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Please share the following with the AAFA Board and Membership as it recounts items of interest that arose during the month of July and looks forward to certain events occurring in upcoming months.

**Monument Proposal update:**

Representative Sam Farr (D – Ca Central Coast), on July 14, introduced H.R. 5797 - The California Seamounts and Ridges National Marine Conservation Area Designation and Management Act. This will legislatively implement the closures sought by the various conservation groups. You can access the language of the Bill and track its progress through the house here - <https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/house-bill/5797>. While this Bill stands little chance of getting out of the Republican controlled House, it does specifically exempt “the troll Albacore fishery”. Also exempted is recreational fishing. Interestingly, both Tanner and Cortes Banks were removed from the list of those areas proposed for closure. We must all be mindful that this is merely politics at its finest. Rep Farr introduced this Bill knowing it will go nowhere. Democratic Representatives Huffman and Hahn have both indicated they will not support this Bill. But once the Bill is defeated, the proponents of the closures will be able to notify the Executive Branch (President Obama) that Congress was unable to act on this and the only way to ensure the areas are protected is through the President’s power under the Antiquities Act. On July 25, notice was provided that a discussion of this Bill will take place at Scripps on August 16. Both Natalie and myself are planning on attending this “open discussion”.

**Follow-up on June’s upcoming events:**

1. July 13 - The Port of San Diego’s Board of Port Commissioners met to discuss the development of a world class waterfront. At that meeting, the Board directed its staff to exclusively continue discussions with Protea Waterfront Development to further evaluate their proposal, while not eliminating the other five proposals. Staff expects to return to the board on October 13, with an update. We discussed this proposal with Dave Rudie who attended the meeting, along with Peter Halmay. I was assured that our concerns regarding possible adverse impacts to current tenants were relayed. I would like to see a copy of the Agreement the Port has with the commercial vessels in those areas designated for development.

**Federal Register Items of Interest:**

1. July 22 – USCG issued a final rule regarding *Harmonization of Standards for Fire Protection, Detection, and Extinguishing Equipment*. This rule goes into effect on August 22<sup>nd</sup>. This final rule implements rules proposed in January of 2014 and will update Coast Guard regulations pertaining to certain design and approval standards for fire detection and alarm systems, fire extinguishers, and other fire prevention equipment. While it unclear how these regulations will be applied; it appears only vessels in excess of 65 feet will be faced with strict rule regarding what is required on any vessel. I would imagine most, if not all, AAFA vessels are already in compliance as they incorporate best practices. Fire extinguishers will now have to be inspected (annually) by a licensed or certified extinguisher servicing agent. **If your vessel exceeds 65 feet, it must** be equipped with the minimum number, location, and type of portable fire extinguishers specified below: (See Table 28.160 to be effecting 8/22/16)

Space	Minimum Required Rating	Quantity and Location
Safety areas, communicating corridors	2-A	1 in each main corridor not more than 150 ft (45.7m) apart. (May be located in stairways.)
Pilothouse	20-B:C	2 in the vicinity of the exit
Service spaces, galleys	40-B:C	1 for each 2,500 sq ft (232.2 sq m) or fraction thereof suitable for hazards involved
Paint Lockers	40-B	1 outside space in the vicinity of the exit.
Accessible baggage and storerooms	2-A	1 for each 2,500 sq ft (232.2 sq m) or fraction thereof located in the vicinity of the exits, either inside or outside the spaces.

Workshops and similar spaces	2-A	1 outside the space in the vicinity of the exit.
Machinery spaces; Internal combustion propelling machinery	40-B:C	1 for each 1,000 brake horsepower or fraction thereof but not fewer than 2 or more than 6.
Electric propulsion motors or generator unit of open type	40-B:C	1 for each propulsion motor generator unit.
Auxiliary spaces	40-B:C	1 outside the space in the vicinity of the exit.
Internal combustion machinery	40-B:C	1 outside the space in the vicinity of the exit.
Electric emergency motors or generators	40-B:C	1 outside the space in the vicinity of the exit.

The text of the final rule is available at <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2016-07-22/pdf/2016-15229.pdf>

- July 26 – The FDA issued a notice related to collection of information and request for comments on Procedures for the Safe and Sanitary Processing and Importing of Fish and Fishery Products. It appears to be no more than an extension of previously requested information (last made in 2013). The notice specifically seeks comments on: (1) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of FDA’s functions, including whether the information will have practical utility; (2) the accuracy of FDA’s estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (3) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (4) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques, when appropriate, and other forms of information technology. See - <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2016-07-26/pdf/2016-17571.pdf>

#### Other items of interest:

- Around the beginning of July, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) published “The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture 2016”. For 2014, total catches of tuna and tuna like species were almost 7.7 million tons. Albacore was reported to have catches in 2014 in line with 2004 levels.
- On July 20, the USCG announced it is suspending development of an Alternate Safety Compliance Program (ASCP) and will instead develop an Enhanced Oversight Program (EOP) for commercial fishing vessels (CFVs) by January 1, 2017. This was, in part, due to the results of the meeting held in May where a number of fishermen and fishing associations expressed concern over the scope and necessity of such programs. Here is the notice of suspension - [https://www.uscg.mil/msib/docs/011\\_16\\_7-20-2016.pdf](https://www.uscg.mil/msib/docs/011_16_7-20-2016.pdf)
- On July 29, the judge dismissed the Plaintiff’s cause of action in *Goethel v Pritzker*. This was a suit filed by groundfish fishermen on the East Coast and claimed that industry funding of at-sea monitors (observers) was illegal or, in the alternative, NOAA lacked legal authority to require such payment. The suit was dismissed because it was filed outside the statute of limitations; but the Court went to great lengths to note that even if had been filed in a timely fashion, it would have ruled in the Government’s favor.

#### Upcoming items of interest

- August 10 – California Legislature Joint Committee on Fisheries and Aquaculture will hold a hearing on the recent Dungeness Crab fishery closure and updates on possible regulatory/legislative action should Domoic Acid levels exceed acceptable levels in future years. We will attend to ensure any proposed actions aren’t overly broad and result in an unnecessary burden to other fisheries
- August 16 – public discussion on H.R. 5797 as noted above under the Section entitled monument update. This will be held at Scripps.
- August 29 – Sept 2 – 12<sup>th</sup> Regular meeting of the Northern Committee (“NC”) of the WCPFC in Fukuoka, Japan. A proposed Agenda has been made recently available on the WCPFC website – see <https://www.wcpfc.int/system/files/WCPFC-2016-NC12-03%20%5BProvisional%20Annotated%20Agenda%5D-31May2016%20%28rev-clean%29.pdf>. Attached to this document is an overview of materials related to albacore

submitted in advance of the NC meeting and a review of materials related to albacore presented during the recently completed Scientific Committee meeting.

4. September 12 – 20 – PFMC meeting to be held in Boise, Id. Highly Migratory Species (which includes Albacore) is on the Agenda; but it is currently unclear if Albacore will be discussed. There is a catch-all “International Issues” item which will likely cover results from the June/July IATTC meeting and could provide an overview of the recently completed NC meeting. My guess – much of this topic will be spent on pacific bluefin tuna as the IATTC meeting ended without an agreement on management measures for 2017 & 18. The IATTC will reconvene in October to address bluefin tuna conservation measures.

**OVERVIEW OF MATERIALS RELATED TO NORTH PACIFIC ALBACORE SUBMITTED IN ADVANCE OF THE NORTHERN COMMITTEE MEETING AND A REVIEW OF MATERIALS RELATED TO NORTH PACIFIC ALBACORE PRESENTED DURING THE RECENTLY COMPLETED SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE MEETING.**

The Twelfth Regular Session of the Northern Committee

As of this date – August 5 – nothing has been posted on the meeting’s website related to north Pacific albacore. See - <https://www.wcpfc.int/meetings/12th-regular-session-northern-committee> as materials will likely be added prior to the commencement of the meeting. As expected, it appears that Pacific bluefin tuna will be the primary focus of attention. This is bolstered by the fact that the recently completed IATTC meeting failed to result in any action in setting quotas or other fishery specific conservation measures for Pacific bluefin the 2017 – 18 fishing seasons.

The Twelfth Regular Session of the Scientific Committee of the Commission for the Conservation and Management of Highly Migratory Fish stocks in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean (WCPFC-SC12) held August 3 – 11, 2016

Document – Overview of tuna fisheries in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean, Including Economic Conditions – 2015

Link - <https://www.wcpfc.int/system/files/GN-WP-01%20Overview%20of%20WCPFC%20Fisheries%20Rev%201%20%2829%20July%202016%29.pdf>

Information related to North Pacific Albacore:

1. Note – this review does NOT currently include, detailed information on several WCPFC Statistical Area (WCP-CA) fisheries, including the north Pacific albacore troll fishery. This fishery may be covered in future reviews, depending on the availability of more complete data. (see Pg 1)
2. The 2015 WCP-CA albacore catch (120,043 mt) was the lowest since 2011 and nearly 28,000 mt lower than the record catch in 2002. This is comprised of 68,594 mt of south Pacific albacore and 51,449 mt of north Pacific albacore. Longline landings accounted for 80,596 mt of the 120,043 mt total.
3. In terms of value by species, all species declined in value except albacore which remained steady at \$357 million result in its contribution to the total catch value rising to 7%.

Document – Tunas, billfishes and other pelagic species in the eastern Pacific Ocean in 2015

Link - <https://www.wcpfc.int/system/files/GN-WP-02%20IATTC%20Tunas-billfishes-and-other-pelagic-species-in-the-EPO-2015.pdf>

Information related to North Pacific Albacore:

1. Catch data for 2015 has not yet been finalized.
2. Recounting the findings of the Albacore Working Group – “The Working Group concluded that the north Pacific albacore stock is not experiencing overfishing and is probably not in an overfished condition. The current exploitation level ( $F_{2010-2012}$ ) is estimated to be below that of  $F_{2002-2004}$ , which had led previously to the implementation of conservation and management measures for the stock in the eastern Pacific (IATTC Resolution C-05-02, supplemented by Resolution C-13-03) and the western and central Pacific Ocean (WCPFC CMM 2005-03). The Working Group noted that there is no evidence that fishing has reduced SSB below thresholds associated with the majority of biomass-based reference points that might be chosen and that population dynamics in the north Pacific albacore stock are largely driven by recruitment, which is affected by both environmental changes and the stock recruitment relationship. The Working Group concluded that the north Pacific albacore stock is healthy, and that current productivity is sufficient to sustain recent exploitation levels, assuming average historical recruitment in both the short and long term” (pg 76)

Document – Report of the 16<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the ISC in the North Pacific Ocean

Link - <https://www.wcpfc.int/system/files/GN-IP-02%20ISC16%20Report%20Final.pdf>

Information related to North Pacific Albacore:

1. In 2015 the catch of priority species monitored by ISC member countries was 60,094 t of North Pacific albacore tuna. (p 12)
2. Canadian report (p 13 – 14)

- a. Preliminary estimates of catch and effort in 2015 are 4,334 t and 5,197 vessel days (v-d) and are 9% lower and 9.5% higher, respectively, relative to 2014.
  - b. The effort and catch in Canadian waters (73% of effort and 67% of catch) were about twice the levels occurring in US waters (27% of effort and 33% of the catch) in 2015 while a minimal amount of effort and catch were recorded in high seas waters as far west as 140°W.
  - c. Releases of albacore too small to be marketable (< 3 kg) increased from 7.2 t in 2014 to 14.6 t in 2015 and approximately half of the releases occurred in Canadian waters. It appears that the distribution of juvenile albacore in the eastern Pacific Ocean shifted northward in 2015.
3. US Report (p 17 – 18)
- a. For the U.S. albacore troll fishery, the number of vessels fishing has been highly variable since 2008 and 587 vessels participated in 2015.
  - b. Catch by troll and pole-and-line in 2015 was 11,571 t.
4. Albacore Working Group Report (p 22 – 23)
- a. Accomplishments of the ALBWG over the past year include:
    - i. Maintained progress on the MSE process for north Pacific albacore tuna;
    - ii. Planning for the stock assessment in 2017, including the development of work assignments for WG members and work plans for the WG;
    - iii. Recommendations on stock status and conservation advice for 2016;
    - iv. Identified a Vice-Chair (H. Kiyofuji, Japan); and
    - v. Re-elected the current Chair (J. Holmes) to a one-year term that will conclude at the end of the ISC17 meeting.
  - b. Proposed work plans and schedule for 2016/17:
    - i. NC12 - discuss proposed management objectives for approval
    - ii. Data Preparation Workshop - Define fisheries & review input data series for consistency & conflicts
    - iii. Stock Assessment Workshop - Recommendations on stock status and conservation advice
  - c. Ongoing issues affecting its work:
    - i. Clarification of North Pacific ALB catches reported by China and Vanuatu to the IATTC and WCPFC (see ISC15 Plenary report for a fuller description and
    - ii. Clarification of engagement with managers/stakeholders from the IATTC and WCPFC on MSE.
  - d. Discussion - The process for identifying candidate management procedures or harvest control rules for the MSE was raised, because work to date has not focused on those components. For the next year the ALBWG will be focusing on completing the stock assessment and will not have time to devote to MSE development. The USA National Marine Fisheries Service is in the process of hiring a scientist who will be tasked with leading MSE development. This person will work closely with the ALBWG and take on the identification of management procedures for evaluation
5. Stock Status and Conservation Advice (p 29)
- a. Since the ALBWG has no new information on stock status or conservation concerns, it recommends no changes to the stock status and conservation advice provided by ISC15.

Document – Report on the Harvest Strategy Workshop (MOW4)

Link - <https://www.wcpfc.int/system/files/HSW%20%28MOW4%29%20Report%20for%20WCPFC12.pdf>

Information related to North Pacific Albacore:

1. MSE in the context of North Pacific Albacore (p 7 – 8)
  - a. MSE is new to many (including scientists) considerable education is needed; one reason why many find it hard to understand is because it has its own jargon/terminology (and also because it is highly technical).
  - b. The following main observations concerning the use of MSE were made:
    - i. Scientists can play a role in developing a harvest strategy approach for tuna stocks using management strategy evaluation (MSE) as identified in the NC NPALB management framework
    - ii. Scientists could make all the necessary choices for MSE ...if the sole objective is to maximize annual yield
    - iii. Otherwise, a structured approach is needed to:
      1. Define objectives, harvest control rules, and acceptable risk from stakeholders;

2. Define working hypotheses for ecological and fishery dynamics; and
3. Evaluate consequences of alternative management procedures (relative to the objectives)

Document – 2<sup>nd</sup> ISC Management Strategy Evaluation Workshop ALBWG Chairman’s Report on Outcomes for North Pacific Albacore

Link - <https://www.wcpfc.int/system/files/SC12-MI--WP-07%20ISC16%20MSE%20Report%20of%20the%20ALBWG.pdf>

This provides a very good overview of the May Workshop which took place in Japan.