

# WESTERN FISHBOAT OWNERS ASSOCIATION



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## Members:

There is much anticipation what the albacore season will bring this season after a year of Covid and all it presented. As life and fishing returns to normal, we can all hope for a safe and productive season. Over past three coastal albacore seasons landings were down about 60% of the last 25-year average. Although record albacore catches were made in Japan in 2020 they did not reflect in results on this side of the Pacific. Ocean conditions and migrating forage fish may have been a factor on this coast. 2021 will certainly be interesting but will be challenging as things sort themselves back out. Markets do remain sluggish but with reopening of outlets there may be some good news as we proceed through 2021.

## NOTICES:

**Dues 2021** - There are still a few albacore fishermen that owe 2021 WFOA membership dues, please send them when you can. We will retain you on the information lists through July instead of June given all the disruptions in the past.

WFOA has cut expenses to a minimum and is seeking other funding sources such as assessment's given, we no longer manage AFRF and have that revenue from processors and buyers. However, fishermen can fund this organization alone with your help. This is a transition year so we appreciate the support.

**Tonnage Assessment to keep fishermen in the game:** Please consider the assessment release form sent out last month. Funding will be needed to support WFOA representing fishermen in management and regulatory issues that are occurring and accelerating in the management bodies. WFOA sent a release form to vessels owners to sign and send in last month. WFOA will also send copies and information to district directors that can hand them out. We appreciate your participation and will give us an

June 15, 2021

indication how the future of WFOA and the fishery may go.

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**Markets & Price:** Longline albacore price in the western Pacific has remained low since November. Longline catches were good in January thru March but have fallen off.

After record catches in the May - June 2020 albacore summer fishery in Japan the catch so far this season have been below average. It could be a late season but looks more like an off-year. Prices also are flat there but some upward movement has been seen in local markets as demand increases on limited supply.

There probably still remains some consumer hesitancy especially in the canned markets after Covid-19 due to large inventories of canned albacore and other tuna's moving from factory warehouses to consumer's pantries during the panic of spring 2020.

However, the good news is that there is increasing demand for blast/bled albacore for re-opening of restaurants and fish markets in the U.S. and especially Canada where there is little inventory of albacore. Increasing demand in blast markets should take some pressure off canned markets which absorbed much of the blast frozen in 2020.

## DIRECTORS

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NEW ZEALAND  
VACANT

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(Secretary / Treasurer)

**Other Factors:** There are ongoing supply chain problems with containers and trucking for shipping albacore at this time. Covid seemed to have backed up the system, as well as many containers being sidelined for a year due to lack of business. This is slowly resolving itself but is centered in large container ports such as LA/Long Beach, Oakland, and Puget Sound.

Prices for dry goods containers have skyrocketed and refrigerated containers have been set aside during the slowdown. As demand opens back up more containers should become available but it will create some problems with some or all buyers and shippers this season. Some have been looking into cold storage in case of mid-season problems but each buyer is aware and hopefully work through any disruptions.

**MANAGEMENT:** Within this newsletter is included **two reports** by Peter Flournoy who is now on retainer for these issue and others with WFOA and not AFRF. The reports are on the Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) process which is nearing completion and a report on Crew and Customs (CBP) issues especially those affecting boats with foreign crew. There has been issues with CBP especially in Puget Sound that have been partially resolved but have been nightmares for U.S. vessels owners. The best solution still remains a specific crew visa for HMS species or albacore vessels. WFOA will be addressing this issue this year with help of other fishing groups and processors if they desire.

**U.S./Canada Treaty Issues:** As of the date of this newsletter June 15<sup>th</sup>, the U.S. waters are now open until September 15<sup>th</sup> to the Canadian vessels on their list of 45 participants. We expect more Canadian effort than in 2020 when many took part at home in other permitted fisheries or just stayed tied to the dock with no blast markets available.

Total U.S albacore landings in 2020 were 7,316 mt (8,047st) with 78% caught in the U.S. EEZ, 9% in the Canadian EEZ, and 12% on the high seas. Logbook coverage was 69%. 31 U.S. vessels fished in the Canadian EEZ and the U.S. total

number of vessels was 401 vessels. 10 U.S. vessels landed albacore in Canada.

Total Canadian catch was 2,356 mt (2,591st), with 71% caught in the Canadian EEZ, 20% in the U.S. EEZ, and 9% on the high seas. 34 Canadian vessels fished in the US EEZ out of the 45 allowed and 103 in the Canadian waters. Logbook coverage was 100%.

**Marine Stewardship Council:** The annual surveillance audit is ongoing at this time. WFOA and AAFA met online with the certification team from MRAG in late May. The annual audit has been delayed nearly a year because of COVID-19. MRAG has written most of the report and a few more loose ends need to be wrapped up before a 60-day comment period. All involved in this process see no issues with the certification for this year.

There will be requirements in the next couple of years leading up to recertifying for both the NP and SP to develop Harvest Control Rules (HCRs) to cover conditions set in the last certification. These would probably need to be completed or presented to RFMO's and others bodies by mid 2023 or earlier for the SP and possibly as far as late 2024 for the NP fishery. A couple examples in our certifications are as follows . See Link Below

<https://fisheries.msc.org/en/fisheries/@@search>

#### North Pacific Troll and Pole Albacore

By the end of the 4th year of certification, well defined HCRs must be in place that ensure the exploitation rate is reduced as the PRI is approached, as expected to keep the stock fluctuating around a target level consistent with or above MSY. In addition, these HCRs must be likely to be robust to the main uncertainties, and there must be available evidence to indicate that the tools in use are appropriate and effective in achieving the exploitation levels required under the HCRs.

#### South Pacific Troll Albacore:

Within five years (of 2016), there will be evidence that the harvest strategy is responsive to the state of the stock and the elements of the harvest strategy work together towards achieving stock management objectives reflected in PI

Well defined HCRs will be in place that ensure that the exploitation rate is reduced as the PRI is approached, are expected to keep the stock fluctuating around a target level consistent with (or above) MSY.

By the fourth surveillance audit, demonstrate that WCPFC decision-making processes have responded to the albacore declining CPUE issue by putting in place appropriate management measures, e.g. harvest strategy. By the 4th surveillance audit: Decision-making processes have responded to the albacore declining catch rate by putting into place an appropriate harvest strategy or other appropriate management measures.

WFOA and AAFA will continue to advocate for harvest control rules and scientifically based Target Reference Points with other countries that have troll fisheries for South Pacific albacore through a revised and strengthened WCPFC CMM

To take care of the conditions the U.S. albacore fishery would have to develop and present some HCR in the name of conservation and sustainability of the resource. Since in the NP the MSE process seems to be going down such a path that may make it easy, but the SP with all its issues passing something that makes sense may be difficult. We certainly do not want to further restrict U.S. access which is shrinking while leaving it open to other nations that have no regard for the measures.

WFOA and AAFA members are covered under the MSC certification. At this time 2021 buyers that utilize MSC need to send in their 2021 Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) Buyers Agreement, those that signed up in 2020 were sent a mailer with a copy recently and also an email message. If you need one sent, please email wfoa@charter.net Any new troll or pole U.S. vessel can be added to the list of certified vessels by your buyer contacting WFOA with vessel name, owners, and doc or state #.

**OTHER:**

**American Fishermen's Research Foundation (AFRF)** has continued its restructuring and will be managed by AFRF itself and not WFOA going forward. AFRF will focus mostly on science and data collection on albacore. David Itano will still be its science advisor and represent AFRF at

stock assessment and other relevant meetings concerning Pacific albacore. Ericka Carlson is the administrator and they have also hired on a short-term basis Melissa Flores to organize and classify historical AFRF records going back 50 years if available. The AFRF board still consists of seven buyers and seven WFOA representatives at this time with Rick Goche – F/V Peso II as President. We will include more information in the next newsletter. Buyers not under the new 2021 buyers contract and want to be involved in research and science should request information and a new contract from.

American Fishermen's Research Foundation  
Ericka Carlson - Administrator  
P.O. Box 16338  
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**New Members:**

Community Ice LLC	Newport, OR
Safe Coast Seafood	Ilwaco, WA

**From Safe Coast Seafoods (ILWACO):** *"It's almost Tuna Time, and there is a new buyer on the coast! We are Safe Coast Seafoods - located in Ilwaco. We are at the former Jessies Ilwaco Seafood Co. facility.*

*With four hoists, two ice delivery systems (One flake, one cocktail) bait, fuel, POs, and friendly service, we are here to meet your needs.*

*Fuel is available in port through Wilcox & Flegal, and live anchovies thanks to Columbia bait Company! Delivery permit applications are also available in our office on or before the day of delivery.*

*Our dock personnel have many combined years of experience and are looking forward to seeing old friends and making new ones! Our hope is this season proves plentiful and profitable for all involved. Stay safe out there, and hope to see you soon!"*

Angel Wirkkala  
Dock Supervisor  
Safe Coast Seafoods – WA  
360-642-3773

**Clark Permar** – We regret to hear the passing of Clark Permar on May 27, 2021. He was retired and resident of Port Orford, Oregon. His last boat was the F/V San Pablo which is now based in Coos Bay, Oregon.

### **Hawaii's Fishermen Are Worried About China's Fleet. So Is the Military**

The U.S. military increasingly sees illegal fishing as a national security threat and has China's vast government-subsidized fleet in its sights.

Hawaii's commercial fishermen and the U.S. military have a potential threat in common — China's fleet of government-subsidized ships that has been straying into more distant waters in search of seafood and more influence.

Local longliners have reported seeing increasing numbers of Chinese vessels near the islands, accusing them of overfishing and intimidating tactics.

Sometimes the ships are fishing, sometimes they're making their way into the eastern Pacific and sometimes they're seemingly just sitting at sea, says Eric Kingma, executive director of the Hawaii Longline Association.

He noted that a group of Chinese vessels seemed to be loitering north of Midway Atoll National Wildlife Refuge last week. "What are they fishing for? I don't know," said Kingma. "But it's an example of them being close to Hawaii and, we believe, getting closer."

For Article See: <https://tinyurl.com/ydukt6hp>

### **Hawaii Longline Association on Labor Standards:**

Link: <https://tinyurl.com/ydukt6hp>

### **CBP Bans Chinese Fishing Company's Products Over Labor Abuses:** May 31, 2021 – Maritime Executive

On Friday, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) issued a complete import ban against Dalian Ocean Fishing Co., Ltd., the owner of the notorious vessel Long Xing 629.

This Withhold Release Order (WRO) was based on a CBP investigation that found evidence that Dalian Ocean uses forced labor aboard its 32 vessels.

The Withhold Release Order is effective immediately and the CBP will detain swordfish, tuna, and other seafood harvested by any vessels owned or operated by Dalian Ocean Fishing, Ltd.

For Article See: <https://tinyurl.com/ydmsvx5p>

**Masks:** The U.S. Coast Guard announced on Friday, June 11, that it would no longer require masks "in outdoor areas of maritime transportation conveyances and hubs," according to a Marine Safety Information Bulletin. 😊

**Pacific Marine Expo** sets return with in-person show from Thursday, Nov. 18, through Saturday, Nov. 20, at Lumen Field Event Center in Seattle

SEATTLE, WA – After a year apart, the commercial maritime industry will come together again for Pacific Marine Expo, which will be held from Thursday, Nov. 18, through Saturday, Nov. 20, at Lumen Field Event Center in Seattle. Pacific Marine Expo is the largest commercial marine trade show on the West Coast, serving commercial mariners from Alaska to California.

Registration for Pacific Marine Expo will open in August at [www.pacificmarineexpo.com](http://www.pacificmarineexpo.com).

Companies interested in exhibiting at Pacific Marine Expo should contact Christine Salmon, Sales Director, at [csalmon@divcom.com](mailto:csalmon@divcom.com) or call (207) 842.5530. For more information, please visit [www.PacificMarineExpo.com](http://www.PacificMarineExpo.com).

Have a safe and productive summer and albacore season and after 2020 expect the unexpected.

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