

# WESTERN FISHBOAT OWNERS ASSOCIATION



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Members:

March 1, 2022

Greetings from WFOA for 2022, and success with the upcoming albacore season. This newsletter contains a few updates that may affect the membership in terms of new regulation and controls beginning to take shape. The December 2021 newsletter contained details of ongoing management issues so this one will be general in those regards. Please refer to the December issue for more information and the next issue around may 1<sup>st</sup> will have updates for the coming season.

**WFOA Board Meeting:** The WFOA board had a virtual meeting on February concerning future management options that are coming to a head in both hemispheres through the RFMO's. Also important are finding answers to why the U.S. west coast albacore landings are declining over the past 3-4 years and what we can do to find answers. Diminishing landings have occurred in the past but over 50 years it has been rare.

AAFA/WFOA Working Group - The board discussion was also about mutual cooperation between WFOA and AAFA moving forward starting with management and access to the ocean. Thus a working group dealing with management and ocean access has been set up between the two organizations to find agreement and speak as one voice for albacore fishermen in the U.S. is the goal, especially as US fleets shrinks. This is especially important given the slow steady attrition of the fleet and the people that make it work, which has reduced our effort nearly 50% over the past 5 years.

Next Board Meeting - A follow-up board meeting will be held later in March and will be open to all members via a virtual platform or phone.

Board Makeup- The board discussed revamping board member requirements for WFOA to be open for more, as its difficult to have fishermen to take on the duty with so much else ongoing.

WFOA is seeking members to serve as new board members in a number of districts. It is not that

difficult and takes little time. Please let us know if you are interested.

The present board is modifying the bylaws so retired members can be active as directors if they desire. Without directors WFOA would not be a member's association. Thus, even if you do not want to take part, at least promote and convince someone who will.

Three districts have vacancies. Vacancies in NZ and BC will be placed on hold, but of the three there is a vacancy in the SF/Bodega Bay District that could be filled. Most of the other district also have directors whose terms are up. Many of those have put in many years on the board and are much appreciated.

**Dues and Assessments:** Dues notice reminders were mailed about the time of this newsletters to those that have yet to pay for 2022. Please pay as soon as possible.

Also, WFOA again will be doing a poundage assessment for the 2022 albacore season. Member response to these requests will determine the future of WFOA going through the 2022 season. Of course better catches would certainly help out all. We will send out a commitment letter in April/May to members for this season. The fees did help WFOA in 2021 and we can certainly do better hopefully with help of some of the buyers to collect the fees at time of sale for those that volunteer.

## DIRECTORS 2022

BRITISH COLUMBIA  
VACANT

PUGET SOUND  
KARL JOHNSON  
JOE MALLEY  
JEREMY BROWN  
BRUCE SAMUELSON

AST / WESTPORT  
LOUIE HILL  
(President)  
ED BITTNER  
DOUG FRICKE  
(Vice - President)  
LIBIE CAIN  
RON HARPER

COOS / 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 / Treasurer)

**Fishing:** Albacore troll fishing was reported to be fairly consistent early on in the South Pacific for the vessels that ventured down. However more recent information has fishing dropping off and cooler waters developing. There also has been some catches early by NZ in their coastal zones and most landings coming into Greymouth, Nelson, and Westport on the South Island. Some Southern Bluefin Tuna has been caught also by the albacore vessels seemingly for the first time. Also, due to supply chain issue and other fuel, ice and support services have been reported lacking onshore.

Fuel pricing continues to be a factor and we expect prices to continue upwards given world events making fuel a factor for the upcoming NP season.

#### **MANAGEMENT:**

NOAA Fisheries is hosting a U.S. stakeholder virtual public meeting to discuss **North Pacific Albacore Management** on April 5, 2022 from 9 am to 1pm HST.

This virtual meeting is intended to prepare for potential discussions at the 2022 annual meetings of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) and Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission Northern Committee (WCPFC NC) on a harvest strategy for North Pacific albacore fisheries. Topics may include, but are not limited to, candidate limit and target reference points.

See the Federal Register notice <https://tinyurl.com/2p92jyku> for detailed information about the meeting.

Please register by March 29, 2022 at <https://tinyurl.com/2p92c7xc>.

Instructions for attending the meeting will be emailed to registered participants before the meeting occurs. The meeting agenda will be distributed to participants in advance of the meeting. If you would like information about meeting access or have other questions about this meeting, please email Valerie Post at [valerie.post@noaa.gov](mailto:valerie.post@noaa.gov).

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WFOA and AAFA have been coordinating on mutual efforts concerning management and access to the albacore resource for U.S. vessels. WFOA's legal counsel Peter H Flournoy has been with WFOA focused mainly on international interests is planning to retire soon. He has been attending the recent online WCPFC annual meeting as it has some possible important ramifications for South Pacific albacore trollers that need to be kept on the front burner in 2022.

[For complete update see the last WFOA newsletter dated December 15, 2021.](#)

From North Pacific MSE internationally that will set reference points for NP Albacore to SP where the proposals are floating around that may limit access, to coastal wind energy and the 303/30 legislation all now on faster tracks.

As a reminder, there has been a push by some of the Pacific Island States to close all of the high seas to fishing including for South Pacific albacore. The U.S. as well as other nations are opposed to this but hybrids of such plans with limited entry or TACs have been in the discussion and there was some action with consequences taken in the annual meeting of the WCPFC detailed in the December 2021 newsletter.

**U.S. Canada Albacore Treaty:** Updated treaty and access requirements were sent out by Canada on February 10<sup>th</sup>. WFOA will send out details in the next mailing and in the Regulations for 2022 insert of the four items listed below. Unfortunately I could not shorten the URL,s for this newsletter of each but for now you can get general information of the DFO sites at: <https://tinyurl.com/y7jzvwkn>

[Legal Requirements for Foreign Commercial Fishing Vessels Entering Canadian Waters and Ports. 2022](#)

[EZZ- Canadian Authorized Agents 2022](#)

[EZZ Application Form 2022](#)

[Fisheries Notice 2022](#)

This is the final year of the present fishing regime under the treaty and will again be renegotiated beginning after this coming season. So far there seems to be a recognition that there will probably be an extension again with some discussion of streamlining some of the procedures. We do not expect the U.S. government to support anything other than that in the near future. However if anyone has had any incidents or issue checking in or out, or with the permits, customs, coast guard please let us know.

**PFMC - Ad Hoc Marine Planning Committee to hold online work session March 4, 2022:** The Pacific Fishery Management Council's Ad Hoc Marine Planning Committee (MPC) will hold an online work session that is open to the public. The online meeting will be held Friday, March 4, 2022 starting at 1 p.m. Pacific Standard Time and ending at 5 p.m. or when business has been completed.

The primary purpose of this online meeting is to discuss the next steps in the authorization process for commercial offshore wind energy leasing, including a description of proposed offshore wind planning Call Area(s) off the Oregon Coast and to solicit public comment.

This meeting will include representatives from the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM), who will provide a presentation on the proposed Call Area(s), followed by discussion with the MPC and meeting participants.

For information: <https://tinyurl.com/3x85wnwp>

See the March 4, 2022 MPC meeting notice on the Council's website or contact Pacific Fishery Management Council staff officer Kerry Griffin at 503-820-2409.

**30x30 public comment period:** From information WFOA received - Seafood dependent businesses asking Biden Administration to prioritize a robust sustainable seafood supply within conservation effort

The Biden-Harris administration is seeking broad public comment on its sweeping climate-focused initiative. The Executive Order on Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad was signed in late January 2021 and ambitiously addresses the growing impacts of climate change.

In a first step toward meeting that order, a multi-agency report released in May 2021 (Conserving and Restoring America the Beautiful) outlined major conservation initiatives that include 30x30, an effort to conserve and restore 30% of our nation's lands and waters by the year 2030. This has sparked concern from seafood producers, who hope to see sustainable seafood as a partner in conservation, not a casualty of it. . .

See: <https://tinyurl.com/37r79xev>

**BBNJ:** Peter Flournoy reported - The U.S. State Department held a one-hour meeting February 23rd for "stakeholders" to discuss their points of view and concerns with the negotiation of a treaty on biological resources beyond national jurisdictions (i.e. on the high seas). The meeting started by the announcement that the suggested changes/comments that the USG had submitted to the last draft of the treaty in March of 2020 had been reviewed by the Biden administration. Some of those comments would remain as the U.S. negotiating position but many had been changed or eliminated because they were put forth by the Trump administration or the U.S. felt they were no longer relevant or important. Most unfortunately, the new comments or negotiating positions could not be disclosed to the stakeholders prior to the beginning of the resumed negotiations in March 7-23, 2022.

So without knowing what the new USG negotiating position will be, the "stakeholders" were asked to provide their views. Most of the comments were made by ENGOs such as Greenpeace, IUCN, and Pew all of which were concerned that at the March session there would be no observers allowed, but they strongly supported a treaty with the most expansive authorities including what activities should have to prepare environmental reports before they could proceed and where high seas marine protected areas should be established.

Glenn Delaney representing ATA emphasized the fishermen's concerns that nothing in the BNJ treaty should undermine the competence or authority of RFMOs to manage fisheries. Eric Kingma representing HLA urged that Hawaiian fishermen already constrained by huge MPAs in the state's EEZ should not face further MPAs on the high seas. Toward the end of the call, I

expressed support by WFOA for both Glenn and Eric's statements.

**Marine Stewardship Council:** Our annual audit is coming up this spring and recertification begins year from now. It is becoming costly for AAFA and WFOA and we are seeking financial incentive's from MSC to carry this on. Both WFOA and AAFA are questioning the value of the certification at this point in time but would like to hear more from those that use the albacore certificate as to whether to continue, drop, or maybe transfer the certificate to another third-party entity or other. I will be sending a letter to those buyers that signed MSC contracts last season for their views.

Depending on some of those outcomes both WFOA and AAFA members and considering the cost versus future benefits, as certificate holders we will discuss the future of MSC concerning troll albacore and markets

#### **OTHER:**

#### **CARES Act 2nd round of Oregon funding**

See: [www.dfw.state.or.us/fish/CARES/](http://www.dfw.state.or.us/fish/CARES/)

Oregon's Round 2 spend plan (pdf) was finalized and approved in December 2021. It is anticipated that Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission will have applications available sometime in mid to late February. Please check [www.psmfc.org](http://www.psmfc.org) for the latest updates; ODFW will also announce when applications are available.

**Forced Labor:** U.S. Customs and Border Protection's (CBP) request for public comments on how best to ensure that goods made with forced labor are not imported into the United States. As anticipated in that alert, U.S. government scrutiny of forced labor continues to increase. Of note, the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) announced on Jan. 25, 2022, that it will develop its first focused trade strategy to combat forced labor. Ambassador Katherine Tai announced the new plan at the first meeting of the President's Interagency Task Force to Monitor and Combat Human Trafficking convened by President Joe Biden.

See: <https://tinyurl.com/y776tr7j>

Also: <https://tinyurl.com/ydctj9pb>

**Good Article - China's expanding influence in the Pacific:** By Jack Erickson, Jan 21, 2022 - Asia Times - While China's growing presence in the developing world has stoked fears in Western media, coverage of the country's quiet but rapid insertion into the affairs of the Pacific Island nations has been scarce. Why is an economic heavyweight like China interested in cultivating ties with the remote and thinly populated island nations of the Pacific Ocean?

The answer is that Beijing views the region as rife with commercial, diplomatic, and geo-strategic opportunities.

One such opportunity is found off the coasts of the islands. The nations of this region possess exclusive economic zones (EEZs) that encompass a combined 19 9 million square kilometers of ocean water. This matters because China's own fishing areas have been severely depleted from years overfishing and other unsustainable practices. . .

Link <https://tinyurl.com/ybm874qo>

**Raffle:** WFOA will still have a drawing at the end of March during the next member/board meeting. We have not sold as many tickets as in the past but they are still available from WFOA on request or when you pay dues.

**Memorial for Paul Heikkila:** There will be a celebration to remember my brother Paul Heikkila who passed away on December 26<sup>th</sup>, on Saturday, March 26<sup>th</sup>. The location is Bay Point Landing in Coos Bay in the pavilion from Noon to 8 pm with the celebration formally starting at 2 pm.

Parking at the Bay Point Landing is limited to about 22 spaces unless you are staying there. Paul's daughter Tanya Heikkila asks for those that are going to email her at [theikkila@hotmail.com](mailto:theikkila@hotmail.com) especially if you need parking.

<https://baypointlanding.com/>

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