

WESTERN FISHBOAT OWNERS ASSOCIATION

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WFOA Members:

This most likely is my final newsletter as WFOA manager. As always it contains information about WFOA as well as pending and potential issues that may or will affect your access to the albacore resource. Beyond that I wish all of you a great new year as well as a productive South Pacific and North Pacific albacore season which looks promising after the 2022 results. Also, and always stay safe.

NOTICES:

New WFOA Manager Hire: The WFOA board over the past two months have sought potential replacements for the WFOA manager position. I have been executive director of WFOA since 1996. It has been a pleasure to serve and has had its challenges and characters.

The WFOA board has settled on the services of Clayton T. Wraith. Clay has a background in fishing and family in fishing for many years. Clay is an attorney and very enthusiastic about helping fishermen maintain access to the resource among many endeavors. He is based in Nashville, TN and will be working for a minimal fee at this time at least until we see where the budget will be after the season. Therefore I strongly encourage members to pay dues on time and voluntary assessments to help increase WFOA's revenue so we can accomplish more in the future.

WFOA is also searching for an administrative person to handle the paperwork and office issues from a west coast base. We have a couple people in mind but if anyone knows someone looking for a part time position, please contact WFOA.

Clay plans to pursue more members as there are still 200-300 U.S. vessels that catch and land albacore that do not belong to WFOA or AAFA. There are also many former WFOA vessels that are potential members. Given Clay's place of residence WFOA also plans to hire an administrated person based on the west coast soon to coordinate the office functions of the organization. To have an easy

December 31, 2022

transition I will be involved over the next few months.

There possibly could be some minor disruptions over the next few months but members can use the wfoa@charter.net email and 530-299-1097 office phone and P.O.B. 992723 mailbox until we have a change and announce it. After that to contact me for any non-WFOA purposes to 3779 Sunglow Dr., Redding, CA 96001 or 530-355-3151 and email heikkila@charter.net.

All other WFOA activities involving regulation and management will continue with WFOA's consultant Mike Conroy. WFOA will also remain involved in state, federal, and international issues, meetings, and decisions. Smooth sailing should be accomplished by April 1.

WFOA Officers: In November at the last WFOA board meeting Shawn Ryan (F/V San Pablo) was elected WFOA President and Doug Fricke - Vice President.

Member Dues: We thanks those members that have already paid 2023 dues despite much uncertainty in the organization. New invoices have just been sent to those yet to pay. Please disregard if you have already done so. More dues means that we can offer better representation to U.S. vessels and fishermen. We encourage your dues contributions and voluntary assessments fees.

DIRECTORS 2022

BRITISH COLUMBIA
VACANT

PUGET SOUND
KARL JOHNSON
JOE MALLEY
JEREMY BROWN
BRUCE SAMUELSON

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

COOS / NEWPORT
HENRY deRONDEN
RICK GOCHE
SHAWN RYAN
(President)

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)

WFOA Board Makeup: The board may/will have to consider a new formula for having an effective and functioning board in 2023 and beyond. The past two years of Covid sort of threw a wrench into the system and WFOA will have to adapt by streamlining.

WFOA has had from 17-22 board members in the past with 17 at this time. Board representation has been based on 10 districts (ports) since 1967. It has become increasingly difficult to find representatives based on ports and the ability to communicate online has dramatically changed the potential approach.

I have recommended that the board be restructured to a fewer total number possibly with a couple directors from each state (WA, OR, CA) and with at-large directors from any area. Just an idea for the board to discuss. A possible effective number could be from 9-13 board members.

FISHING:

North Pacific: As we reported in the October newsletter the landings this past season far exceeded the 2021 landings and also topped the past four seasons. About 8,000/st have been landed in U.S. ports by U.S. albacore fishermen. There has been little change in these numbers since October.

Substantial tonnage has also been unloaded in Canada by U.S. vessels. We are estimating that the total for U.S. landings will be 10,000/st or greater. That is a good number considering the markets and supply chain issues that affected prices and effort from August through seasons end.

South Pacific: There will be fewer vessels fishing in the SP this season with some arriving in the region about now. Recent years have seen from 12-21 vessels in the SP, we expect 8-12 for 2023. The decrease is probably based on operating and fuel costs as well as maintenance issues on boats. At this time a few reports of cold water farther south than normal but it's just beginning.

MANAGEMENT:

U.S. / CANADA Albacore Treaty: The U.S. and Canadian delegations have had two sessions since

November. The overall goal is to have a new regime in place by later spring 2023. The Canadians have proposed a number of changes to the present regime that will expire on December 31, 2022. Unfortunately they have proposed increasing vessels number from 45 to 110 amongst other issues such as defining capacity as a measure of effort. That proposal on a whole was a non-starter for the stakeholders from the U.S. as well as the U.S. government. The U.S. delegation position remains as status quo as supporting the present regime that is expiring.

New Management Measures:

NOAA/NMFS is interested in having a stakeholder webinar in February to discuss harvest control rules for NPALB. We will pass along the information if such a meeting is set up.

WCPFC has adopted the intent to move forward on international management measures based on the MSE computer model that has been in the works for nearly five years.

No fisherman wants additional management regulations, however what started about four years ago which was initiated primarily by the US and Canada government is an international agreement to manage North Pacific Albacore harvest (NPA) based on the projections of the MSE computer model which predicts future abundance of NPA." This summer and winter, the two Regional Fishery Management Organizations (RFMOs) that control the harvest of NPA have passed Resolutions to advance the international management by agreeing on an effort based (TAE) or a catch based (TAC) allocation for each nation that harvest NPA. Knowing our government, they will be pushing to complete this process in the next couple of years which will likely lead to some sort of limited entry for the US fleet. The next workshop on the whole process moving forward is to be scheduled for Feb. 2023.

Marine Stewardship Council (MSC): Marine Stewardship Council (MSC): Recertification for NP and SP albacore pole and troll will take place in 2023. Costs of recertification will be around 70k-75k which is lower than earlier projections and WFOA splits with American Albacore Fishing

Association (AAFA) as co-holders of the certification.

In the past MSC has been maintained by U.S. buyers' contributions as well as individual contributions. Low catches the past 3-4 years has depleted the exclusive MSC-WFOA bank account making recertification more difficult at least at this point in the process. Despite this the WFOA board recognized that some still use MSC and it has potential to be a benefit to marketing in the future. If we were to opt out it would be costly to get back in.

Originally back in 2009 the coastal albacore buyers approached WFOA to secure the certification and since that time in 2009 the fees have covered past recertifications and annual audits. Merging with AAFA which was the first tuna organization to secure the certification helped both of our groups with costs and logistics.

In the November 2022 the WFOA board approved proceeding forward with the MSC recertification and work to secure funds.

Also, we need 2022 buyers signed up for MSC to send in their contributions for this past season if they have yet to do so. A list of 2022 buyers that have signed the annual contract are listed on www.wfoa-tuna.org, and under the MSC button. WFOA contracts MSC buyers annually beginning June 1 and ending May 31.

Update From MSC: *"We are pleased to inform you that the new MSC Fisheries Standard and Guidance (version 3.0) has been published.*

The publication of the new version of the MSC Fisheries Standard follows the most comprehensive review undertaken in the 25-year history of the MSC, including consultations with fisheries and industry representatives, scientists, assessors, environmental NGOs and supply chain organizations.

We are confident that this new version of the Standard will ensure MSC certified fisheries continue to be recognized as leaders in global sustainability, driving progress in protecting our marine resources for this and future generations.

"The new MSC Fisheries Standard provides a global benchmark to drive forward real and lasting change in the way our oceans are fished by confidently recognizing and incentivizing fisheries that are world leaders in sustainability" Rupert Howes, Chief Executive of the Marine Stewardship Council

We have also published several other new and revised scheme documents to support the new version of the Standard and further improve the MSC program. Further details and links to the new documents can be found at."

See: <https://tinyurl.com/2ocg47cb>

American Fishermen's Research Foundation has come up with a new potential project summarized below. For questions contact AFRF administrator Ericka Carlson at (971)-209-2030 or AFRF President Mike Cornman at (360)-581-0982.

Improving Predictions of Distribution Change Under Anomalous Conditions Using a Joint Fishery-Species Distribution Model

Climate-driven changes in the oceans are shifting the distributions of fishery resources, however, further research is needed on how fishing fleets will be affected by these climate changes. Because fish populations and fishing fleets may respond to climate change in divergent ways accurately describing and understanding variations in species and fleet distributions is a key requirement for managers and policy makers to develop management strategies that will support climate-readiness and resilience in U.S. fisheries. The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) National Climate Science Strategy and the Pacific Fisheries Management Council (PFMC) Climate and Communities Initiative both call for improved understanding of the drivers of species distributions, and assessments of the potential impacts shifting distributions of fish stocks will have on coastal communities under different climate scenarios.

AFRF proposes to employ a novel joint fishery-species distribution model (JFSDM) approach to improve model predictive performance and our understanding of how climate-driven anomalies (e.g. marine heatwaves) will impact the spatiotemporal distribution and overlap of fishing

fleets and their catch. To showcase the relevancy of this approach for fisheries management, this research will focus on the U.S. Pacific Albacore Tuna troll-and-pole fishery and will leverage the latest remote-sensing environmental data, fishery dependent and independent data, and single and joint distribution models.

To represent the U.S. west coast albacore fleet, catch per unit effort data of north Pacific albacore tuna (*Thunnus alalunga*) will be obtained from fishing logbook data while fishery independent archival tags of north Pacific albacore tuna will be used to represent the species. To assess the predictive skill across modelling frameworks (single vs joint models), each model will be fit to data under near-average, anomalous, or both climate conditions and validated against a withheld dataset. Additionally, a suite of metrics will be utilized to identify shifts in the overlap between albacore and the U.S. west coast trolling fleet during near-average and anomalous conditions to evaluate the potential impacts extreme events have on the fishery.

The methods developed from this research can be applied to other U.S. fisheries and can be particularly useful for evaluating climate change impacts on fisheries in regions that are also experiencing climate-driven anomalies or directional change (i.e. climate change). These efforts will expand our knowledge of the spatiotemporal footprint of fishing effort and can help aid in the development of a climate-resilient and sustainable fisheries management framework for the U.S. West Coast albacore fishery

Anticipated products: Anticipated products from this project include 1+ peer reviewed manuscripts, which will contain mapped model predictions from the JFSM and single-SDMs and may or may not contain non-confidential heatmaps depicting the west coast wide albacore trolling. Additionally, the receivers are interested in adding the model predictions to from this research to an online tool called Fisheries and Climate Toolkit (FaCeT; <https://facet.research.gmri.io/>) which is an ongoing NASA Biodiversity and Ecological Forecasting project that seeks to develop online products and applications to support climate-ready and sustainable fisheries practices. Users of the online tool will be able to explore and visualize albacore and fleet distributions under MHWs

conditions, track species and fleet magnitude of change, as well as address and communicate model uncertainty. FaCeT only shows model predictions and will not release any confidential data, such as albacore track data. In all cases, we will work with the AFRF to confirm that we have met confidentiality requirements and provide 2 weeks lead time for review of any information that will be made public.

OTHER:

Melvin Frank Martins passed away at his home in Prunedale, CA on Wednesday November 2, Franks was a longtime albacore fisherman and member of WFOA. Full obituary is at:

<https://tinyurl.com/2hymy6up>

Final Thoughts: As I phase out of this position, we should all keep in mind that WFOA is not my association or any particular individual's association. WFOA is vessel owners association made up of fishermen and supporting businesses that have a goal of maintaining access to the resource and returning fair market value of the albacore tuna. WFOA originally was set up in 1967 to negotiate prices with major canners. It has been self-sustaining mainly by voluntary contributions. As other markets emerged WFOA became more involved in management and maintaining access. WFOA also managed AFRF until a couple years ago. WFOA spent a lot of funds on promoting wild albacore and did things like managing high seas carrier ships and fueling operations among many other member services. Times keep changing and so do requirements but today its survival to keep our access to the resource. In 26 years we have done much and had success and some failures. Vessel owners need to maintain their presence in the future by being involved. Too often a handful of directors make the policies with little input. They would rather have more input from members on important issues and I encourage that for the future. Not all will agree on issues but it does little to quit the group over one issue. I may write something about the experience and distribute it at some point to all that have stayed involved.

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