

WESTPORT CHARTERBOAT ASSOCIATION
P. O. BOX 654 • WESTPORT, WASHINGTON 98595

RECEIVED

OCT 14 2010

PFMC

October 12, 2010

Pacific Fishery Management Council
7700 NE Ambassador Place, Suite 101
Portland, Oregon 97220-1384
Mark Cedergreen, Chairman

Re: Washington Albacore tuna bag limit proposal

Dear Council members;

The members of the Westport Charterboat Association are strongly opposed to the imposition of a bag (trip) limit on Albacore tuna at this time. Our reasons are many and I will highlight the most important ones.

First, our fleet numbers about 30 vessels, 20 of which take albacore trips. In the late 1970's we had over 200 vessels operating out of Westport, and far more taking tuna trips. Almost all of the trips taken today are multiple-day trips. These trips are very expensive to operate. Fuel, live bait, an alternate crew, and the extra equipment required by the USCG for trips lasting more than 12 hours make these trips very marginally profitable unless the vessels are filled to capacity (8-12 depending on the size of the vessel). We started fishing albacore in the mid-1960's in Westport and have never had a bag limit. Although our catch per person rarely exceeds the bag limits in place in Oregon and northern California, our clientele are attracted by the absence of a limit and we strongly believe that if a bag limit were imposed we would suffer unnecessary economic damage. Additionally, albacore fishing takes the pressure off the salmon fishery.

Second, there is no compelling biological reason why a bag limit is necessary. Imposition of a bag limit wouldn't reduce our current CPUE to any degree. The only explainable reason for imposition of a limit is a matter of perception. The 2006 stock assessment shows that although the fishing rate is very high in the North Pacific, the biomass is also very high. The 2011 stock assessment will provide information that can be used to determine the need for further regulation throughout the North Pacific and the US West Coast.

Third, in April of this year the Council decided to defer any regulatory action regarding effort limitation in the US commercial fishery until the results of the 2011 stock assessment are known. Why should we be singled out for additional management when only around one half of one percent of the US west coast catch is caught in the Washington recreational fishery? In fact, 2 years ago, charter boats in Washington capped their potential effort through license legislation in lieu of consideration of a bag limit.

Finally, although we strongly oppose a bag limit, a bag (trip) limit less than our neighboring states could be devastating. We hope you will defer consideration of any regulatory action until the results of the 2011 stock assessment are known.

Thank you.

Respectfully yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Steve Westrick". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Steve Westrick, President

Subject: Washington Albacore tuna bag limit proposal

From: "Keizer, John A Civ USAF AMC 627 CES/CEO" <John.Keizer@mcchord.af.mil>

Date: Thu, 14 Oct 2010 12:12:57 -0500

To: pfmc.comments@noaa.gov

CC: Michele.Culver@dfw.wa.gov

October 14, 2010

Pacific Fishery Management Council
7700 NE Ambassador Place, Suite 101
Portland, Oregon 97220-1384

Re: Washington Albacore tuna bag limit proposal

Dear Council members;

I'm an avid tuna angler and strongly opposed to the imposition of a bag (trip) limit on Albacore tuna at this time. I will highlight my reasons.

First; I fish out of a 26ft boat as do most of the guys who I know that fish tuna. If I'm very lucky I might make 4-6 tuna trips a year. Weather is always the driving force and limiting factor for privet boat tuna anglers. These trips are very expensive with fuel, live bait, lodging, extra ice and special equipment needed to catch tuna. Most trips run about \$400-500 a day which also limits the amount of angler's taking part in this fishery. Boats in our class can at max harvest and care for only about 20-25 tuna a trip with a crew of 4. There is just not room to hold more iced tuna then that. Additionally, albacore fishing takes the pressure off the salmon fishery during July and August.

Second, there is no compelling biological reason why a bag limit is necessary. Imposition of a bag limit wouldn't reduce our current CPUE to any degree. The only explainable reason for imposition of a limit is a matter of perception. The 2006 stock assessment shows that although the fishing rate is very high in the North Pacific, the biomass is also very high. The 2011 stock assessment will provide information that can be used to determine the need for further regulation throughout the North Pacific and the US West Coast.

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Finally, although I'm strongly oppose a bag limit, a bag (trip) limit less than our neighboring states could be devastating to this sport fishery in Washington and the coastal community's economy. I hope you will defer consideration of any regulatory action until the results of the 2011 stock assessment are known.

Thank you.
Respectfully yours,

John Keizer
6909 35th St West
University Place WA 98466