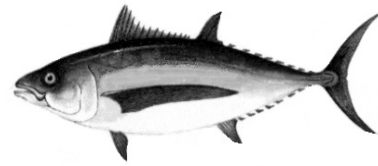


# WESTERN FISHBOAT OWNERS ASSOCIATION ©



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Members:

October 27, 2020

The North Pacific west coast albacore season wrapped up a few weeks ago. The result was a below average season for tonnage landed but similar to the past three years. Many issues were involved this season with weather being worse than normal and fish farther offshore limiting coastal vessel participation. On top of everything the Covid-19 limited most traditional blast frozen markets severely. The virus most likely will be around at least into early 2021. Management, regulatory, and scientific meetings and forums have also been postponed and restricted. Thus, we do not expect too much movement until spring on a number of issues pending.

There are some updates in this newsletter and the AFRF newsletter on some of the ongoing issues that will be present now and after Covid that may affect you.

**Membership Dues 2021:** Thanks to all members that have paid dues for 2021 in the past few weeks. We appreciate it. You can mail it in, email credit card info, or use Paypal and send to [wfoa@charter.net](mailto:wfoa@charter.net).

**E-Mail Lists:** If you are not on or not getting messages on the vessel list or the land list and want to be on let us know via email, [wfoa@charter.net](mailto:wfoa@charter.net). Also, if you have changed emails let us know and include the old and new email in the message or indicate on the yellow card included with your dues

**Annual Raffle:** WFOA is still collecting the \$20 raffle tickets that we did not have a draw for this past spring. These have 2019-2020 printed on them and are still valid. If you need to buy one let us know or add to your dues payment. Given the delay, we will collect a few more prizes and have a regular drawing within six months.

**Fishing and Market:** As of October 26, 2020 the total landings on the west coast totaled 7,682 st, with 4,753 tons landed in WA, 1,977 in OR, and 280 in CA. There still is some fish on boats to be delivered. Also, the U.S. landings made in Canada will put the total U.S. catch more than 8,000 tons. This number is similar to the last few seasons and in someways reflects lower effort due to weather and farther offshore nature of the fishery in 2020. Average size of albacore was up this season with 12-14 pound being average and little amounts of small fish reported. There were some very large albacore (20-35 pounds) caught generally on live bait at the end of the season in places.

It appears a couple dozen boats may fish the South Pacific this season. We expect some will tranship again from New Zealand, and Star Kist may be buying again in Pago, AS. Maybe by the time the South Pacific season is over in April 2021 the Covid-19 issues will be in remission.

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## MANAGEMENT & REGULATION:

**National Commercial Fishing Safety Advisory Committee Members Needed:** The Coast Guard is re-soliciting applications from persons interested in membership on the National Commercial Fishing Safety Advisory Committee (Committee). This recently established Committee will advise the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security on matters relating to national commercial fishing safety. Please read this notice for a description of the 18 Committee positions we are seeking to fill.

Your completed application should reach the Coast Guard on or before December 14, 2020.

Applicants should send a cover letter expressing interest in an appointment to the National Commercial Fishing Safety Advisory Committee and a resume detailing the applicant's experience and which specific position(s) applying for. We will not accept a biography. Applications should be submitted via one of the following methods:

By Email: CGfishsafe@uscg.mil (preferred).

By Mail: Commandant (CG-CVC-3), Attn: NCF SAC ADFO, U.S. Coast Guard Stop 7501, 2703 Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20593-7501. See: <https://tinyurl.com/y6jsxkbb>

### **Covid-19 Survey Tracks Impacts to Harvesters:**

Click Survey link to help NOAA capture impacts of Covid-19 on fishing businesses.

Link To Survey: <https://tinyurl.com/y5tuod5u>

As the seafood industry responds and adapts to the impacts of Covid-19, NOAA is working to fill in some information gaps in their Covid-19 studies and surveys. One of those gaps is West Coast seafood harvesters — folks on the East Coast have already been surveyed. We'd like your help in making sure West Coast harvesters are included in this important work to document impacts to our industry.

The survey linked above will help to close this gap and give NOAA a better understanding of the impacts of Covid-19 on the U.S. seafood industry.

Please take a moment to fill out the survey and share with others. This should take less than five minutes.

**Pacific Marine Expo 2020:** Join us this November as Pacific Marine Expo transforms into Expo Online – a digital experience that will allow commercial mariners to come together virtually from November 17th-19th and then continuing throughout the year as a digital content series, all presented on NationalFisherman.com!

While we cannot come together in person in 2020, we are determined to provide you a high level of education and content that you would expect at the Expo. <https://tinyurl.com/y4qej64v>

### **USCG High-Risk Commercial Fishing**

**Vessels:** Eleventh Coast Guard District Date: October 1, 2020, contact [peggy.a.murphy@uscg.mil](mailto:peggy.a.murphy@uscg.mil)  
Phone: (510) 437-5931

The Coast Guard has implemented a new work instruction for commercial fishing vessels considered to be high-risk, defined as any vessel 50-feet or more in length, built before 2013, and operating beyond three nautical miles (3NM) from shore.

Background: This new instruction builds on the Voluntary Safety Initiatives and Good Marine Practices guide implemented after input from the commercial fishing industry in July 2016. In an effort to improve safety in the commercial fishing fleet, Congress included provisions in the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2010-2012 requiring the USCG to develop an Alternative Safety Compliance Program (ASCP) for vessels over 50-feet in length, over 25 years of age, and operating beyond 3NM from shore. The ASCP was to be developed in cooperation with the commercial fishing industry and prescribed by the Coast Guard by January 1, 2017. Based on industry input, the Coast Guard suspended development of mandatory ASCP standards in July 2016. Congress directed additional safety requirements to be considered in a future rulemaking project in 2020, resulting in this

high-risk vessel work instruction.

The work instruction strongly urges high-risk commercial fishing vessels to pass a dockside safety exam on a 2-year vice 5-year exam cycle. A successful exam results in the issuance of a CFVS decal, which is valid for 2 years. Those identified highrisk commercial fishing vessels without a current CFVS decal will be targeted by law enforcement for a complete at-sea boarding to verify their vessel's compliance with current federal law. Commercial fishing industry owners/operators and organizations are encouraged to provide feedback on this new initiative, and to make comments and recommendations to the USCG at CGFishSafe@uscg.mil, or through their local representatives

**52' USCG Cutters:** The USCG has informed WFOA that they can no longer depend upon the older 52ft coast guard vessels capable of offshore towing of vessels. The boats have had many mechanical problems as the boats were built in the 1950's. The 47ft vessels are not capable of towing beyond 70 miles and much depends on sea conditions. The USCG will however still have cutters available but maybe longer distances away and they will also still do rescues of boats in distress via helicopter. The USCG will have more on this through the winter in spring as how they will deal with the 2021 season.

### **The EPA Vessel Incidental Discharge National Standards of Performance: Vessels Over 79 ft!**

The EPA Vessel Incidental Discharge National Standards of Performance applies to commercial vessels 79 feet in length and above that discharge into waters of the U.S. The proposed rule and how to submit comments are in the links in the email below. Obviously, this does not apply to most of you, but some of the larger vessels may want to read the proposed rules and comment.

Link: <https://tinyurl.com/y5u2lrvk>

**Pacific Fishery Management Council:** The Pacific Fishery Management Council (PFMC or Council) and its advisory bodies will meet November 9 10, 12 13 and 16 20, 2020 by webinar only. Key agenda items related to HMS for the meeting include Council considerations to:

Continue the Biennial Highly Migratory Species Harvest - Specifications and Management

Measures Process by Adopting Available Stock Status Determination Criteria and Considering the Need to Develop Other Harvest Objectives and/or Management Measures

Revisit Hard Caps on Bycatch in the Drift Gillnet Fishery with a Review of a NMFS Report on the Response to Comments in the Final Rule and a Range of Viable Rulemaking Measures for Council Consideration.

<https://tinyurl.com/y69spfmv>

**BOEM Offshore Wind Farms Off the Coast of U.S.** BOEM, the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, has already designated call areas (prospective lease sites) off the coasts of Oregon and California. Currently there is only one offshore wind farm operating in U.S. waters and that consists of 5 wind turbines off Block Island on the East coast which was opened in 2016 and generates only 6 megawatts of electricity. Now four years later there are wind farm projects in the various stages of planning on both coasts and the Gulf for 26,000 megawatts of energy.

Surveys say 80% of the wind resources of the US are in offshore waters between 60 and 1,000 meters. The three call areas designated by BOEM and the California Energy Commission are in the areas off of Humboldt Bay, Morro Bay and Diablo Canyon. BOEM has already deployed 2 "wind buoys" off the California coast in 625mts (2,050 ft) and 1,000 mts (3,200 ft) off the Humboldt and Monterey shores for research on wind speeds currents, etc.

An August 2020 California Energy Commission report said: "the National Renewable Energy Laboratory has identified 112 gigawatts of offshore wind technical potential for California" and " 96 percent of offshore wind resource potential is in water deeper than 60 meters." Those are waters WFOA members fish on the surface for albacore or where they transit to the fishing areas. Given all three West Coast states' programs to develop as much green energy as possible to fight climate change there is a huge coordinated push to put

floating offshore wind (FOSW) farms off the West Coast. So far there has been very little effort made to involve commercial fishermen or to do the research necessary to understand the potential impacts of FOSW farms on essential fish habitat, navigation safety, migratory patterns of fish, electromagnetic effects on migration to say nothing of gathering precise data on how the call areas will prevent fishing in areas currently utilized by commercial fishermen.

**South Pacific Management:** The story of the South Pacific albacore fishery is a good example of the intermix of science and the politics of international management. The story of how the US opened the fishery has been told above, but here are the politics of international management since then. In 2005 the U.S. obtained a resolution in the Northern Committee of the WCPFC which would limit fishing effort on albacore to those levels that existed in 2002-2004 in the western North Pacific (this was after having obtained a companion resolution in the IATTC for limiting effort in the eastern North Pacific). The WCPFC Treaty requires Northern Committee resolutions to be approved by the entire membership of the WCPFC, which includes New Zealand. Politics came into play when New Zealand would not approve the resolution for the North Pacific unless there was a similar one passed for the South Pacific, because it wanted to protect the New Zealand albacore troll fishery which takes place in its EEZ. There was absolutely no scientific basis for such a resolution. Even though the US got a provision in the resolution it should be reviewed every year by the Science Committee, it never has been reviewed. In addition, the Science Committee has repeatedly said in their South Pacific albacore assessments that the troll fishery has no discernable impact on the albacore stocks. This is politics over science.

However, the story ignoring the science and allowing the politics to determine the management measures being put forth goes on. A few years ago the Pacific Island States (PIS) members of the WCPFC wanted to close all fishing for albacore on the high seas. The only troll fishery in the Treaty Area this would impact would be the US fishery which the scientists had said for a decade and a half, did not affect the stocks. This didn't matter. The PIS had two political concerns – one was the adverse impact the high seas Chinese longline fleet

was having on the albacore stocks (although the scientists were very slow to recognize this all the fishermen knew it), and the second was to force all fishing off the high seas and into the EEZs of the PIS where they could gain economically by charging access fees. This effort to destroy the US South Pacific albacore troll fishery went on for several years and may come up again shortly now that the troll fishery has been more productive. Again, politics over science.

Most recently the WCPFC decided to place a target reference point on South Pacific albacore which would cause a small reduction in catch over the next 20 years. Again, with no scientific basis, and actually against what the scientists have asserted, the Chinese insisted any reduction should apply to all gear types in the albacore fishery including troll gear. Another example of how politics of management can override even the best and most accepted scientific information

**OTHER: Tri-Marine Hires Christa Svensson as Sustainability Manager:** From Undercurrent News - <https://tinyurl.com/yxlqy7vz>

Tuna giant Tri Marine has hired Christa Svensson as its new sustainability program manager. Svensson said on LinkedIn her role encompasses environmental sustainability, with a significant focus on social programs that work toward ending unfair labor practices in fisheries globally.

"I am impressed and inspired by Tri Marine's long-term commitment to advancing best practices for the environment and with regard to human rights," she said. "They're a founding member of the International Sustainable Seafood Foundation (ISSF) and leader of the Seafood Task Force's (STF) work on tuna. I look forward to working with the team on implementing best practices for the environment and for protecting workers' rights for everyone associated with our company."

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