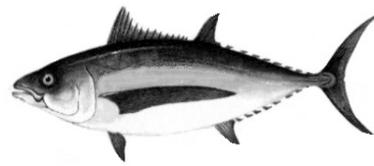


WESTERN FISHBOAT OWNERS ASSOCIATION ©



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Members:

April 25, 2019

We are a couple months away from another albacore season. Having come off the last two seasons that have seen catches down 30%-40% from the 30-year average, we are hoping for larger fish in larger numbers in 2019.

Albacore fishermen are also facing new international management in the form of effort or catch controls. The ongoing MSE process seems to hold that vibe. Fishermen need to belong to organizations that represent U.S. fishermen's access to a resource we catch a small percentage of but could bear the brunt of management. Stay tuned as we will keep you informed on these issues and what you can do.

NOTICES:

Newsletter Flyers: Supporting members wishing to insert flyers in the next newsletter have a deadline of June 14th to send WFOA flyers and/or electronic (PDF) flyers which we post on the website and distribute to those that receive the newsletter via e-mail only.

Coming In the June 2019 Newsletter:

- Four page summary of regulations for 2019
- List of 2019 Albacore Buyers and Contacts
- List of WFOA Supporting Members 2019

Dues: Member dues reminders for 2019 were recently mailed out. We encourage all to pay as soon as you can. Also, if you sold your boat please send WFOA the new owners contact so WFOA can solicit their membership.

Member Contacts: WFOA has been producing email updates for a number of seasons. Many members have changed emails on their vessels or at home and may not be receiving the messages. Please indicate your new regular email and vessels email on your dues receipt or send it to wfoa@charter.net.

Raffle: The main raffle drawing was held at the WFOA/AFRF luncheon in Astoria on March 26th. Top

prize was a \$500 gift certificate from Alaska Airlines, 2nd prize - \$ 300 Englund Marine Gift Certificate from Da Yang Seafoods, Seafood Gift package from Westport Seafood, and 4th prize was a \$100 gift certificate from Englund Marine. These were for the \$20/tickets sold all year. Similar prizes will be offered in 2020 and tickets are available now.

WFOA thanks those above that contributed to the raffle and others such as, Day yang Seafoods, Englund Marine, Chicken of the Sea, Westport Seafoods, Pacific Seafoods, Wilcox and Flegal, Jessies IFCO, Ocean Imaging, Westside Wines, and others for contributing to the lunch and other prizes.

WFOA Board Meeting:

The WFOA Board met in Astoria, OR on March 24th - 25th. The meeting mainly centered on organizational issues such as directors distribution and elections. The other large issue was the management of albacore and possible effort controls coming (limited entry). The 2020 annual meeting will be held in Newport, OR per the board's decision.

DIRECTORS

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
SHAWN RYAN

EUREKA / FT. BRAGG

AARON NEWMAN

SF / OAKLAND

VACANT

MOSS LANDING

TOM HART

MORRO BAY

WAYNE MOODY

SOCAL/HAWAII

JOHN LAGRANGE
ROB McADAM

NEW ZEALAND

PETER BALLANTYNE

TERESA REEVES

(Secretary / Treasurer)

MARKET and CATCH:

South Pacific 2019: Boats have come and gone in the South Pacific for January-March albacore troll fishery. There were just nine U.S.-BASED boats fishing in the region in 2019. The albacore was either transported back to the west coast and Canada or transhipped out of new Zealand at a high cost.

North Pacific 2018: For U.S. ports the final landings show the following:

| | |
|---------------------|-----------------|
| California - | 45 st |
| Oregon - | 2,900 st |
| <u>California -</u> | <u>4,473 st</u> |
| TOTAL | 7,518 st |

Note: US data from NOAA has the total for 2018 at 8,478 st landed in U.S. ports compared to the above number from Pac Fin. We are asking for clarification.

Canadian Albacore Landings and catches in 2018 totaled 2,988/st of which 68% was caught in the U.S. EEZ compared to the previous year where 75% was caught in the U.S. EEZ but their catch was 2,013 st.

Both the U.S. and Canadian catches and effort on the high seas zones were off considerably from 2017 totals.

North Pacific 2019: Given the large numbers of small albacore reported along the west coast last season the best hope is that they added a year in growth and will be 12-15 pounds and available.

Effort has been down over the past few seasons. Data shows 451 U.S. boats fished in the U.S. EEZ in 2018. This was down from 518-2017, and down from the 600-700 numbers prior to 2013. U.S. boats that fished in the Canadian EEZ was 25 (most which was part of the 451) which was about average for the last decade. Canadian effort in the U.S. EEZ was 45. Access to salmon by smaller vessels may have an effect but also vessels and owners' attrition within the fleet have most to do with it. Again in 2019 weather, other fisheries like shrimp and salmon, markets, and location of albacore will be factors determining the final catch.

Pricing and markets will as always depend on catch in Japan in May and June and Spanish catch in the Bay of Biscay which was exceptional in 2018 for the first time in a number of years.

There have already been early catches off Japan and some landings in March as it was a year ago. Last year these catches tapered off and then picked up again in May and June. Time will tell.

It is too early to judge the market at this time but Thailand has had a large demand for albacore in recent months. Europe will be a factor given their good catches last season and will be interesting to see if there is a repeat in high catch rates or back to normal.

There was much discussion at the board meeting on the pricing of blast frozen albacore in regards to the sudden drop over the past year in ex-vessel values by as much as 50%. Sources say that some of this is maybe from the influx of cheap foreign loins entering the market in the U.S. via Canadian processors and mislabeled as Canadian caught. During the past two years loin prices on the market have declined as much as 50%.

All albacore fishermen, associations, MSC, and processors as well should be concerned by this and a joint effort by U.S. and Canadian fishing industry needs to investigate and gather facts on the matter and find ways to increase public awareness of this issue and also change or make sure present the labeling laws are being adhered to.

Blast markets like mentioned above are having issue with cheap foreign albacore. Foreign interests have bought some of the Canadian facilities and local west coast albacore is not in prime demand so it seems. Japan has bought little blast albacore in recent seasons but that could always change. The U.S. and Canada combined catch is only about 5% of the world supply of albacore. Blast frozen probably accounts for something like 2%. It seems like demand should keep prices reasonable for that amount.

MANAGEMENT:

U.S. Canada Treaty:

Canada Access Permits: These are required of U.S. boats fishing in Canadian waters as well as access ports for unloading and other activities. These are available now. To obtain a permit you need to be on the NOAA list first and then contact Canada as below.

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

2019 is the last year of the present 3-year regime under the U.S./Canada albacore treaty. The U.S. government's position going forward will depend on the stakeholders. As we all know there are opinions across the board on this and it is difficult to find consensus.

WFOA will poll its members on the treaty and options from October 1-31, 2019 after the season. We will mail out surveys in late September and encourage all to weigh in. Treaty negotiations will probably begin late in 2019.

Crew and customs – Rick Goche and Peter Flournoy have been working on this through Senator Ron Wyden's office to explore at first HB-2 visas for U.S. vessels' crew, however, there are too many problems with them. The application deadlines do not line up with the albacore fishing seasons; these visas are no longer available for crew from the Philippines; the overall pool of these visas is small and highly competitive. The better strategy might be to have Senator Wyden write to the U.S. State Department rather than the Department of Homeland Security to encourage the State Department to have their embassies again issue C-1/D visas which they stopped doing a few years ago.

We need fishermen input on foreign crew being picked up in Canada that have foreign crew and/or the need for C-1/D Visa is meant for transit. We have been stymied on this ever since 9-11 but having it resolved would give U.S. vessels and owners many other options if the crew could be picked up and discharged in U.S. ports and airports.

Management Issues Discussed at Board Meeting:

Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE)- Doug Fricke and Peter Flournoy briefed us on the newest updates regarding this matter. Most of the information is in the February 2019 Newsletter. WFOA is on top of this as it could affect all. We will keep the members updated.

Limited Entry: WFOA has a long history of opposing limited entry in the albacore fishery given the health of the stocks and no fleet expansion. However, we are

always warned against latent capacity and possible downturn in stocks. The MSE process is setting up a framework to move toward effort controls down the road international but designed by each individual country. For the west coast albacore fleet we would be dealing with the PFMC. Many worry that the U.S. would impose effort controls on its own already diminishing and aging fleet and other countries may take other routes. We will get a good idea of this after the next international stock assessment later this year and in 2020 and what schemes are laid out in the MSE.

Also Updated by Peter Flournoy:

MSA: The 2018 Representative Don Young's version of the Magnuson/Stevens act required the South Atlantic and Gulf Councils to hold a referendum of the affected fishermen before the Council could impose limited entry. WFOA and AAFA tried to get the same restriction for the PFMC, however, they were unsuccessful because of the opposition of the Council and some processor. Because it is a new Congress all prior bills, including Don Young's need to be resubmitted.

United Nations Treaty for Biological Diversity beyond national jurisdiction: This needs to be followed. It has been ongoing but will affect all fisheries and industry.

Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM): This is divided into three areas off the west coast. All three are off California. They are wind energy farms. National Marine Fisheries Service should petition to study what the potential impacts of off shore energy might be on fisheries including migration patterns.

Tokelau Agreement: Currently it is in disarray. More than likely it will not be implemented in future which is probably positive for the U.S. SP vessels.

MSC New Objectives: MSC is now tinkering with added labor conditions and crew pay in their evaluations. The WCPFC passed a resolution having to do with crew pay and health insurance. Most is directed at foreign fleets but could affect U.S. and Canadian boats. The resolution passed is what most U.S. boats carry-out now with their crew.

IMO Numbers on smaller > 12m HMS vessels comment period:

NMFS is proposing regulations under the Tuna Conventions Act of 1950 (TCA), as amended, to implement International Maritime Organization (IMO) requirements in Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) Resolution C-18-06 (Resolution (Amended) on a Regional Vessel Register) and amendments to existing regulations related to the IATTC Regional Vessel Register (Vessel Register) for purse seine vessels fishing in the eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO). The proposed rule would expand the IMO number requirements to include certain categories of smaller U.S. vessels fishing for tuna and tuna-like species in the EPO. The proposed rule would also modify regulations associated with the Vessel Register and prohibition and incidental catch provisions.

These revisions would provide more clarity and make U.S. regulations more consistent with the IATTC management framework, while allowing controlled operational flexibility for the U.S. industry.

DATES: Comments on the proposed rule and supporting documents must be submitted in writing by May 16, 2019.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments on this document, identified by NOAA-NMFS-2018-0030, by any of the following methods:

Electronic Submission: Submit all electronic public comments via the Federal e-Rulemaking Portal. Go to <https://tinyurl.com/y5j7xlwt>, click the Comment Now! icon, complete the required fields, and enter or attach your comments.

Mail: Submit written comments to Daniel Studt, NMFS West Coast Region Long Beach Office, 501 W Ocean Blvd., Suite 4200, Long Beach, CA 90802. Include the identifier NOAA-NMFS-2018-0030 in the comments.

Instructions: Comments must be submitted by one of the above methods to ensure they are received, documented, and considered by NMFS. Comments sent by any other method, to any other address or individual, or received after the end of the comment period, may not be considered. All comments received are a part of the public record and will generally be posted for public viewing on www.regulations.gov without change. All personal identifying information (e.g., name, address, etc.)

submitted voluntarily by the sender will be publicly accessible. Do not submit confidential business information, or otherwise sensitive or protected information.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:
Daniel Studt, NMFS, West Coast Region, 562-980-4073.

The amendment extends eligibility to motorized inboard fishing vessels of less than 100 gross tons GT that are at least 12 meters in length overall and that are authorized to operate outside waters under the national jurisdiction of the flag State.

Electronic Logbooks: From NMFS - *The operator of any commercial fishing vessel and any recreational charter fishing vessel for highly migratory species in the management area must maintain onboard the vessel an accurate and complete record of catch, effort, and other data on report forms provided by the Regional Administrator or state agency.*

All information specified on the forms must be recorded on the form within 24 hours after the completion of each fishing day. The original logbook form for each day of the fishing trip must be submitted to either the Southwest Fisheries Science Center or the appropriate management state agency within 30 days of each landing or transshipment of the highly migratory species. Each form must be signed and dated by the fishing vessel operator.

Informational and Download Link:
<https://tinyurl.com/y6kpsrcr>

OTHER:

WFOA Social Media Committee: A social media committee was set up at the board meeting, to put together a committee to explore options for updating WFOA websites as well as boosting the social media platforms. Teresa Reeves, Libbie Cain, Lewis Hill, and Mike Cornman will comprise the committee. Greg Surenger volunteered to help as well.

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