WFOA

Membership Newsletter

As the 2025 albacore season gets underway, the WFOA Board of Directors and staff would like to extend our warmest wishes to all our members, crew, families, and supporting businesses.

Each season brings new challenges and new opportunities—and we're proud to represent this fleet. Whether you're a greenhorn making your first trip to the grounds or you're celebrating your fiftieth season, we're grateful for the hard work, collaboration, and grit that define this fishery.

Stay safe out there-and best of luck this season!



Our Story to Tell

-Clayton Wraith, WFOA Executive Director

We need to tell our own story. Never in my life have I heard or seen so many different groups showing interest in our industry. While you get ready to head out to sea there is an increasingly consequential dialogue going on about who is doing what, where in the ocean. Reports, ratifications, executive orders, proposals, surveys, treaties, conferences. Harvest strategies, seafood tariffs, IUU, port state measures, labor practices, certifications, recommendations, limitations. RFMOs, NGOs, CEOs, IPOs, shoot, folks are looking underwater for UFOs. In this newsletter alone there are articles outlining issues that could impact our livelihood for decades.

A lot of people discussing these issues haven't been spending enough time talking with the folks on the water. There seems to be a lot more talk about fishermen, than talking to fishermen. A lot more telling fishermen to listen, than listening to fishermen. For better or worse, a story of who we are and what we do is being told. We have become characters in a drama of overfishing, environmental degradation, greed, slavery, and economic blight. A drama

where ours is a dying industry better suited for a bygone era than a priority for the future of food.

That's not the story I know. The characters in our story know this is more than a job, it's a passion that spans generations. That our boats are more than a metric to be calculated, they are the heartbeat of a working waterfront. That our product is more than a global commodity impacted by tariffs, it's an essential season for a fleet of families and the best pound for pound protein you can harvest anywhere in the world.

The WFOA is working hard to tell that story. The information you provide, the photos and videos you send our way, your commendations and even the critical feedback are essential to our efforts. Your contributions help us push back unfair narratives, create enthusiasm for the future of our fleet, and rebut inaccurate justifications for unnecessary regulation. I realize that the realities of our industry make it tough to focus on much more than keeping the boat on the water, catching

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your share, and keeping hope alive for 2025. But we need to be intentional about engagement now more than ever. So when you get a chance to respond to surveys, or provide feedback, please take a few minutes to do so. It might feel like one more thing to add to the list, but it's one more thing that really matters.

So thank you for supporting. Thank you for joining the fight. We can't afford to have someone else tell the story of the West Coast albacore fleet, it's your story to tell.

2025 Photo Contest



THEME: VIEW FROM THE OFFICE

- We want to capture what a day at the office looks like for you! Send us your photos from the back deck, wheelhouse, unloading dock, or wherever you consider your "office"
- Prizes will be awarded for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place
- All members, supporting members, and crew are eligible to enter. Cutoff for submission is 10/31/25

By submitting you agree that all photos may be used in print and digital marketing and publications related to the Association

No Canadian Treaty for 2025 Season

-WFOA Staff

According to correspondence sent out by the Department of State on May 27th, the United States and Canada will not have a reciprocal fishing and port access regime under the Pacific Albacore Tuna Treaty (Treaty) during the 2025 season. Head of the US delegation Dave Hogan explained that the negotiations for a new Treaty regime had, "timed out in terms of establishing a regime for this year and offering benefits of port access in advance of the season."

Delegation communications between the US and Canada that began in December 2024, are on an extended pause in accordance with an executive memo issued when the Trump Administration took office. The memo directed the Department of State to pause all ongoing negotiations so that a comprehensive review of the negotiations between the US and other countries could be reviewed to determine whether any potential agreements aligned with the Administration's diplomatic priorities.

In response to the memo and the freeze on international negotiations, the

US delegation cut off any ongoing negotiations with Canda for a new reciprocal fishing and port access regime.

Hoping to build on "the good progress" that the delegation had made prior to the freeze, Mr. Hogan began the pursuit of a waiver that would exempt the Tuna Treaty discussions from the State Department's negotiation freeze. The justification for the proposed exemption is based on the urgency in Treaty discussions, the importance of timeliness to fishermen, and the fact that this negotiation was not a new treaty but a negotiation of a regime within an already ratified treaty.

Despite the diplomatic freeze, the scientific communities from each country completed the annual data exchange in April. This led some to believe that negotiations could resume before the season. Ultimately the waiver process timed out, but information, including effort levels and landing data, are available to members by contacting the office.

The lack of an agreement has already impacted preparations for this

season and will continue to be a factor shaping the 2025 albacore season. It's unclear when or if the negotiations will continue. During the latest Pacific Fishery Management Council (PFMC) held in early June, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) confirmed that the waiver was still pending. A report to the Council on international matters explained, "(t)he Department of State will continue to pursue a waiver to proceed with legally binding negotiations for 2026, and a stakeholder call will be scheduled for fall 2025 to discuss progress on these issues."

In response to the NMFS report the Highly Migratory Species Advisory Subpanel (HMSAS), which includes several WFOA members, advocated that "the State Department will prioritize allowing discussions on a potential regime under the Treaty so those conversations can begin before the end of the year. There remains an interest in a future regime provided the terms are fair to U.S. fishery participants and don't disproportionately benefit Canadian harvesters."

District Meeting Wrap Up

-WFOA Staff

This spring, the WFOA completed its annual series of District Meetings, connecting with albacore fishermen and industry stakeholders from northern Washington to southern California. These in-person events created meaningful opportunities for dialogue, local engagement, and momentum heading into the 2025 fishing season.

Executive Director Clayton Wraith called the tour a success: "We had great feedback all along the coast. It was clear to me that when given the opportunity to share their opinions and address important issues, the fleet is ready to engage."

Meetings were held in Seattle, Westport, Astoria, Newport, and Coos Bay, and throughout California's coastal ports including Crescent City, Eureka, Fort Bragg, Bodega Bay, Moss Landing, Morro Bay, and San Diego. Venues ranged from port offices to private residences, and were generously hosted by harbormasters, WFOA members, and fishing families.

Each meeting offered updates on a wide range of topics, including: federal and international policy developments, offshore wind, albacore market trends, and port-specific concerns. Conversations were candid and constructive.

Whether in formal presentations or im-

promptu dockside chats, the goal was the same—create space for honest discussion and shared strategy.

Across regions, several common concerns surfaced:

Trading Dollars for Dollars:

Fishermen voiced concerns about the cost of fishing outpacing returns. As one Westport fisherman put it, "If I drive the boat around for three months, catch my share of fish, and by the end of the season I barely break even—or worse? I'm better off leaving the boat tied up." Early indicators for 2025 suggest improved market conditions, but members need to see that translate into real economic improvements to continue investing effort into the fishery.

Aging Fleet and Infrastructure:

Across multiple ports, members noted the growing challenges of maintaining older vessels and the lack of younger entrants into the fishery. This is a critical issue and the organization is exploring ways to support long-term fleet viability and generational renewal.

Regulatory Frustration:

From permitting delays to policy inconsistency, members expressed fatigue with bureaucratic hurdles. WFOA continues to advocate for policies that



support sustainable, profitable fisheries—not just paperwork and added costs.

These meetings also sparked new membership applications, allowed distribution of updated marketing and outreach materials, and strengthened relationships with port officials and buyers. Some of the most meaningful moments weren't on the agenda. As Wraith put it, "Wayne always said if you want to talk with fishermen, go to the docks. That proved true. Some of our best conversations happened around gear piles, truck beds, and boat ramps."

WFOA extends sincere thanks to everyone who helped host, participate in, or support this year's meetings. Catering support in Westport and Coos Bay came from valued community supporters: Marinos, local fishermen, and the Oregon Albacore Commission. Englund Marine provided numerous venues and logistic support and Wild Planet and MSC provided giveaways. The work ahead is real—but so is the strength, clarity, and commitment of the fleet.





MSC Certification Update

-WFOA Staff

The WFOA and the American Albacore Fishermen's Association (AAFA) agreed to terms of a Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certificate-sharing agreement for the North and South Pacific albacore pole-and troll fisheries. The agreement satisfies the requirements of the latest MSC evaluation criteria by outlining a clear agreement on how the certificate holders will manage compliance and vessel eligibility. At the center of the negotiations between the associations were the requirements and procedures for maintaining an accurate and timely List of Eligible Vessels (Vessel List). Previous MSC versions allowed more flexibility for each association and had no specific restrictions on the timeline of adding qualified vessels to the list throughout the season. The new agreement sets out specific dates for when each certificate holder can add qualifying boats to the Vessel List.

In advance of the North Pacific albacore season boats need to be included on the list of eligible vessels submitted to the MSC by June 1st of each season if they want to sell MSC Certified fish. For the South Pacific albacore season, boats need to be included on the list by December 1st. To address the scenario of a vessel that wants to participate in the MSC chain of custody but isn't included on the Vessel List by the initial cut-off date, the associations agreed to a mid-season add on period. The North Pacific mid-season update will take place on August 10th. While the South Pacific mid-season add-on date will be February 10th.

The WFOA will continue to work with vessel owners and buyers to facilitate participation in the MSC chain of custody. Any vessel not listed here or on AAFA's roster will not be eligible to sell MSC fish. Any vessels interested in getting on the mid-season list should contact the office no later than August 7th.



Western Fishboat Owners Association MSC Vessel List

No.	VESSEL NAME	OFFICIAL#	
1	Akvavit	663294	
2	Alecat	545751	
3	Alison F	1061147	
4	Alliance	637848	
5	Amy Lyn	595206	
6	Anchor	252739	
7	Anna C	921637	
8	Assurance	605600	
9	Barbara Marie	643587	
10	Bertha J	249610	
11	Betty H	560992	
12	Calogera	618104	
13	Capriccio	609044	
14	Carol M	225374	
15	Castaway	555318	
16	Celtic Aire	590273	
17	Charlie Noble	292272	
18	Charlotte M	629672	
19	Condor II	545999	
20	Connie S	1047576	
21	Dayna S	1213437	
22	Destiny	243806	
23	Dove	992704	
24	Four Sisters	661543	
25	Holly H	602398	
26	Innisfree	224225	
27	Island Girl	986398	
28	Jacqueline L	280453	
29	James Lee	518173	
30	Jo El	507777	

No.	VESSEL NAME	OFFICIAL #
31	Julia C	1273857
32	Kara J	597779
33	Karen Jeanne	605854
34	Karolee	248180
35	Kathy Ann	558609
36	Kaylee H	536620
37	Longfin	689214
38	Maria Isabel	586208
39	Marie M	509968
40	Marina	1040505
41	Marine Star	537893
42	Maverick	930683
43	Michele Ann	569611
44	Mikette	622875
45	Miss Julie	592310
46	Miss Venus	WN9616NV
47	Mistress	627906
48	Nancy M	1029958
49	Natalia Victoria	604553
50	Nedian	669101
51	New Dawn	295629
52	Northern Lady	550828
53	Ocean	912873
54	Olinka	558005
55	Orion	512179
56	Pacific Aggressor	OR326AHN
57	Pacific Gem	1222557
58	Peso II	263690
59	Pollux (Mor-Jon Inc)	943815
60	Rampaige	602540

No.	VESSEL NAME	OFFICIAL#
61	Redeemer	597963
62	Resolute	223688
63	Roggy	574577
64	Rose-Marie	WN7546RP
65	Rowan	1050716
66	San Pablo	517173
67	Seaward	591062
68	Seven Daughters	602564
69	Shirley B	1110940
70	Sicily	650498
71	Southern Horizon	1052597
72	Spring Persuader	OR 564 AFK
73	St. Jude	917554
74	Stephanie M	1132795
75	Sunset Charge	534685
76	Svetlana M	1121787
77	Sylvia	507393
78	Teresa M	648910
79	TNT	603201
80	Trinket	583728
81	Tytan	690689
82	Vicki K	639319
83	Vigorous	250226
84	Wendy Seaa	1043151
85	West Coast	246240
86	Wet & Wild	589969
87	Widgeon	1067330
88	Yaznak	1035687
89	Yerda Marie	619763

-The finalized certificate and vessel lists for both associations are publicly available on the MSC website at https://fisheries.msc.org/en/fisheries/aafa-and-wfoa-north-pacific-albacore-tuna/@@view.



Member Highlight: Living the Dream Through It All

-WFOA Staff

"It all started when I was conceived on a commercial fishing boat in 1960." And so begins Henry DeRonden-Pos fishing tale. As a 3rd generation fisherman, he's been passionate about fishing for a long time. His grandfather got his start in San Francisco running charter boats, became a decorated Merchant Marine, and eventually dabbled in commercial fishing. Henry's dad followed in his father's footsteps, buying a boat after high school and going on to become a Merchant Marine and fisherman.

Henry was born into the lifestyle and his dad continued to guide him down the fishing path, "I was going to be a fisherman, whether I wanted to or not." When he was eight years old, he started fishing on his dad's boat, the Fortune. Ten years later he would be captain of his first boat, a little 28-footer out of Depoe Bay called the Cindy R. "I fished that little gas engine from Destruction Island to Cape Blanco. No electronics, just a compass and a fathometer that barely worked."

It may have been crude back then, but he made money. He remembers bringing the boat in when he was still in high school. "I looked at my check after unloading, factored in the season ahead, and thought, damn! I'm going to be rich by the end of this season! It didn't exactly work out that way, but when you get a taste of something like that you spend the rest of your life looking for more."

His second boat was the Clara B II and he had it for 18 years until it was sunk in a tragic hit and run. While fishing off San Francisco in 2004, a steel boat rammed into him at 2 in the morning. With no time to get dressed Henry jumped into action, but the other vessel would not relent, and the Clara B II was torn apart. With his boat quickly taking on water he was able to get his life raft inflated before slipping on debris and knocking himself temporarily unconscious. Henry woke up just in time to be thrown overboard in nothing but his birthday suit. That tragedy set him back mentally



Name: Henry DeRonden-Pos **District:** Newport, OR

thrown overboard in nothing but his birthday suit. That tragedy set him back mentally and financially and he took some time to recover.

Henry acquired his third and current boat, the New Dawn, a year after his accident. The boat has been good to him for the last 20 years, fishing so well that he sometimes feels like it has a mind of its own. "I'm just like the flea on the back of a dog. The boats got a mission, and I've just got to get on board, get out there, and do it." When he's out there, part of his passion for the work comes from his Catholic faith. "The idea of being close to your maker out here, always a miracle."



-The New Dawn, Photo credit: Oregon Albacore Commission

Looking ahead, Henry is quick to be hopeful. "There's always hope with the ocean." He believes the fishery has a bright future and that we've been laying the groundwork for success, "we're in a down period right now, for sure, but things are rebuilding." As a lifelong producer, he doesn't feel like it's time to hang up his hat. "I tried to retire a couple years ago, but it was like I was selling my identity, selling my soul. This is who I am, this is what I do. Living the dream, as they say."

Part of that dream involves teaching the next generation of fishermen, something he takes pride in. He knows if it wasn't for the old timers who helped him out, he wouldn't be where he's at today. He may not have appreciated it as much as he could have then, but he does now, and he's committed to paying it forward. Several of the deckhands he's trained have gone on to become successful captains and he's learned patience along the way. When asked if he had any advice for other folks just getting started or looking to get into the business he said, "Prepare for the worst and hope for the best. You never know what's around the corner. And say your prayers!"

Pacific Fisheries Management Council Recap

-WFOA Staff

The Pacific Fishery Management Council (PFMC) convened in early June in Santa Rosa, CA to cover a number of topics including recent Executive Orders directed at improving commercial fishing competitiveness, groundfish management, habitat issues and highly migratory species management. WFOA members ghly Migratory Species Advisory Subpanel (HMSAS) were briefed on several matters over multiple days an

appointed to the Highly Migratory Species Advisory Subpanel (HMSAS) were briefed on several matters over multiple days and worked with council staff, the Highly Migratory Species Management Team (HMSMT) and the HMSAS to provide guidance impacting the Council, the State Department, and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS).

After finishing his first meeting as the representative for Commercial Fisheries North of Point Conception, WFOA member Eric Johnson had several take aways. "It was a pretty steep learning curve and a very interesting process. Working with the other members of the HMSAS helped a lot. I wasn't sure what to expect but I can see that it is important to have the fishermen perspective represented at the Council. I believe now's the time for engagement. We have a real chance to be heard and need to be doing more to get our voice out there."

The HMSAS reports and recommendations are available online at <u>June 2025 Decision Summary Document - Pacific Fishery Management Council</u>

US Delegation Anticipates Delay on Finalization of North Pacific Albacore Harvest Control Rule



US delegates to the Inter America Tropical Tuna Comision (IATTC) informed leadership of the WFOA that the finalization of the North Pacific Albacore (NPA) harvest control rule would not be addressed at the 2025 annual IATTC meeting. Instead, the IATTC meeting scheduled to take place in Panama City, Panama this September will focus on the impact of a recent Yellowfin Tuna stock assessment report and the continued negotiations surrounding the international management of Bluefin tuna. This unexpected development will give the West Coast albacore fleet more time to discuss the options for translating fishing intensity into the harvest strategies for NPA and allow NMFS a better opportunity to formulate quality engagement with the fleet.

NMFS recently held a stakeholder event to gain insight that would help formulate a NPA proposal they would be submitting to Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs) meetings this summer. During the April 25th meeting, NMFS engaged with a large group of stakeholders including several members of the WFOA. A report on the meeting was presented to the

PFMC and members of the HMSAS had a chance to weigh in. The HMSAS report explicitly recommended not submitting a proposal and made suggestions when trying to engage the fleet:

"In preparing for further engagement with domestic stakeholders NMFS should consider providing more clarity on (1) how will "effort" be defined for purposes of management, (2) assuring US fishery participants that any Canadian fishing effort in the US EEZ will be attributed to the US when establishing our historic effort per the US-Canada Albacore Treaty (Treaty), (3) what this could mean to fishery participants if a management response is triggered, (4) the potential management and operational implications of an exceptional circumstance."

Additionally, the Commercial Troll Representative Clayton Wraith took the opportunity to provide public comment on the matter which highlighted the membership feedback he had received critical of the workshop—the importance of starting any conversation with why any limitation should be placed on a fleet that is having a di minimis impact on the stock and how this type of international management would be enforceable on other countries. You can view the councils discussion on this matter online. The HMSAS report starts here and Clayton's public comment starts here.

Missed the stakeholder meeting? Contact the office to request any of the documents covered:

- → Slide Presentations
- → Background Paper
- → IATTC Scientific Advisory
 Committee Draft Documents
- → Stakeholder Meeting Summary

South Pacific Albacore: Tracking Key International Developments

Major steps are underway at the international level that may shape the future of South Pacific albacore (SPA) management—and WFOA is closely engaged in monitoring and advocating for the U.S. troll fleet throughout the process.

Earlier this year, the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) endorsed a U.S.-led proposal to establish a Joint Working Group (JWG) between the WCPFC and the IATTC. This working group will serve as a formal platform for coordination on SPA management between the two commissions. The first set of draft Terms of Reference for the SPA-JWG has been released, with a second informal meeting scheduled for July 31, 2025, via videoconference.

The stated goals of the SPA-JWG include development of a common harvest strategy, improved alignment of conservation measures across both regions, joint scientific research, and harmonized catch and effort limits. Importantly, this collaboration will influence how SPA is managed across the high seas and EEZs in both the Eastern and Western Pacific.

The Highly Migratory Species Advisory Subpanel (HMSAS), which includes WFOA representation, has strongly supported the U.S. role in leading this effort. The HMSAS has encouraged the Pacific Council to recommend that U.S. delegates prioritize West Coast

fleet interests—
specifically, recognizing the low-impact nature of the U.S.
pole-and-troll fleet and avoiding onesize-fits-all management measures that
could inadvertently disadvantage
American surface fisheries.

"The U.S.-based SPA surface fishery has a de minimis impact on the stock," the HMSAS noted in its recommendation. "That must be acknowledged in any future management actions developed under the JWG framework."

Meanwhile, the WCPFC has also scheduled a South Pacific Albacore Management Workshop (SPAMWS) for September 11–12, 2025. This virtual meeting will focus on finalizing a management procedure and its implementing measure for SPA, intended to replace the current measure (CMM 2015-02) at the WCPFC's annual meeting in December.

Key issues still under discussion include:

- Whether catch or effort controls will be used:
- How to handle mixed-fishery interactions (e.g., with bigeye and yellowfin);
- Compatibility between Eastern and Western Pacific data and rules.

Updates will be provided as they develop.



Monthly Office Hours

-WFOA Staff

The WFOA will continue to hold open office hours the fourth Monday of the month from 6am to 8am. Members are invited to join the open video meeting to contribute input or ask questions.

Open office hours are intended to maintain an emphasis on organizational transparency, increase membership participation, and give opportunity for earnest discussion addressing membership perspectives and concerns. Members receive a link prior to the meeting and are invited to come and go during the two hour time period. Participation is encouraged during the meeting but not required and members are welcome to listen-in without directly contributing.

Feedback on the meetings from WFOA members has been positive with several members using it as an easy way to stay engaged. "This is a great way to have important conversations. Sometimes it feels like official meetings are too formal or the stakes are pretty high so you have to be careful what you say. We need more things likes this where we can just talk it out and have good conversations," said a Newport member.

Mark your calendars for the remaining 2025 office hours:

- July 28th
- August 25th
- September 22nd
- October 27th
- November 24th
- December 22nd

Join Us!

Executive Order Aims to Restore Seafood Competitiveness

THE WHITE HOUSE WASHINGTON

-WFOA Staff

In April, President Trump signed Executive Order 14276: Restoring American Seafood Competitiveness, a sweeping federal directive aimed at unburdening U.S. fishermen and reviving domestic seafood markets. The order builds on the Administration's 2020 seafood directive (EO 13921), but adopts a more forceful tone, targeting not only regulatory delays, but also offshore wind development, foreign trade manipulation, and expanding import controls.

Both orders remain in force and collectively outline a strong federal posture: cut red tape, retaliate against unfair foreign practices, and catch more American fish.

For the North Pacific albacore fleet, several directives are worth watching. The EO calls for stabilizing markets, enhancing economic profitability, supporting efforts to educate American consumers about the health benefits of seafood and increasing seafood purchases in nutrition programs. These efforts

could support long-standing WFOA objectives.

The 2020 Executive Order (EO) emphasized aquaculture expansion, regulatory streamlining, and fair trade promotion. It created the Seafood Trade Task Force and launched the concept of "Aquaculture Opportunity Areas" with the goal of improving U.S. seafood exports and permitting timelines. The new 2025 EO takes a harder stance. It describes seafood as "one of the most heavily regulated sectors in the United States," blames "restrictive catch limits" and "outdated fisheries data," and calls for a rapid deregulatory push. The EO recognizes the current state of the American Seafood industry by decrying that, "nearly 90 percent of seafood on our shelves is now imported, and the seafood trade deficit stands at over \$20 billion." The order prioritizes a new "America First Seafood Strategy" to strengthen U.S. market share and calls for expanded port inspections to prevent **ÎUU** imports. The

U.S. Trade Representative is instructed to consider retaliatory tools—including Section 301 of the Trade Act—to combat forced labor and trade distortion by foreign seafood producers.

Each Regional Fishery Management Council—including the Pacific Fishery Management Council (PFMC)—is tasked with identifying ways to comply with the goals of the EOs and committing to concrete work plans to meet those goals within 180 days of the EO. After an in depth briefing from legislative experts, the PFMC is requesting individual advisory panels to submit guidance related to their fisheries by the September 2025 meeting. The PFMC intends to outline those recommendations and submit them to the Secretary of Commerce for implementation within the timeframe outlined in the EOs.

"West Coast albacore fishermen have always fished clean and played by the rules," said Clayton Wraith, Executive Director of WFOA. "These Executive Orders acknowledge the competitive imbalance we face with foreign imports and recognize the need to have more Americans eating the fish we are harvesting. The WFOA welcomes any meaningful reforms that protect sustainability and restore opportunity for the American troll fleet."

It is important to note that the legislative language in the EOs has numerous references to other agencies, pieces of legislation, and appropriation restrictions. These caveats may limit the applicability of specific ideas related to improving the albacore industry. Additionally, there are a number of designated interagency communication and evaluation requirements that could delay or prevent specific actions from taking place. WFOA will continue engaging on the issue to ensure that implementation of these orders aligns with the needs of our fleet, promote the profitability for our producers, and the conservation principles that sustain our fishery for the long haul.

CALL FOR ENGAGEMENT WITH FISHERY STAKEHOLDERS

These discussions are happening now if you have ideas or recommendations that could help our industry the WFOA wants to hear them. Your expertise can help inform the statements and positions we advocate for including the upcoming recommendations for the PFMC. Some examples previously provided by members include:

- Improved market access and stability
- Reducing barriers to creation of new processing opportunities domestically
- Reducing impact of foreign HMS fisheries on domestic production/markets

We encourage members to have intentional dialogue about what can be done to improve the fishery. Email, call, or join us during office hours to share your ideas!

New EO Pushes to Advance Deep Sea Mining

THE WHITE HOUSE WASHINGTON

-WFOA Staff

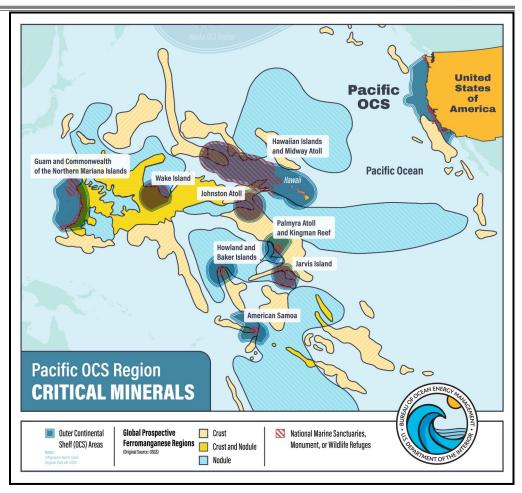
The federal government is rapidly advancing plans to open U.S. waters—including areas off the West Coast—to potential offshore mineral and energy development, following a pair of Executive Orders issued this spring.

On April 24, Executive Order 14285 directed federal agencies to "expedite" deep-sea mining efforts for critical minerals within the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and beyond. This includes streamlining permits, mapping seabed deposits, and accelerating private -sector access to seabed mineral resources like cobalt, nickel, and rare earth elements. A separate Executive Order issued April 8 (EO 14260) seeks to block state-level environmental regulations—such as California's climate and coastal protection laws—that could restrict federal offshore energy projects.

In tandem with the Executive Orders, the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) is developing its 11th National Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Oil and Gas Leasing Program, which includes all 27 U.S. OCS planning areas. For the first time in decades, this includes the Pacific Coast—despite longstanding state opposition and Congressional moratoria.

Of particular note: On April 30, a U.S. subsidiary of The Metals Company, a Canadian firm, submitted applications to NOAA for commercial recovery and exploration permits in the Clarion-Clipperton Zone—1,300 nautical miles south of San Diego—underscoring the speed at which private actors are moving under the new framework.

While these actions are being marketed as part of a national security and energy independence agenda, WFOA is tracking the implications for fishing grounds and marine ecosystems, especially in areas where members operate. Whenever BOEM initiates public comment processes for future lease sales, we encourage stakeholders to stay engaged.



-Credit: BOEM

SPEAK UP FOR YOUR OCEAN

Federal agencies are fast-tracking plans to open new areas of the Pacific Ocean to deep-sea mining—without fully accounting for the impact on West Coast fisheries, marine ecosystems, or coastal communities.

If you make your living on the water—or care about the future of our ocean—you have a right to be heard.

BOEM is accepting public comment on its current leasing and development plans (American Samoa). These proceedings can set precedent for future West Coast developments. WFOA strongly encourages fishing families, coastal business owners, and local port communities to weigh in on all BOEM proceedings.

Submit a comment: BOEM Comment Form

Deadline: July 16th, 2025

Need help getting started? Contact WFOA staff for sample language or policy background. Protecting fishing access starts with making your voice count.

UN Report: U.S. Fisheries Among Best Managed in the World

-WFOA Staff

The 2025 United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC), held in Nice, France, closed this month with renewed global commitments to sustainable ocean governance. Among the many international discussions, a significant focal point was the release of the Food and Agricultural Organization's (FAO) "Review of the State of World Marine Fishery Resources", which drew clear attention to the strengths—and challenges-of fisheries management worldwide. For U.S. fishery stakeholders, particularly those involved in the North Pacific albacore troll and pole fishery, the report brought welcome confirmation: U.S. fisheries are among the bestmanaged on the planet.

According to the report, "among major fishing nations, the U.S. consistently stands out for its science-based approach, monitoring, and enforcement, resulting in a relatively high proportion of stocks being fished at sustainable levels."

In a time when global overfishing remains a persistent concern—roughly 35% of assessed marine fish stocks are overfished globally—the U.S. continues to outperform peers in both rebuilding

depleted stocks and preventing overexploitation. The report also notes that while many countries show limited or deteriorating performance, the U.S. maintains high levels of transparency and accountability in stock assessments and management outcomes.

While the report reaffirms concerns over certain tuna stocks, it also clearly states that North Pacific albacore is not overfished and not subject to overfishing, aligning with the most recent assessments from both the International Scientific Committee for Tuna and Tuna-like Species in the North Pacific Ocean (ISC) and U.S. NOAA Fisheries. This is an important distinction as albacore is often lumped into generalized concerns over global tuna sustainability.

"Stocks such as North Pacific albacore remain within sustainable harvest limits, with long-term management frameworks now adopted by both major RFMOs covering the Pacific," the report states.

WFOA has long advocated for science-driven, precautionary harvest control rules, and the current management system—grounded in recent harvest

strategy agreements by IATTC and WCPFC—is delivering tangible results. As the U.N. pushes for greater international alignment on climate-resilient fisheries, the U.S. system is being held up as a model.

Beyond recognizing current leaders, the conference and report urge all nations to scale up effective fisheries governance. This includes addressing IUU (Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated) fishing, climate impacts on migratory stocks, and data deficiencies—particularly in developing regions.

"Despite significant gains in some regions, many of the world's major fisheries are still managed with insufficient data or weak enforcement, making them vulnerable to collapse," the report warns.

For the U.S. albacore fleet, this global context matters. The sustainability of our fishery depends not only on sound domestic policy, but also on the international frameworks in which we operate. The U.N. report's praise affirms the effectiveness of U.S. leadership in those spaces and reinforces the need for continued vigilance in worldwide enforcement.

Congress Renews Push to Reauthorize Magnuson-Stevens Act

-WFOA Staff

The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA)—the cornerstone of U.S. fisheries law—is once again under consideration for reauthorization. Lawmakers in the House introduced a new bill in May that aims to modernize the decades-old statute while reinforcing science-based management, regional flexibility, and economic vitality.

The MSA was first passed in 1976 to assert U.S. control over fisheries within 200 miles of the coast and to prevent foreign overfishing. It created the regional fishery management council system and has been reauthorized twice—

in 1996 and 2006—each time adding stronger conservation and rebuilding mandates.

However, every attempt to reauthorize the law since 2006 has failed. Efforts in 2014, 2015, and 2018 all collapsed amid political gridlock, with debates over catch shares, rebuilding requirements, and climate provisions stalling compromise. Many in the fishing industry have grown wary of sweeping changes that could weaken local input or overburden small fleets with one-size-fits-all rules.

The newly introduced bill—cosponsored by Rep. Jared Huffman (D- CA), Rep. Ed Case (D-HI), and Rep. James Moylan (R-Guam) —focuses on climate resilience, equitable access, and improved support for science and data collection. It would also require fishery managers to consider changing ocean conditions when setting catch limits, a shift that could significantly affect how stocks are managed in the years ahead.

WFOA is monitoring the process closely. While the bill emphasizes flexibility and sustainability, any statutory change could have lasting effects on the fleet's access, accountability, and recognition within federal management frameworks.

The Lowdown on Monday Market Reports

-WFOA Staff

Starting in July, the WFOA will resume its weekly Monday Market Reports to support the North Pacific albacore fleet throughout the 2025 season.

These in-season updates will include current market prices, fishing conditions, weather trends, and timely regulatory information—all aimed at helping members make informed decisions and stay connected across the coast.

Reports will be sent by email each Monday. WFOA members and supporting members are encouraged to contribute updates from their region, including observations from the grounds or notes on buyer interest. All submissions are voluntary and will be treated confidentially.

"For the most part, the feedback we get on these reports is overwhelmingly positive," said Executive Director Clayton Wraith. "Some folks question the value or may not agree with certain details, and I understand that. But my hope is that the reports provide something useful—especially for fishing families trying to plan their seasons."

WFOA has provided in-season updates in various forms for decades, and the Monday Market Reports continue that tradition using more accessible tools and faster communication. For 2025, the WFOA will verify any submitted price information before including it. If multiple data points differ, the report will show a range based on the most current and reliable inputs received.

Send any season information you'd like to share confidentially to:

info@wfoa-tuna.org or text (541) 729-0344

The success of these reports depends on participation from the fleet. If you have information to share—or simply want to be part of the conversation—reach out to the WFOA office. Every perspective helps strengthen this resource for the entire fishery.

MID SEASON SURVEY TO RETURN

In an effort to continue collecting useful data on our fleet, we will be sending out another mid-season survey this year. These surveys provide us with invaluable information that we use in wide ranging discussions that help accurately tell the story of our fishery.

When the time comes, please take a few minutes to answer questions ranging from water conditions and fishery trends, to crew dynamics and economic viability.



Let's do this!



WFOA

Membership Newsletter

West Coast Albacore Fishery Participants Asked to Weigh In on Economic survey

-Brett Wiedoff, Petra Consulting LLC

Participants in the West Coast North Pacific albacore fishery are being asked to take part in a voluntary annual cost and earnings survey that will help shape the future of fishery management decisions.

NOAA Fisheries, in collaboration with Petra Consulting LLC and key industry organizations—including the American Albacore Fishing Association, Western Fishboat Owners Association, and the Oregon Albacore Commission—has launched the 2022–2024 Cost and Earnings Survey. The survey has been mailed to fishery participants who registered for a Pacific Highly Migratory Species Permit in 2024.

The goal of the survey is to collect accurate economic data that will support informed decision-making in both domestic and international fisheries management. This includes evaluating the impacts of current and proposed policies on fleet profitability and the livelihoods of those who participate in this vital fishery. This effort is a critical step in ensuring that the economic realities of albacore fishery participants are clearly understood and factored into future fishery management decisions.

Fishermen are encouraged to set aside less than an hour to complete the survey, using records from the 2022, 2023, and 2024 fishing seasons. This includes data such as fuel and oil expenses, provisions, and other operating costs. Respondents can either fill out and mail back the paper survey in the pre-addressed envelope provided or use

"Your responses are essential to understanding the true operating costs and earnings of the albacore fleet," said a spokesperson from NOAA Fisheries. "This survey provides the economic context needed to ensure fair and effective management."

a secure online portal for faster digital submission. Instructions for online participation will be made available on the designated survey webpage.

Participation is completely voluntary, and all responses are strictly confidential. Any data shared with NOAA Fisheries is protected under federal law and will only be reported in summarized form to preserve anonymity and protect proprietary business information.

To thank those who take the time to participate, survey respondents will be automatically entered into a drawing to win one of three \$200 prizes—either a gift certificate to a marine supply store of their choice or a cash gift card. Winners will be announced by September 29, 2025.

For additional information or help with completing the survey, participants can contact Brett Wiedoff of Petra Consulting LLC at bwiedoff@gmail.com.



VOLUNTARY TONNAGE REMINDER

The WFOA is encouraging members to support its mission by participating in a voluntary tonnage assessment during the 2025 albacore season. The contribution of just one penny per pound is a small investment that helps ensure a strong voice for U.S. fishermen at every level of fishery management. In 2024, 20% of members contributed. Every contribution goes a long way towards fighting for our fleet, no matter the size.

Historically voluntary tonnage has been facilitated in a variety of ways, but currently post-season contributions are the most utilized format. Membership renewals that go out in the fall will include a section to record tonnage and contributions for this years catch. Some buyers are willing to collect the contribution at the time of delivery as well.

Western Fishboat Owners Association

2108 N ST, STE #8469 Sacramento, CA 95816 Phone: (530) 229-1097

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