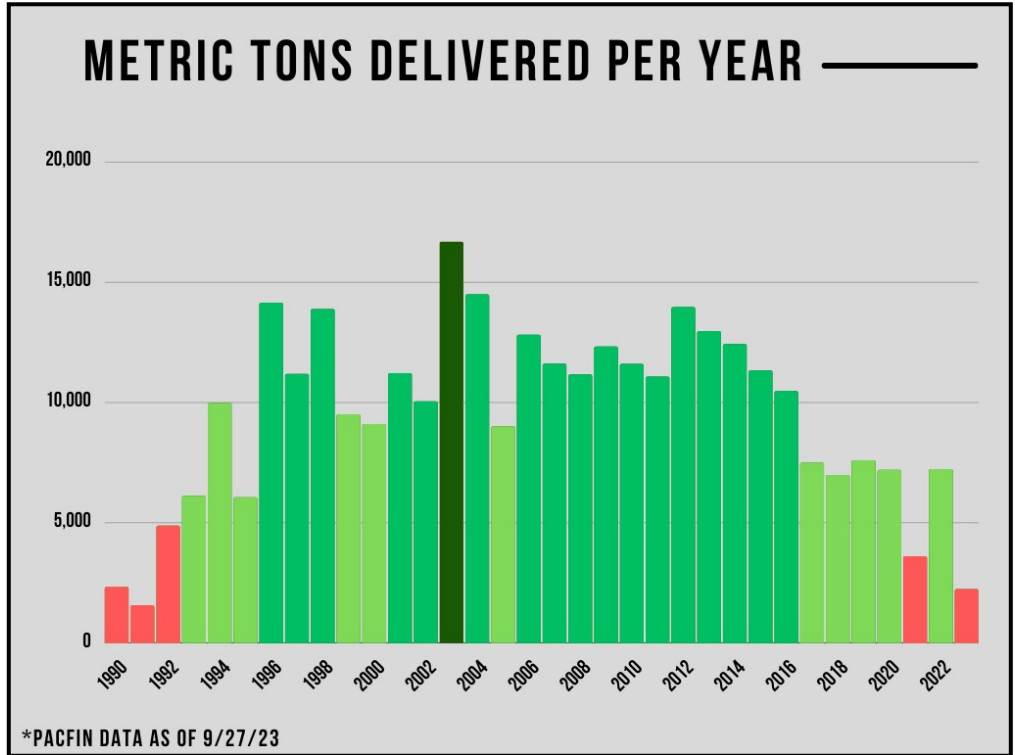


Albacore Season on Pace for Lowest Production in Decades

-WFOA Staff

The 2023 albacore season may go down as the worst seasons in over three decades. Reports generated from state agency fish ticket data show the total landings of albacore on the West Coast of the United States this season totaling less than 2,300 metric tons (m/t). By comparison, over the last 20 years, the fleet has averaged over 10,500 m/t delivered. The average production since 2017 has been consistently lower but still near the 7,000 m/t mark, nearly three times the total so far this season.

Compounding the severity of the circumstances surrounding this year's low production are the high cost of fuel and the low price per pound being paid for albacore. "It's an absolute disaster," a member of the WFOA explained, "I have never seen anything like this. Other years we have had slow fishing the price was normally higher. Add the price of fuel? Some boats won't survive a season like this." Just how dire is the economic equation facing the fleet this year? Since 1991, only the 2021 season has produced less than 4,000 m/t. During that season the average price paid on the coast was over eighty cents higher per pound and the



price of fuel was over a dollar less per gallon.

Theories as to the reasons behind the low production this season are varied. Some folks have pointed to the El Nino weather pattern delaying season-

al production. Others point to the low price per pound and limited markets reducing the number of trips made by vessels participating in the fishery this season. Further analysis of the full season data will be provided in the fourth quarter newsletter.

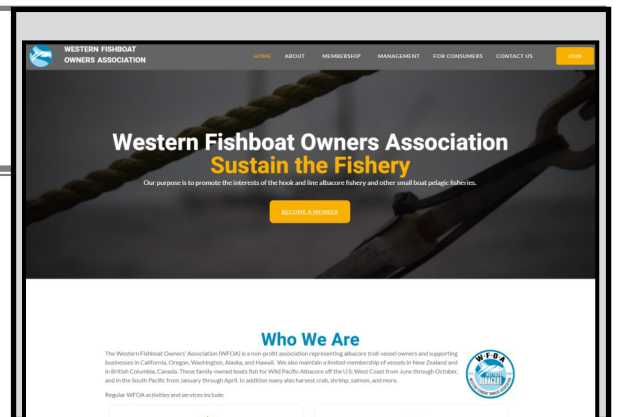
WFOA Launches Revamped Website With Eye Towards the Future

-WFOA Staff

The WFOA staff has updated their website to improve membership benefits and advocacy goals. They considered modern communication channels, growing member participation, being a reliable source of information, and boosting the fleet and WFOA supporting members' profitability, political influence, and marketability. Despite limited resources and several priorities, they ambitiously updated the outdated website's

aesthetic and functionality, completing work ahead of schedule and with a zero-budget approach.

The WFOA is exploring additional functionality and input from members is encouraged. Updates to the Wild Pacific Albacore site are also planned, and members interested in promoting their brand



should contact the WFOA directly. The new website can be found at www.wfoa-tuna.org.

Offshore Wind Blows in to the Oregon Coast

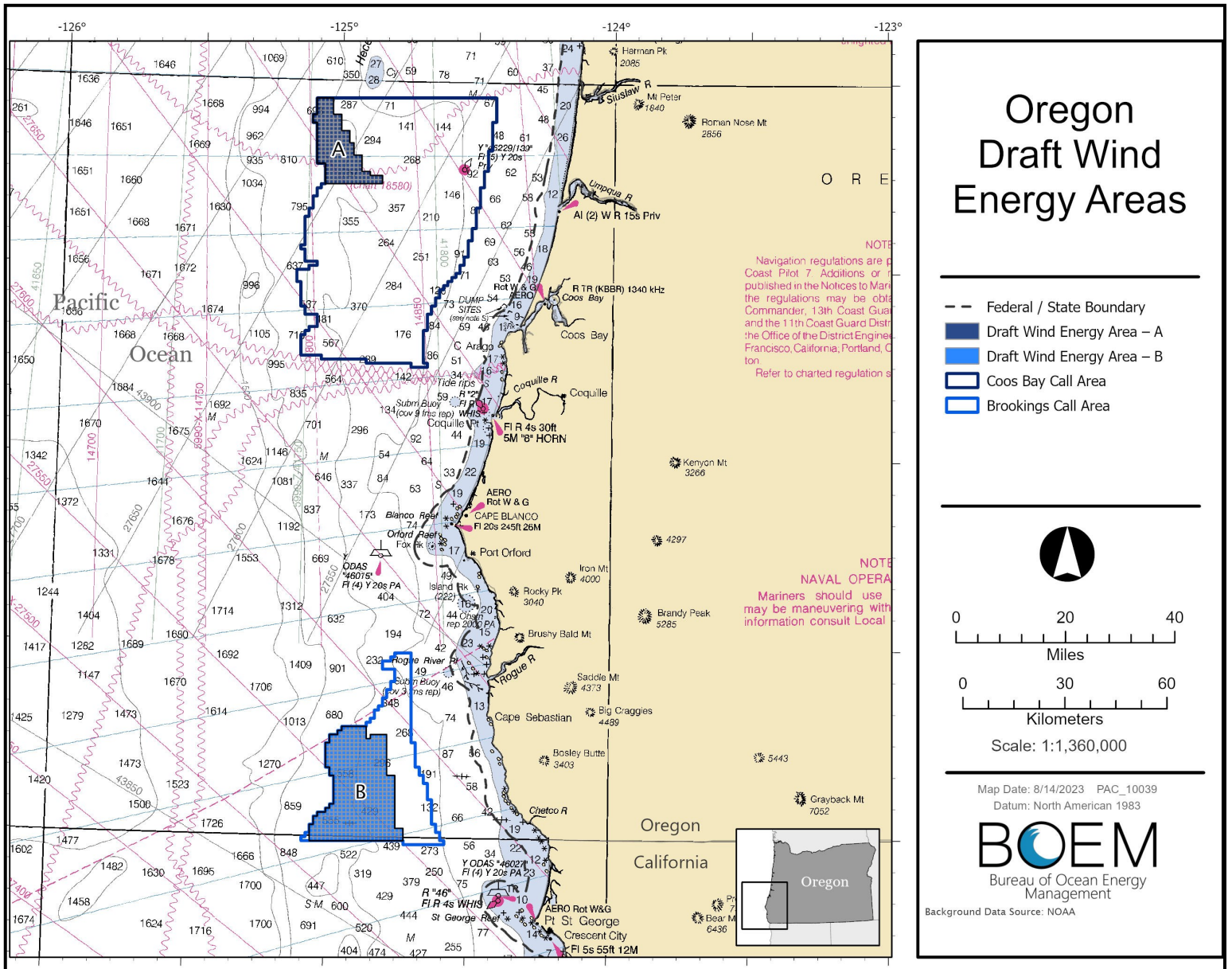
-Mike Conroy, Industry Consultant

On August 15, the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) published two Draft Wind Energy Areas (DWEAs) within the Call Areas off the Oregon Coast. The public comment period on the two DWEAs currently closes on October 16, 2023. In support of these areas, BOEM and NOAA’s National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science (NCCOS) issued a Draft Report: A Wind Energy Area Siting Analysis for the Oregon Call

Areas (Draft Report). The Draft Report purports to show how a spatial suitability model was used to deconflict the entirety of the two Call Areas to get at the DWEAs. A full description of the Draft Report is outside the scope of this update; but a brief overview of the fisheries data layer is warranted.

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife partnered with the National

Marine Fisheries Service to provide information on 9 different fisheries: groundfish bottom trawl, at-sea hake mid-water trawl, shoreside hake mid-water trawl, pink shrimp trawl, groundfish fixed gear pot, groundfish longline, commercial albacore, charter albacore, and Dungeness crab pot fisheries. These fisheries were combined to form a single “fisheries data layer” for inclusion in to



-Map, Oregon Draft Wind Energy Areas A & B

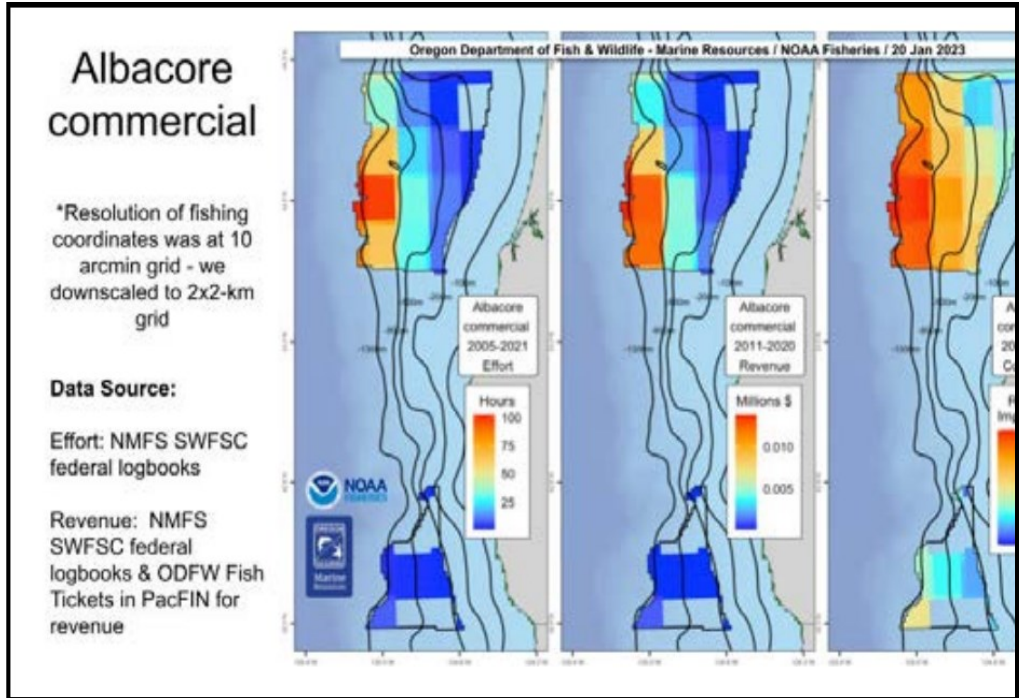
Offshore Wind—Continued

-Mike Conroy, Industry Consultant

the suitability model. A more detailed description of the fisheries data layer, including information on each of the above fisheries, can be found on pages 153 – 166 of the Draft Report.

As you know, DWEA “A” includes some important ground for albacore fisheries. The graphical representation on page 161 of the Draft Report (pictured right) confirms this. Inclusion of the other fisheries, particularly those which do not operate primarily within the boundaries of the Call Areas, seems to diminish the importance of the DWEAs to the albacore fishery. Last June, WFOA and AAFA submitted a comment letter on the Call Areas noting the importance of the Coos Bay Call Area to the albacore fishery. It will be critical for the albacore fleets to comment on the DWEAs. To that end, please send any information you may have about the potential impacts to the albacore fishery from the two DWEAs. This information can be submitted to your Directors, Executive Director, or WFOA staff.

Why is this important? As the nation, and states, look towards renewable energy, offshore wind is being touted as necessary to address climate change. The West Coast is becoming the next target area for offshore wind developers. Five



-Graph, pg 161 of Draft Report: A Wind Energy Area Siting Analysis for the Oregon Call Areas

leases covering 576 sq miles, capable of generating 5 gigawatts (GW), were sold off the California coast last December. California has a long-term planning goal of another 20GW of offshore wind facilities by 2045. Last year, two unsolicited lease requests were submitted for waters offshore Washington.

Regarding the BOEM process, the identification of DWEAs begins to offer clarity on specific areas that may be auctioned off to developers. After the comment period closes, we will likely see Final Wind Energy Areas. Those areas will be the lease sites to be auctioned. If we assume the goal is to have effective leases by January of 2025, time is of the essence.

Membership Renewals

-WFOA Staff

Membership renewals are being sent out in November. The new WFOA website allows for easy and secure renewals and provides additional information. If you have not received recent communication from the WFOA please contact the WFOA staff to ensure your information is correct. Regular updates have been provided regarding important issues impacting the industry and it is important all member information is up to date.

Since 1967, the WFOA board, Directors, and staff have been committed to advocating on behalf of the fleet and the fishing communities along the West Coast. WFOA will not be able to continue fighting for the future of the fleet without the membership dues, the revenue produced through a voluntary tonnage assessment, and donations to the organization. The WFOA staff recognizes the difficulties of the season this year and sin-



cerely appreciates the support of members. Please consider renewing your membership, encouraging a friend to get involved, and making a voluntary donation to the WFOA.

No Canadians in American EEZ for the First Time Since 2012

-WFOA Staff

For the first time since 2012 the delegation from America and Canada failed to enact a regime under the international treaty that allows for reciprocal fishing and port access. The treaty between the government of Canada and the United States on Pacific Albacore tuna Vessels and Port Privileges was originally signed and enacted in 1981. In 2012, issues (including purported disproportionate benefits and confrontations on the water stemming from the number of Canadian vessels off the West Coast) led to changes in the terms of the treaty.

Since 2012, the two countries have used a three-year regime renewal period to evaluate the benefit of the treaty and set the parameters of the agreement. This includes the number of vessels allowed to fish in the foreign Economic Zone, the dates range for fishing and the requirements for port access, unloading and data sharing. The most recent regime signed in 2020 expired on December 31st 2022. Ultimately, the delegations from each country failed to come to an agreement prior to this season and as a result access to the ocean was limited. Throughout the difficult season many were left wondering what happened and what happens next?

What Happens Next?

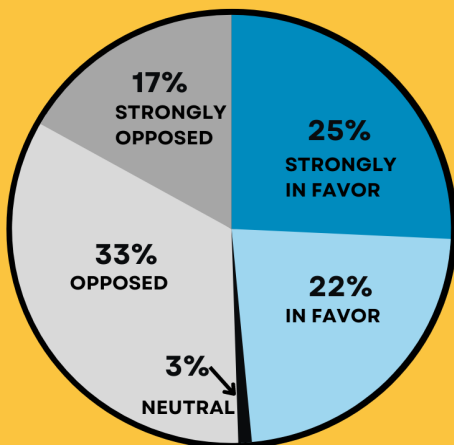
The fallout of the failed negotiations is still being felt and the same questions remain heading into the 2024 Negotiations. With no regime in place and a slow season the dialogue has continued amongst vessels from both sides of the border throughout the summer. Negotiations are set to resume in November and the US Delegation has requested a meeting to provide stakeholder input.

When asked about the role the WFOA will play in the upcoming negotiations the WFOA Executive Director, Clayton Wraith, stated, "The WFOA has a responsibility to be the voice of it's members in any international negotiations that directly impact our fleet. Folks have strong opinions on this matter and it's important to make sure they have a chance to be heard." Pressed to explain the best path forward Mr. Wraith commented that, "these are difficult discussions that have real world consequences. I truly believe we need to increase communication and re-frame these issues in the light of the real world impact and the future success of the fleet."

The WFOA will be surveying members again in the fall in order to provide input representative of the views of membership.

July 2023 Member Survey

What is your opinion on the current



As real world impacts mounted at the beginning of the season, WFOA members provided valuable feedback on a proposed 'mid-season regime'.

I fully support mutual fishing opportunities for both sides of the border!

I am AGAINST trying to make this arrangement this late in game.


Never know if the biomass will move mainly into Canadian waters this year.


The Canadian fisherman are a nightmare to fish along with. I can say the same about some Americans too but, there is difference and if I had to pick one side to fish with it would be ours.

Each countries' requirements for fishing in their fishery exclusive zone should be equitable.


Changes Proposed by Canada


Seen as non-controversial

 (1) Flexibility on the overall length of replacement vessels

 (2) Improved data collection and sharing

Contentious and unresolved

 (3) Increase the number of Canadian vessels allowed to access the US EEZ from 45 to 110

 (4) Extending the length of the fishing season for Canadian vessels in the US EEZ from Sept. 15th to Oct. 31st

HOW IS THE INFORMATION GATHERED?

The data used to determine the parameter of the treaty regime negotiations is compiled by the Canadian/US working group. The data exchange covers multiple sources that include catch totals, landing ports, and fleet efforts. Full details will be available on our website.

WHAT HAPPENED?

10/31/22 ▶

A LETTER IS SENT TO THE US DELEGATION BY CANADA'S DEPARTMENT OF FISHERIES AND OCEANS (CDFO). THEY PROPOSE FOUR SPECIFIC CHANGES (SEE BOX RE: CHANGES).

Fall '22 ▶

MEMBERS OF THE FLEET ON BOTH SIDES OF THE BORDER CONFUSED RE: THE REQUEST FOR THE INCREASE IN VESSELS. FOLKS WONDER IF THE CDFO ENGAGED IN DIALOGUE WITH THEIR FLEET PRIOR TO SENDING THE PROPOSAL.

11/8/22 ▶

THE TWO SIDES MEET FOR IN-PERSON MEETINGS IN VANCOUVER. US DELEGATION DISAGREES THAT THE TREATY UNEVENLY BENEFITS THE US FLEET. THE US PROPOSES A "STATUS QUO" RENEWAL OF THE TREATY, BUT THESE DISCUSSIONS FAILED TO LEAD TO AN AGREEMENT.

Winter '22 ▶

THE US DELEGATION SEEKS FURTHER INSIGHT FROM INDUSTRY PARTICIPANTS, PROVIDED UPDATES, AND DRAFTED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS THE CANADIAN REQUEST FOR MORE FLEXIBILITY IN THE OVERALL LENGTH OF THE REPLACEMENT VESSELS.

4/18/23 ▶

ANOTHER IN-PERSON MEETING BETWEEN THE TWO SIDES TAKES PLACE IN SEATTLE. AGAIN, THE TWO COUNTRIES FAILED TO COME TO AN AGREEMENT. CANADA BEGINS ENFORCING RESTRICTIONS ON PORT ACCESS TO AMERICAN ALBACORE VESSELS.

Spring '23 ▶

THE US DELEGATION MEETS WITH STAKEHOLDERS (INCLUDING WFOA) AND REQUESTS INSIGHT RE: WILLINGNESS OF THE FLEET TO ACCEPT THE CANADIAN PROPOSAL. THE US DELEGATION DISCUSS POSSIBILITY OF A "VOLUNTARY AGREEMENT" THAT COULD ACT AS A SHORT-TERM BRIDGE REGIME FOR THE 2023 SEASON.

7/1/23 ▶

UNCLEAR WHETHER AN AGREEMENT WOULD BE REACHED. AN UPDATE REGARDING THE POSITIONS OF BOTH COUNTRIES WAS OUTLINED AT THE ANNUAL WFOA MEMBERS MEETING ON JULY 1ST.

7/12/23 ▶

THE CANADIAN DELEGATION SENDS A PROPOSAL FOR A "STATUS QUO" BRIDGE REGIME TO GO INTO EFFECT AT THE END OF THE WEEK. IN RESPONSE THE US DELEGATION REQUESTS INPUT FROM STAKEHOLDERS. IN RESPONSE TO THIS REQUEST THE WFOA SENT OUT A POLL, SOLICITED MEMBERS' INPUT, AND CONTACTED DIRECTORS (SEE MEMBER SURVEY RESULTS GRAPH)

7/25/23 ▶

INFO GATHERED IS CONVEYED TO THE US DELEGATION PROMPTLY. THE US REQUESTS MORE TIME TO CONSIDER THE CANADIAN MID-SEASON TREATY. IN RESPONSE, THE CANADIAN DELEGATION INFORMED THEIR FLEET THAT THE TREATY REGIME WOULD NOT BE IN PLACE FOR THE 2023 SEASON.

WFOA Leaders Take Part in MSC Stakeholder Meeting

-WFOA Staff

The Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) reassessment of North and South Pacific Albacore tuna fisheries began in earnest this September with a Stakeholder meeting in Westport, WA. Leadership from WFOA and AAFA met with a team from the third-party private auditing company MRAG Americas, Inc. to provide documentation, have personal conversations with fleet members, take a tour of unloading facilities, and learn more about the day-to-day realities of life on the water while fishing for Albacore.

Previous assessments had been based primarily on data provided by government agencies and fisheries enforcement. This time the MRAG team wanted to make a more personal connection. MRAG scientist Nick Hahlbeck stated:

“I appreciated the chance to meet several kind folks from AAFA and WFOA

and see a glimpse of the fishery through their eyes. Hearing firsthand about how the men and women on boats, in processing facilities, and in the office think about the sustainability of their work helps us do our jobs better as assessors.”

Starting at the Blue-Buoy and ending with an official Stakeholder call at McCausland Hall, the conversations and hands-on demonstrations reinforced that the troll and pole albacore fishery is one of the best in the

world.

MRAG scientist Erin Wilson reflected on the Stakeholder meeting with these sentiments:

“The site visit for the MSC reassessment for North and South Pacific albacore was very informative. WFOA, AAFA, and the albacore stakeholder/fishing community were all very helpful in providing information and knowledge about the fishery that can't be captured by reading reports or in online searches. The assessment team met with fisherfolk, processors and several other stakeholders during the visit, which added clarity in terms of how the fishery operates. This perspective from the people involved in the day-to-day activities in the fishery is invaluable, particularly in how it relates to the MSC process and requirements. MRAG Americas is very grateful for the hospitality provided during the site visit and we look forward to continuing our relationship with this fishery during the recertification process.”

The WFOA will continue to provide updates on the certification process as they are available.

“This perspective from the people involved in the day-to-day activities in the fishery is invaluable”



MRAG Scientist Erin Wilson at Dock visit, Westport, WA



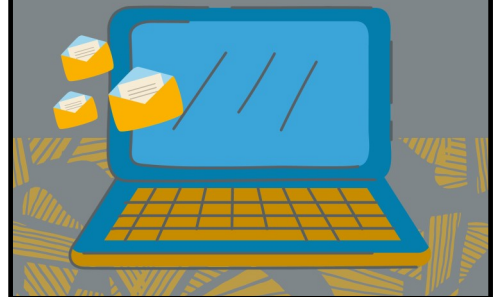
EU LISTING

UPDATE

Do you want to be able to sell your product overseas? Is your buyer requesting that you be a listed processor? The WFOA is able to process EU listing applications year round. If you'd like assistance please email us with the following information:

- Copy of current Coast Guard Vessel Registration Certificate
- Name for Listing
- Vessel Name
- Hailing Port City
- Hailing Port State
- Physical and Mailing address
- Registered Length

Don't stay out of the loop
MAKE SURE WE HAVE YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS



Directors Wanted!

-WFOA Staff



Are you passionate about the fishing industry and want to make a positive impact? Do you have thoughts on the big issues facing our fleet today? The

WFOA is seeking individuals who are interested in becoming a Director.

As a Director, you'll have the opportunity to work closely with other passionate individuals who share your love for the sea and the fishing industry. You will be involved in making strategic decisions and guiding our organization towards a successful future. We need people who are willing to participate and show up as part of the team. We're stronger when we

stand together.

If you're interested in joining us, we would love to hear from you. New Directors are elected in January so please contact us to learn more about the role and how you can get involved. We look forward to hearing from you and working together to make a positive difference in our industry.

Doug's Corner

Thoughts on the future management of the North Pacific Albacore fishery

-Doug Fricke, WFOA Vice President

This spring and summer have been busy for the anticipated international management of North Pacific Albacore (NPA). Myself, along with Clayton Wraith (WFOA Executive director), Mike Conroy (WFOA advisor), and others, have been in meetings with the US delegation and other countries to find an international plan on how to curtail harvest of NPA across the North Pacific if there is ever a collapse of the NPA biomass.

The harvest of NPA in the Western Pacific north of the equator is controlled by the Northern Committee (NC) which proposes management measures to the Western Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC). It's important that the harvest by nations in the West Pacific are included in any international agreement because scientists are telling us that the albacore that we catch along our coast migrate to the West Pacific to spawn.

This Spring the NC members (including China) agreed to an international harvest strategy that stated: all Nations harvesting NPA will take similar reductions to their national harvest if the NPA biomass drops below agreed levels. There are many details regarding what will happen at given levels of the forecasted NPA biomass levels. The details can be found on the NC website, but the bottom line is that your

representatives have been demanding an agreement that is fair and equitable to the US fishermen. We were successful in making sure that the agreement covered the entire range of the NPA across the Pacific, that on good years we can exceed harvesting above the Target Reference Point, that harvest allowance between forecast years could not move more than 20%, and that new entrants may be required to take additional reductions in fishing effort (harvest). The US Delegation anticipates that the entire WCPFC will adopt the above-described proposal by the NC at their meeting in December of this year.

The above discussion pertains to the Western Pacific (west of 180 degrees). The Eastern Pacific (EPO) where most of our fleet fishes, is controlled by the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) or east of 180 degrees. In July of this year, the IATTC adopted a Resolution similar to the proposal adopted by the NC this Spring, with a few minor changes. One issue that was not determined by either NPA management proposal is how the US industry will measure its activity of removing biomass from the North Pacific-wide biomass. The question is: should the US use a Total Allowable Catch (TAC) or a Total Allowable Effort (TAE)? Most industry feels strongly that the US should use a TAE to quantify our po-

{ Key Takeaways }

- Fair and Equitable to the US Fishermen
- The whole stock is covered. No near the equator Loop-hole
- Any required reduction is gradual
- No limit on US Fisherman production if stock is healthy
- We decide how to manage our US effort.
- No Quotas or Total allowable catch.

tential removals. Using TAC would be like the North of Falcon quota for salmon fishing. TAE would be more like the Oregon "days on water" method to manage fishermen. Currently, our US scientists are leaning toward a recommendation that the US should use the TAE method and use "days on the water" or "number of vessels" to manage the US fleet. The US managers have a goal to determine how best to manage the US fleet by the end of 2024.

In conclusion, the NPA is healthy and not overfished. In the last 15 years, the international harvest of NPA has been safely around the Target Reference Point of the newly agreed to international management plans. This means that no harvest reductions for any of the NPA harvesters should be necessary in the near future.

Member Highlight

-WFOA Staff

Name: **Libie Cain**, Director for the Astoria/ Westport District

WFOA Member Since: 2009

Current Pet: A cat named Moo

Libie would be the first to tell you she didn't come from a long line of fishermen. "I'm not from a commercial fishing background at all. I married into it and I embraced that." As part of her drive to embrace the commercial fishing lifestyle she raised her family while being a deckhand for 20 years and building her canned seafood business, Sassy Seafoods, with her business partner Teresa Reeves.

As we all know, successful seasons aren't a guarantee. Canning your product and selling it directly to consumers can be a way to manage those ups and downs. Does Libie believe the model is still viable? "Absolutely! But it's not easy. You have to commit fully." Between catching, cleaning, and canning there's a lot to learn in order to be successful. "It's not just having a boat that's going to harvest for you. The logistics are crazy." She stresses that it's important to establish strong relationships with your partners and have a plan when it comes to marketing. Sassy Seafoods sells direct at Farmers Markets and via



- Libie Cain

- Sassy Seafood, Original Flavor

their website and they've established a strong brand. "I came up with 'Boat to Belly' in Ilwaco while I was underneath the boat painting", she says. The catchphrase is a play on the Farm to Table concept. Despite all the information available to consumers, she's still surprised that there is so much uncertainty regarding the consumption of canned tuna. "So many people don't understand commercial fishing at all."

The profession has changed over the years and some improvements have definitely made it more family friendly. While reminiscing on the days of an operator having to connect your infrequent phone calls to a loved one on the ocean, she appreciates that "technology advancements have been a game changer." Nowadays having one or more parents on the ocean doesn't mean weeks or months without contact. When asked for a favorite fishing memory she recalled moments many can relate to: "Sometimes it's so calm and peaceful out there, like a lake. Those are my favorite days. When it's not hard to stand and you can set the coffee cup on the table."



- Libie Cain

Sounds like a good time to us!

New Acronyms In This Issue:

NC : Northern Committee
WCPFC: Western Central Pacific Fisheries Commission

IATTC: Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission
TAE : Total Allowable Effort

TAC: Total Allowable Catch
PFMC: Pacific Fishery Management Council
OAC: Oregon Albacore Commission

Western Fishboat Owners Association

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Check out our new website at
WWW.WFOA-TUNA.ORG