

HMS FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN PUBLIC HEARING SUMMARY

Date: January 28, 2002	Hearing Officer: Mr. Bob Alverson
Location: Olympia, WA Natural Resources Building 1111 Washington Street NE, Rm. 172 Olympia, WA 98501	Other Council Members: Mr. Phil Anderson
Attendance: 9	HMSPTD: Ms. Michele Robinson
Testifying: 3	Council Staff: Mr. Dan Waldeck Mr. Kit Dahl
<u>Organizations Represented:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Washington Trollers Association</li> <li>· Westport Charterboat Association</li> <li>· Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission</li> <li>· US Coast Guard</li> <li>· Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife</li> <li>· National Marine Fisheries Service-Northwest Regional Office</li> </ul>	

**Synopsis of Testimony**

Of the 3 people testifying, generally:

- 1 represented the recreational fishery
- 2 represented the commercial fishery

**Commercial Comments**

The first commentator was not in favor of limited entry for the albacore troll fishery. He noted that salmon trollers, at times, depend on access to albacore fishery. He also asked about how expensive licenses would be if licenses would be required even if a fisher did not participate in the albacore fishery and where the license fee would go.

The hearing panel responded that National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) would administer permits, and they would determine license fees. The intent would be for permit fees to be determined by administrative costs.

The second speaker remarked about the proposed management cycle, commercial permits, and drift gillnet closures. He suggested the Council refrain from HMS management decisions during the July-September period, as this is the peak of the West Coast-based albacore fishery. Relative to commercial fishing permits, he suggested permits be issued to a person or entity, because if limited entry is developed, it will be necessary to tie catch history to an individual which reduces problems in identifying who can claim past participation during the qualifying period. Also relative to permits, he questioned whether Canadian albacore fishers in U.S. waters should be required to hold U.S. HMS permits. He contended that if U.S. HMS fishers are required to hold permits, Canadian fishers in U.S. waters should also be required to hold permits. Relative to the proposed drift gillnet closed area, he asked for clarification as to the bounds of the closed area. He concluded by complimenting the Council process.

**Recreational Comments**

This representative from the charterboat sector noted a desire to be accounted for in HMS management,

especially the albacore fishery. He is opposed to the small mesh drift gillnet fishery targeting albacore and the use of pelagic longlines with the U.S. exclusive economic zone (EEZ). He does not support federal permits for individual recreational anglers, but would support federal licenses and logbooks for the charterboat sector.

**Number of Written Statements Submitted at the Hearing = 2**

PFMC  
02/26/02

Dr. Don Melsaac, Executive Director  
PFMC  
7700 NE Ambassador Place  
Portland, OR 97220

1/28/02

Douglas Fricke  
Commercial At-Large HMS A/P  
110 Valley Road  
Hoquiam, WA 98550

Subject: Testimony to 1/28/02 PFMC Hearing on HMS at Olympia, Wa.

I do have three short comments on the "Draft Fisheries Management Plan and ESI for U. S. West Coast Fisheries for Highly Migratory Species". However my main propose as the Northern at-large commercial representative to the PFMC HMS Advisory Panel is to listen to the comments of area industry individuals in order to relate their concerns to the PFMC through the HMS Advisory Panel.

My comments follow:

- Paragraph 8.3.5 Management Cycle - Please do not schedule any of the HMS decision making or review requirements during July through the end of September as that is the middle of the albacore tuna fishermen's season for the U. S. West Coast.
- Paragraph 8.5.1 Permits - There needs to be clarification that the HMS fishing vessel permit is issued to a person or entity that can retain a clear right to the catch history. If limited entry comes in the future, we need to avoid the problem of who can claim the catch history. Also, for the purpose of control and management, shouldn't there be a requirement for Canadian vessels to obtain a similar permit to fish albacore in the U.S. EEZ?
- Paragraph 8.5.4 Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Measures - there needs to be clarification of the new closures off of Washington and Oregon. The "proposed action" talks about new closures but there is no description of the closures.

I would like to conclude by complimenting the PFMC process for recognizing suggestions by industry in the past and correcting inaccuracies that were included in past draft documents.

# **W**ESTPORT CHARTERBOAT ASSOCIATION

P. O. BOX 654 • WESTPORT, WASHINGTON 98595

January 28, 2002

**To: Pacific Fishery Management Council**

**From: Mark Cedergreen, Executive Director**

**Re: Highly Migratory Species Fishery Management Plan (HMSFMP)**

The Westport Charter boat Association is comprised of the 30 charter vessels fishing out of Westport, Washington. Approximately half of these vessels participate in the albacore fishery off southwest Washington during the time period from late July through early October. Our fishery is dependent upon albacore migrating to within one hundred miles of port, which has occurred in most years since the mid-1960's.

Virtually all of the recreational trips taken in Washington are on vessels out of Westport. Westport is the only port on the Washington coast that fishes with live bait. Our catch averages about 2 percent of the Washington landings (commercial and recreational) of Albacore Tuna. We are a very small part of the overall HMSFMP proposal and we are concerned that we could be "lost in the shuffle" so to speak.

We generally support the position of the Western Fishboat Owners Association (WFOA).

More specifically, we are strongly opposed to the use of small mesh nets for catching albacore and the use of pelagic longlines within the EEZ. We are also opposed to a federal individual recreational fishing license. We believe that state licensing systems are the vehicle by which to license recreational fishers. We support a charter boat logbook program and a Federal license of charter boats for the purpose of monitoring and record keeping so long as the cost of a license is not excessive. We support an annual or a bi-annual process for specific regulations and reserve our comments on those issues until that system is in place.

Thank you for considering our views.