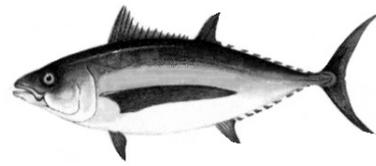


WESTERN FISHBOAT OWNERS ASSOCIATION ©



P.O. Box 992723
Redding, CA 96099

Ph. (530) 229-1097
Fax (530) 232-0107

wfoa@charter.net
<http://www.wfoa-tuna.org>

Members:

August 15, 2015

We are midway through the 2015 albacore season on the west coast. Nature has thrown some curve balls this season. Sea surfaces along the coast have warmed early and quickly combining with an approaching El Nino that has pushed albacore north early, and has flattened out the temperature breaks and resulting in a lack of feed in places. It will be interesting to see what the next two months bring and what 2016 brings. In the meantime fish smart and stay safe.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

✓ **Vessel E-Mail List:** WFOA will try to send out brief updates throughout the season on our vessel email list. If you are not on, not getting them, or your email has changed let us know.

✓ **Regular E-Mail List:** WFOA will be doing weekly updates in-season again beginning in early July. Please let us know if your regular email has changed.

✓ **2016 Annual Meeting Site:** WFOA will be looking at meeting venues for a Mid-March 2016 event. We will concentrate on Oregon locations as they are most centrally located and hotel taxes and fees tend to be lower than in WA or CA.

ALBACORE CATCH: As predicted catches started earlier in Mid-June off Oregon. Fishing over the past eight weeks has remained generally in a tight band from Newport, OR to the Columbia River. Fishing in this region has been on mixed grades of fish from very small to very large but predominately in the average 11-13 pound range. Catches per day have been all over the board with some doing very well and many not. There also have been reports of catches made far north off Vancouver Island and the Queen Charlottes which is no surprise given the warm water conditions along the coastal zone. Very little to no albacore has been caught south of central Oregon through California, and very little sign has been cited offshore from boats transiting from Hawaii. Canadian effort has not been at full potential either in the US EEZ or in Canadian waters as a number of their vessels have remained in other

fisheries due to the poor blast markets.

Japanese catches of their summer albacore was about 30% lower than 2014 with some of the later catch occurring by purse seine methods.

Fishing in Europe in the Bay of Biscay was slow to start but picked up a bit lately. Warm water in the bay has also been a problem with fish remaining more to the west and north.

MARKET & PRICES: Ex-vessel prices for albacore delivered in west coast ports have remained stagnant after starting at \$2,150st for brine and \$2,200st for brine/bled. The rate of the US Dollar to the Euro has made it difficult to incur added value out of the export European market. Although the USD/Euro was once close to parity, which was very difficult for US exporters is now around \$1.11 USD/Euro. A few years ago it was around \$ 1.50 and sales were easier. Also, the stronger USD is affecting the Japanese markets. There is more demand and interest from Japan for blast frozen albacore but so far they have not been very aggressive and may find themselves short after this seasons catch ends.

U.S. blast frozen prices did begin the 2015 season at \$2,600st - \$3,000st for a few small sales in July but soon fell to slightly over brine frozen prices at \$2,300st where they have pretty much remained. Canadian buyers who

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once drove this market are buying but at low prices and being quite hesitant as they most likely do not want to create the oversupply issues of 2012-2014 that we are all paying for now.

Low blast prices are difficult for those vessels that invested a lot to upgrade to blast freezer systems in the past few seasons as blast prices were good. We can only assume this supply problem is at the bottom and will begin correcting itself over the long run. Almost all other competing world fisheries that sell high end albacore use blast methods so in the long-run boats should be better off installing these systems. Over the past 10 years the blast prices have been mostly volatile and in 2006 were actually less than brine for a time. In 2012 the prices to vessels especially in Canada peaked at more than \$5,000st before too much albacore, some of dubious quality was in inventory and markets did not absorb the quantity rapidly.

MANAGEMENT & REGULATION:

PFMC: The Pacific Fishery Management Council and its advisory bodies will meet September 9 -16, 2015 in Sacramento, California, to address issues related to management of groundfish, highly migratory species, ecosystem management, salmon, Pacific halibut, and habitat matters.

Please visit the "Current Council Meeting" webpage for complete meeting and agenda details. www.pcouncil.org

Questions? Please contact Council staff at 503-820-2280 or toll free 1-866-806-7204.

From NMFS - HMS permits and Alaska fishing:

The HMS permit is only valid for making landings to and fishing within the U.S. EEZ of California, Oregon, and Washington. While fishing in the Alaskan EEZ no Federal HMS permit is needed. However, there are requirements from the state. Alaska created the following guidance for HMS vessels which you can find on the West Coast Region's Albacore treaty webpage: <http://tinyurl.com/qhdk64r>

U.S. /Canada Treaty: U.S. vessels wishing to fish in Canadian waters pursuant to the treaty must register with NMFS at least 7 days prior to the first planned day in Canada by contacting NMFS at (562) 980-4024 or email albacore.fish@noaa.gov

U.S. Vessels Check In: Prince Rupert CG station, Phone 250-627-3074.

Fishing Season: Canadian's access to US waters from June 15 - September 15, U.S. vessels can fish in Canadian waters outside of 12nm June 15 - October 31.

Port Access Season: U.S. boats June 15 - Dec 31 under the regime. Jan 1 - June 15 with approval and application below.

To enter a Canadian port U.S. vessels will need to fill out an application any time of the year. (Not Needed Just For Fishing). Application to Enter Canada Ports: <http://tinyurl.com/mvy4pvg>

Bowie seamount - Apparently U.S. and Canadians cannot fish on or in the region of the Bowie seamount according to NMFS sources. However on the Canadian law webpage concerning marine protected areas such as Bowie it states that commercial fishing is exempt. We will update this when we get a clear answer.

Application to Enter Canadian Waters and Ports: WFOA is still working on a solution to the confusion and subsequent charging four U.S. vessels with fishing in the Canadian EEZ without a port access application. NMFS reiterated that guidance to the US fleet is that "The port access is not required for fishing in the EEZ". All seem to agree but the higher up bureaucrats have not straightened it out yet. We expect this to be resolved and a better format established to address similar confusion instead of court trials and heavy fines.

WFOA and AAFA wrote a letter dated June 11, 2015 to the U.S. Dept of State requesting official clarification and something in writing that U.S. fishermen can carry onboard if fishing in the Canadian zone. If we get such a document WFOA will forward it to the membership.

From NMFS - April 2015 "We are still advising that U.S. Vessels fishing in Canada with no intention to enter a Canadian port do not need a EEZ license. Vessels entering port for weather will not need an EEZ license but they should not expect to be able to sell fish, pick up crew etc." NOTE- despite many messages and requests since Mid-June to the US government to confirm NMFS position after checking with Canada --WE HAVE RECEIVED ABSOLUTELY ZERO RESPONSE GOING ON 9 WEEKS.

NOTE: Force Majeure applies if a boat seeks entry for bad weather, serious illness or injury on board requiring attention, or even a breakdown of the ice, engine or freezing system. That is international law, treaty or no treaty, fishing regime or no fishing regime.

USCG Safety Exam Notice: Passing a U.S. Coast Guard fishing vessel safety examination will become mandatory Oct. 15, 2015.

Any fishing vessel crew operating beyond three miles offshore will need to complete their safety examination and receive a commercial fishing vessel safety decal, which should be displayed on the vessel.

For inspections along central Washington Coast and the Puget Sound, contact Robert Cuddeback at 206-217-6187. For inspections along the Oregon coast from Brookings to Westport, Washington, contact Curt Farrell at 503-240-9373.

Fishing Vessel Drill Conductor Training:

For Complete list See: www.amsea.org

Eureka
October 5 - 6, 2015
Woodley Island Marina
601 Startare Dr
Eureka, CA

Crescent City
October 8 - 9, 2015
Fishermens Wives Hall
150 Marine Way
Crescent City, CA

Fort Bragg
October 12-13, 2015
Salmon Troller marketing Association
19292 South Harbor Dr
Fort Bragg, CA

Bodega Bay
October 15-16, 2015
Bodega Bay Grange
1370 Bodega Ave
Bodega Bay, CA

These workshops 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! Register online at www.amsea.org or call (907) 747-3287

NOAA - retention of salmon and albacore on the same fishing trip. To Salmon and Albacore Fishermen - There have been recent inquiries about the status of fishing for tuna with salmon on board, and vice versa. Here is the current situation.

Under current Federal regulations, salmon (and halibut, among other species) are prohibited species under HMS regulations (tuna are covered under HMS). Therefore, it is currently unlawful to have tuna and salmon on board at the same time. This goes for commercial AND recreational fisheries.

A final rule to update the Federal regulations to allow retention of salmon (and halibut) by fishers who are participating in both the HMS fishery and salmon (or halibut) fisheries is expected to take effect within the next couple of weeks, but until it does, the regulations on prohibited species are in effect and enforcement of those regulations should be expected.

Commercial vessels and Charter vessels who want to participate in the tuna fishery must have an HMS permit, issued by NMFS. Private recreational fishers do not need an HMS permit, but do need the appropriate state licenses.

Effective January 1, 2015, vessels in excess of 24 meters will need to have VMS to participate in HMS fisheries.

Please contact Taylor Debevec at (562) 980-4066 if you have further questions on HMS fisheries.

Albacore Limited Entry?: Although this issue has not been up for discussion lately amongst the membership I have been approached and contacted by some members that feel it may be time to revisit the issue. Their main concerns are the increasing influx of foreign ad-measured vessels which we have been offered no relief from the USCG, as well as other increases in effort. Although either is not much of a problem the latent capacity could be an issue down the road as other fisheries become squeezed and the U.S. troll and pole albacore fishery remains one of the only open access fisheries left. In any case pursuing something like limited entry would require members to put aside individual designs and come up with a system that would benefit the WFOA member fleet.

IUU - Seafood Fraud Comment Period: NOAA is announcing a public comment period, opening Monday August 3, on a draft set of principles for

determining species at-risk of illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing activity and seafood fraud, and a draft list of at-risk species generated by applying these principles. These draft lists were developed with input from the public on the initial request for comment this past May. This announcement is a key step for implementing Recommendations 14 and 15 of the Action Plan on Combating IUU Fishing and Seafood Fraud, and the establishment of a risk-based seafood traceability program. We (NOAA) look forward to getting feedback on these draft lists and receiving additional input or clarifications. In addition to providing public comment through the Federal Register process, a public webinar has been scheduled for August 25, 3:30pm to 5:00pm Eastern. All details will be posted on-line. See: <http://tinyurl.com/nzg49nk>

Marine Stewardship Council: WFOA and AAFA have completed our second year surveillance audit for MSC a bit later than we anticipated over gathering of information on the South Pacific fishery. Please note that the second annual MSC surveillance audits for the AAFA and WFOA North Pacific albacore fishery and South Pacific albacore fishery have just been published on the MSC website. They are available through the links below:

North Pacific fishery: <http://tinyurl.com/qg8sl77>

South Pacific fishery: <http://tinyurl.com/nqsck8s>

Review and Positions concerning South Pacific Albacore management issues:

In finalizing the South Pacific audit WFOA and AAFA had Dr. Wespestad do a six page paper on the SP fishery and management issues. Below is part of a cover letter sent to Michael D. Tosatto, Regional Administrator, NMFS Pacific Islands Regional Office. We will post the entire paper on the wfoa website MSC page.

“Attached is a review of the South Pacific efforts toward developing a target biological reference point (BRP) and associated harvest control rules (HCR) to facilitate sustainable management of South Pacific albacore. Both American Albacore Fishing Association and the Western Fishboat Owners Association participate in albacore fisheries in the South Pacific Ocean and are certified under the Marine Stewardship Council. The South Pacific Albacore certification has a condition that a target BRP and associated HCRs be developed for albacore. If progress is not made over the next few years we will lose the certification and access to markets for the fish harvested by U.S. pole and line vessels.

The U.S. South Pacific albacore fishery is a small one, but important to some vessels and we expect it may rise to former levels of harvest

in some years if market conditions are favorable. We note that the major issue to managers is removal of excess capacity in the long line fishery and reducing effort to former levels. Assessment scientists in the South Pacific do not find the pole and line fisheries to be a problem in terms of harvest levels or effort. We strongly support efforts to reduce excess capacity that has strongly affected the economics of the fishery and driven prices to low levels.

In the attached paper we review the current state of the BRP-HCR development for South Pacific albacore and find the process is not as far along as in the North Pacific. We find that the WCPFC has still not developed management objectives important for the development of a management strategy analysis (MSE) required to evaluate proposed BRPs and the associated HCRs. In the North Pacific the process is already underway, and if the Northern Committee of WCPFC approves the proposed MSE, the analysis can be completed by 2017. We expect the South Pacific will take as long, and if not started soon there is danger that the U.S. fishery and other certified fisheries will lose their certification. We hope the U.S. delegation to WCPFC will help formulate acceptable management objectives that can form the basis for an MSE and get the MSE process started in the very near future.

We note in our paper that there are many proposed BRPs available but the MSE process is required to complete the process. Both the WCPFC and IATTC are requiring a full MSE process to develop a target reference point and the associated harvest control rules. We urge the U.S. delegates to the RFMOs to help advance the process and to develop funding.”

OTHER:

Mark Halvorsen: We were shocked and saddened to learn of the death of Mark Halvorsen, F/V Hans Halvor that occurred Saturday, June 20th in his sleep at home in Olympia. We wish the best to his wife Cori and family in this time. Memorial article for Mark Halvorsen: <http://tinyurl.com/nojmyuq>

New Members Since May 1, 2015:

F/V Nova Ron Sloan Newport, OR

Recent Article with Tuna Ramifications:

China’s Global Ambitions, With Loans and Strings Attached

NOTE: While not mentioning fisheries specifically it certainly shows the China’s influence in the Pacific region and what we are facing in years to come as far as securing fair trade and fisheries regulations to protect the resources.

By CLIFFORD KRAUSS and KEITH BRADSHER JULY 24, 2015 - New York Times

The country has invested billions in Ecuador and elsewhere, using its economic clout to win diplomatic allies and secure natural resources around the world. See: <http://tinyurl.com/ogcc9jl>

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