

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:

October 10, 2021

The 2021 North Pacific albacore season has come to an end for the most part. Some may say it never did start. Landings were lowest since 1994. A few vessels did well and market prices were up due to short supply and high demand of albacore. But generally fishing effort was lacking or reduced. Meanwhile the push to manage the albacore fishery goes forward in both the South Pacific and North Pacific. WFOA for the past 25 years has stayed involved at all levels and does a good job using limited and shrinking resources. However, we need participants and financial support through dues and assessments to carry on in your behalf going forward.

WFOA Board: The WFOA board will be holding virtual meetings over the next couple of months. Given Covid-19 and the AFRF situation over the past year, organizational issues have been put on hold in some cases. I as manager am doing the job on a part time basis as 50% of former budget amounts. WFOA over the past few seasons have had to cut back expenses in most areas given the slow production and attrition of the fleet. We do need new members in order to represent your interests. There are over 400 albacore vessels that do not belong to either WFOA or AAFA. But to hire an effective person as my replacement in today's world it takes more than what we collect now. We certainly appreciate all those that pay dues each and every year. It has been voluntary and we have maintained this organization for over 50 years with that approach.

Fishing and Markets: Many vessels gave up for the year early into the albacore season as fishing was very sporadic and generally farther offshore than normal. It has also been reported that many smaller fish have showed up on the coast in September. Some catches have been made beyond the 129W-130W region and off Canada but winter storms seem to be developing. Total catch landed in the U.S. may not exceed 4,000 tons including U.S. landings in Canada which would be the lowest since 1994. So far as of October 4th only 3,173/st of albacore have been

landed in U.S. west coast ports, at an average value of about \$3,860/st according to Pac Fin data. There still is fish onboard boats and numbers above do not include U.S. landings in Canadian ports. For reference historic 1991 landings were about 1,900 tons. Japan's coastal fishery in may and June was also very poor, although they did have a record season in 2020.

The cause of the low albacore catch may have many reasons and is open to speculation. It most likely will be studied by scientists over the coming years. On the surface it seems that factors such as ocean conditions, such as cold water along the coast, lack of certain forage species, weather conditions, lack of effort because of the above reasons, high seas interception of albacore by IUU, and possibly the increased effort on albacore spawners in the Western Pacific could be some of the causes. It is unfortunate in a year recovering from Covid-19 that there are limited amounts of albacore to fill markets. Higher prices have made up for some of the pain but we need to find answers concerning the downward trend.

Prices: Albacore prices were established in mid-July for cannery destined unbled brine prices of \$ 3,000/st and Brine/Bled at \$ 3,100. Soon brine/bled at some buyers were from \$3,200-\$3,500 depending on quality and size. Blast/bled albacore at the end of the season was ranging

DIRECTORS

BRITISH COLUMBIA
DON BELLHAM

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)

from \$5,000/st - \$ 6,500/st. much depending on quality and size.

Buying and transport continued to be plagued by 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.

MANAGEMENT:

Management Issues WFOA has stayed involved with lately: Thanks to Peter Flournoy, representing WFOA, and who made some of the following observations on many of these and other issues we have been able to make our points concerning our fishery.

NORTH PACIFIC - After discussions and email with both the PIRO and West Coast Region offices of NMFS their earlier suggestion that the MSE process for North Pacific albacore be discussed at the Northern Committee meeting coming up on October 5-7, 2021 has been tabled to a later date. It has been recognized that there is a need for further discussions between the fisheries managers and the fishermen to be able to come to reasonable target reference points and threshold reference points. After those additional exchanges of views will be necessary to develop functional harvest control rules.

SOUTH PACIFIC - The WCPFC-TCC meeting which began last week and will finish this week spent a great deal of time discussing the subject of Chinese and Taiwanese utilizing more longline vessels and obtaining larger catches in the areas south of 20° degrees South thus violating CMM 2015-02. This gave rise to conflicting views of how the phrase "fishing for" South Pacific albacore should be interpreted. The Secretariat said it meant those vessels which harvested 50% or more of albacore measured against the yellowfin and big eye catch. China and Taiwan argued that it meant 50% or more measured against all species of fish caught. A working Group will meet in November to resolve this issue and whether the measure should apply

to the entire WCPFC Convention Area. There was also limited discussion of electronic reporting of catch and effort focused on the long line fleets.

NMFS published a notice in the Federal Register today soliciting applications for the General Advisory Committee (GAC) and the Scientific Advisory Subcommittee (SAS) to the U.S. Delegation to the IATTC. Applications from first time nominees as well as previous GAC and SAS members are welcome. Self-nominations are acceptable. The notice can be found online: <https://tinyurl.com/u5csykr7>

Offshore Wind Energy:

VANDENBERG AIRFORCE BASE - The California State Lands Commission is considering two applications (CADEMO or IDEOL projects) to each place 4 anchored wind turbines in somewhat shallow state waters (262 to 328 feet deep). Comments on a draft EA were due on September 13, 2021. It was pointed out that both projects were described as demonstration projects. As such there was no purpose in going forward with them since the BOEM projects being discussed for federal waters off of California were to be sited in waters 500 to 1,200 meters deep. Other comments on the SLC draft preliminary environmental assessment pointed out the section which listed out numerous commercial and recreationally important species in the area as well as marine mammals and endangered species, all of which required detailed research and studies.

MORRO BAY EXTENSION AREAS - Comments were also due on the BOEM extensions to the Morro Bay call area on September 13th. The PFMC, because of the work of the newly formed ad hoc Marine Planning Committee sent a 6-page letter of comment to BOEM pointing out the substantial concerns the Council has with this call area. It included the potential impacts on albacore habitat areas, historic albacore and swordfish fishing grounds, impediments to traveling to albacore fishing areas, shoreside economies, in addition to concerns about non-HMS fisheries such as crab and ground fisheries. The letter is available on the Council website and contains the following summary:

The direct and indirect effects of wind energy areas on fisheries, habitats, socioeconomics, and ecological resources should inform all wind energy area planning processes, and should do so in advance of the leasing, permitting, and construction phases of wind energy development.

The Council recommends that BOEM exclude from further consideration the West Extension and areas identified as spawning habitat for sablefish and dover sole, other ecologically sensitive resources, and important fishing grounds. Additional precautionary measures include establishing buffer zones to protect resources and fishing, where indicated; using location and design criteria to further minimize impacts to fishery resources from wind energy projects and cable routes; and any activities associated with establishment or maintenance of those structures.

NOTE: BOEM Oregon Intergovernmental Renewable Energy Task Force Meeting

The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) and the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) are pleased to announce the upcoming BOEM Oregon Intergovernmental Renewable Energy Task Force (Task Force) webinar on October 21, 2021. The purpose of the meeting is to provide an update on offshore wind energy planning and to discuss next steps toward offshore wind energy leasing in Oregon.

See: <https://tinyurl.com/yzfwcxy4>

U.S. Representative Jared Huffman defends AIS requirements in IUU bill that both the industry and NOAA Fisheries find redundant

October 1, 2021 -- Last month, representatives from 129 fishing organizations signed a letter to Congress, organized by the Saving Seafood Coalition, opposing proposed new vessel monitoring requirements that have been determined to be redundant by NOAA Fisheries. Rep. Jared Huffman (D-CA), the Chairman of the House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Water, Oceans, and Wildlife, was asked about the concerns raised in the letter and unfortunately

defended the proposed changes in a statement to Seafood Source. The following is an excerpt from the story that appeared in Seafood Source. Please click through to the complete story to read Chairman Huffman's comments.

Nearly 130 members of the U.S. fishing industry signed a letter sent earlier this month to the top members of the U.S. House of Representatives subcommittee that oversees fishing policies, expressing concerns about a bill they said would create technological redundancies, add to their costs, and raise privacy concerns.

The industry members told U.S. Reps. Jared Huffman (D-California) and Cliff Bentz (R-Oregon), in the 14 September letter they oppose a proposed requirement in H.R. 3075, also known as the Illegal Fishing and Forced Labor Prevention Act, that would mandate automatic identification systems (AIS) be used to track fishing activities in both U.S. waters and the open seas. See: <https://tinyurl.com/yhux3su6>

AFRF TAGGING UPDATE: AFRF and NMFS have successfully deployed archival tags on 78 North Pacific albacore this season. We were not able to get them out last season due to the pandemic and travel issues for NOAA scientists. Huge thanks to the captain and crew of the F/V Peso II for engaging in this important research for the albacore fishery.

Our mission now is to get the word out to as many fishermen and processors as we can to make them aware of the tags and the reward information for return of the tags. AFRF has posters in both email and hard copy versions available. We would greatly appreciate your help in distributing this poster to your contacts. Please contact Ericka Carlson at erickac@afrf.org or 971.209.2030 to receive a copy.

Archival Tag Recovery: American Fishermen's Research Foundation has deployed over 1,000 tags since 2001. The reward for catching and returning the whole fish is \$500. If you find one in your albacore catch, please separate the tagged fish from the other fish and contact SWFSC, your buyer, AFRF, or call NMFS at 858-546-7000.

KGW, local Portland NBC affiliate has done a TV news story on the tagging. See it here: <https://bit.ly/2XB9Ss3>

Ericka Carlson - Administrator
American Fishermen's Research Foundation
P.O. Box 16338 Portland, OR 97292
971.209.2030
afrf.org

USCG Boardings 2021: Crew aboard the Coast Guard Cutter Alert out of Astoria, Oregon, have completed 60-day law enforcement patrol focused on albacore tuna fishing within the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone of the coasts of Washington and Oregon.

WFOA would be curious to see how boardings went and if you had any issues with methods, selection of who to board or any other pertinent information. I have received some concerns already that may reflect on some lack of knowledge about current laws and procedures by vessel owners and operators. It would be good to address any of these this coming winter before there are larger problems.

Pacific Management Council Activities:
[Pacific Council Request for Advisory Body Nominations for the 2022-2024 Term](#)

The Pacific Fishery Management Council is requesting nominations for the 2022-2024 Advisory Body term. Information on submitting a nomination and links to forms and resources can be found on our Advisory Body vacancy web page. To ensure consideration, nominations should be received via our online Advisory Body Nomination Form no later than 5 p.m. Friday, October 22, 2021.

For further information on the advisory bodies or the nomination process, please contact Mike Burner, Deputy Director (503-820-2414 or toll free 866-806-7204).

Note: I have reapplied for another term on the HMSAS of the PFMC Troll seat given all the albacore related issues that seem to be in the near future. However, if anyone else wishes to put their name in for that seat it is fine by me.

Also, one can resign the position at any time and the PFMC will select another rep.

Marine Stewardship Council: WFOA and AAFA have just completed the annual audit which was delayed by Covid for over a year. The NP and SP reports should be posted on the MSC website.

[Part of the Sept 10th statement by the HMSAS to the PFMC which are issues WFOA will have to deal with over the next couple of years.](#)

Marine Stewardship Council ("MSC) and Western and Central Pacific Ocean ("WCPO") fisheries - On July 27, MSC issued a press release indicating, "Twenty-two tuna fisheries in the Western Central Pacific Ocean could face suspension of their certification to the Marine Stewardship Council's Standard for sustainable fishing unless an international agreement is reached on how to set controls on catch limits between 26 countries." The HMSAS is concerned about impacts to markets to U.S. based stakeholders participating in MSC certified fisheries in the WCPO - for example the South Pacific Albacore fishery. We encourage the Council to work with Stakeholders and NMFS in an effort to minimize possible significant negative impacts to U.S. participants in fisheries which may be impacted.

OTHER:

Coos Bay fisherman safe after rescue by university research vessel: It was a relief to know that Frank Akers, F/V Lanola was rescued very quickly by an Oregon based research vessel on the night of August 28th. We wish Frank all the best going forward.

See: <https://tinyurl.com/47wmuxdm>

New WFOA Members:

Robert Wright F/V Capriccio Eureka/Ft. Bragg

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