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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 July and looks forward to certain events occurring in upcoming months.

Follow-up on April's upcoming events:

1. The International Scientific Committee for Tuna and Tuna-Like Species in the North Pacific Ocean released the stock assessment for North Pacific Albacore. Bottom-line, **“Based on these findings, the ALBWG concludes that: 1) the stock is likely not overfished, and 2) overfishing is likely not occurring.”** See page 9 of link below). If you are so inclined, the 109-page report is here - <https://www.wcpfc.int/system/files/SC13-SA-WP-09%20Stock%20Assessment%20N%20Pacific%20Albacore.pdf>.

Federal Register Items of Interest:

The following appeared in the Federal Register which may have an impact on AAFA vessels. Given the sheer number of items for this month, I have taken a different approach and provide them in order of importance to AAFA – rather than chronologically.

1. July 7 – Extension of public comment period re USCG reg overview. In last month's report, we noted a notice which sought public comments on *Existing Coast Guard Regulations, Guidance Documents, Interpretative Documents, and Collections of Information*. This notice, extended the deadline for public comment until September 11, 2017. We reached out to the AAFA Board and PMA members and received feedback on two specific items: (1) limiting the requirement for AIS only in those areas with a vessel traffic separation scheme and (2) life raft servicing requirements. We will be submitting comments to this effect (and any others that come up between now and September 11) before the due date. See - <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2017-07-07/pdf/2017-14254.pdf>
2. July 7 – NOAA issued a notice and request for public comments regarding Streamlining Regulatory Processes and Reducing Regulatory Burden. This mirrors notices published by other administrative agencies. In this notice, NOAA asks for comments on existing processes and regulations under the agencies' statutory mandates: (1) Marine Mammal Protection Act; (2) Endangered Species Act; (3) Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act; (4) Federal Power Act; and (5) National Marine Sanctuaries Act. Additionally, this notice seeks comments on Marine Aquaculture. Comments are due by August 21. See - <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2017-07-07/pdf/2017-14167.pdf>

3. July 10 – NMFS – Seafood Import Monitoring Program meetings. NMFS issued a Notice of public meetings to discuss implementation of the U.S. Seafood Import Monitoring Program. The meetings will address issues relevant to both foreign exporters and U.S. domestic importers of seafood species whose products are covered by the Seafood Import Monitoring Program – tuna is one of the covered products. The mandatory compliance date for this Program is January 1, 2018. We attended the July 13 meeting in Long Beach and it didn't provide any insights that we didn't already know. See - <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2017-07-10/pdf/2017-14327.pdf>
4. July 18 – USCG published a notice of availability of Navigation and Vessel Inspection Circular (NVIC) 01–16 change 1. This provides that display of certain electronic charts and publications will meet—as an equivalency—the “marine charts,” “charts,” “maps,” or “publications” requirements. See - <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2017-07-18/pdf/2017-15056.pdf> for the Federal Register Notice – and https://www.uscg.mil/hq/cg5/nvic/pdf/2016/NVIC_01-16_electronic_charts_and_publications.pdf for the NVIC document for the list of approved electronic charts.
5. July 19 – The Department of Homeland Security issued a temporary rule increasing the number of H2B Visas issuable under the Temporary Nonagricultural Worker Program. H2B Visas will be granted to a nonagricultural temporary worker “having a residence in a foreign country which he has no intention of abandoning who is coming temporarily to the United States to perform . . . temporary [non-agricultural] service or labor if unemployed persons capable of performing such service or labor cannot be found in this country.” See - <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2017-07-19/pdf/2017-15208.pdf>.
6. July 12 – NMFS published a notice re West Coast Region Vessel ID Requirements. As you are likely all aware, commercial fishing vessels with HMS permits must display the vessel's official number (U.S. Coast Guard documentation number or state registration number) in accordance with applicable regulations. This notice asks whether the collection of information is necessary, etc. This is merely a “checking the box” exercise which won't lead to any regulatory change as this regulation implements a resolution adopted by the IATTC. See - <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2017-07-12/pdf/2017-14576.pdf>
7. July 27 – The EPA published a proposed rule revising the definition of “Waters of the United States”. Public comments on the proposed rule will be accepted until August 28. This is a wide-reaching proposed rule which will impact actions and proposed actions offered by the EPA. In short, this proposed rule will undo the definition of “Waters of the United States” resulting from the 2015 Clean Water Rule. <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2017-07-27/pdf/2017-13997.pdf>
8. July 31 – NOAA published a notice extending the public comment period regarding review of National Marine Sanctuaries and Marine National Monuments Designated or Expanded Since April 28, 2007. The public comment period has been extended through August 15. See - <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2017-07-31/pdf/2017-16012.pdf>
9. July 14 – The State Department published a request for comments on reducing regulation and public burden and controlling cost. The published notice seeks comments on any State Department regulations that Eliminate jobs, or inhibit job creation; are outdated, unnecessary, or ineffective; impose costs that exceed benefits; Create a serious inconsistency or otherwise interfere with regulatory reform initiatives and policies; and/or are inconsistent with the requirements of section 515 of the Treasury and General Government Appropriations Act, 2001. See - <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2017-07-14/pdf/2017-14620.pdf>
10. July 5 - International Trade Administration of the US Dept of Commerce. As noted in a previous report, the US initiated a countervailing duty investigation on 100- to 150-Seat Large Civil Aircraft from Canada. Obviously, this will not directly impact AAFA or its vessels; but does show that Trade relations between the two nations have some issues. This notice merely asks for an extension of time for issuance of a preliminary finding. See - <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2017-07-05/pdf/2017-14057.pdf>.

11. July 6 - International Trade Administration of the US Dept of Commerce. Somewhat related to the immediately preceding Item of Interest, this notice identifies pre-existing various antidumping and countervailing duty orders which are subject to an annual review. Two items from Canada are included on the list – certain Salts and a Resin product. See - <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2017-07-06/pdf/2017-14172.pdf>
12. July 13 – United States International Trade Commission. The Commission issued a notice re scheduling of the Final Phase of Countervailing Duty and Antidumping Duty Investigations for softwood lumber from Canada. This was previously brought up in the April report. The final hearing is scheduled for Sept 12, 2017. See - <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2017-07-13/pdf/2017-14718.pdf>
13. July 14 – Notice of public meeting of the Marine Fisheries Advisory Committee. The focus of this meeting will be to discuss and finalize their recommendations on improving resilience of coastal fishing communities. The meeting is scheduled for Aug 9 at 11AM. See - <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2017-07-14/pdf/2017-14797.pdf>

Other items of interest:

1. In early July, the Pacific Fishery Management Council published the Pacific Council News – which mainly reports decisions made at the June PFMC meeting. See - <http://www.pcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2009/12/Newsletter-Summer-2017-final.pdf>
2. Late June a Bill was introduced entitled, “Protecting Honest Fishermen Act of 2017” which would require all seafood sold in America to be traceable from the time it was caught to the time it was served. See - <http://www.foodsafetynews.com/2017/07/coastal-lawmakers-call-for-bait-to-table-labeling-for-ocean-fish/#.WYfOKMeGPIU>. You can track progress of the Bill via - <https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/115/hr3108>.
3. On July 25 and 26, I attended the 2017 Review of Southwest Fisheries Science Center Economics & Human Dimensions Program in Santa Cruz. Dale Squires (economist in the La Jolla office) spoke very favorably of AAFA and the American Tuna brand. Attached is the Agenda for the meeting - <https://swfsc.noaa.gov/textblock.aspx?Division=PRD&id=22523>
4. WTO Members Prepare for Next Chapter in Fisheries Negotiations. The focus here is on the upcoming WTO ministerial conference scheduled for later this year with a focus on harmful fisheries subsidies. This will be something to keep an eye on as the meeting nears depending on what other sorts of other proposals are submit to the WTO. See - http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/stories/2017/06/19_new_asst_admin.html
5. A Chinese fishing company banned from deep-sea fishing after caught w/ over 100 tons of endangered Southern Bluefin tuna. Also, the vessel was fishing in an area it wasn't licensed to fish in. See - <http://www.newshub.co.nz/home/new-zealand/2017/06/fishing-company-banned-after-hauling-endangered-tuna-in-pacific.html>
6. A human rights complaint was filed with an international commission in mid-July to investigate ongoing claims of human rights violations in Hawaii's longline fishing fleet. The complaint asks the commission to determine the responsibility of the United States for human rights abuses against foreign workers in the state's commercial fishing industry. This likely the direct result of a new story published late last year which focused on that fishery. See - <https://www.nationalfisherman.com/west-coast-pacific/international-human-rights-agency-asked-investigate-hawaii-fleet/>

Upcoming items of interest

1. August 9 – 11 – MRAG - Contractor for AAFA MSC Re-Certification, 3rd MSC Certification, 2nd re-certification for AAFA will be in town doing a site visit for the North and South Pacific Albacore fisheries.
2. September 11 – 18 – Pacific Fishery Management Council meeting to be held in Boise, Idaho.