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WHAT AAFA IS DOING FOR YOU – 2022 AAFA MEMBERSHIP VERSION

The start of a new year – 2022. We expect the following will be items worthy of attention: offshore wind off all three states, 30 x 30 initiatives federally, in some states and internationally, albacore management, treaty regime, MSC standards and how those may impact fisheries, etc.

Through **June 7**, 2022

Tagged albacore.

As a reminder, there are tagged fish swimming around out there! If you happen to catch an albacore with two types of tags – a Dart Tag and an Archival Tag – there are cash awards available to turning those in (up to \$500. See - [Albacore Tagging Reward Poster \(noaa.gov\)](#) – for instructions on how to claim the award if you catch a tagged fish.

We wanted to thank everyone who attended the AAFA general meeting on April 28. We covered a lot of the material presented here, just in more detail and devoted time to answering questions to those in attendance.

AAFA Professional Management Arm

In addition to the Board of Directors, AAFA formed a group known as the Professional Management Arm. See - [Professional Management Arm \(PMA\) - American Albacore Fishing Association](#). The information contained on that link is in the process of being updated. PMA is focused on providing advice to the Board on issues that may have an impact on the operation of the fishery. This is a chance for any AAFA member to ensure they are made aware of potential issues and the ability to participate in a relatively small group to ensure your voices and concerns are heard as the Board considers AAFA's positions and/or actions. PMA is always seeking enthusiastic individuals who wish to have a say in the future of your fishery. There is no set schedule of meetings; but rather it meets as necessary as potential items arise. Issues that will likely be at the forefront of PMA discussions this year will be offshore renewable energy, potential management of the fishery, the US-Canada albacore Treaty, and international efforts related to biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction. If you are interested in volunteering – please contact Joshlyn at Admin@AmericanAlbacore.com. If you have questions about PMA or want to learn more – please contact Mike at Mike@wecofm.com.

COVID-19 – second round of fisheries assistance – no changes since last report

- California – Disbursements are likely to occur during the second quarter of 2022. See - [California CARES Act Information – Fisheries Relief \(psmfc.org\)](#)
- Oregon – Oregon's "Round 2" spend plan was approved on December 23 (see - [OR-CARES-2.0-spend-plan.pdf \(psmfc.org\)](#)). It is anticipated that "Round 2" applications will become available in the second quarter of 2022. See - [Oregon CARES Act Information – Fisheries Relief \(psmfc.org\)](#)

- The Washington “Round 2” spend plan was approved on 11/01/2021 (see - [Microsoft Word - 11.1.21 Final WA CARES Round 2 Spend Plan \(psmfc.org\)](#)). It is anticipated that “Round 2” applications will become available in March 2022. See - [Washington CARES Act Information – Fisheries Relief \(psmfc.org\)](#)

North Pacific Albacore – Management Strategy Evaluation (“MSE”) & Future Management of the Fishery

- NMFS hosting a virtual U.S. stakeholder meeting on April 5, 2022, to discuss harvest strategy options with a focus on preparing to potentially propose management objectives, limit, and target reference points to the IATTC. **This is the next step in developing management measures for the north pacific albacore fishery.** AAFA was well represented and conversations continue, both within AAFA and with other industry stakeholders, to derive an industry position in management objectives and reference points. **A write-up on the Workshop was submitted to the PFMC by NMFS before the June PFMC meeting – it can be accessed at [NPALB Apr 5 Meeting Summary \(pcouncil.org\)](#) (while it is a lengthy document, pay particular attention to the first 5 pages).**

Marine Stewardship Council (MSC)

- On February 1, the MSC released proposed changes to the MSC Fisheries Standard, Fisheries Certification Process and all associated program documents. AAFA **has participated in a number of calls/meetings about these proposed changes. We are in the process of completing our annual surveillance audit and we aren’t expecting any issues to arise as a result.**

US – Canada Pacific Albacore Treaty

- We are entering the final year of the most recent three-year regime.
- We will have to think about AAFA position and then seek to understand other association’s position(s) as well.
- AAFA participated in the US-Canada Data Working Group Call on April 20. The data didn’t reveal any surprises. It is anticipated that bilateral consultations will begin in June of this year regarding a future Regime.
- **AAFA participated in the US-Canada Treaty Consultation meeting on June 7. By and large it was a review of information provided during the Data Working Group Call. There are plans for an in-person formal negotiation this fall.**

UN Intergovernmental Conference on Marine Biodiversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction – ABNJ/BBNJ

- The fourth UN Intergovernmental Conference was held in March of this year. At the conclusion of the Conference, “delegates decided to hold a fifth session [by the end of the year] with the goal of finalizing a new treaty and stressed the need to facilitate greater participation to allow all countries and communities to have a say in how marine resources existing outside of national jurisdiction should be shared.”
- **On May 30, a Further revised draft text of an agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction was published – see [IGC 5 - Further revised draft text final \(un.org\)](#). We have not yet had a chance to carefully review the full draft.**

Domestic Management – PFMC

- It is expected that there will be discussions on albacore during the upcoming June meeting of the Pacific Fishery Management Council. We suspect the Council will be asked to provide guidance to NMFS regarding management objectives for the fishery and reference points (target and limit). **AAFA will be represented at the PFMC meeting.**
- The Council's Marine Planning Committee (MPC) met on February 1. Topics discussed included offshore wind, the Aquaculture Opportunity Area in Southern California, the Federal 30 x 30 initiative, and various policy documents.
 - Offshore wind.
 - Updates were provided on offshore wind moving forward off California and Oregon
 - The presentation provided to the MPC by BOEM is available [here](#).
 - Aquaculture Opportunity Area off Southern California
 - The National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science provided an overview of the [Atlas for the Southern California Bight](#) which identified ten (10) discrete areas that have "the highest potential to support three to five marine aquaculture operations off the coast of Ventura and Santa Monica.
 - Federal 30 x 30 initiative
 - We received an update from NOAA staff about the state of the Federal 30x30 initiative.

Wind farms – Generally

- RODA's 2021 year-in-review is available here: [Year in Review \(rodafisheries.org\)](#)
- There are a number of lawsuits which resulted from the permitting of the Vineyard Wind Project. One was filed by RODA and challenges a number of actions which resulted in the permitting. Another filed on behalf of six (I think) commercial fishermen, trade associations, and a shoreside businesses.

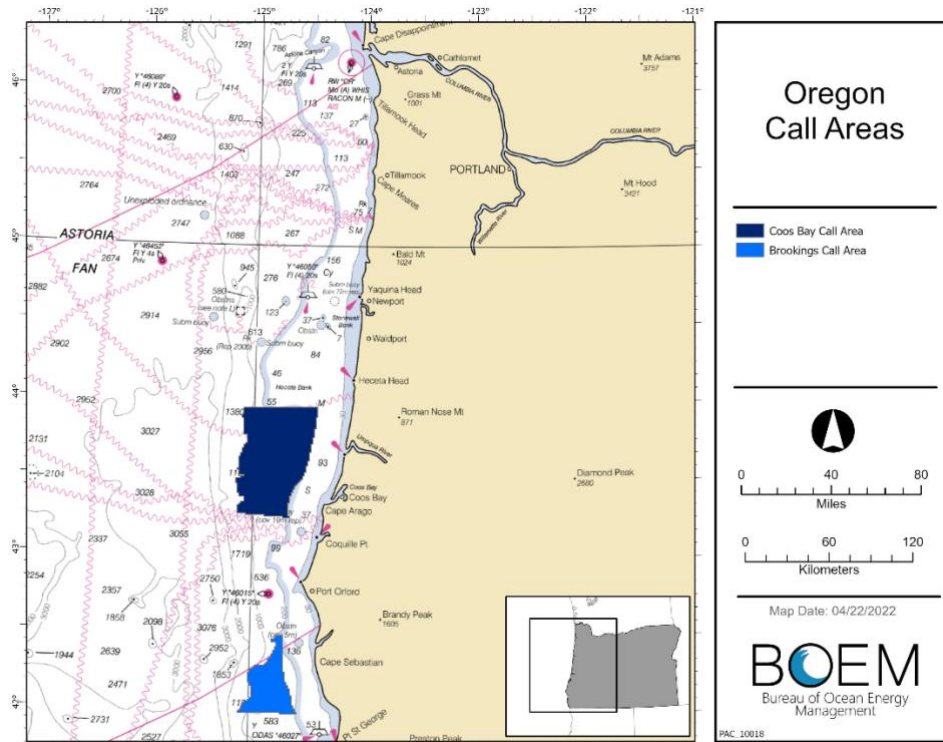
Wind farms off the California Coast

- There are two Wind Energy Areas (WEA) which have been designated off California.
- [Humboldt WEA](#).
 - In mid-January BOEM published a [Draft Environmental Assessment for the Humboldt WEA](#) (Draft EA).
 - It is expected that BOEM will allow the lease sales for the Humboldt WEA to go forward as planned in the Fall of 2022.
 - On April 7, the California Coastal Commission held a hearing to consider BOEM's request for a Consistency Determination for activities which would be allowed pursuant to lease sales in the Humboldt WEA. The Commission conditionally concurred. **It is expected the Commission will make a similar conditional concurrent when it meets to discuss lease sales in the Morro Bay WEA on June 8.**
- [Morro Bay WEA](#)
 - The Draft EA for the Morro Bay WEA was published on April 6. The public comment period closes on May 16.
 - On April 19, the Small Business Administration convened a workshop to hear from folks whose small business may be impacted by the Morro Bay WEA. AAFA was represented on this call.
- **On May 31, BOEM published a [Proposed Sale Notice](#) for the two Wind Energy Areas (Humboldt and Morro Bay) off the California Coast. The public comment period for that closes on August 1. It is envisioned that a Final Sale Notice will be published shortly after September 1, and the lease sales will take place before the end of the year.**

Offshore Renewables off the Oregon Coast

- In January, 2022 BOEM issued its [Data Gathering and Engagement Summary Report for Oregon Offshore Wind Energy Planning](#).
- On April 28, BEOM published in the Federal Register the Call Areas off Oregon – see <https://www.regulations.gov/document/BOEM-2022-0009-0001>. **The Public Comment period closes on**

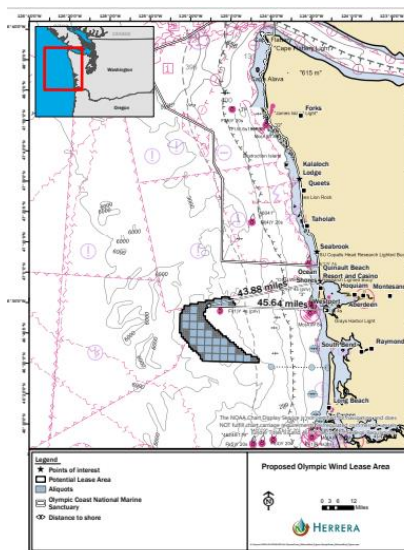
June 28. In total, the areas cover roughly 1,200 square miles. By comparison, the two WEAs off California encompass 582 sq miles. The map of the three Call Areas off Oregon follows:



- To note – the Southern border of the Brookings Call Area is roughly 51 miles above the Northern border of the Humboldt WEA.
- BOEM has indicated that it intends to engage with participants in fisheries who may be impacted. We will share dates of those meetings when they are scheduled.

Offshore Renewables off the Washington Coast

- We are unaware of any definite projects proposed or likely to be proposed imminently off Washington. That is not meant to be interpreted as there is not interest in doing so. The following is a map of an area off Washington which was of interest to at least one potential developer



Other items through June 7, 2022

- On February 25, the [USCG published a notice seeking information and comments related to the Pacific Coast-Port Access Route Study](#) effort currently underway. In this notice, they seek “public comments regarding vessel traffic patterns in the areas near Point Mugu and south of the Channel Islands in the Pacific Missile Range, San Francisco Bay, and the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) Humboldt Bay and Morro Bay offshore Wind Energy Areas (WEAs). Information received will be used to make recommendations regarding establishing safety routing measures to improve waterway operations and vessel movement along the California coast.” There is a list of 28 questions the USCG is seeking input on. The public comment period closes on May 26.
- The USCG submitted its annual report to the PFMC. See - <https://www.pcouncil.org/documents/2022/03/i-1-a-uscg-report-1-u-s-coast-guard-2021-report-to-the-pacific-fishery-management-council-april-2022-prepared-by-thirteenth-and-eleventh-coast-guard-district-and-thirteenth-coast-guard-district.pdf/>. Of interest:
 - “Two Canadian tuna trollers were boarded while fishing in the U.S. EEZ this year with no violations detected. All other Canadian vessels observed or queried were in compliance with applicable treaty provisions”
 - “The Coast Guard is particularly concerned with continued reporting from the U.S. and Canadian Albacore fleets of net marked fish and potential movement of the Chinese fleet toward the US EEZ. Any fishermen with specific reports of vessel names, dates, and/or locations of Chinese vessels operating in the Northeastern Pacific Ocean are encouraged to make a report to any of the PFMC Enforcement Consultants.” To this end – if you are fishing and see any vessels matching this description – please forward that information to myself and the AAFA office and we will ensure it is communicated.

Table outlining upcoming meetings for May/June where AAFA will have a presence

This is the current schedule of upcoming events/meetings (as of 6/7)

| | | | |
|-------------|-------|---|---|
| 6/7 – 6/14 | PFMC | June Council Meeting | Information, when available, will appear here - June 8-14, 2022 Council Meeting - Pacific Fishery Management Council (pcouncil.org) |
| 6/17 | BOEM | BOEM Fisheries Mitigation Draft Guidance Public Meeting – Pacific Coast | Meeting Registration - Zoom |
| 6/29 – 6/30 | IATTC | U.S. General Advisory Committee and Scientific Advisory Subcommittee | |
| 7/26 – 8/5 | IATTC | Annual Meetings of the IATTC | |