

American Fishermen's Research Foundation News ©

AFRF Fees: We want to remind WFOA members that with a mix of new markets this season, AFRF fees still are required to be paid at the rate of \$20/st by the vessel unloading at any Non-AFRF buyer. All AFRF buyers are listed at the end of this newsletter. WFOA members are required by WFOA By-laws to adhere to this. If you unload to any buyer listed we stress that they pay the fees on all troll and baitcaught albacore to benefit research and education on albacore for ALL troll and pole and line albacore fishermen.

Archival Tagging: AFRF in cooperation with NOAA/NMFS and Southwest Fisheries Science Center will resume tagging and has conducted an early tag trip on the F/V Nightwind. Forty Eight tags were deployed off coastal Washington in the second week of August. The second tagging trip will take place toward the end of the season onboard the F/V SeeAdler. A \$500 reward is given for tag recoveries.

Permit Reminders: HMS FMP Permits: All U.S. vessels fishing inside or outside of 200 miles must have in possession one of these. The initial permit applications were mailed out in 2005 by NMFS to all vessels that had landed albacore in 2004. If you did not land an albacore you probably did not receive one! These are free and were good until December 31, 2006 after which new applications will be mailed based on when your birth date is. You may have received a letter from NMFS stating they will send renewal notices out for your HMS permit (Inside 200 nm) to correspond with your birth date instead of prior to the season. If you do not receive one or have questions call: Chris Fanning, 562.980.4198 or e-mail<chris.fanning@noaa.gov>

Or Click here: <http://swr.nmfs.noaa.gov/hms/hmsapp.pdf>

HSFCA Permits: Vessel owners are reminded that HSFCA permits for HMS outside of 200 miles are required since 1996. They are good for five years and have a nominal charge of \$67. If you have applied and have not received yours -- or are planning to apply -- our advice is to make copies of the application and your check before you send it in and keep that with you. For questions call Rick Deering at NMFS 562.980.4032 or e-mail <rick.deering@noaa.gov>, Or this link: <http://swr.ucsd.edu/fmd/hsfca.htm>

NOTE: New international regulations will soon require vessels fishing west of 150W to fill out a supplemental attachment asking for such things as capacity, freezer system details, horsepower, etc . . . These will be sent out later this year.

HMS Logbooks: These are required and need each page signed prior to sending them in at the end of each trip. Failure to send in a logbook may result in not receiving an HMS permit application in 2008. If you did not land albacore in 2006/2007 you may/will need to call NMFS 562.980.4198 and request the logbook and permit for 2008 as they will only send them to vessels that landed over one metric ton. The logbook is mandatory for all waters and species included under the PFMC - FMP.

Current Status and near-term outlook for North Pacific Albacore.

Vidar G. Weststad, AFRF Science Consultant

A brief, two day meeting of the Albacore Working Group held in conjunction with the 8th Meeting of the International Scientific Committee (ISC) Plenary, Takamatsu, Japan 15 to 16 July 2008. The meeting was held to:

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1. Update fisheries statistics through 2007.
2. Provide a review of stock status since the last assessment
3. Develop a biological research plan designed to improve albacore stock assessment
4. Start to prepare for the next North Pacific albacore stock assessment in March 2010.

The consensus of the meeting was that albacore were in better condition than previously believed and that the near-term outlook is for stocks to remain at or near current sustainable levels. Recent changes in the fisheries brought on by increased fuel prices and fish market volatility have complicated the assessment process. The ALB WG proposed a new program to increase biological sampling in order to more accurately assess the trend of albacore and asked guidance on biological reference points in order to develop and evaluate appropriate ones for albacore. The working group will conduct another assessment in 2010 and hold an interim meeting in 2009 to work on biological issues and to prepare the model and data for the 2010 assessment.

In the review of fisheries the Japanese reported that the large (distant water) pole and line fleet catch was much reduced in 2005 and 2006, but preliminary estimates that the catch level has increased since then (Figure 1). The primary cause was low skipjack prices caused fishery changes that contributed to albacore catch declines; however, price increased in 2007 and so did catch. The Japanese reported that the total number of large and medium sized longline vessels and large pole and line vessels has continued to decrease but the number of medium sized (offshore) pole and line vessels continues to be stable. Other Asian fisheries are relatively small with effort largely exerted on other species. In some cases there have been no recent reporting of catches, but the estimated portion of the total catch is a minor component.

On the North American side, the Mexican commercial catch continues low with albacore largely bycatch while fishing for other species. John Childers, NMFS, reported that very little has changed in the U.S. fisheries since 2005. He noted that catch and effort data are collected from logbooks (voluntarily submitted prior to 2005) and required since then. The mandatory logbook program has increased data submission greatly with submissions increasing from 20% to 70% following introduction of mandatory logbooks and currently approaching 100%.

For the Canadian fishery, it was reported that the 2007 albacore catch is estimated to have been 6,075 t, an increase from 5,832 t in 2006. Most of the Canadian catch came from the Canadian and the U.S. EEZ. The CPUE from the Canadian troll fleet in 2007 is 854 kg/day, down slightly from 934 kg/day in 2006, the highest CPUE in the time series. Two size modes centered at 64 cm and 75 cm, corresponding to three and four year old fish predominated in the Canadian catch, and similar to that of the US troll catch. This is as expected, since both fleets operate in the same waters. It was noted that differences in CPUE made it difficult to directly compare US and Canadian data, as the US reports in number of fish and Canada in Kg.

The ALBWG's review of recent fisheries information (since 2005 – the terminal year from the last stock assessment) indicate the following:

1. Total catch in 2006 was slightly greater than in 2005. However, in 2007, catch increased substantially – returning to a level more typical of the past decade.
2. Recent values of CPUE were also either stable or higher than in 2005.
3. Recent information regarding the magnitude of the 2003 year-class was mixed with some data sources appearing to be consistent with a strong 2003 year-class and other sources not.

Recruitment is an important factor in projecting near-term yield. The 2003 year class appeared to be strong in the North American fishery, but has only partially appeared in Asian fisheries. It is hoped that this year-class will recruit to the longline fishery, an indication that it has recruited to the spawning population.

Another factor that emerged this year is the fact that projected catch was larger than actual. This led to an

increase in the estimated spawning biomass (SSB) estimates to be greater than those estimated in the 2006 stock assessment. More generally, it was recognized that the assumed catches in recent years can have a large influence on short term projection results – particularly when the assumed and actual catches differ appreciably.

The working group developed a proposal to improve the collection of critical biological data. There will be a need to secure funding for these efforts. Other issues that the ALB WG needs to follow include the implications of high fuel prices on the standardization of effort time-series because of the changes in fishing patterns that are occurring, should funding become available.

Lastly, the ALB WG discussed the potential effect of potential requests (from the Northern Committee or the ISC Plenary) for further work on reference points using the last assessment as the foundation for such work. The 2006 stock assessment was followed by innovative reference point analyses. Considerable additional work will be needed to move passed the “proof of concept” stage. A request was sent to ISC for clarification of standards for BRPs, this topic will be reviewed at the February-March 2009 meeting tentatively scheduled for 24 February – 3 March 2009, with Japan offering to host the meeting.

Appointments:

Recently the Governor appointed the “Blue Ribbon” Committee which is supposed to review and make recommendations to the California Fish and Game Commission concerning a series of Marine Protected Areas in the Santa Barbara, Ventura, Los Angeles, San Diego area coastal waters. The members of the Committee are:

- William W. Anderson, President of Westrec Marina Management, Inc.
- Don Benninghoven, former executive director of the League of California Cities
- Meg Caldwell, Director and Senior Lecturer on Law, Stanford Law School's Environment and Natural Resources Law & Policy Program
- Susan Golding, President and Chief Executive Officer of The Golding Group and Former Mayor of San Diego
- Dr. Jane Pisano, president and director of the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County
- Catherine Reheis-Boyd, Chief Operating Officer and Chief of Staff for the Western States Petroleum Association
- Gregory F. Schem, President and Chief Executive Officer of Harbor Real Estate Group

WCPFC Commission: President Bush announced the appointment of the U.S. Commissioners to the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC).

- Tuna Purse Seine Fleet: Paul Krampe, American Tunaboat Association
- Department of State: Bill Gibbons-Fly, Office of Marine Conservation
- Department of Commerce: Jane Luxton, NOAA General Counsel
- Western Pacific Fisheries Management Council (WPFMC): Peter Young and Rick Gaffney

Other:

We generally do not have such a long tribute to a lost member, but Frank martins was unique and an original founder of WFOA and AFRF.

Frank “Hart” Martins Sept. 23, 1919 – July 6, 2008

Frank Martins passed away at his home on Sunday July 6, 2008 at the age of 88, surrounded by his family. He was born on September 23, 1919 to Frank Martins, Sr. and Marie (Mamie) Martins of Salinas, both descended from pioneer families that originally settled in San Luis Obispo. He attended Salinas High School being a star

wrestler and football player.

He was inducted into the Army during WWII, and trained at Camp Ibis in the Mojave Desert (5 miles from Needles) for 13 months. Living in a tent and training for the invasion of Africa. Fighting ended in Africa, he was then sent to the European Theater, as chief radio Sargent in the 440th AAA Battalion, where he fought in five campaigns that included the invasion of Normandy and the Battle of the Bulge.

Returning home, he married his childhood sweetheart, Lillian Goulart, and returned to his true love, the open sea. He became a member of the Western Fishboat Owners' Association when it was formed in it's infancy, and served as President for many years, then as Director. Later the American Fishermen's Research Foundation was formed, and he served as President for many years; then Director. When he retired he was an advisor to the Board of Directors.

During these years he received numerous awards. Some from NOAA for his participation beyond the normal duty of Ships of Opportunity Program of Marine Observations; and another for Ship Weather Observation. NASA and Jet Propulsion Laboratories awarded him for his support of the Capabilities of Microwave Sensing of the World's Oceans, the Proof-of-Concept Voyage of the First Oceanographic Satellite- "Sea Sat". Western Fishboat Association awarded him the first "Bob Insinger Award" for outstanding service to Western Fishboat Owner's Association. He recently received the American Fishermen's Research Foundation's first "Frank Martins' Award" for outstanding contributions to the knowledge of biology, life history and oceanography of the Albacore tuna fishery "the award in his name will be given Occasionally to a person in the fishery or the scientific community who has made exceptional contributions to the scientific knowledge and management of albacore tuna".

He was a Past Grand Knight of the Knights of Columbus, Monterey Council; and Past Faithful Navigator of Fourth Degree. He and his good friend, Richard Smith who recently passed away, enjoyed cooking dinners for the Knights. Frank also headed the Knights who placed American flags on Memorial Day at the Catholic Cemetery. He headed the group of Knights who held the Stations of the Cross during Lent at San Carlos Cathedral.

When Cannery Row Properties Co. first began remodelling Cannery Row they engaged Frank to remodel some of the canneries – making the Outrigger Restaurant (now the Fish Hopper Restaurant), the Steinbeck Theatre (now many small shops) the Bear Flag Inn, and other shops. He also built homes on the Peninsula.

He was a devout Catholic, wonderful friend, husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather, and a good family man. He is survived by his wife Lillian, his sons Melvin and Mark Martins a daughter Kathleen Fosmark (Steve). Grandchildren Stephanie Potter (Joe), Eric Fosmark (Christine), Scott Fosmark (Debbie), and five great-grandchildren Noah, Maxwell, and Emma Potter, Kayla and Sean Fosmark, all of the Monterey Peninsula. Survived by brothers, Ernest, Louis, Allen and James Martins of Salinas; his sister Joyce Renebone of Stockton, and his uncle, Mitchell Ruda of San Louis Obispo.

Preceded in death were sisters Marguerite Roberts and Dolores Holt Rodgers of Salinas. He leaves numerous nieces, nephews and cousins. Also survived by his little faithful dog Missy.

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AFRF Contracted Buyers: Arrowac Fisheries, Bluewater Fisheries, Bornstein Seafoods Inc., Bumble Bee Seafoods, Carvalho Fisheries, Chicken of the Sea International, Driscoll's Wharf, Interocean Fisheries, Island Trollers Inc., Jessie's Ilwaco Fish Company, Ilwaco Landing LLC, Mary-Lu Seafoods, New Day Fisheries, Pacific Seafood Group, Papa George Gourmet Albacore, Pelican Packers Inc., Seafood Producers Co-op, Shamrock Fisheries, Star Kist Seafoods, Starvin Marvin Seafoods, Trident Seafoods, Tri-Marine International, Whole Foods Select Fish, Wild Planet Inc

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