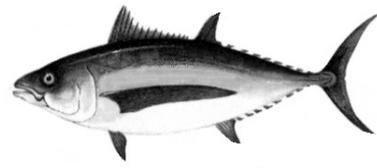


WESTERN FISHBOAT OWNERS ASSOCIATION ©



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Members:

March 1, 2015

March marks the beginning of a new year of management and regulatory meetings for Highly Migratory Species (HMS), as well as positioning by buyers and sellers of albacore for the upcoming season. Hints of market condition and trends generally start for the coming year in March. WFOA has its district and annual meetings in March where in some cases it's the members' best chance to be informed, ask questions, and offer ideas and opinions to their association.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

WFOA/AFRF Annual Meeting: March 29 - April 1, 2015, Holiday Inn Express - Astoria, Oregon. See attached schedule. WFOA will hold a dinner and reception on Tuesday evening March 31, 2015. The reception will begin around 1800 followed by a catered dinner with a speaker. Dinner will be in the Loft at the Red Building a block west of the hotel. A raffle will follow. This will leave Wednesday, April 1st for the AFRF board meeting. There will be a short general meeting the morning of March 31 and most seminars will be held in the afternoon.

Astoria Rooms and Suites: To make reservations call direct at: 1-503-325-6222, or; Toll Free 1-800-315-2621 and ask for the "WFOA Group" Rates

Dues 2015: 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.

MARKET & PRICES: Rising value of the USD against foreign currencies especially the Euro and Yen in recent

months has created a drag on the export market. This comes at a time where there is still blast/bled inventory in storage in the U.S. and Canada. Albacore is being sold but dealing with the dollar's rise have created some lost sales. When a sale is made, the west coast longshoremen's slowdown has also been a problem. Although this issue may have been resolved but there is a long backlog of freight to load and unload in both directions.

It seems when most food commodities are on the rise at the retail level, albacore tuna remains stagnant despite a demand. Subsidized foreign albacore is a main culprit in this issue and there for at least now seems to be no answer by the U.S. government to deal with it.

The market for brine is in a better position than it has for a long time. The industry saw a dramatic up-tic in domestic outlets in 2015 and hope this trend continues. In 2014 WFOA was pessimistic that brine frozen albacore could still compete in the world market of predominately blast frozen albacore, but we have been pleasantly surprised. We look forward to this trend continuing especially if quality keeps improving from the vessels all the way through the chain of handling and ultimately to the consumer.

WFOA has also believed that whatever freezing or cooling method such as brine, blast, or iced is conducted

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(Secretary / Treasurer)

properly and within the capabilities of the vessels freezer/cooling system they all produce a very good product for the consumer in all forms. By the time of the next newsletter in early May a better vision of the 2015 season's market should be available.

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 especially when compared to other species. 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.

South Pacific 2015: Only 6-9 vessels will be fishing in the South Pacific this season. The absence of vessels due to the long voyage and costs which are completely understandable serves the interests of the uninformed regulators as we try support our continued existence in the SP. At international management meetings the U.S. fleet presence continues in jeopardy being caught up in the management scenarios over albacore longlining in the Western Pacific, even though we are a speck in the whole realm of things.

U.S. presence in the South Pacific began in 1985 and increased to when in 1997 -1998 there were up to 55 vessels from the U.S. taking part in the South Pacific albacore troll fishery with up to 5,000 tons landed. Much of the past landings were made to U.S. canners in American Samoa. However, over the last 10 seasons or more, most of the boats have been blast/bled vessels with larger capacities and other markets. This trend developed most likely from the added-value of blast frozen albacore covering the added costs of fishing in the south.

MANAGEMENT & REGULATION:

Pacific Fisheries Management Council: The Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) and its advisory bodies will meet March 6-12, 2015 in Vancouver, Washington, to address issues related to salmon, Pacific halibut, highly migratory species, ecosystem-based management, and habitat matters.

Please visit the link for details.
<http://tinyurl.com/obq4hqa>

AIS Requirements: From - Garden States Seafood Association - The ruling, "Vessel Requirements for Notices of Arrival and Departure and Automatic Identification System becomes effective March 2. However, you have until March 1, 2016 to install the AIS.

The USCG is requiring commercial vessels 65 feet and longer that operate in U.S. waters to be equipped with an automatic identification system by March 1, 2016 under a new rule that becomes effective on March 2.

If you aren't aware of this rule, you're not alone. Though the rule has been in the works for about 11 years, the Coast Guard hasn't done a very good job of publicizing it. I just spoke to a Coast Guard fishing vessel safety officer and he didn't become aware of the rule until about a week ago.

The Coast Guard says the purpose of the AIS requirement and the Notice of Arrival and Departure, which affects only commercial vessels 300 gross tons or less coming from a foreign port, "is to improve navigation safety, enhance the Coast Guard's ability to identify and track vessels, and to heighten the Coast Guard's overall situational and maritime domain awareness, which will enhance mariner's navigation safety and the Coast Guard's ability to address threats to maritime transportation security."

Commercial fishermen won't be alone in the Coast Guard's AIS rulemaking. It's estimated that 5,848 commercial boats are affected. Of that total, 2,906 are commercial fishing boats, the largest vessel group subject to the requirement. Another 1,429 tugs and other towing boats make up the next largest group of boats affected. The vessel groups occupying the bottom of the list are school boats — 10 — and dredges at 17.

For those who haven't seen the benefit of AIS, the Coast Guard says it's "the most effective tool currently available to enhance a mariner's situational awareness and our own [maritime domain awareness]."

From a financial standpoint, owners of commercial fishing boats 65 feet and longer did luck out in that they are only required to have class-B AIS and not class A, though they can if they want. That's opposed to other categories, such as passenger boats more than 65 feet, which must have class-A AIS.

The Coast Guard figures an average class-B AIS unit costs about \$700, whereas the average cost of a class-A unit is \$3,230. The USCG AIS and Notice of Arrival webpage guidance is now live at:

http://www.uscg.mil/d13/cfvs/News/NOA_AIS.asp

EPA Discharge Regs: Feb 05 2015 - Senator Lisa Murkowski introduced legislation to permanently block an EPA incidental discharge regulation that poses serious threats to Alaska's fisherman and coastal communities. The flawed regulation is written so broadly that it would penalize fishermen simply for rinsing fish guts off their deck, or rainwater washing other materials off their decks.

The bill – cosponsored by Senators Barbara Boxer (D-CA), Dan Sullivan (R-AK), and Maria Cantwell (D-WA) – would make permanent the three-year moratorium from the regulation's requirements for commercial fishing vessels and commercial vessels less than 79 feet that Senator Murkowski championed as part of the Coast Guard Reauthorization Bill signed into law in December. Link: <http://tinyurl.com/m6b54jj>

Canada Treaty: As all know the 2014 season saw higher levels of catch in Canadian waters than in recent years. We are awaiting tonnage figures from Canada. There have been no bilateral treaty sessions set but WFOA has requested if there is that it included the port access issues by U.S. vessels. Some have had a very difficult time dealing with Canadian bureaucracy and there are cases still ongoing with fines threatened by Canada. WFOA legal counsel has been recently working on a couple of these. There is now two years remaining on the fishing regime after which there will be no access either way for fishing albacore, baring industries' request to continue.

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.

Oregon Dungeness Crab Commission votes to leave MSC program: February 23, 2015 - *By John Sackton*, Seafood.com News - The Oregon Dungeness Crab Commission, made up of harvester representatives of the state's dungeness crab fishery, voted Feb. 20 to allow their Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certification to expire on Nov. 30, 2015 and not go forward with a five-year recertification and new assessment.

"We need to spend our money on our own research priorities, rather than spending research dollars to meet the requirements of the MSC assessment process," Hugh Link, executive director of the Crab Commission, said.

For full article see: <http://tinyurl.com/qcpejbb>

Other:

Fishing Vessel Drill Conductor Training:

This workshop meets U.S. Coast Guard training requirements for commercial fishing vessels. \$75 for commercial fishermen after scholarships from NIOSH and \$195 for all others. Space is limited!

To register call 907-747-3287 or visit www.amsea.org

Crescent City
March 12-13
Marine Way
Crescent City, CA

Eureka
March 16-17
Woodley Island Marina
601 Startare Dr
Eureka, CA

Fort Bragg
March 19-20
Salmon Trollers Marketing Assoc
19292 S. Harbor Dr
Fort Bragg, CA

Bodega Bay
March 23-24
Bodega Bay Grange Hall
1370 Bodega Ave
Bodega Bay, CA

Article: 'Marine genocide' warnings over Chinese fishing boats: Article - <http://tinyurl.com/m6fqang>

February 11, 2015 -- A political tsunami is building in the South Pacific over the growing presence of Chinese

fishing boats. More than 1300 heavily subsidized Chinese boats are now licensed in the region with plans for a further 300 this year. Fishing with long-lines, many are targeting albacore tuna with some set to take over the exclusive economic zones (EEZs) of the Cook Islands and Samoa.

"I call it marine genocide, something needs to be done about it soon," Samoa fish exporter and expatriate New Zealander John Luff said. In Rarotonga politicians are actively working to exclude New Zealand fishing operations, preferring the Chinese.

Sources were shocked even though a year ago diplomatic dispatches were pointing to China's openly declared plan to increase its deep-water fishing fleet to more than 2300 boats.

There is also information in the AFRF section of this newsletter on NOAA's new report of IUU fishing which fails to mention China's participation in IUU despite China increasing their domestic legal fisheries by vast numbers.

They say they are reporting all their catch. It's just that we don't know if it is all of it or not, or where some of it is coming from. There have been seizures of Chinese drift net vessels and at least one had albacore on board. It was violation of drift net agreement, but since one can assume that there are usually more than one boat out there then it's safe to assume China has some IUU albacore landings.

In 2008, the Coast Guard detected 81 incursions by foreign fishing vessels into the U.S. EEZ. The Coast Guard also participated in the 2008 multinational high seas drift net (HSDN) enforcement campaign, Operation North Pacific Watch. Through this campaign, the Coast Guard interdicted two Chinese-flagged HSDN vessels, facilitating their seizure by Chinese officials.

August 14, 2012 - JUNEAU, Alaska — The Coast Guard 17th District transferred custody of the fishing vessel Da Cheng, a 177-foot fishing vessel seized 850 miles east of Tokyo, Japan in the North Pacific Ocean, for large-scale high seas drift net fishing, to two patrol vessels from the China Fishery Law Enforcement Command Tuesday. The Da Cheng was targeting albacore tuna using 10 miles of large-scale drift nets and had already caught about 30 metric tons albacore tuna during its current trip. In addition, the Coast Guard found six metric tons of shark bodies and fins onboard the vessel.

June 2014 - On May 27, the Morgenthau caught up with the Yin Yuan nearly 625 miles east of Tokyo, and boarded the vessel along with officers from the China Coast Guard's Fisheries Law Enforcement Command. The Yin Yuan's captain admitted to

throwing 3.3 km of driftnet as well as other equipment overboard before the Morgenthau had caught up with his vessel. The Coast Guard found between 900 and 1200 lbs of salmon on board and identified the vessel to be in violation of several fisheries laws, including: fishing with illegal gear, failing to maintain sufficient catch data, and fishing without any kind of license, permit, or official authorization. The Morgenthau escorted the Yin Yuan to the East China Sea, where it turned the vessel over to Chinese authorities on June 3, 2014.

Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission offers agencies director position to Curt Melcher - February 13, 2015

SALEM, OR -The Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission has chosen Curt Melcher as its choice to be the next director for the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. The Commission's decision was announced during the Commission's regular meeting in Salem. Melcher has served as ODFW Interim Director since September 2014.

Melcher was among three finalists being considered for the position following a national search for candidates. The other finalists were Edward Bowles, Fish Division Administrator, ODFW; and Krystyna Wolniakowski, former Director, Western Partnership Office, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.

Additional background on Melcher can be found on the ODFW website at: <http://tinyurl.com/lfsp99b>

New Members:

Marine Refrigeration Solutions -Port Townsend, WA

Vessel For Sale: F/V Mr. Wind, 77'x21'x10', steel, 398 Cat - 8000 hrs, 50 ton capacity, blast freeze. Built 1974. Call Don Bellham for details - 604-594-2056.

Air Service from Crescent City: WFOA has written letters of support for potential air service out of Crescent City, CA to both Oakland, CA and Portland ,OR. Alaska Seaplanes www.flyalaskaseaplane.com is the company which submitted their proposal to the US Dept. Of Transportation and are hoping to have this up and running by summer.

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