



What **AAFA** Is Doing For You

OFFICE UPDATES

Hope everyone had a safe and successful season. AAFA was and continues to be involved with many vital issues. It is amazing AAFA's core goal and founding principle is marketing, but it has added the management/involvement of so many challenges facing fishermen and families. 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) social and human rights issues in fisheries, and likely more things!



Consultant Reporting: Mike Conroy

November & December 2022

COVID-19 – SECOND ROUND OF FISHERIES ASSISTANCE

California – Checks were mailed on December 1st. If you applied and did not get a check yet – contact the DFW as instructed on the link that follows. See - [California CARES Act Information – Fisheries Relief \(psmfc.org\)](#)

Oregon – Oregon's Round 2 CARES Act relief has closed. See - [Oregon CARES Act Information – Fisheries Relief \(psmfc.org\)](#)

NORTH PACIFIC ALBACORE – MANAGEMENT STRATEGY EVALUATION ("MSE") & FUTURE MANAGEMENT OF THE FISHERY

NMFS hosted a virtual U.S. stake-

holder 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. Both the IATTC and WCPFC came to agreement on a harvest strategy for North Pacific albacore based on the MSE. The agreement(s) require development of harvest control rules in 2023.

MARINE STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL (MSC)

We are getting quotes from contractors who will work with the certificate holders in seeking recertification. As you know – both the North Pacific and South Pacific albacore fisheries (AAFA & WFOA) are MSC certified. The agreements facilitated by the

IATTC and WCPFC should be helpful in addressing conditions which have been placed on the certificates in recent years.

US – CANADA PACIFIC ALBACORE TREATY

On October 31, shortly before the PFMC's November meeting, the Canadian Government submitted a letter which contained proposed revisions to the Annexes. See <https://www.pcouncil.org/documents/2022/11/g-2-supplemental-attachment-4-letter-from-canada-department-of-fisheries-and-oceans-re-proposal-on-a-pacific-albacore-tuna-treaty-access-regime-beyond-2022.pdf/>. In short,

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Consultant Reporting:

Mike Conroy - Continued

the Canadian government proposed the following changes:

Annex C:

- Increase the number of Canadian vessels allowed to access the US EEZ to 110
- Allow Canadians to fish in the US EEZ until October 31
- Annex A:
- Modify the replacement vessel rules to provide flexibility
- Ensure timely and better data is shared by and between the parties

Suffice to say this was not well received by US based industry. The HMSAS requested the Council forward its recommendation that each of these was unacceptable except the modification to Annex A which requires better data reporting. AAFA offered in person testimony at the meeting and the Council agreed with AAFA's position - as reflected in the HMSAS statement. See PFMC decision document for the November 2022 meeting - [November 2022 Decision Summary Document - Pacific Fishery Management Council \(pcouncil.org\)](#)

The Canadian Government hosted an in-person Treaty Consultation on November 8 in Vancouver, BC. AAFA was present in person as well as participated virtually. Dave Hogan, U.S State Department, was the delegation lead and did a great job in communicating the US position as it relates to the requested changes in the Annexes. The meeting adjourned early.

On December 9, State Department hosted a follow-up meeting with U.S stakeholders to report out on the conversation and to discuss and review the next steps. More on this surely to follow.

UN INTERGOVERNMENTAL CONFERENCE ON MARINE BIODIVERSITY OF AREAS BEYOND NATIONAL JURISDICTION - ABNJ/BBNJ

The fifth Session of the Intergovernmental Conference on BBNJ took place in August. AAFA participated in a US Stakeholder call on July 26. The fifth Session of the Intergovernmental Conference on BBNJ adjourned on August 26 with plans to resume in February of 2023.

DOMESTIC MANAGEMENT - PFMC

As noted above, the PFMC did have a discussion on the US-Canada Albacore Treaty. The Council also adopted the HMSAS suggestion related to the upcoming WCPFC meeting. Namely, the Council recommended to the US Delegation to the WCPFC that it adopt the harvest strategy for North Pacific albacore proposed by the WCPFC Northern Committee (NC) at the upcoming 19th Regular Session.

INTERNATIONAL MANAGEMENT

As expected, the WCPFC adopted the Northern Committee's recommendation. We have been contacted by the NMFS West Coast and Pacific Island Regional Offices about the feasibility of scheduling a US stakeholder meeting in February to begin the discussions on a Harvest Control Rule. They hope to be able to report to the PFMC during its March meeting.

WIND FARMS - GENERALLY

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). We have seen how the NCCOS model is being used by BOEM in documents submitted for the Central Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico.

There is truly a lot going on under this topic. However, not all of it is bad.

- In November, Bloomberg published a news story about [May 13 letter from NMFS Office of Protected Resources to BOEM](#) highlighting the very real possibility that offshore wind will have negative impacts on the North Atlantic Right Whale. While that is an east coast whale that is listed under the Endangered Species Act, there are a number of ESA-listed whales on the west coast who may be similarly impacted.

- On November 24, a study was published that showed [offshore wind farms impact the marine ecosystem](#).

WIND FARMS OFF THE CALIFORNIA COAST

The California Coastal Commission conditionally concurred on both WEAs earlier this year.

On December 6 & 7 BOEM auctioned off 582 square miles off the California coast. In total, the lease sales brought in \$757 Million (or roughly \$2,061/acre). This compares unfavorably to the \$4.37 Billion brought in by the February lease sales off New York (or roughly \$9,000/acre). Four of the five winning bidders are foreign based companies. Once the leases are signed, the winning bidders will be able to conduct site assessment and site characterization activities. In issuing is conditional consistency determination, the California Coastal Commission required the establishment of a Fisheries Working Group. AAFA was present at a meeting on December 8 where the Working Group was discussed. It is hoped AAFA will have presence on the Working Group.

OFFSHORE RENEWABLES OFF THE WASHINGTON COAST

On December 14, the Washington Coastal Marine Advisory Council is meeting. There are three items on the agenda which may be of interest to folks in Washington:

- A presentation on the Hecate Offshore Wind project (estimated for 10:45am)
- And two items discussing WCMAC's offshore wind technical committee (estimated for 1:10 and 1:20pm)

The Agenda and Draft Principles of Engagement can be found here - [12.14.2022 DRAFT WCMAC Meeting Materials.pdf \(wa.gov\)](#)

OTHER ITEMS THROUGH OCTOBER 15, 2022

- 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. On December 7th, a Magistrate Judge in the 9th Circuit found that the 2017 NMFS Biological Opinion on the USCG's implementation of Traffic Separation Schemes in California was not in compliance with the Endangered Species Act. See - <https://www.courthousenews.com/environmental-advocates-win-case-alleging-pacific-coast-shipping-routes-threaten-whales/?fbclid=IwAR2XJRrsBwWqbyExVRErasuhs-CQJKvYO3Q360I-HzpwStqRFqcd2x2VQIYo>. It remains to be seen if and/or how this may impact the USCG efforts on establishing voluntary offshore and onshore fairways under the PAC PARS.

- On October 20 a news article was published entitled [World's largest no-fishing zone benefits fish and fishermen](#). There is a segment of the scientific community which disagrees with this study - expect to see some counter articles in the not too distant future. For

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example, "But for spillover to have resulted from the closed area the abundance in the closed area would have needed to increase considerably due to the removal of fishing effort. This is essentially impossible for yellowfin tuna (which showed the strongest effect) because there was almost no catch of yellowfin in the area before closure, averaging only 64 MT per year from 2010-2015."

- On October 28, a news article highlight that a US fishing tuna vessel was cited for violation of the Jones Act - namely employing a paper captain. See - [U.S. Coast Guard Busts Another Tuna Boat for Jones Act Violations \(maritime-executive.com\)](#). On December 8 additional information, including the name of the vessel and its owner were published. See - [Vessel owner prosecuted in Coast Guard's 'paper captain' crackdown | National Fisherman](#)

- In early November a news article was published which opined that at least 6% of fishing vessels turn off their tracking devices. See - <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2022/nov/02/at-least-6-percent-global-fishing-likely-as-ships-turn-off-tracking-devices-study>.

- On November 8, NOAA announced membership in the American Fisheries Advisory Committee. This Committee will be responsible for making recommendations for Saltonstall-Kennedy priorities and grant award fun-

ding. See - [NOAA Announces Membership for the American Fisheries Advisory Committee | NOAA Fisheries](#)

- On November 18, U.S. commercial fishing industry leaders and participants submitted recommendations to the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) to inform the development of a U.S. Ocean Climate Action Plan (OCAP). [AAFA was a signatory to this letter.](#)

- At present - the only known meeting scheduled which may impact AAFA is the March Pacific Fishery Management Council meeting scheduled to begin on or about March 4. The meeting will be held in Seattle, Wa and at present it is unknown if the HMS advisory bodies will meet in person or remotely.



WE NEED YOUR PHOTOS!

We use your photos for social media, these newsletters, the website, and more. If you take any high-resolution photos (or videos) of albacore tuna, you in action, or your boats please send them to us at: admin@americanalbacore.com