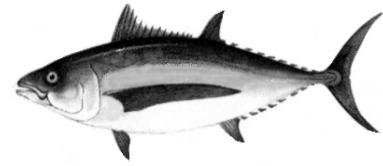


WESTERN FISHBOAT OWNERS ASSOCIATION ©



P.O. Box 992723
Redding, CA 96099

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

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

Members:

April 20, 2016

This is our normal transition period between the 2015 summer albacore season, the South Pacific season and now the start of the 2016 summer albacore season. It is difficult to predict fishing, but history has shown good catches in years following El Nino seasons. According to NOAA there is a slackening of El Nino which has about a 50% chance of turning back to La Nina conditions by fall. Given an improving market and a focus from regulators away from albacore for the moment we are encouraged about this season.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

✓ **2016 Annual Meeting:** WFOA held its 2016 annual meeting from Sunday, March 20-23, 2016 at the Hallmark Resort in Newport, Oregon. We had seminars concerning ocean conditions, regulations, and compliance. Marine Stewardship Council sent the speaker for the dinner who was peppered with questions about some of certification such as Cook Island Longline and its China connections. We all agreed to meet more on promoting local west coast albacore and MSC promised to look closer at the issue of some questionable certification. WFOA appreciated them attending.

WFOA thanks the following for their support of the reception and dinner:

Bornstein Seafoods Inc., Bumble Bee Seafoods, Chicken of the Sea, Englund Marine, Gallagher Transport, Ilwaco Landing LLC, Jessies' Ilwaco Fish Company, Interocean Seafoods, Marine Chartering Co., Oregon Seafoods, Pacific Seafood Group, Seafood Producers Coop, Seafood Suppliers Inc., Star Kist Co., Trident Seafoods, Tri-Marine Fish Company, Wild Planet Foods, Wilcox & Flegal Oil

The Big Winners in the 2016 Raffle for the Southwest Airlines \$500 certificate and the Go Pro 4 were Ed Bittner and Tommy Hart respectively. Ed has won the \$500 SWA prize now two years in a row. Tickets for next year are now available and are \$25/each.

WFOA Elections:

The WFOA Board Elected Officers for 2016: President – Lewis Hill, Vice President – Karl Johnson, Sec/Treas – Teresa Reeves

Executive Committee – Lewis Hill, John LaGrange, Karl Johnson, Wayne Moody, Shawn Ryan, Ed Bittner

AFRF Reps – John LaGrange, Rick Goche, Wayne Moody, Lewis Hill, Ron Harper, Karl Johnson, Henry deRonden, Shawn Ryan, (Alt) Mike Brown

✓ **Vessel E-Mail:** WFOA maintains a info e-mail list to the boats in the summer. We usually send short messages on price and markets or regulations as they occur. Some vessels receive regular email through Sat-Phones but many get messages through their VMS systems or other means. We are updating these lists between now and July!

If you have a vessel email and want on the list let WFOA know!

If you have a new email address on the boat let us know!

WFOA will send out a few test message as the season gets closer to see who receives them.

DIRECTORS '2016 - 2017'

BRITISH COLUMBIA
DON BELLHAM

PUGET SOUND
KARL JOHNSON
(Vice - President)
JOHN MCKINNON
MIKE BROWN
ROD McVICKER
BRUCE SAMUELSON

ASTORIA / WESTPORT

LOUIE HILL
(President)
ED BITTNER
DOUG FRICKE
LIBIE CAIN
RON HARPER

COOS BAY / NEWPORT

HENRY deRONDEN
BARRY NELSON
SHAWN RYAN

EUREKA / FT. BRAGG
AARON NEWMAN

SF / OAKLAND
VACANT

MOSS LANDING
STEVE FOSMARK

MORRO BAY
WAYNE MOODY

SOCAL/HAWAII
JOHN LAGRANGE

NEW ZEALAND
PETER BALLANTYNE

TERESA REEVES
(Secretary / Treasurer)

MARKET & PRICES: Albacore dock prices for 2016 are a couple month early yet to determine but compared to the past two years interest in buying and servicing the fleet is up. Buyers such as Interocean Seafoods wish to purchase brine albacore this season with possible incentives. They did not buy any in 2015. Other brine markets also are there as always, and the blast frozen at sea markets look to be ready for fish unlike the past two seasons. We will update in the emails between now and June any new information and a full update in the June newsletter of potential markets, prices, and buyers.

South Pacific: Ten boats fished in the South Pacific this season. Fishing was better than last season especially in early January and weather was generally good. As the season progressed fishing became slower and spottier. Boats may have averaged 40 tons or so each. Most of the fish is headed back at this time to coastal and/or Canadian buyers.

Unloaders and Insurance 2016: Many WFOA members received notices from insurance pools and carriers that using unloaders at buying stations without proper insurance could result in enormous liability to the boat owners. Most buyers caught in the middle last season did not provide unloaders. Vessels could secure them on their own. It appears that in 2016 some buyers have got out in front of this situation and secured proper insurance and will again supply unloaders. We will list all in the June newsletter.

WFOA Membership: Member Dues for 2016 are due and payable by June 30th. Most have paid but we also recognize the crab situation in California, and a potential down year for salmon may be a burden on some. We will send out reminders by the end of April.

The board discussed non-representation in the SF/Bodega district and lack of participation in some others. Discussion focused on making some or one at-large director appointed by the board or manager to fill vacancies until a new director could be found. Discussion on narrowing districts such as making NoCal into one from Brookings, OR to SF. No action was taken for now except to encourage members to be directors and conduct meetings that draw a crowd.

The board discussed ideas to get small boat memberships especially if 2016 has increased effort from salmon fleet. Posters to hang in buyers offices were one thought. Board members have a list of vessels that unloaded to share and focus on picking up a few new members. Also, boats are getting sold and an effort

needs to be made to sign new owners if they are in albacore fishing. Much of the promotion of local fish many are doing directly benefits ice vessels. WFOA also represents albacore trollers at management meetings and not just members. Salmon boats in 2012 were used a pawn in the IATTC somewhat showing by Mexico that the US was violating international agreements to cap effort at current levels. It took some discussion over time to show that these boats are seasonal and do not contribute that much to overall catch. But it's an issue that may arise again this season and we will do our best.

Marine Stewardship Council (MSC): WFOA and AAFA who share the North and South Pacific Albacore Pole and Line/Troll Albacore certification under MSC put out for bid a request to a number of certifiers for the 2016-2017 Annual Audit and potential re-certification in 2017. We have accepted the services of MRAG Americas going forward. The audit for this year will begin shortly.

MSC Buyers Contracts: WFOA will be sending out the annual MSC contracts to buyers this week. We only send to those that have signed up in the previous seasons so if you are a fish buyers/processor that are planning on buying MSC albacore contact WFOA for a contract.

MANAGEMENT & REGULATION:

Albacore Trollers have to Do Dolphin School: It appears most albacore fishermen received a letter from NMFS saying you are required to complete a Dolphin Safe course and have a certificate "Captains Statement" to present after each trip. This is response to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) new rules on "dolphin safe" labeling of tuna imports.

The NOAA Website has links to the so called "Course" which appears all the captain or owner needs to do is read the downloadable PDF file, and then there are links at acceptable one page templates you can carry with you.

Link: www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/dolphinsafe/dsctc.htm

The whole thing is convoluted and not very well written.

WFOA's legal counsel Peter Flournoy talked to NMFS on this issue and here is his take.

From Peter - *"In talking with some of the NOAA/NMFS Enforcement people this morning, this is not entirely of their doing. Many of you have heard of or may be familiar with what is commonly called the Tuna/Dolphin litigation with Mexico over the U.S. Dolphin Safe policy.*

That litigation, which has been going on for 10 years or so in before various panels of the World Trade Court, finally came to a conclusion last year. Once again the Panel ruled in favor of Mexico. This now allows Mexico to sue for damages, which they are asking, as I understand it, approximately \$500,000 per year. While this is likely to be a vastly inflated claim, it has gotten the attention of the people in Washington at the Office of International Trade. They have decided, and convinced others that it would help the United States if it put in place regulations that applied to any and all U.S. fishermen (and foreign fishermen selling to U.S. companies) who have any intention of catching and selling tuna which at some point will be labeled "dolphin safe".

Since these decisions have been made at the highest levels in Washington, D.C., and since the West Coast Region generally has jurisdiction over U.S. fishermen who fish in the Eastern Pacific and are under directions to do this, it is unlikely that any good will come from trying to "fight city hall". Aside from a failure to communicate in advance with those associations which represent West Coast Fishermen, NMFS West Coast Region has done everything they can think of to make the new regulation as least burdensome as possible.

NMFS acknowledges that there is no evidence, anecdotal or otherwise, that albacore troll or pole and line fishermen have ever had any interaction with dolphins. They also want to clarify that if the tuna you catch will never go into the market for shelf stable (canned and pouched) tuna, this does not apply to you (although if your fish is going into the loin market this probably does apply to you). Apparently, it does not apply to ice boats that catch and sell their tuna "fresh".

Related Article:

Earth Island Institute: New NOAA dolphin safe regulation brings US into WTO compliance - March 23, 2016 - Undercurrent News - In response to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) new rules on "dolphin safe" labeling of tuna imports, Earth Island Institute -- a nonprofit which owns Dolphin Safe -- said this brings the US into compliance with World Trade Organization (WTO) rules, Earth Island said in a release.

Earlier this week NOAA field an interim final rule to implement the new regulation -- which extends 'dolphin safe' labeling rules currently applied to Mexican tuna imports to the rest of the world -- under the Dolphin Protection Consumer Information Act.

This week, it emerged Mexico is planning to request authorization from the WTO to impose \$472 million in sanctions against the US.

In November 2015 the WTO upheld a ruling that the US tougher catch verification and documentation rules to Mexican fishing fleets in the tropical eastern Pacific Ocean was discriminatory.

Instead of loosening the rules on Mexico, NOAA opted to raise the standards for all other countries.

Contrary to claims by the government of Mexico, the Dolphin Safe label standards are intended to focus on tuna fisheries that regularly and deliberately net and kill dolphins, said David Phillips, director of Earth Islands' international marine mammal project.

Alternate Compliance for the USCG authorization Act regulations were discussed by the board. Oregon Albacore Commission been working with USCG on this issue and have reduced paperwork and requirements for the coastal fleet down to about 10 pages from many. OAC is confident that the USCG will sign off on this plan soon.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND DISCUSSION MEETING

The US Coast Guard and Washington Sea Grant are co-hosting a meeting in Westport to discuss the Alternate Safety Compliance Program recommendations at the Chateau Westport on Thursday, April 28.

Alternate Safety Compliance Programs will be required for vessels as they reach 25 years of age if they are greater than 50 FT overall and operate beyond 3 NM from the Territorial Sea Baseline.

Casualty data will be presented and input will be sought from the fishermen regarding suggested requirements for all vessels in the program addressing common risks such as falls overboard, flooding and fire. Fishermen are encouraged to provide information on your suggested best practices for reducing these and other risks pertaining to your fishery.

PLEASE TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO PARTICIPATE AND PROVIDE INPUT TO HELP SHAPE EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT SAFETY STANDARDS.

WHAT: ASCP Meeting
WHERE: Chateau Westport, 710 Hancock St.
Westport, WA
WHEN: Thursday, April 28, 2016 - 9am

Please RSVP to Libie Cain -360-581-5948 or Sarah Fiskén 206-543-1225

Please contact Troy Rentz for any questions regarding this meeting USCG 13th District Fishing Vessel Safety Alternate Safety Compliance Coordinator 206-220-7216

Pacific Fisheries Management Council (PFMC):

There was no albacore related issues on the April PFMC agenda in Vancouver, WA. However, there will be EFP issues and shallow-set longline issues on the June 23-28, 2016 in Tacoma, WA. There will probably be discussion at least in the HMSAS on the MSE workshop in Japan held in May and the upcoming WCPFC-Northern Committee Meeting in September in Japan. Most international management bodies are focused now more on Bluefin and Bigeye than on albacore.

U.S. /Canada Treaty: On March 21 the WFOA Board discussed the Treaty and pending suspension of the fishing regime after the 2016 season. Thoughts were mixed as some benefit from EEZ access in Canada and port privileges. Most agreed if regime expires port privileges will be difficult at best to obtain. The U.S. fleet needs Canadian blast buyers as completion in the market. Most of the board felt it was way too early given lack of input from members and a whole season to go. Such a position would weaken the industry's negotiations over possible other items.

The Board agreed that loosening of port restrictions and credit for Canadian albacore harvested in the U.S. zone should be priority items.

The suspension of the fishing regime indefinitely is as WFOA interprets it- the default position. Any changes, extensions, or other issues would have to be instigated by the U.S. albacore industry probably by the end of this year.

Treaty Poll: The board voted that WFOA send out a member poll from September 30th - October 31st on this issue to gather members opinion on this matter. Oregon Albacore Commission will also do a similar survey during the same time frame.

Public Outreach: WFOA and AFRF have been doing updates on all websites and communications lists. We plan to do more consumer education and outreach featuring the local fishing community in action through our outreach on websites, Facebook, twitter, and weekly informational e-blasts.

Getting out more information to the public and consumer on where albacore is available off vessels or markets or restaurants will be a priority. In return WFOA needs the information sent to us so we can send it out. We encourage boats selling off the dock to contact WFOA with information on where, when and how much? Also if any retailers or restaurants want information out on any new products or promos please send it to WFOA.

As always we will be working with the Oregon Albacore Commission where we can be helpful as they do a wonderful job in Oregon. WFOA also plans to do more wit groups such as Slow Foods and Chef Collaborative and maybe the Aquariums.

WA, Alaska Senators Introduce Legislation to Put More American Seafood in School Lunches:

WASHINGTON, D.C. - U.S. Senator Maria Cantwell (D-WA) introduced S. 2529, legislation that would strengthen the Buy American provisions within the National School Lunch program to require that fish and fish products served through the program have to be caught in U.S. waters, or in the case of tuna, caught by a U.S. flagged vessel.

S. 2529, would amend the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act by adding an additional condition to the "Buy American" provision of the law to require that any fish or fish product acquired under the Act be harvested from U.S. waters, and end the practice of the U.S. spending tax dollars to subsidize displacement of high quality, nutritious U.S. fish products with inferior products from abroad.

OTHER:

VESSEL FOR SALE: F/V Quashala, 61 ft LOL, 16. 2 ft Beam, 8 ft Draft. Rebuilt, New Deck, Beams, Bulwarks. Wood Hull, Aluminum House. Fish hold dived into 4 tanks for tendering. Refrigerated 25 ton capacity for albacore. Reconditioned Detroit Mail Series 60 with 600 hours. 4 cyl John Deere 75kw aux. Cessna hydraulic system. 120-240v Hydro-watt Generator. Fuel 4,700 US gallons. Many other extras. Asking \$130,000 USD. call Don at 1-604-594-2056.

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