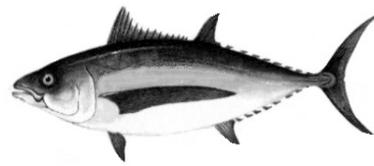


WESTERN FISHBOAT OWNERS ASSOCIATION ©



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Members:

It has been a quiet winter and early spring in regards to most albacore issues both in the market and management. We expect interest will increase as we move towards June and the opening of the albacore fishery off the west coast.

NOTICES:

2018 Dues: There are still some members who have not paid 2018 dues. WFOA will be sending new reminders at the time of the April Newsletter. Please pay as soon as you can.

WFOA Annual Raffle 2018: Winners were drawn last week in Ilwaco and Seattle at district meetings and winners were:

1st Prize - \$ 500 Gift Certificate - Alaska Airlines - Jeffery Thomas, F/V Kathleen Jo

2nd Prize - Live Bait Gift Certificate from Westport Seafood - 100 Scoops Live Anchovies (Tradeable) - Tom Hart, F/V Charlie Noble

3rd Prize - \$ 300 Gift Certificate from Englund Marine donated by DaYang Seafoods in Astoria - Karl Johnson, F/V Seven Daughters

4th Prize - Large Seafood Gift Box from Westport Seafood - Tim Mulcahy, F/V Calogera

5rd Prize - \$ 100 Gift Certificate donated by Englund Marine - John McKinnon, F/V Raptor

A new raffle will now begin for 2019 with similar prizes and tickets will again be \$20/each for public education. We thank those who donated the prizes for 2018 and good luck to all in 2019.

Board Meeting: WFOA will hold an online board meeting on April 26th. If you have issues to bring up or ideas contact WFOA or your district directors prior to the meeting. We will update members on any board

April 20, 2018

action in the next newsletter in early June and in email info messages.

MARKET and CATCH:

South Pacific: Fishing wrapped up in the South Pacific for the few boats that were there from the U.S. Most of the albacore were caught earlier in the year and late December and most were caught west of 160°W as far south as 44°S. Except for a few boats fishing could be considered average to poor in the region. The New Zealand coastal troll fishery was good early with warmer than normal sea conditions. However, the albacore caught by the troll fleet were very small in size.

North Pacific: There have been some pole and line catches by the Japanese in March. This is a couple months earlier than normal. Off coastal Japan SST's have been fairly elevated but weather conditions have also varied from warm to quite cold.

Some U.S. jig boats will be fishing in the offshore areas this spring and early summer in traditional areas. There has been no effort by the U.S. albacore fleet east of the dateline for nearly 10 years. Last season albacore

DIRECTORS 2018

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WAYNE MOODY

SOCAL/HAWAII

JOHN LAGRANGE

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TERESA REEVES

(Secretary / Treasurer)

were scattered across a wide region offshore so the pattern maybe changing back to some catch potential offshore. The boats scouting far to the west may also be able to identify the type of fleet visible on AIS we watched in 2017.

2018 Effort: With restricted salmon fisheries in 2018 we are expecting more effort from the salmon fleet into albacore if fish are available within range and weather is reasonable. Markets for iced fish remain strong and in demand from numerous buyers.

WFOA encourages salmon fishermen and others who decide to fish albacore to join WFOA. By joining we have more say in management and regulatory issues and it applies as much to small boats as large and in cases of restricted future effort maybe more. If WFOA members have friends in their groups that are not members tell them to request an application or just forward their name and we can send one out.

MEMBER COMMUNICATION: WFOA maintains a general email list to send out weekly messages during the season, we also maintain a vessel list of about 30 boats. Many of the email address change over the off-season so members need to let WFOA know if changes occur. WFOA maintains fish reports on the website. However, we strive to keep information very vanilla and general in nature. There may be a need to discontinue this as even a small general report seems to cause crowding at times – or at least I have been told!

Websites: WFOA maintains wfoa-tuna.org for member information and PacificAlbacore.com for consumer information. American Fishermen's Research Foundation (AFRF) website is AFRF.org.

Facebook: WFOA has a consumer informational page at Wild Pacific Albacore on Facebook. We also started a Face book page for paid up members to post their thoughts but have had little interest so far. It can be found on Facebook at: Western Fishboat Owners Association Members.

Weekly E-Mail Reports: WFOA has been doing these for a number of seasons and includes generally price and unloading information. Again we will strive to keep information quite basic and fair as we can especially disseminating buyer price information. WFOA encourages vessels to report basic information, especially areas devoid of fish and weather and ocean temperatures.

MANAGEMENT:

Limited Entry: Also given the push for international Harvest Control Rules (HCR's) there may come a time soon that national quotas are set in which case it would be up to NMFS and/or the councils to figure how to restrict the U.S. fleet (despite the fact it is on decline by attrition). If there is a limited catch such as a TAC or limited effort (Limited Entry) into the fishery it would take a couple years or more to implement through the PFMC. Any HCR could and probably would end the albacore treaty with Canada as it is written. This is not in motion at this time but another poor year could change the game! WFOA will strongly support access and supply for our members in such cases.

US/Canada Treaty: 2017 was the first year of the new 3-year regime allowing 45 Canadian access in the U.S. EEZ and historical levels of U.S. access into Canada. The Canadian access was from June 15 -Sept 15. We have no figures yet on participation but figure Canadian access of 45 boats was near 100% with most of their catch occurring in the U.S. EEZ for 2017. Little U.S. effort in Canadian waters this year occurred. Low catches and landing reported in Canadian waters by both U.S. and Canadian boats.

What happens with the treaty now? Nothing until after the 2019 season. After 2019 all can promote what they feel is best for the fleet.

Community Impacts Study: Calls are being made from a contractor working for NOAA asking to interview fishermen for a study "Potential Community Level Impacts of Albacore Distribution Shifts on the U.S. West Coast Commercial Albacore Fishery"

This is a research project to describe the potential effects of a distribution shift in where albacore can be caught on the albacore fishing community, defined as fishermen and others who depend on the albacore fishery as an income source.

Though this project is independent of the albacore Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE), the results might be useful to inform efforts to work economic consideration into the albacore MSE. In addition, the results could be useful for

future regulatory impact analysis, in case the albacore fishery is ever subjected to management in the future.

For Information Contact Stephen Stohs - NOAA Federal <stephen.stohs@noaa.gov>

PFMC Nominations: WFOA has endorsed Mike Conroy for the CA at large seat. Lori Steele (WCSFPA) and Christa Svensson (Jessies) are in contention for the Oregon seat held by Jeff Feldner we have not endorsed either yet but it will be on the board agenda. In March WFOA endorsed Don Alber (IFCO) and Jonathan Gonzales (Pac G) for the Northern processor seat on the HMSAS that was held by Pierre Marchand. As of March 15th we know that the PFMC seated Carl Nish of AAFA as a Northern processor through 2018 when all terms are up and renewable.

Magnuson Stevens Re-Authorization: 24 Groups Express Support for HR 200 - WFOA signed onto a support letter by Saving Seafood in February along with many other industry groups. WFOA signed onto this letter as we agreed with most of the content. However, we do have some additional comments we are going to formally submit especially on the issue of requiring a referendum within industry if IFQ's are proposed. In HR 200 this applies to all other jurisdictions but not that under the PFMC management area at this time. To impose IFQ's on the U.S. albacore fleet or other fleets under the PFMC without them having a say is problematic at the least.

MARINE STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL (MSC): The North and South Pacific Albacore MSC re-certifications shared by WFOA and AAFA are almost complete. MRAG is the certification body doing the work starting with site and constituent visits in August 2017. MRAG just posted the North Pacific report on recertification on the MSC website for review. There again are conditions that WFOA and AAFA do more to establish harvest control rules and reference points in a set time frame. We continue to be pushed to promote fair and equitable biological reference points and harvest control rules for the North and South Pacific. Again, we have little influence on the politics of international tuna management but we do what we can at the same time protecting our members from undue and irrational management both internationally and federally.

WFOA AAFA MSC Action Plan Presented to MRAG March 2018:

1. AAFA and WFOA will continue, through their participation in the U.S. delegations to the two relevant tuna RFMOs, the IATTC and WCPFC, to promote the development of a scientifically based target reference point and harvest control rules that apply to all of the fishing mortality of the North Pacific albacore stock. Since this work is being primarily conducted by the Northern Committee of the WCPFC and its science provider, the International Scientific Committee, the clients will continue to actively participate in the US delegations to those meetings. As they have in the past, both organizations will support positions taken by the U.S. delegations to the IATTC and WCPFC to develop and implement a scientifically based target reference point and harvest control rules.

2 AAFA and WFOA will continue to work with, and will report on, ongoing efforts to explore opportunities to cooperate with and support the work of other tuna fisheries organizations to develop a scientifically based target reference point and harvest control rules.

3. WFOA/AFRF science advisor will also continue to work with the Albacore Working Group of the International Scientific Committee as it proceeds with its Management Strategy Evaluation process to pursue the establishment of a scientifically based target reference point and harvest control rules.

Responsible parties: AAFA and WFOA will support the West Coast Region of the National Marine Fisheries Service and their scientific staffs, the Pacific Islands Regional Office of the National Marine Fisheries Service, which usually heads delegations to the WCPFC Northern Committee to develop harvest control rules. Both organizations will also support the efforts of the U.S. Department of State to negotiate the acceptance of a scientifically based target reference point and harvest control rules.

Timeframe and Milestones:

1. By the first annual surveillance audit the certifier will be presented with information on those consultations which have occurred with the responsible parties.

2. *By the second surveillance audit the certifier will be presented with information on progress which has been made in establishing a scientifically based target reference point and harvest control rules.*

3. *By the third annual surveillance the certifier will be presented with information on how those harvest control rules, assuming they have been agreed to by the RFMOs, might be implemented.<end>*

MSC Future 2018 and Beyond:

WFOA and AAFA are wrapping up the process of re-certification of the MSC certificate for the next four years. The present certification covering N & S Pacific troll and baitboat albacore expires on June 20, 2018 as we have had it extended due to the process. We will send new certificates out once completed.

As most of you know, we are frustrated with the MSC certification process in regards to some of the parties that have been certified over the past few years seemingly way beyond the MSC requirements. At the same time we as a clean and well-managed fishery keep struggling to meet "conditions" even though we cannot in most cases meet these given are lack of political power from such a small entity.

WFOA obtained this certification at the request of and with funding help of the processors involved. Without the funding annually we would not continue it. When we obtained the original certification with the Canadians back in 2009 it was a move to have access to potential MSC markets and was requested by a number of buyers. Now almost all troll albacore segments across the globe are certified essentially homogenizing the effect. WFOA still is concerned about hastily pulling out and again being the lone man standing without the MSC. WFOA hears from some that still have certain MSC sales and feel the need to support their efforts as we will for now.

Thus, WFOA after going through the present re-certification with much time and expense hopes the present involved processors keep supporting this in 2018. WFOA does however see an end to the MSC given how the entire process seems modeled. If issues such crew, labor, and social issues are inserted in future requirements we would find that extremely problematic.

If WFOA and the processors need to withdrawal from this certification now or in the near future it needs to be thought out for maximum benefit. This would be especially important in the media and management world. We certainly do not want to be parties to rules and conditions that have little to do with sustainable and well-managed fishing of albacore tuna. However, we also believe we cannot be exposed as one segment of the industry that cannot comply with the rules, even if they are not true.

OTHER:

Harold "Lynn" Stephey of the F/V Judy passed away on September 5, 2017 at home in Cambria after a 8 year battle with lung cancer. He is missed and remembered by many as a good man, friend and fisherman.

Stan Davis, F/V Nightwind a previous and longtime member and president of WFOA and AFRF passed away in early April after complications from heart surgery. We will pass along any announcement or details when we receive them. WFOA expresses its condolences to Stan's wife Phyllis and his family.

A guide to buying fish (Article)

Go sustainable in stores and in restaurants

The Monterey Bay Aquarium Seafood Watch program maintains state-specific guides to help consumers and businesses make responsible seafood choices by avoiding fish that perpetuate destructive fishing and farming practices. The one below is Wisconsin's current guide to buying fish, which lets you know what your best choices are, which fish are good alternatives and species to avoid. See: <http://tinyurl.com/y8zj8xqk>

Note: This is interesting especially as good albacore is said to be caught by "trolls"

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Thanks - Stay Safe