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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 January of 2018 and looks forward to certain events occurring in upcoming months.

Vacancies on the California Delegation for the Pacific Fishery Management Council.

Updates on this. Applications submitted, letters of support received (thank you!). Governor has to submit his recommendations to the Secretary of Commerce by March 15. Other Council news – Carl Nish threw his name in the hat for the vacant Processor North of Cape Mendocino seat on the Highly Migratory Species Advisory Subpanel.

Follow-up on October's upcoming events:

1. January 17 – 19. 6th National Scientific Coordination Committee of the Council Coordination Committee will meet in San Diego. In speaking to scientists who attended, it was a high-level discussion on Management Strategy Evaluations (MSE). Briefing Book for that meeting available at <http://www.fisherycouncils.org/ssc-workshops/scs6-briefing-book>. I assume this will be a topic of conversation at the upcoming PFMC meeting.
2. March 8 – 15. Pacific Fishery Management Council meeting in Rohnert Park, Ca. I will be attending and sitting on the HMSAS as an alternate. At present, the entirety of the HMS items appear to focus on moving forward with authorizing a Deep Set Buoy Gear fishery for swordfish. Albacore interest on the HMSAS may bring up the idea of a MSE webinar/workshop with NMFS and fishery participants.

Federal Register Items of Interest:

In past reports we have highlighted actions taken against Canadian importers and industry by the International Trade Administration of the Department of Commerce and The United States International Trade Commission. The intent was to show how there are some tensions between the two Nations on certain trade issues. Rather than take up space delving into each – we will simply list the publication date in the Federal Register, the topic of the publication and provide a link if the reader wishes to learn more about the publication.

Date	Topic	Link
Jan 3	Dept of Commerce & Intl Trade Commission issue countervailing duty order on Certain Softwood Lumber Products (Softwood Lumber) from Canada	https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2018-01-03/pdf/2017-28483.pdf
Jan 3	Dept of Commerce & Intl Trade Commission issue an antidumping duty order on certain softwood lumber products (softwood lumber) from Canada	https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2018-01-03/pdf/2017-28484.pdf
Jan 3	Dept of Commerce conducting administrative review of the countervailing duty (CVD) order on supercalendered paper (SC paper) from Canada.	https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2018-01-03/pdf/2017-28198.pdf
Jan 16	Dept of Commerce preliminarily determines that countervailable subsidies are being provided to producers and exporters of certain uncoated groundwood paper (UGW paper) from Canada	https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2018-01-16/pdf/2018-00570.pdf

1. January 8 – The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management announces the availability of the Draft Proposed Program (DPP) for the 2019–2024 Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program. Public comments will be accepted on the Draft document through March 8. The Program proposes 7 lease sales in the Pacific Region (2 each for Northern California, Central California, and Southern California, and 1 for Washington/Oregon) staggered over the course of those 5 years. See - <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2018-01-08/pdf/2018-00083.pdf> .
2. January 9 – NMFS publishes proposed Annual Catch Limits (ACLs) for Monitored stocks under the PFMC’s Coastal Pelagic Species Fishery Management Plan. Northern Anchovy is a Monitored Stock with ACLs set as follows: Central Subpopulation (predominantly south of the Ca/Or Border) – 25,000mt; Northern Subpopulation (Between the Ca/Or Border and the US/Canada Border) – 9.750mt. These ACLs will remain as such until changed by a future rulemaking. See - <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2018-01-09/pdf/2018-00084.pdf>
3. January 17 – NOAA issues proposed rule regarding its Commerce Trusted Trader Program. This Program is designed for importers of the species deemed priority species under the Seafood Import Monitoring Program (SIMP) and will allow importers, who are a part of this Program to be subject to reduced reporting and recordkeeping requirements and streamlined entry of applicable species into the United States. See - <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2018-01-17/pdf/2018-00653.pdf>
4. January 23 – NMFS publishes notice of proposed Amendment to the Highly Migratory Species Fishery Management Plan. The intent of this Amendment is to bring descriptions of the management context for highly migratory species (HMS) fisheries up to date, better describe the Council’s role in the process of making stock status determinations including evaluations of the best scientific information available (BSIA), and change the schedule of the Council’s three-meeting biennial management cycle for HMS stocks. AAFA representatives and members took part in the development of this Amendment. See - <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2018-01-23/pdf/2018-01180.pdf>

Other items of interest:

1. *National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES)*. The temporary extension of the exemption expired on January 19. As of Feb 1, there has been no action to extend this exemption; but there are numerous groups working on this in Washington DC. We have been told that this requirement will NOT be enforced, while efforts are underway to extend, or make permanent, this exemption.

2. *State of the California Current*. NOAA and its partners released a report on the state of the California Current in 2017. Not surprisingly it found the California Current in a state of transition. Ocean temperatures throughout the region were abnormally high from 2013–16. In 2016–17, they began returning to a level more in keeping with long-term averages. See - https://www.nwfsc.noaa.gov/news/features/california_current/index.cfm
3. *Navy may block proposed wind farm off Central California Coast*. There is a thought that this isn't real; but rather an effort by those pushing for the proposed Chumash National Marine Sanctuary to gather support for that effort. We are keeping an eye on this. See - <http://www.sanluisobispo.com/news/local/environment/article196861249.html>.
4. *Offshore Oil and Gas Drilling*. The current administration indicated an intention to allow new offshore oil and gas drilling in nearly all United States coastal waters, giving energy companies access to leases off California for the first time in decades and opening more than a billion acres in the Arctic and along the Eastern Seaboard. See - <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/04/climate/trump-offshore-drilling.html>.

Upcoming items of interest

1. March 8 – 15. Pacific Fishery Management Council meeting in Rohnert Park, Ca. Highly Migratory Species have ½ of one day at this meeting with topics including: NMFS Rpt. (1 hr); EFPs – Initial Review/Final Approval (1 hr); Deep Set Buoy Gear Authorization, ROA/PPA (3 hr). I haven't been given any indication that Albacore will be a part of the Agenda, but I will keep an eye out.