



Mike Conroy, Esq. - President
Mike@wecofm.com
(562) 761-7176

Please share the following with the AAFA Board and Membership as it recounts items of interest that arose during the month of March of 2018 and looks forward to certain events occurring in upcoming months.

Important notice - CHECK THE ZIPPER ON YOUR SURVIVAL SUITS. See -
<https://www.amsea.org/single-post/2018/03/27/Coast-Guard-Urges-Mariners-to-Inspect-Immersion-Suit-Zippers>

Follow-up on January's upcoming events:

1. March 8 – 15. Pacific Fishery Management Council meeting in Rohnert Park, Ca. As expected, there was nothing related to the North Pacific Albacore fishery brought up during the recently completed PFMC meeting. One matter of interest, Carl Nish was appointed to the Highly Migratory Species Advisory Subpanel in the Processor North of Cape Mendocino seat. The HMSAS did bring up the recent study (<https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fmars.2018.00046/full>) which was based, in part, on VMS data from shrimp, albacore and salmon vessels obtained from NMFS Office of Law Enforcement. We contended this was a misuse of that data. It started quite a conversation on the Council floor.
2. March 28 – Workshop entitled, “Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) Workshop for the NOAA NMFS/OAR Project “From Physics to Fisheries: A Social-Ecological Management Strategy Evaluation for the California Current Large Marine Ecosystem”. This was an interesting Workshop that was focused on the California Current only. While many of the larger management implications effecting the Pacific-wide fishery were not discussed, there was extensive conversation about the US-Canada Treaty. One of the management strategies to be evaluated under this process will be the termination of the Treaty and how that will affect the US fishery in terms of harvest and economic valuations. Aa follow-up workshop will likely occur early next year.

Federal Register Items of Interest:

In past reports we have highlighted actions taken again 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. We 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
Mar 8	Dept of Commerce & Intl Trade Administration issued a notice of an Initiation of Expedited Review of a countervailing duty order on certain softwood products from Canada	https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2018-03-08/pdf/2018-04678.pdf
Mar 12	U.S Intl Trade Commission finds a reasonable indication that an industry in the US is materially injured by reason of imports of large diameter welded pipe (LDWP) from Canada and others	https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2018-03-12/pdf/2018-04848.pdf
Mar 19	Dept of Commerce preliminary determination that certain uncoated groundwood paper (UGW paper) from Canada is being, or is likely to be, sold in the United States at less than fair value	https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2018-03-19/pdf/2018-05486.pdf

1. March 12 – NMFS announces public meeting of the General Advisory Committee to the U.S. Section to the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission on 6/28/18, and a public meeting of the Scientific Advisory Subcommittee to the General Advisory Committee on 6/27/18. It doesn't appear that anything related to Albacore will be discussed; but that could change. See <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2018-03-12/pdf/2018-04829.pdf>
2. March 16 – USCG extended the public comment period re potential establishment of Regulated Navigation Areas (RNAs) at harbor entrance bars to Crescent Harbor, Humboldt Bay, Noyo River, and Morro Bay. The request for comments was originally published on February 8. See - <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2018-03-16/pdf/2018-05342.pdf>.
3. March 16 – NMFS Publishes the Final 2017 List of Foreign Fisheries. The Marine Mammal Protection Act contains a provision prohibits imports of commercial fish or fish products caught in commercial fishing operations resulting in the incidental killing or serious injury (bycatch) of marine mammals in excess of United States standards. Of note: See - <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2018-03-16/pdf/2018-05348.pdf>
4. March 19 – USCG issues final rule re Marine Casualty Reporting Property Damage Thresholds. This proposed rule was originally published on Jan 23, 2017. In short – monetary thresholds for reporting are being modified as follows: Marine Casualty – \$75,000; a Serious Marine Incident is one which exceeds \$200,000. Note – this is related to the value of property damage resulting from an incident. See - <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2018-03-19/pdf/2018-05467.pdf>
5. March 21 – USCG announces the discontinuance of its remaining 38 maritime Differential Global Positioning System (DGPS) sites. This will begin in September of this year and conclude by September of 2020. See - <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2018-03-21/pdf/2018-05684.pdf>
6. March 28 – NMFS issues final rule setting trip limits for commercial take of Pacific bluefin tuna for 2018. 1-mt trip limit—except for large-mesh drift gillnet vessels, which would be subject to a 2-mt trip limit—throughout 2018 or until the 2018 catch limit is reached and the fishery is closed. See - <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2018-03-28/pdf/2018-06148.pdf>

Other items of interest:

1. *National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES)*. Last we postulated that this was going to be addressed in the Federal Spending Bill – it wasn't. We have been assured a permanent fix is still being sought in Washington, DC. We have also been told that this requirement will NOT be enforced, while efforts are underway to extend, or make permanent, this exemption.
2. *Southern California waters could support numerous offshore fish farms*. There is already one permitted aquaculture facility (mussels) operating in federal waters off Long Beach, Ca. A finfish facility is planned for federal waters offshore of San Diego. We will have to pay close attention to proposed offshore facilities because shipping and the Navy are other users of this space which will surely have voices in potential

proposed locations. <https://www.newsdeeply.com/oceans/articles/2018/03/26/report-offshore-fish-farms-could-thrive-in-california>

3. *MSC Certification for PNA skipjack and yellowfin tuna fishery.* Although numerous groups filed objections, the PNA free-school skipjack and yellowfin tuna fishery has been officially recertified with the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC). See - <http://fis.com/fis/worldnews/worldnews.asp?monthyear=&day=29&id=96629&l=e&country=0&special=&ndb=1&df=0>
4. *Does potential of fishery closures have negative impacts of mental health of fishery participants.* This article also examines how these closures are increasing interactions between recreational and commercial fishing interests. <https://qsia.com.au/2018/03/01/net-free-zones-stress-and-mental-health-issues/>.
5. *Secretary of Commerce questions safety of seafood imports.* He also states that NOAA Fisheries officials need to work harder to reduce the country's seafood trade deficit. <https://www.seafoodsource.com/news/food-safety-health/us-commerce-secretary-wilbur-ross-questions-safety-of-foreign-seafood-imports>

Upcoming items of interest

1. April 16-18 - Organizational session of the Intergovernmental Conference on an international legally binding instrument 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. I believe the session will be broadcast live via - <https://papersmart.unmeetings.org/en/ga/bbnj-intergovernmental-conference/organizational-session/agenda/>
2. April 30–May 5 – Albacore Working Group meeting to be held in La Jolla. At present, there is no Agenda available for this meeting. I spoke with Steve Teo at the March 28 MSE Workshop and the Agenda for the ALBWG Agenda had not yet been finalized – but he did note it was not a public meeting
3. May 14–18, 2018 – IATTC Scientific Advisory Committee Meeting. The Provisional Agenda for this meeting has an Item, “North Pacific albacore tuna: update on management strategy evaluation (MSE) work.” See - <https://www.iattc.org/Meetings/Meetings2018/SAC-09/PDFs/Docs/English/SAC-09-Provisional-agenda.pdf>. I plan to follow-up to see when and whether or not we will be invited to attend.
4. May 21-24, 2018 – Tuna Conference in Lake Arrowhead. The theme for this year is “Climate variability and ecosystem considerations in management of large pelagics”. I plan to find out more about this during the upcoming PFMC meeting.