be hosting an applicant webinar next Friday, April 20, 2018 at 3:00 PM EDT. Participants may register by clicking here or by following the link below:

<http://register.gotowebinar.com/register/7465705232595556099>

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WFOA Members Obligation to AFRF Contributions: Under WFOA's bylaws you are required as a member to submit AFRF fees for any albacore landed to buyers that are non-AFRF contracted buyers. If you unloaded all or a segment of your catch to those AFRF buyers you need not submit to that portion.

Payments of USD \$20/ton can be made to:

American Fishermen's Research Foundation
P.O. Box 992723
Redding, CA 96099

AFRF relies on funding such as yours to continue this unique organization that has been involved in cooperative research and public education for all North Pacific troll albacore fishermen over the past 46 years. It is extremely hard to show short term benefits of this contribution but without AFRF we may not have access to albacore grounds.

AFRF Contracted Buyers: Bornstein Seafoods Inc., Bumble Bee Seafoods, C2C Premium Seafood, Chicken of the Sea International, Da Yang Seafood, Driscoll's Wharf, Hag Fish LLC, High Seas Tuna Inc., Interocean Fisheries, Island Trollers Inc., Jessie's Ilwaco Fish Company, JK Fisheries, Ilwaco Landing LLC, Oregon Seafoods, Pacific Seafood Group, Papa George Gourmet Albacore, Pelican Packers Inc., Seafood Producers Co-op, Star Kist Foods, Trident Seafoods, Tri-Marine International, Westport Seafood Inc, Wild Planet Foods