

WESTERN FISHBOAT OWNERS ASSOCIATION ©

P.O. Box 992723
Redding, CA 96099

Ph. (530) 229-1097
M. (530) 355-3151

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

Members:

Greetings to all the members and others. We hope all are having a good start to the year. It seems that at this time Covid-19 is fading as the weather warms and the vaccine is now available. We certainly hope it is a memory by the summer albacore season and all of us can move back to a normal routine.

Fishing: There were about 20 boats fishing the South Pacific and have seen mixed success. There has not been much information but it sounds like the weather has been bad much of the time and fishing more spotty than last season with more mixed sizes depending on the area. One vessel has sold in American Samoa to Star Kist for MSC markets and the others unloading in New Zealand or bringing fish back north. The blast markets may be showing an uptick in demand as outlets begin to re-open. Brine prices for longline and troll are stagnant possibly because of large demand in early 2020 and stockpiles in homes at this time.

WFOA Board Meetings: WFOA held a board meeting on February 12, 2021 mainly to focus on organizational issues some which are mentioned in this newsletter. WFOA will hold another later in March or as needed along with an online general meeting late in March or early April. Notices will be sent out to all members in about two weeks.

Directors: There are a few WFOA director seats available that include New Zealand (Peter Ballantyne resigned as director after decades of service), the San Francisco/Bodega seat remains open, possibly Moss Landing, and the Canadian seat, depending on Don's health. Any vessel owner member that wishes to be a director in any of these districts let us know. As there will

March 1, 2021

not be any sit-down district meetings again due to COVID-19 the board can approve requests. If there are more than one, we can have a mail-in election.

Manager Search: Since my contract expires March 31, 2021 and part of the duties is to manage the affairs of AFRF, I will only manage WFOA after March 31st except for wrapping up a few lingering projects like archival tagging this summer, bio sampling for NOAA, graphic and photos of the industry for use by AFRF, WFOA, and Oregon Albacore Commission, and maintaining economic issues until the AFRF board decides on how and who will manage AFRF and be maintained in the future as a scientific foundation. There also is a possibility that such a person could also manage WFOA at years end. I have requested a WFOA salary cut of 50% to save WFOA funding for 2021 while other sources of revenue are explored and a replacement can be found for 2022.

Please pass the word to anyone interested in either position to please send in a brief letter of interest to

DIRECTORS
BRITISH COLUMBIA DON BELLHAM
PUGET SOUND KARL JOHNSON (Vice - President) JOE MALLEY JEREMY BROWN 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 VACANT
TERESA REEVES (Secretary /

WFOA/AFRF or one of the WFOA directors with a brief description of their qualifications and vision of the future U.S. albacore troll and pole fishery. We can then contact them for further details. The AFRF position is the most urgent at this time and would be dealing with science agencies, buyers, cooperative research groups and public education. The AFRF board will have to handle the process. As far as the WFOA position we will actively pursue that issue as the season winds down.

Send letters to WFOA/AFRF. POB 992723, Redding, CA 96099 or email to wfoa@charter.net.

Membership Dues 2021: WFOA thanks all that have paid dues for the 2021 year. An invoice was re-sent on March 1, 2021. We appreciate those that pay every year and keep this voluntary association going. We cannot do it only by dues as the shrinking of the fleet continues. WFOA will not receive management fees from AFRF in 2021 and beyond, so we may be asking WFOA members to support the organization with limited tonnage contributions or other methods.

General Membership Online: The WFOA board has approved holding a WFOA general meeting for vessel owner members in the last week of March or early April. This will probably be done over our Go-to-Meeting platform that can accommodate 150 participants. Those calling in can do so by phone or computer. WFOA will send out time, date, agenda and call-in information no later than two weeks prior to the event.

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 a ticket let WFOA know or add to your dues' payment. WFOA will have a drawing at the time of the general meeting online. We do have prizes such as \$300 gift certificates from Englund Marine etc. And depending on ticket purchases we will probably have a top prize in the \$500 range.

MANAGEMENT & REGULATION: Much of HMS management such as the Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) have been delayed for a year with COVID-19 as well as other management of albacore that may be on different agendas. The international bodies have primarily stayed focused on other HMS species. We expect that to change later in 2021. The board stressed the need to keep in the game with items such as 30/30 in the works, the finalization of MSE, and a gamut of regulatory and management issues on the back burners that will soon be issue to deal with to maintain access to the fisheries of all types.

In the next regular WFOA newsletter we will include the usual update sheet (6-pages) on regulations and requirements affecting U.S. albacore trollers and bait boats for your use and information.

The Pacific Fishery Management Council (PFMC) and its advisory bodies will meet March 2-5 and 8-11, 2021 by webinar only, to address issues related to groundfish, Pacific halibut, salmon, highly migratory species, ecosystem, and administrative matters.

Key agenda items for the meeting include:

Consider Modifications to Highly Migratory Species Essential Fish Habitat

Consider Reports on International Highly Migratory Species Activities and Provide

Recommendations on U.S. Positions

Clarify Deep-Set Buoy Gear Permit Regulations

Consider Highly Migratory Species Biennial Harvest Specifications and Management Measures

Report of the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries

Marine Planning Update

Report on the California Current Ecosystem and Integrated Ecosystem Assessment

Consider the Climate and Communities Initiative Workshop Report

Adopt Updates to the Fishery Ecosystem Plan

PFMC California Seat: WFOA supports Mike Conroy (PCFFA) in his attempt to secure a seat on the Pacific Management Council and we sent a letter to California's governor's office supporting that goal.

Marine Stewardship Council - The next surveillance audit will occur in May 2021. The annual audit has been delayed nearly a year because of COVID-19 but will be done this year remotely.

HB 8632, the 30-30 Bill: This legislation has some provisions that are targeting commercial fishermen through a section on Marine Protected Areas. The "30 30" nickname comes from the legislation's goal to have 30% of the United States waters set aside as conservation areas by 2030. If passed, it could stop commercial fishing in these areas but could allow sport fishing. The top-down approach will have cabinet level appointees approving the sites in which commercial fishing would be banned.

Link: <https://tinyurl.com/yd87nm3o>

More 30/30: President Bidens January 27th Executive Order includes some language which establishes a "goal of conserving at least 30 percent of our lands and waters by 2030." Section 216(c) reads as follows, "The Secretary of Commerce, through the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, shall initiate efforts in the first 60 days from the date of this order to collect input from fishermen, regional ocean councils, fishery management councils, scientists, and other stakeholders on how to make fisheries and protected resources more resilient to climate change, including changes in management and conservation measures, and improvements in science, monitoring, and cooperative research."

See: <https://tinyurl.com/ya4ejk2f>

Coast Guard issues warning to mariners turning off AIS: ASTORIA, Ore. --- The Coast Guard is issuing a warning to mariners and

commercial fisherman about the dangers and legal consequences of disabling a vessel's Automated Identification System.

The Coast Guard has seen an alarming increase of commercial fishing and crabbing vessels disabling their AIS, purportedly in an attempt to keep their fishing spots secret from competition.

The regulation (33 CFR 164.46) in part states that all self-propelled vessels, at a length of 65-foot or more, engaged in commercial service and operating on the Territorial Seas (within 12-nautical miles of shore) must maintain AIS in effective operating condition, which includes the continual operation of AIS and its associated devices (e.g., positioning system, gyro, converters, displays) at all times while the vessel is underway or at anchor, and, if moored, at least 15 minutes prior to getting underway.

Violators of this regulation can expect to receive a civil penalty up to a maximum of \$35,486 per violation.

Contact: Coast Guard PA Detachment Astoria Office:(503)861-6380, After Hours: (206) 819-9154

OTHER:

Genetic markers show Pacific albacore intermingle across equator but remain separate stocks - February 09, 2021

NEWPORT, Ore. - Analyzing thousands of genetic markers in albacore tuna from the Pacific Ocean, researchers at Oregon State University have learned that just seven dozen of those markers are needed to determine which side of the equator a fish comes from.

The scientists also discovered that fish from different hemispheres intermingle and sometimes breed with each other.

Published today in *Evolutionary Applications*, the findings are an important step toward better understanding the population structure of a species that's a vital and inexpensive source of protein for people around the globe.

Albacore in the North and South Pacific Oceans are currently managed as separate stocks. The OSU study affirms this approach while also opening the door to more research into overlap and interbreeding that can be used to refine management strategies throughout the Pacific.

“Albacore support one of the world’s largest and most valuable fisheries and one that is particularly important on the west coast of North America,” said Kathleen O’Malley, an associate professor in the OSU College of Agricultural Sciences. “There’s been a lot of work done to understand stock structure of the albacore globally, but research in the Pacific hasn’t been very fine-tuned and has tended to generate as many questions as answers.”

Full Article: <https://tinyurl.com/yahub7zn>

Kathleen O’Malley, 541-961-3311
kathleen.omalley@oregonstate.edu

Covid-19 Vaccinations: Fishermen & Processors - From Oregon Trawl Commission

If you would like to get your business operation vaccinated sooner than later, I'd encourage you to fill out a survey with your local county health department (see the links below) to get in the queue for when essential workers operating in high-risk environments become an eligible group for vaccination. You can complete this form as an organization to cover your captain(s) and crew members or otherwise plant workers.

Clatsop County - <https://tinyurl.com/yd3qx3y6>

Lincoln County - <https://tinyurl.com/yynexnw7>

Coos County - <https://tinyurl.com/ya8r57tu>

I will follow up on this email once I have more information about the Curry County's plan. For now, it doesn't look like they are surveying interested essential businesses or individuals yet. More to follow.

Yelena Nowak yelena@ortrawl.org

China’s fishing in South American waters raises questions, fears - Every country with a

distant-water fishing (DWF) fleet engages in illegal fishing, but China has the largest DWF fleet in the world. The recent presence of Chinese vessels off the coast of several South American countries has alarmed environmental authorities in the region. Álvaro Etchegaray
Published February 21, 2021

In the final months of 2020, alarms went off in the Galapagos Islands and a big part of the Pacific coastline of South America, triggered by the presence of hundreds of fishing vessels, most of them Chinese, edging on their sovereign waters. The vessels’ presence has become a major diplomatic headache for several Latin American countries, as the ships are part of the Distant Water Fleets (DWF), a group of vessels fishing on the high seas in waters usually belonging to no country, but often near exclusive economic zones (EEZ).

The Chinese fleet - According to a June 2020 report from the UK-based research group Overseas Development Institute (ODI), China’s distant-water fishing fleet is the biggest in the world. It comprises nearly 17,000 vessels, with about 1,000 registered in other countries. The report indicates that during 2017 and 2018, Chinese vessels’ most frequented area was the Pacific Northwest, but that the most intense activities were focused in the Atlantic Southwest and Pacific Southeast — especially off the coast of Peru, in squid fisheries.

Interestingly, while China does sell its fleet’s catch to more developed markets like the European Union, Japan, or the United States, Mallory indicates that nowadays they are shipping a lot more back home. “They’ve started to build up a retail industry in China to market that seafood, and they also are importing a lot more due to an increase in consumers with more discretionary income and concerns about local food safety.”

See: <https://tinyurl.com/y7ujo8k8>

© All material in this newsletter is copyrighted and may not be used, copied, or reprinted without specific written permission of Western Fishboat Owners Association