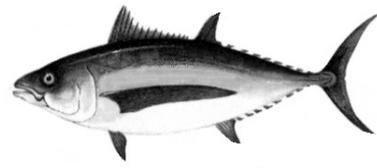


WESTERN FISHBOAT OWNERS ASSOCIATION ©



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Members:

January 1, 2015

Happy New Years to all! As we begin a new year one thing we should expect is the unexpected. This could include albacore catch area shifts, changing ocean conditions, and an evolving market for local albacore. The 2014 season was interesting in all three but unknowns remain out there. Of course we also will have the ever increasing realities of management and regulation on the fleet. Some is good and much is not well thought out by those with little knowledge of the fishery and its fishermen. WFOA will continue to do as much as possible changing this never ending march toward oblivion.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Dues 2015: WFOA sent 2015 dues invoices last week. If you already paid disregard the notice. We certainly appreciate those who paid early. You can pay WFOA dues by check, cash, credit card, and Paypal. If you have a Paypal account just log in and use wfoa@charter.net to send the payment to. Paypal can be linked to your bank accounts or credit cards.

E-mail Delivery of this Newsletter: WFOA has now nearly 200 members receiving this newsletter by e-mail only in PDF format. If you wish to be on the email list let us know and you will not receive a hard copy. You can request both. The card in your dues invoice can be returned with your preferences.

WFOA/AFRF Annual Meeting: The Annual meeting for 2015 will be held in Astoria, OR from March 29 - April 1, 2015 at the Holiday Inn Express. The WFOA directors will meet March 29-30, the AFRF directors on April 1, and most of the events for members including the reception and dinner will be on March 31. A detailed schedule will be sent out in the March 1 newsletter and posted online. The Holiday Inn Express can be contacted for WFOA group rooms at 503-325-6222.

Logbooks: From 2013 data it appears that only 67% of logbooks were submitted for albacore. This is still preliminary but we encourage vessels to send it in even from 2013 and especially for 2014. Issuance of

HMS permits will be held up if you have a logbook outstanding. WFOA suspects most of the delinquent logbooks are from smaller boats that have small landings of which many who are not members of any association may be unaware the logbooks are required.

MARKET & PRICES:

North Pacific Season 2014: The U.S. North Pacific albacore catch in 2014 began in late June. July and most of August had excellent catches in numerous areas along the coasts of Oregon and Washington. The Canadian catch was very good late into September off the Queen Charlotte Islands. A few albacore were caught off SE Alaska.

The total U.S. catch for season according to Pac Fin is 13,590,948 tons. Of that 9,141 was landed in WA, 4,374 in OR, and 76 tons in CA. There were some minor landings of less than 100 tons total in AK. U.S. vessels landed as high as 1,000 tons in Canada. The Canadian catch is hard to determine yet as data has not been compiled. Given the fishing reports it could easily be 5,000 tons.

South Pacific 2015: Only 6-9 vessels will be fishing in the South Pacific this season. Crew issues were a problem as in Mid-December, as vessels were having difficulties securing crew in the Philippines when Canada stopped issuing visas. This is troubling as it is one part of

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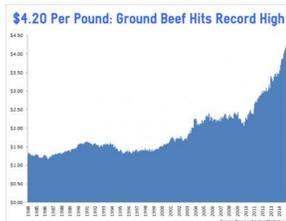
the treaty regime with Canada where U.S. boats had port privilege through Dec 31st of each year to conduct such arrangements. In mid December the U.S. State Department received the following response from DFO in Canada which resulted in resolution of the problem.

"... our Temporary Foreign Worker Programme policy changes are not an issue here. Our Embassy in the Philippines continues to process large number of applications and [we] gather that there are generally no issues with these applications and there is a high acceptance rate. There have been a few seafarers who were recently refused due to lack of appropriate documentation. Note that some have already reapplied and been approved. Thus I do not think that there is any systemic issue here but rather a question of ensuring that complete documentation is provided at time of application."

Markets: The albacore blast-bled market still have supply issues. Large Canadian landings were made at seasons' end as well as U.S. landings. The blast market was already stressed from 2013 as traditional markets in Japan stayed out. As of now some inventory is moving but at low prices. The increase in the value of the U.S. dollar against foreign currencies has not helped the export market. Also, the west coast longshoreman's work slowdown has made shipping difficult.

At this stage we do not what all of this will mean for the future but there are markets. What is encouraging is a growing domestic market that has absorbed the brine frozen and fresh albacore and appears stable and expanding. Some of the west coast buyers and processors have helped turn this around dramatically and we hope the U.S. consumer can support the local product that is available nationwide in thousands of outlets.

WFOA's goal is to help promote albacore domestically, which is caught by U.S. fishermen in all forms from brine, blast, and fresh to all markets available. With soaring prices of beef and meat in the U.S. fish such as albacore still is a real bargain both fresh and in the can if consumers have access to it.



We remained discouraged by the price of raw product received by fishermen. It is the continued world production and availability of cheap and subsidized albacore worldwide which is frustrating to us and our fishermen. Ex-vessel prices are probably about 35% of

those in 1981 when cost of living elements are factored in. Vessel operating costs and new rules and regulations are always increasing.

Fuel Costs: The price of oil per barrel has taken a dramatic slide since June and reached lows we have not seen for many years. This affects gasoline the most, as prices at the pump are approaching \$2.00/g. This should affect diesel somewhat, although diesel on the highways is about \$1.00/g higher than gasoline at this time. However, boats may be advised to fill their tanks this winter if they have capacity. One thing we usually can count on is the price to go back up. New increased domestic production and problems in OPEC and other issues are affecting the downturn at this time.

Thai Union set to acquire Bumble Bee for \$1.5bn
December 18, 2014 - Undercurrent News

Thai Union Frozen Products has entered into a binding agreement to acquire 100% of the shares of North America's largest branded shelf-stable seafood company – Bumble Bee Foods. The \$1.51 billion purchase is set to marry two of the most recognized seafood brands in the United States — San Diego-based Bumble Bee and Thai Union-owned Chicken of the Sea. It also affirms sale process reports by Undercurrent News dating back to June. The closing remains subject to clearance by the United States antitrust authorities and other closing conditions set forth in the acquisition agreement.

Tri Marine revs up own-brand product offerings in consolidating US canned tuna industry; December 22, 2014, - Jeanine Stewart

Tri Marine International does not need to know the impacts stemming from the Bumble Bee Foods-Chicken of the Sea tie up announced last Thursday in order to make decisions about where to go next with its expanding plans for its Ocean Naturals brand.

The deal closure could result in new competitors if the coming antitrust review requires asset sales — as the Federal Trade Commission seems likely to require for the Sysco-US Foods deal — but these outcomes will not impact Tri-Marine's Ocean Naturals brand plans, COO Joe Hamby told Undercurrent News.

The \$1.5 billion tuna fishing and canning company was already well underway with robust brand expansion plans for its premium Ocean Naturals brand when two of the big-three U.S. tuna companies — the other being Dongwon Industries-owned Starkist — became set to merge under Thai Union Foods on Thursday.

Having launched a new jarred skipjack tuna product last month, Tri-Marine is aiming to release at least eight more products under then 1.5-year-old brand during 2015, adding to a lineup that includes multiple iterations of cans, jars and pouches.

For Full Article See: <http://tinyurl.com/p525jmo>

MANAGEMENT & REGULATION:

For a report on the WCPFC meeting in Samoa please see the AFRF segment of this newsletter for the report by Peter H Flournoy.

See also the separate insert by Dr. Wespestad on the Chinese fishery and effects.

Discharge Extension: President Obama signs discharge permit exemption for commercial fisheries. (WFOA and 47 other associations and groups signed a letter supporting action on this)

WASHINGTON -- (Saving Seafood) December 19, 2014 After Congress voted unanimously this week to extend a three year moratorium exempting commercial fishing vessels from needing incidental discharge permits from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for deck washing, the President signed the extension into law on Thursday.

Yesterday, President Obama signed into law the "Howard Coble Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Act of 2014," exempting small fishing vessels from the EPA's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) discharge permit requirements. The law extended the exemption provision for three years on the very day that the EPA's NPDES permit requirements would have taken effect.

The regulation was intended to prevent fuels, toxic chemicals, or hazardous waste from entering the water. Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska) told the Alaska Journal of Commerce that requiring a permits for fishermen to hose down a boat is overkill - especially when recreational boats, including mega-yachts - are exempt from the rule.

"We want to abide by environmental regulations that make sense," Murkowski told the Journal, "But I don't think any of us believe it should be a requirement for a fishermen who has had a good day out on the water, and they are cleaning up the boat, and hosing slime and maybe some fish guts off the deck and that then becomes a reportable discharge to the EPA.... Let's use

some common sense here." A 3-year extension to the existing NPDES vessel discharge permit moratorium (for all commercial fishing and charter fishing vessels regardless of size; and commercial-use vessels under 79 feet) was just adopted as part of the Senate USCG bill. It will now go back to the House for final approval where it is expected to pass without issue. Senator Murkowski (AK) and her staff played a key role in this process along with Senators Boxer (CA), Cantwell (WA), Thune (SD), Rubio (FL) and Vitter (LA) and many other coastal Members as well as Senate Commerce Committee staff from both sides of aisle. The House effort was led by Chairman Duncan Hunter (CA-R-50th) and Congressman Frank LoBiondo (NJ-R-2nd) and the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee/USCG Subcommittee staff. We are most appreciative to all of those that helped with this effort to secure a 3-year reprieve from these burdensome permits which were scheduled to be implemented by the EPA on December 19, 2014.

Oregon Lawmakers Secure Provision to Keep Newport Coast Guard Air Facility Open until January 2016:

Life-Saving Rescue Helicopters Had Been Scheduled for Removal by Dec. 15

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Following their repeated calls to ensure the safety of residents in coastal areas, Oregon Senators Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley and Representatives Peter DeFazio, Kurt Schrader, Earl Blumenauer and Suzanne Bonamici announced the Congress has passed legislation that will keep the U.S. Coast Guard's air facility at Newport open through the coming year.

The Oregon lawmakers worked to include language in the Coast Guard reauthorization bill that would keep the Coast Guard's air stations open through January 1, 2016—including the Newport facility. The Senate passed the short-term Coast Guard reauthorization bill earlier.

In a letter last month, the Oregon lawmakers, along with South Carolina Senators Tim Scott, R-S.C. and Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., and Representatives Mark Sanford, R-S.C., and Tom Rice, R-S.C., and Duncan Hunter, R-Calif., urged the Department of Homeland Security to reverse the Coast Guard's decision. This letter came on the heels of a letter that Oregon lawmakers sent to the Commandant of the Coast Guard urging him to keep the helicopter in Newport.

While the Coast Guard claims that it would still be able to meet the national standard of a two-hour search-and-rescue response time, local fishermen and Central Coast residents who depend on the rescue helicopters say first-hand experience shows that closure of the base will lengthen response times and threaten the safety of local mariners.

At Asia-Pacific summit, Kerry gives wrong advice for world's fisheries: December 9, 2014 -- The following is an excerpt from an op-ed, written by Dr. Ray Hilborn, Dr. Brian Rothschild, Dr. Steve Cadrin, and Thor Lassen, that was published online today by The Hill's Congress Blog.

Dr. Ray Hilborn is Professor of Aquatic and Fisheries Sciences at the University of Washington and the author of *Overfishing: What Everyone Needs to Know* by Oxford University Press. Dr. Brian Rothschild is Dean Emeritus of the University of Massachusetts School for Marine Science and Technology. Dr. Steve Cadrin is the immediate past President of the American Institute of Fisheries Research Biologists. Thor Lassen is the founder and President of Ocean Trust.

The APEC summit is the most recent instance in which the US has touted the expansion of marine preserves as a tonic for global overfishing, especially as climate change and ocean acidification threaten to radically alter our ocean ecosystems. This past September, the Administration created the largest marine reserve in the world when it expanded the Pacific Remote Islands Marine National Monument, moving this strategy to the forefront of our international ocean policy. Secretary Kerry hailed this development as "critical" at the summit, going on to note, "most of the fisheries of the world are overfished."

But Secretary Kerry gets some key facts wrong here. For one, most of the fisheries of the world are not overfished. In 2014, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) placed that number at 29 percent, and reported that approximately 70 percent of the stocks that they assessed were being fished within biologically sustainable levels. If the U.S. is going to promote sustainability worldwide, it should acknowledge current management successes.

And more importantly, these Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) aren't sufficient to solve some of the most pressing issues affecting our oceans, despite our nation's recent enthusiasm for promoting them.

For Full Article See: <http://tinyurl.com/ohv49vz>

Vessel Documentation Fee: Effective November 10, 2014 the cost to renew your Certificate of Documentation (COD) will be \$26.00. The Final Rule that established this new fee was published in the Federal Register (79 FR 47015) on August 12, 2014. If you have any questions, please visit our website or contact us at (800) 799-8362.

Canada Treaty: WFOA is awaiting the annual data exchange with Canada on landings and catch by each country's fleet in 2014. We do expect Canadian landings to be good as very good catches were made from July through September along Vancouver Island and late off the Queen Charlotte Islands. This has no effect on the fishing regime under the treaty other than required exchange of data. We have not been aware of many incidents on the grounds in 2014. The existing fishing regime is in place for two more seasons after which it will be left to expire unless harvesters request an extension or modification of the regime under the treaty.

MARINE STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL: The present certificate under AAFA and WFOA will be up for the normal annual audit in February or March 2015. We expect no issues as both organizations have been proactive in federal and international management processes seeking fair and equitable management measures, data collection, and biological reference points. Given this in our opinion WFOA and AAFA have met the requirements of the one condition outstanding and we believe that condition should be removed. However, that is not likely the findings of the auditors. WFOA and AAFA will again be splitting the costs of the audit. This certification runs through 2017 at which time it can be re-certified if the parties feel it useful to maintain.

Other:

Mark Helvey - The Highly Migratory Species Senior Policy Advisor with the West Coast Region of NOAA/NMFS has recently announced his retirement scheduled for sometime in the next few weeks. WFOA has worked with Mark for a number of years on HMS and treaty issues and wish him well!

New Members:

F/V Miss Tiffanie Kris Melling Ast/West

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