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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 **October 15, 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.

Hope everyone had a safe and successful season. Now that the “offseason” approaches, there will likely be a number of things that come up in the next 6 or so months that will require some attention. In no particular order: (1) The US-Canada Treaty, (2) Offshore wind, (3) Harvest Control Rule discussion and decisions, (4) MSC recertification, (5) and likely more things!

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

- California – Disbursements are likely to occur **by the end of 2022**. See - [California CARES Act Information – Fisheries Relief \(psmfc.org\)](#)

- Oregon – Oregon’s **Amended** “Round 2” spend plan was approved **in July of 2022** (see - [OR-CARES-2.0-spend-plan 2022.07.22.pdf \(psmfc.org\)](#)). Oregon’s “Round 2” CARES Act Fisheries Assistance applications became available at midnight on Thursday, September 1st, 2022. Applicants will have until 11:59 pm (PST) on Monday, October 31st, 2022 to apply. 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 \(psmfc.org\)](#)). **The application period closed at 11:59 pm (PST) on Friday, October 14th, 2022.** See - [Washington CARES Act Information – Fisheries Relief \(psmfc.org\)](#) for the Application.

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

- NMFS hosted 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. **During its July meeting the IATTC agreed upon a Harvest Strategy for North Pacific albacore (NPA). A recommended measure which was based on the IATTC Resolution was adopted by the Northern Committee in early October (see below).** AAFA was well represented at both the IATTC and NC meetings.

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. **The annual surveillance audit was completed and no issues were found. We are still learning about the new Fisheries Standard and its potential impact on future certifications. However, given the agreed upon measures related to future management of the fishery, we are less concerned about potential problems with the certification.**

US – Canada Pacific Albacore Treaty

- **We just completed** 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. **An in-person negotiation has been scheduled to take place virtually and in Vancouver, BC on November 8 & 9. The State Department has scheduled a U.S. stakeholder call for October 28. Dave Hogan, State Dept, has implied that he may provide an update on the Treaty during the November PFMC meeting. AAFA will be present at all of these.**

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 \(un.org\)](#).
- The fifth Session of the Intergovernmental Conference on BBNJ took place in August. AAFA participated in a US Stakeholder call on July 26.

Domestic Management – PFMC

- The **September** meeting of the Pacific Fishery Management Council did **not have any items specific to NPA on its Agenda**. That being said, the Council did take the advice of the HMSAS and recommended that the NC follow the lead of the IATTC when considering a harvest strategy for NPA.
- The Council’s Marine Planning Committee (MPC) met on **September 30**. Topics discussed included the **status of offshore wind off all three west coast states, utilization of a spatial suitability model in informing draft wind energy areas off Oregon (see below), and the US Coast Guard’s draft Pacific Coast Port Access Route Study (PAC PARS), and an update on the West Coast Ocean Alliance**. The MPC posted an overview of the meeting in the Council’s Briefing Books – see <https://www.pcouncil.org/documents/2022/10/c-6-a-mpc-report-1.pdf/>.
- It is possible that the State Department will provide an update on the US-Canada Treaty during the November PFMC meeting.

International Management

- During the recently completed IATTC meeting, a [Resolution presented by the US, Canada and Japan](#) was adopted which identified a harvest strategy for North Pacific Albacore. AAFA and WFOA worked together to ensure any language creating harvest control rules was removed until next year when industry had a chance to review and make recommendations.
- The NC held a virtual met **October 3 – 5**. AAFA attended and participated in the meeting. Although there was an effort to have the NC include harvest control rules in their recommended measure to be forwarded to the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission, the NC opted to adopt a recommendation that largely mirrored the IATTC Resolution. See - [DRAFT Harvest Strategy for North Pacific Albacore Fishery \(16Sep\) - Rev.02 \(Adopted\) | WCPFC Meetings](#). This recommendation will now be forwarded to the full WCPFC for adoption (or rejection) during its meeting later this year

Wind farms – Generally

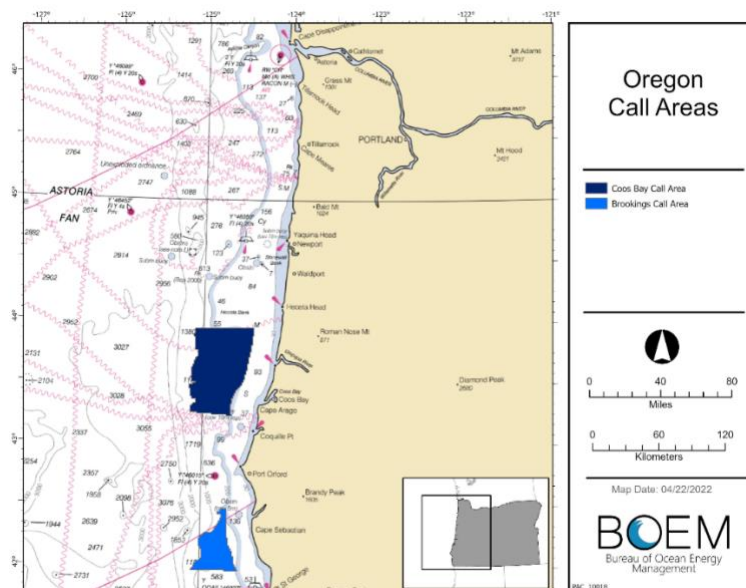
- RODA’s 2021 year-in-review is available here: [Year in Review \(rodafisheries.org\)](#)
- There are a number of lawsuits which resulted from the permitting of the Vineyard Wind Project. One was filed by RODA and challenges a number of actions which resulted in the permitting. Another filed on behalf of six (I think) commercial fishermen, trade associations, and a shoreside businesses.
- **On June 23rd, BOEM published [DRAFT Guidelines for Mitigating Impacts to Commercial and Recreational Fisheries on the Outer Continental Shelf Pursuant to 30 CFR Part 585](#). AAFA is coordinating with RODA in developing comments.**
- NOAA and BOEM jointly announced an effort to acquire and use the best available information and knowledge in its decision making, BOEM is improving its processes for identifying future offshore wind energy sites. The Bureau will apply these changes to ongoing planning efforts in the Gulf of Mexico, Central Atlantic and Gulf of Maine, and off the Oregon coast. BOEM will employ a spatial model that analyzes entire marine ecosystems to identify the best areas for wind energy sites in the above locations. The model is being designed and developed by NOAA’s National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science (NCCOS).

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.
 - **The California Coastal Commission conditionally concurred on both WEAs earlier this year.**
- [Morro Bay WEA](#)
 - The **Final** EA for the Morro Bay WEA was published on **October 5**.
 - 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. 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.
- On August 11, the California Energy Commission (CEC) adopted its Final Report on Offshore Wind Planning Goals for 2030 and 2045. It established goals of 2-5 GW by 2030 and 25 GW by 2045. AAFA consultant, Mike Conroy, was on a panel during a recent (June 27) CEC meeting arguing against increasing the 2030 goals beyond those numbers.

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>. 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.
- AAFA and WFOA submitted a joint comment letter in response to the Call For Information. It is expected that BOEM will announce Wind Energy Areas off the Oregon Coast later this year.
- **As noted above, BOEM has indicated it will be utilizing a spatial suitability model to assess areas within the Call Areas which are the least conflicted. These will then be published as Draft Wind Energy Areas**

(WEAs). This is a change in BOEM’s process. We expect this will delay the identification of those draft WEAs until the first quarter of 2023.

Offshore Renewables off the Washington Coast

- There have been two unsolicited lease request submitted for federal waters off the State of Washington. BOEM is still reviewing the lease applicant’s ability to perform under the lease request. The two requests are as follows:
 - [Olympic Wind](#) – 292 sq miles (See page 10 of the ULR for a map of the area)
 - [Cascadia Wind](#) – 403 sq miles (See page 13 of the ULR for a map of the area)

Other items through **October 15, 2022**

- The commercial fishing exemption under California’s AB5 expires at the end of the year. AAFA consultant has been working with friendly legislators in Sacramento to get that exemption extended for another three years. As of early August, AB 2955, appears to be headed for passage. **Governor Newsom signed this into law in August.**
- The USFWS published the Congressionally mandated *Feasibility Assessment: Sea Otter Reintroduction to the Pacific Coast*. This could impact other fisheries AAFA members participate in in Northern California and Oregon.
- The US Coast Guard publish its Draft Pacific Coast Port Access Route Study in August. The public comment deadline was initially October 25; but that has been extended until November 8. The [following link](#) will take you to a website that shows the proposed Fairways off the US West Coast, provides a link to the Draft Study, and has recordings workshops the USCG held on the Draft Study.

Table outlining upcoming meetings where AAFA will have a presence

This is the current schedule of upcoming events/meetings (as of 10/15)

Treaty 10/28 11/8-9	Delegation Bilaterals		
11/2 – 11/8	PFMC	November Council Meeting – Garden Grove, Ca	
11/27 – 12/3	WCPFC	19 th Regular Session of the Commission	19th Regular Session of the Commission WCPFC Meetings