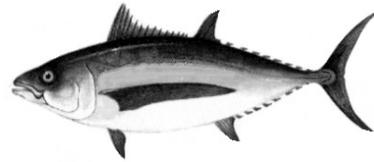


# WESTERN FISHBOAT OWNERS ASSOCIATION ©



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Members:

October 20, 2017

What happened? It's a good question considering that albacore landings will end up at about 50% of recent averages. There will be all winter and spring to speculate and some of this is written below. However, as we wait for the 2018 season but low catches do not slow down the international and federal management of albacore fishing where we as fishermen have to stay involved. WFOA and AFRF will stay involved as much as possible on behalf of the membership while we hope and expect a better catch in 2018 and wish those in other fisheries good luck this winter.

## NOTICES:

**Annual Meeting 2018** - The WFOA board will make a decision on this soon. WFOA may suspend the general meeting and convention in 2018. We may however do more in individual districts and by electronic means between now and May.

**Expo Meeting:** WFOA will have the November member meeting at Expo in Seattle. The date will be Thursday, November 16<sup>th</sup> and the Century Link Events Center, Room 1D47 under the stadium. 10:00 A.M. - Noon. All members and friends are invited.

**2018 Dues:** Due's invoices were recently mailed. We encourage members to pay as always even if the fishing ends badly. These are the type of years that WFOA collects less dues because of low catches and tonnage fees through AFRF but our costs do not go down especially regarding trying to represent fishermen at international meetings. Also, there are 200-300 boats that deliver a fair amount of albacore and belong to no association. If anyone knows a potential member give them an enclosed application or let the office know and we can send them out.

**WFOA Members Facebook Page:** This page is set up on Facebook under "Western Fishboat Owners Association Members". We have not seriously tended to it lately as we were waiting for the season to end.

Initially this page was intended for a discussion group for only vessel owners but we have decided to expand it to any paid up WFOA members which includes vessels owners, supporting businesses, and retired and crew. You will have to be approved if you sign on which is easy and then feel free to post.

## MARKET and CATCH:

**Catch:** It looks like the albacore season is over in most areas although some boats are still on their way to unload. The total catch will be off from recent years and could be a result of two years of El Nino and La Nina and other environmental factors. Albacore seem to be scattered over a vast area of the NE Pacific with little concentrations in any particular area.

Pac Fin data on Oct 12<sup>th</sup> showed about 4,500/st of albacore landed in WA and OR. There is still some tonnage on larger boats although some of that will go through Canada. At the very end we may make 6,000 tons or about 50% of the last 20-year average.

### DIRECTORS 2017

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**Prices:** Albacore prices to the boats have not changed much in the past month. Currently Blast/Bled prices are as high as \$6,400/st, and Brine/Bled from \$3,100/st - \$3,800/st, Regular non-bled brine is from \$3,000 - \$3,500/st, and Iced remains around \$2.00 lb. Although there are probably exceptions to these prices, the best is call given the high demand and short supply.

Some have asked how these record prices will carry over for the South Pacific and 2018 North Pacific seasons. There is no way to project the future price at this time other than to say it depends mainly on supply to drive prices one way or another.

The west coast price and prices paid to boats in the South Pacific are now pretty much detached from longline prices. Most albacore is sold domestically especially in a short production year like 2017. Demand for South Pacific albacore should be good and demand for the 2018 North Pacific season should remain good.

The 2017 was hopefully an anomaly in catch where ocean conditions played a major role in keeping albacore from concentrating in the usual manner. It has happened in the past. The good sign is that there seemed to be scattered fish all over from California to Canada and out to 2,000 miles of mixed age classes. I assume more boats may look at the dateline fishery in 2018 again and the other offshore regions that have been slow for the past 10 years. The international stock assessment was positive in 2017 and historical trend show little fluctuation in catch since 1996 except for a couple years.

**South Pacific:** Last season from December through April saw 13 vessels fishing in the South Pacific and we expect about the same number this season. Fishing last season was good early in the season and was slow later. Markets and prices should be good given the slow catches in most places.

**WCPFC Area Endorsements:** (All Vessels Fishing West of 150°W, and west of 130°W south of 4°S WCPFC) WCFPC Area Endorsement: <http://tinyurl.com/lywnp6m>

NOTE: Vessels in the WCPFC Registry are required to use IRCS and not Document # on their vessels for ID. Also, make sure the photo you submit to register

reflects this. Having it wrong could result in prosecution and heavy fines for the US vessel.

**LaNina all over again?** Following a mild and short-lived La Niña episode in 2016/2017, the climatic phenomenon stands a 55 to 60 percent chance of developing once again this fall and winter. That's the most recent forecast from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Based on observations of what's happening in the Pacific Ocean, and modeling to predict what may be coming, NOAA's Climate Prediction Center has issued a La Niña watch, indicating that conditions are favorable for development. See: <http://tinyurl.com/y89yzphy>

**Spanish fleet not allowed to capture more albacore, after exhausting quota:** From Friday, October 13<sup>th</sup> the Spanish fleet will not be able to fish more albacore (*Thunnus alalunga*) in the Atlantic Ocean due to exhaustion of its fishing quota. The General Direction of Fisheries Management estimated that by October 13 the fleet will have exhausted 100 per cent of the estimated albacore quota for the set of Spanish ships: 14,196,452 kilos. Prices averaged EUR 4/kilo. [editorial@fis.com](mailto:editorial@fis.com) - [www.fis.com](http://www.fis.com)

#### **MANAGEMENT & REGULATION:**

**Logbook Reminder:** WFOA reminds all U.S. albacore fishermen to turn in their logbooks for 2017. Last year the compliance rate was slightly more than 80% while Canadian compliance was 100%.

We assume most of those vessels in non-compliance do not belong to AAFA or WFOA. Most are vessels that caught small amounts of albacore between other fisheries and sold to private consumer markets. They most likely had no information about logbook compliance or penalties.

Submission of the albacore logbook is mandatory for fishermen targeting albacore with troll or pole-and-line gear. The information collected in the logbook is used in international assessments of the two Pacific stocks (North Pacific albacore

and South Pacific albacore) as well as in negotiations of the US-Canada albacore treaty.

For more information on permits and logbooks, including how to obtain a permit and the appropriate logbook, visit the NMFS WCR permits website and the NMFS WCR logbook website, or contact the NMFS WCR Permits Coordinator, Shannon Penna, at 562-980-4238, or [wcr.permits@noaa.gov](mailto:wcr.permits@noaa.gov).

**Pacific Fishery Management Council:** The Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) and its advisory bodies will meet November 14-20, 2017 in Costa Mesa, California to address issues related to groundfish, coastal pelagic species (CPS), highly migratory species (HMS), salmon, and Pacific halibut. The meeting of the Council and its advisory entities will be held at the Hilton Orange County Costa Mesa, 3050 Bristol Street, Costa Mesa, California 92626; telephone, 714-540-7000.

The only agenda item related to HMS will be before the full council on Friday, Nov 17th: - Recommendations on International Management Activities for Highly Migratory Species

**U.S./Canada Albacore Treaty:** 2017 was the first year of the new 3-year regime allowing 45 Canadian access in the US 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 was near 100% with most of their catch occurring in the US EEZ for 2017. Little U.S. effort in Canadian waters this year occurred.

There have not been any incidents at sea except a few crowding complaints early in July. Most of the fleet did concentrate in the usual areas and since fishing was sparse there was much competition on the grounds for small spots.

**The Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE):** An international workshop was conducted in Vancouver BC October 16-19, 2017 followed by a closed meeting of the ALBWG. This process was started over a year ago and will determine much of future albacore management especially in the north Pacific. This process was started first on albacore since it does not have any stock issues at this time. Eventually the MSE process could be applied to all HMS species. Further

information is in the AFRF newsletter and a full report will be in the December newsletter.

**Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) - Re-certification:** The North and South Pacific Albacore MSC re-certifications shared by WFOA and AAFA is underway. MRAG is the certification body doing the work starting with site and constituent visits in August. We expect the process to last until early 2018. MRAG our certifier just posted the North Pacific audit results for the 4<sup>th</sup> year of the certification on the MSC website for review. 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. The re-certification will again be for 4 years with action plans for each year we can adhere too. Beyond this certification we do not know if MSC will be a factor for WFOA in the future.

## **FREE DRILL INSTRUCTOR WORKSHOP**

Taught by the NPFVOA Vessel Safety Program  
Sponsored by the Seattle Fishermen's Memorial

Date: Wednesday, November 1, 2017

Location: Chateau Westport Resort, 710 Hancock, Westport, WA 98595  
Time: 8:00am—5:00pm

Cost: Free, but pre registration is required. Call 206-285-3383 or email [info@npfvoa.org](mailto:info@npfvoa.org) to sign up!

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This is a U.S. Coast Guard-accepted course which meets the requirements of 46 CFR 28.270 and is intended for masters and senior shipboard personnel who are responsible for conducting and supervising a vessel's safety and emergency training program. Covered topics include procedures for conducting and evaluating training drills, vessel emergency party organization, recommended training and drill topics and scenarios, and documentation of training conducted.

California Courses \$50:

Bodega Bay: October 26 & 27, 2017  
7:30 AM to 5:30 PM  
Bodega Bay Grange Hall  
1370 Bodega Avenue  
Bodega Bay, CA 94923

Monterey: November 2 & 3, 2017  
Heritage Harbor Conference Room  
7:30 AM to 5:30 PM  
99 Pacific St. Suite 100-A  
Monterey, CA 93940

Only \$50 to commercial fishermen, thanks to support from the U.S. Coast Guard, DCCED, and NIOSH. \$195 for all others. Meets the U.S. Coast Guard training requirements for drill conductors on commercial fishing vessels. Register at [www.amsea.org](http://www.amsea.org) or call: (907) 747-3287. Alaska Marine Safety Education Assoc.- 2924 Halibut Point Road - Sitka, Alaska 99835

**OTHER:**

**WFOA Members Obligation to AFRF Contributions:** Under WFOA's bylaws you are required as a member to submit AFRF fees for any albacore landed to buyers that are non-AFRF contracted buyers. If you unloaded all or a segment of your catch to those AFRF buyers you need not submit to that portion.

Payments of USD \$20/ton can be made to:

American Fishermen's Research Foundation  
P.O. Box 992723  
Redding, CA 96099

AFRF relies on funding such as yours to continue this unique organization that has been involved in cooperative research and public education for all North Pacific troll albacore fishermen over the past 46 years. It is extremely hard to show short term benefits of this contribution but without AFRF we may not have access to albacore grounds.

**Microsoft's Paul Allen Going High-Tech in Fight Against Illegal Fishing:** Microsoft Corp. co-founder Paul Allen, concerned about illegal fishing depleting global fish populations, will spend \$40 million to develop a system that uses satellite imagery and data-analysis software to help countries spot and catch unlicensed fishing boats.

Called SkyLight, the system is being tested in the Pacific Island of Palau and the African nation of

Gabon. Allen is trying to use technology to aid enforcement, particularly in countries with thousands of miles of coastline to patrol and few resources to do so. Allen will announce the initiative at the Our Oceans Conference in Malta on Friday.

Illegal fishing accounts for about 20 percent of the world's catch, costing up to \$23.5 billion a year, according to the World Wildlife Foundation, and placing additional stress on a wild fish population that has declined by about half since 1970. Overfishing raises the risk of conflict among fishing nations and raises the risk of hunger and joblessness in an industry that provides employment for more than 1 in 10 of the world's people. See: <http://tinyurl.com/y934ly54>

**CA Joint Committee on Fisheries and Aquaculture hearing:** Senator McGuire, Chairman of the Joint Committee on Fisheries and Aquaculture (JCFA), is announcing the upcoming JCFA hearing on October 27, 2017 1:00-5:00 p.m., 825 Fifth Street, Eureka, CA – Humboldt County Board of Supervisors Chambers.

The informational hearing will include presentations and discussions related to fisheries throughout California focusing on the fishery disasters for salmon, Dungeness crab, sea urchin and sardines. For Information Contact:

Tom Weseloh, Chief Consultant Joint Committee on Fisheries and Aquaculture -Senator Mike McGuire, Chair [Tom.weseloh@sen.ca.gov](mailto:Tom.weseloh@sen.ca.gov), 707.445.6508

**New Members Since August 2017:**

F/V Liberty II      Peter Emmons      Eureka/Ft. Bragg  
F/V Tommy John    Greg Surgener      SoCal / Hawaii

**Membership Applications:** Included within are tow member applications for both vessel owners or supporting business members. WFOA cannot make catch better but we do try to keep the fleet on the ocean in the face of increasing management as well as coordinating market price issues with coastal buyers.

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