

Pacific Islands Fishery News

Newsletter of the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council / Summer 2018

ISSN 2151-2329 (PRINT) ISSN 2151-2337 (ONLINE)

BILLFISH AMENDMENT TARGETED ISLAND FISHERIES WITH NO CONSERVATION GAINED

The enacted legislation, unlike its title, was not a simple technical amendment, but rather an arrow pointed at sustainable US Pacific Island commercial billfish fisheries at the behest of largely US mainland recreational fishing groups.



HR 4528, signed into law by President Trump on Aug. 2, 2018, will have a big impact on Hawai'i fishermen and wholesale businesses as well as potential markets for American Samoa, Guam and Northern Mariana Islands fisheries. Introduced by US Rep. Darren Soto (FL-R), the bill had the seemingly benign title "To make technical amendments to certain marine fish conservation statutes, and for other purposes." In reality, the amendment to the Billfish Act of 2012 prohibits US caught billfish landed in the US Pacific islands by US fishermen from being sold to continental US markets (including the State of Alaska and the Territory of Puerto Rico). Swordfish is not included in the Act's definition of billfish.

"It is disappointing that special interest groups were successful in lobbying Congress to eliminate sustainable US Pacific Island

caught billfish sales on the mainland," notes Kitty M. Simonds, executive director of the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council. "The change will not have a conservation benefit and is inconsistent with the principles and standards of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act."

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS, aka NOAA Fisheries) is currently deciding whether or not implementing regulations are necessary to enforce the law. The Council staff believes regulations are needed to clarify what is prohibited and what remains legal. Shortly after the law was signed, Council staff received numerous calls from the public about purchasing fresh billfish and value-added products in Hawai'i to bring to the mainland for sharing or personal consumption. Questions are also being asked about the exportation of

billfish and value added products to foreign destinations.

In addition, seafood businesses on the mainland will need time to adjust and source new products to support their programs that have been built on using sustainably caught fish from Hawai'i fisheries. Hawai'i vendors have made commitments to mainland restaurants and retail groups to provide a variety of selections to support their "Fresh Hawaiian Catch of the Week" programs. They specifically choose Hawai'i sourced fish because it is sustainable and traceable and has been regulated to have low environmental impacts.

It is clear that NMFS, industry and the public will need time to work through the complexities of this new rule. Given these issues, the Council wrote to Chris Oliver,



Island Fisheries Targeted by Billfish Amendment

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NOAA Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, suggesting that NMFS develop a national education and outreach effort that corresponds to the rule-making process and that NMFS initiate enforcement after publication of the final rule. It was suggested that NMFS convene a meeting with the appropriate wholesale/dealer representatives in Hawai'i and the Council to sort through the issues to be addressed in development of implementing regulations.

Prior to the bill's passage, the Council received letters from both Oliver and US Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross stating that HR 4528 was unnecessary and would not lead to improved billfish conservation. Proponents of the bill said the 2012 Billfish Conservation Act had created a loophole in the prohibiting of all foreign imports of billfish into the United States by providing an exemption for US fisheries landing billfish in Hawai'i, American Samoa, Guam and Northern Mariana Islands. However, the exemption provided to US Pacific Island fisheries in the 2012 legislation was clearly a preference by Congress to not negatively impact jobs in US seafood markets, as the Congressional record indicates.

Sales of foreign-caught billfish in the US and commercial harvest and sales of US caught billfish in the Atlantic, where several species are overfished or experiencing overfishing, have been prohibited since 1988. For decades, a NMFS administered Billfish Certificate of Eligibility (BOE) has been required to accompany any billfish caught in the Pacific that is offered for commercial sale in the United States. The COE is meant to ensure billfish in the US market is not from the Atlantic or foreign fisheries by documenting the vessel, homeport,

port of offloading and date of offloading. There was no loophole as alleged, and no evidence that foreign billfish were being laundered through Hawai'i. Rather, the bill removed an exemption for domestic, sustainably caught billfish, as billfish populations in the Pacific are healthy. Proponents, on the other hand, believe marlins and other billfish should be caught only by recreational fishermen.

Sport fishing for billfish involves catch-and-release and retention for home consumption. Dozens of recreational billfish tournaments provide prize money for the largest marlin landed. Anecdotal information suggests a substantial amount of recreationally harvested billfish on the East Coast is sold through black-market channels.

Congresswomen Colleen Hanabusa (D-Hawai'i), Madeleine Z. Bordallo (D-Guam) and Aumua Amata Coleman Radewagen (R-American Samoa) said the legislation "will negatively impact the livelihoods of fishermen in Hawai'i, Guam and the Pacific Insular Areas by closing off the only off-island market for U.S.-caught billfish." They added, "We support needed-conservation efforts in the Atlantic, but do not believe that Pacific fisheries need to be targeted in order to achieve these goals." Unfortunately, their Congressional voices and the voice of reason based on best scientific information fell on deaf ears.

The enacted legislation, unlike its title, was not a simple technical amendment, but rather an arrow pointed at sustainable US Pacific Island commercial billfish fisheries at the behest of largely US mainland recreational fishing groups.

173rd Council Meeting Actions



NOAA Assistant Administrator for Fisheries Chris Oliver (center) participated in the Council's 173rd meeting and Fishers Forum on Maui. Also pictured are Council Executive Director Kitty M. Simonds and William Choy, founder of the Maui Cooperative Fishing Association.

At its 173rd meeting, June 11-13, 2018, in Wailea Maui, Hawai'i, the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council made final recommendations on seven regulatory items for federally managed fisheries of Hawai'i, American Samoa, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) and the Pacific Remote Islands. The Council additionally took initial action on aquaculture and on sea turtle

management in the Hawai'i longline fishery and made recommendations on a suite of non-regulatory matters.

Special guest Chris Oliver, the current NOAA Assistant Administrator for Fisheries and the former executive director of the North Pacific Fishery Management Council, participated in the Council meeting and associated Fishers Forum on Hawai'i's bottomfish fishery. To hear his remarks to the Council, go to https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=en_1Mb7sB2Q.

ECOSYSTEM MANAGEMENT SPECIES

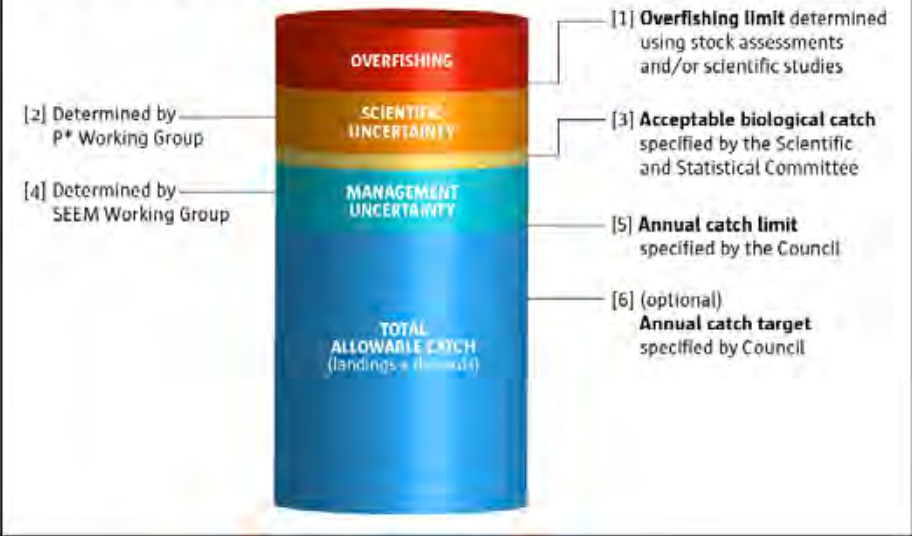
The Council recommended that some species from the "management unit species" category be moved to the "ecosystem component" category in the fishery ecosystem plans (FEPs) for the Hawai'i, American Samoa and Mariana (Guam and Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) Archipelagos. Ecosystem component species are monitored and would continue to be managed by existing permitting requirements and gear restrictions, but they do not require the setting of annual catch limits (ACLs) and designation of essential fish habitat.

On Sept. 13, NMFS announced the proposed rule to reclassify the species in the Federal Register. Public comment on the rule is being solicited through Oct. 29, 2018. The proposed amendments to the FEPs and accompanying environmental assessment along with other supporting documents are available at <https://www.regulations.gov>. Electronic public comments can be submitted through the Federal e-Rulemaking Portal at <https://www.regulations.gov/docket?D=NOAA-NMFS-2018-0021>. Alternately, written comments may be sent by postal mail to Michael D. Tosatto, Regional Administrator, NMFS Pacific Islands Region, 1845 Wasp Blvd., Bldg. 176, Honolulu, HI 96818.

CNMI SLIPPER LOBSTERS

The Council evaluated the 2017 catches relative to the 2017 annual catch limits (ACLs). The CNMI slipper lobster ACL was exceeded. The Council recommended applying the accountability measure, which would reduce the ACL for fishing year 2018 to 0 pounds for CNMI slipper lobster. However, the Council noted that the CNMI slipper lobster is recommended to be an

Process for Specifying Annual Quotas



ecosystem component species and ACLs may no longer be applied to this species complex.

MAIN HAWAIIAN ISLANDS DEEP-7 BOTTOMFISH

The Council also recommended a three-year ACL specification for seven species of main Hawaiian Island (MHI) deep-water bottomfish, known as the Deep 7. The ACL of 492,000 pounds for fishing years 2018-19, 2019-20 and 2020-21 reflects an increase of 186,000 pounds over the limit set for 2017-18. The increase can be attributed to the improved working relationship between scientists and the fishing community.

The new ACL is based on the 2018 benchmark stock assessment by Langseth et al. The assessment features refined catch and catch-per-unit (CPUE) effort information resulting from the series of data workshops organized by the Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center that included key fishermen from the Deep 7 bottomfish fishery. The assessment also utilized an estimate of abundance from the Cooperative Research Fishery-Independent Bottomfish Surveys, which used the Modular Optical Underwater Survey System. The new stock assessment indicates that the Deep 7 bottomfish complex is not overfished nor experiencing overfishing. It estimates the maximum sustainable yield (MSY) for the fishery at 509,000 pounds, an increase from the MSY of 404,000 pounds estimated by the previous assessment for the fishery.

The Risk of Overfishing (P*) Working Group reevaluated the scientific uncertainty around the benchmark assessment. The P* members rescored four dimensions of scientific uncertainty: 1) assessment information; 2) uncertainty characterization; 3) stock status; and 4) productivity and susceptibility. The group recommended a risk of overfishing level of 42 percent, a 3 percent increase over

the previous fishing year. The improvements in the CPUE data and fishery-independent estimate of abundance, as well as better quantification of uncertainties, contributed to the reduction of scientific uncertainties and allowed management of the fishery at the higher risk level. This new risk level resulted in an acceptable biological catch (ABC) of 508,000 pounds, an increase of 202,000 from the previous ABC. The Council's Scientific and Statistical Committee endorsed the P* Working Group recommendation and specified the ABC at 508,000 pounds.



A snapshot from the Modular Optical Underwater Survey System video footage used to conduct fishery-independent research on the main Hawaiian Island Deep 7 bottomfish fishery.

The Social, Economic, Ecological and Management (SEEM) Working Group quantified the management uncertainties. The group noted that emerging fisheries like bottomfish fishing using ocean kayaks and jet skis, online sales of bottomfish and the increase in the Commercial Marine License fee may result in fewer and inaccurate catch reports. The Working Group quantified the management uncertainty at 2 percent. The management uncertainty was deducted from the ABC resulting in an amended risk of overfishing level of 40 percent. The Council accepted the modified risk level, which accounted for both the scientific and management uncertainties,

and specified the ACL at 492,000 pounds.

For accountability measures, the fishery will continue to be monitored in near-real-time through the trip reports required by the State of Hawai'i. The Pacific Island Fisheries Science Center will project the current year's catch to determine the fishery closure date in order to prevent the ACL from being exceeded. Should the ACL be exceeded, the amount of overage will be deducted from the next year's quota. The fishery has not reached the ACL in the past eight years, demonstrating that the fishery is sustainable and well managed.

SEA TURTLE MANAGEMENT

The Council recommended amending the Pelagic FEP to establish a management framework for the Hawai'i shallow-set longline fishery that consists of 1) annual limits on the number North Pacific loggerhead and leatherback turtle interactions consistent with the anticipated level of annual interactions that is set forth in the current valid biological opinion (BiOp) and 2) individual trip interaction limits for loggerhead and leatherback turtles. The Council recommended annual limits of 37 North Pacific loggerheads and 21 leatherback turtles and an individual trip limit of five North Pacific loggerhead turtles. These limits were based on the anticipated level of interactions analyzed in a biological evaluation of the Hawai'i shallow-set longline fishery under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) Section 7 consultation process. As part of its recommendation, the Council said it would review its recommendation if the new BiOp from the ongoing consultation results in a jeopardy decision or otherwise results in a different incidental take statement for North Pacific loggerheads or leatherbacks. The draft BiOp is expected to be available by Oct. 1, 2018, and the final BiOp is expected to be completed by Oct. 31, 2018.

AMERICAN SAMOA LARGE VESSEL PROHIBITED AREA

The Council recommended a regulatory amendment to provide a four-year exemption for vessels permitted under the American Samoa longline limited entry program to fish within the American Samoa Large Vessel Prohibited Area (LVPA) seaward of 12 nautical miles (nm) around Tutuila, Manu'a and Swains Islands and 2 nm around offshore banks. The Council reiterated its support of all fisheries occurring in American Samoa waters and within the US exclusive economic zone. The Council further recommended annual monitoring of the American Samoa longline and troll catch rates, small vessel participation and local fisheries development initiatives. During

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173rd Council Meeting Actions

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Council discussion on the LVPA rule, Council Member Henry Seseapasara offered the Government of American Samoa's position supporting the status quo, under which no exemption would be provided.

The Council, in its decision, recognized the poor economic conditions experienced for more than a decade by the American Samoa longline limited entry fishery, which targets albacore for the local cannery. As a consequence, dozens of vessels have left the fishery. The remaining longline vessels continue to face lower catch rates and increasing operational costs. Available information indicates that the current LVPA restricts fishing operations and optimal yield and adversely affects efficiency by preventing vessels from "following the fish."

The Council also recognized that *alia* fishermen who troll for yellowfin, skipjack and wahoo perceive that their fishing would be harmed if LVPA regulations are modified. However, available scientific information gathered when a similar modification was in effect in 2016 showed no adverse impacts to the catch rates of pelagic troll vessels, including *alias*.

The 2016 LVPA rule led to disagreement within the American Samoa fishing community and is the subject of litigation. A 2017 federal court decision required the Council to consider and protect American Samoa cultural fishing (though the US government has noticed its appeal of this decision). To this end, NMFS conducted research on American Samoa cultural fishing practices and presented the results to the Council at its 172nd meeting in March 2018. The research indicates that all fishing in American Samoa has cultural importance, whether commercial longline, commercial *alia* vessels, troll or other fishing sectors because catch from all locally based fishing sectors flow into the American Samoa community for cultural purposes.

In July and October 2017, the Council requested consultation with the Government of American Samoa on preserving and protecting cultural fishing. The Council also requested that the American Samoa Government forward a recommendation that would address its concerns of this action to the Council by May 30, 2018, in advance of its June meeting. The Council received a response from the American Samoa government in October 2017 that Seseapasara is the point of contact on cultural fishing; but it did not receive responses to the requests

for a consultation on cultural fishing, nor did it receive a recommendation from the Government that would address its concerns about the proposed action.

Council staff is working with NMFS on the proposed amendment document for transmission to the Secretary of Commerce in early October.

AMERICAN SAMOA MARINE CONSERVATION PLAN

The Council concurred with the governor of American Samoa's new three-year Marine Conservation Plan (MCP) with the addition of a project to support research activities on pelagic fisheries. The research would include the collection of life history information, ecosystem indicators, economics and fishing communities, and fisheries interactions and management. The MCP describes how the local government would use funds received from Pacific Insular Area Fishery Agreements, from payments received under specified fishing agreements between a territory and US fishing vessels or from fines and penalties as authorized by the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act.

LONGLINE-CAUGHT BIGEYE TUNA

The Council recommended that Amendment 7 of the Pelagic FEP and implementing regulations be modified to remove the requirements a) that catch or effort limits for longline-caught bigeye tuna in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean be established for the US Pacific Territories prior to the establishment of the limits the Territories can allocate to US vessels permitted under the Hawai'i longline limited entry program, and b) that annual catch and allocation limits must be established for longline-caught bigeye tuna in the US Pacific Territories by permitting the Council to recommend that the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) promulgate multi-year catch/allocation limits. This action is intended to provide less disruption in the US bigeye longline fishery and reduce the administrative burden of specifying such limits annually.

NON-REGULATORY ACTIONS

False killer whales: The Council recommended that NMFS review its serious injury determination policy and support additional research to obtain scientific information on species-specific post-hooking mortality information to inform revision of the policy. NMFS currently classifies most false killer whale interactions in which the animal is

released with trailing gear or a hook in its mouth as a serious injury, which is evaluated the same as a mortality.

Seabirds: The Council convened a workshop to review seabird mitigation requirements in the Hawai'i longline fishery and the best scientific information available while taking into account operational aspects of the fisheries, seasonality, the location of seabird interactions, alternative mitigation measures and cost-benefit analysis. The workshop held Sept. 18 and 19, 2018, at the Council office in Honolulu identified the following: a) blue-dyed bait as a candidate for removal from existing measures and b) tori (streamer) lines as holding a potential for the Hawai'i longline fishery.

Skipjack tuna: The Eastern Pacific Ocean skipjack is a major fishery but does not have a stock assessment. The Council encouraged the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission to support a formal assessment of the stock.

Shark Species: The Council recommended that NMFS address the following data gaps and research needs for sharks that are listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA): a) data on the capture of oceanic whitetip sharks in the non-longline pelagic fishery; b) fishermen outreach to improve species identification of shark species to improve accurate catch data reporting; c) identification of nursery ground habitat for ESA-listed scalloped hammerhead sharks, which are currently unknown in American Samoa, Guam and the CNMI; and d) improved data collection by the observer program.

Protected Species Research: The Council recommended NMFS prioritize protected species projects to include, among others, meta-analysis of sea turtle post-hooking mortality rate studies to inform future ESA consultations and evaluation of post-hooking mortality for marine mammals depending on amount of remaining gear.

Mariana Archipelago Fisheries: The Council communicated fishermen's concerns to the government of Guam regarding fish aggregation devices in Guam and asked the CNMI to provide the Council with the data and justification for the potential changes in minimum catch sizes being considered.

For the complete list of actions by the Council at the 173rd meeting, go to www.wpcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/FINAL-173-CM-Action-Memo.pdf



Critical Habitat Designated for Main Hawaiian Islands Insular False Killer Whales

On July 24, 2018, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) published the final rule designating critical habitat for the Main Hawaiian Islands (MHI) insular false killer whale distinct population segment (DPS). The critical habitat encompasses waters from 45-meter depth contour to the 3,200-meter depth contour around the MHI, with 14 areas excluded from designation based on economic or national security impacts.

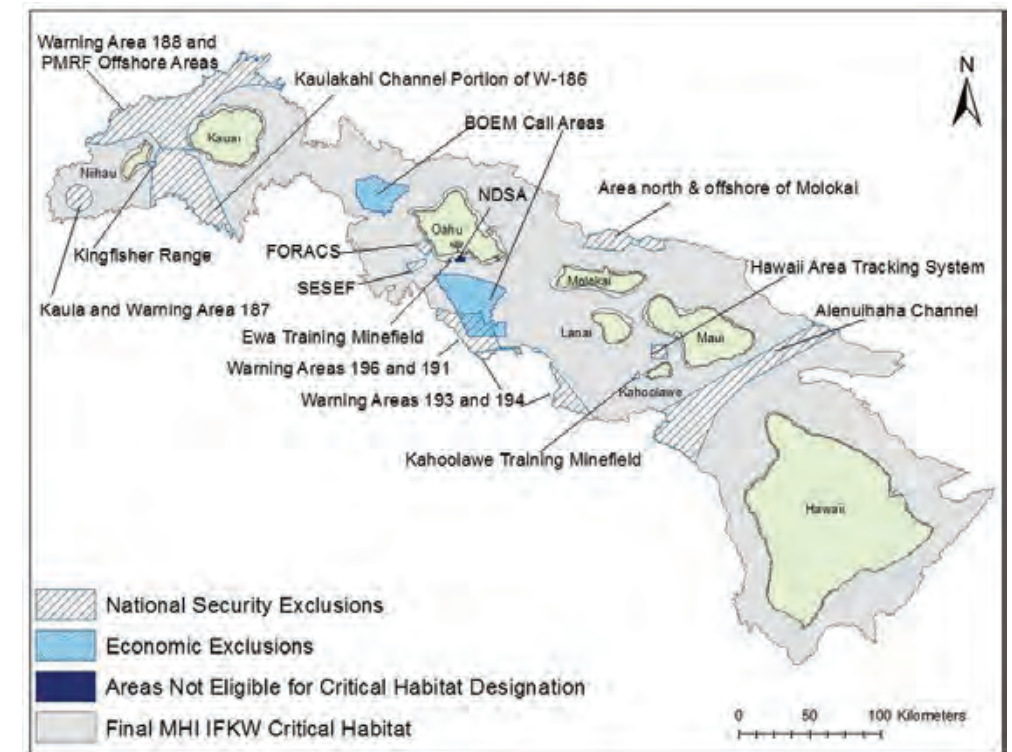
Designated under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), critical habitat is defined as an area that contains features essential for the conservation of a species that is listed under the ESA. The MHI insular false killer whale DPS was listed under the ESA as "endangered" in 2012.

In the critical habitat final rule, NMFS identified the island-associated marine habitat essential for MHI insular false killer whales as having the following characteristics:

- (1) Adequate space for movement and use within shelf and slope habitat;
- (2) Prey species of sufficient quantity, quality and availability to support individual growth, reproduction and development as well as overall population growth;
- (3) Waters free of pollutants of a type and amount harmful to MHI insular false killer whales; and
- (4) Sound levels that would not significantly impair false killer whales' use or occupancy.



False killer whale. Photo: Charlotte Boyd, NOAA Fisheries



Federal agencies must consider impacts of proposed projects and activities to the area designated as the Main Hawaiian Islands Insular False Killer Whale Critical Habitat.

Critical habitat adds a layer to an existing ESA consultation process to ensure that activities that are funded, authorized or permitted by the federal government do not destroy or adversely modify the species' critical habitat. It does not, by itself, create a protected area or restrict access. Nor does it directly impact activities without the "federal nexus" or stop development or activities with a federal nexus. Many projects will likely move forward without modifications after consultation with NMFS. However, if NMFS determines that an activity will likely impact the insular false killer whale critical habitat, then the project must work with the responsible federal agency and

other entities to modify the activity or take precautions to protect the habitat.

Federally managed fisheries that are subject to the ESA consultation process include, among others, the Hawai'i longline fishery and the MHI bottomfish fishery. At this time, restrictions to Hawai'i fisheries are not expected as a result of the designation, given that available information suggests that prey competition between insular false killer whales and fisheries is low. However, NMFS states in the final rule that "future revised management measures could result as more information is gained about MHI [insular false killer whale] foraging ecology or as we gain a better understanding of the relative importance of certain prey species." Thus future modifications to federally managed fisheries were not ruled out.

The final rule notice and supporting documents are available on the NMFS Pacific Islands Regional Office website at www.fpiir.noaa.gov/PRD/prd_mhi_false_killer_whale.html#critical_habitat.

Yellowfin Tuna and South Pacific Albacore Catches at Record Highs in 2017

The Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) held the 14th Regular Session of its Scientific Committee (SC14) in Busan, South Korea, from Aug. 8 to 16, 2018. Scientists from throughout the Western Pacific, Pacific Islands and the United States convened for an annual review of the statuses of highly migratory fisheries in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean and make conservation recommendations. The multinational meeting included presentations ranging from stock assessments to bycatch reduction, environmental impacts on fisheries and harvest strategies.

Despite a catch decline in 2017, the outlook for bigeye is optimistic and the stock is healthy. In 2017, the SPC determined that the stock is neither overfished nor experiencing overfishing. At SC14, the impact of a new growth model used in the stock assessment was revisited. Scientists from Australia analyzed more bigeye tuna samples to get even more robust estimates of size at age. The growth model and stock status were agreed upon by the delegation as the best available science. Scientists from the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission will be partnering with the SPC and Australian scientists to further investigate any regional

swordfish is roughly two-thirds MSY. Stock projections for swordfish are highly positive, and the stock is expected to maintain its high productivity under current fishing levels.

Other notable species discussed included South Pacific albacore, bluefin tuna, skipjack tuna, yellowfin tuna and some shark species. Bluefin tuna, while currently at 3.3 percent unfished biomass, exhibited a slight increase in spawning biomass since 2014 and a high recruitment year in 2016. While the stock is overfished and experiencing overfishing, it is projected with a 98-percent probability to meet its primary rebuilding target by 2034 and projected to reach a secondary rebuilding target just 10 years later. South Pacific albacore was also reassessed by the SPC with an updated growth model and information on maturity. The status and outlook for South Pacific albacore is optimistic as the stock biomass is over its limit reference point and overfishing is not occurring. The skipjack tuna stock in the western and central Pacific Ocean is expected to increase stock biomass and approach a target reference point for the stock by 2019. Yellowfin tuna in the region has experienced decreases in catch-per-unit-effort in recent years; however, stock projection analyses expect a slight increase in biomass from the previous assessment followed by a slight decline. Neither skipjack nor yellowfin in the region is considered to be experiencing overfishing.

Delegates also discussed numerous conservation and management topics. Parties of the Nauru Agreement plan to reduce the number of fish aggregating devices (FADs) in the water. The SPC has been tracking FADs within the waters with transponders and estimated 5 percent of FADs in the southwestern Pacific become beached or derelict and about a quarter drift outside their intended fishing area and also become derelict. Discussions emerged on what defines a FAD and trade-offs of FAD construction materials. PIFSC and international scientists discussed the benefits of circle hooks and hook sizes to reduce bycatch of turtles and other species. Hook pods and other hook-shielding measures emerged as alternative measures to reduce unintended interactions with seabirds.

At SC15 to be held in Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia, in August 2019, new assessments will be presented on skipjack tuna in the western and central Pacific and on North Pacific and southwest Pacific striped marlin.

growth differences in bigeye tuna from the eastern and western Pacific. Projections of the bigeye tuna stock to 2045 under current conditions exhibit a considerably low risk of spawning biomass failing to maintain a limit reference point. While the stock is healthy and projections are positive, scientists at SC14 noted that stock biomass had declined for several decades with increases in biomass in recent years.

Another presentation at SC14 of particular interest to Hawai'i fisheries is the 2018 western and central North Pacific swordfish stock assessment. Scientists from the National Marine Fisheries Service Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center (PIFSC) presented on the status of swordfish using an improved and robust model. The western and central North Pacific swordfish stock is healthy with no probability of being overfished or experiencing overfishing. Spawning biomass is considerably higher than spawning biomass at maximum sustainable yield (MSY), and fishing mortality is less than one-half the mortality rate at MSY. Recent annual catch of western and central North Pacific



Delegates and observers for the WCPFC 14th Regular Session of the Scientific Committee in Busan, South Korea, Aug. 8-16, 2018.

Scientists from the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) led reviews of tuna trends in the WCPFC region up to 2017. Total catch of tuna was down 5 percent in 2017 from the previous year at 2,539,950 metric tons (mt)—the lowest since 2011. However, some key fisheries experienced record high catches in 2017, including total yellowfin tuna (670,890 mt), purse-seine yellowfin tuna, total South Pacific albacore and South Pacific longline albacore. The banner yellowfin catch exceeds the previous record year by 35,000 mt. South Pacific albacore catch was up 35 percent from 2016 at 92,291 mt, with China taking 45 percent of the catch. Skipjack tuna experienced its lowest catch since 2011 at 1,624,162 mt. Scientists postulate that the decline in skipjack tuna catch and catch-per-unit-effort could be attributed to environmental shifts as a previous El Nino cycle phases out. Bigeye tuna, of particular interest to the Hawai'i longline fishery, experienced an 8-percent decline in long-line catch.

Fishermen and Academic Communities Join to Help Volcano Victims

By Gary Beals, Hawai'i Advisory Panel chair



Hawaii Community College culinary arts instructor Shawn Sumiki

On the weekend of June 30, 2018, the Hilo Trollers Club held a fishing tournament based out of Wailoa Small Boat Harbor. This tournament was a bit different from the usual agenda. Due to the disruption caused by the lava flow in the Puna area, the Club fished with the intent of donating the catch to the impacted people of Puna. The fish would be prepared by Shawn Sumiki, an instructor with the culinary school at Hilo Community College (HCC), and his volunteers.

On the day of the tournament, the Hilo Trollers Club counted 17 boats on the unusually calm waters of the windward side of the island of Hawai'i. At the end of the day, the fishermen weighed in 27 mahimahi, six ono and three aku totaling about 300 pounds, which produced 100 pounds of filets. The fishermen also collected 'opala (rubbish) from the sea, which was weighed and will count towards the Year End Opala Award and then recycled.

On July 2, Craig Severance, the club's weighmaster, delivered the fish to Sumiki at HCC for processing. Once processed, the prepared cuisine was delivered to Pu'uhoonua O Puna, where Ikaika Marzo and Desha Mendes offered the fresh fish dinners to those in need.



Tori Hiro

Since the eruption started in early May, Sumiki and Tori Hiro have prepared about a thousand meals per day, three days per week. Shipman Park in Kea'au and the Pahoa Gym in Pahoa were among the drop-off points for the prepared fish dinners. The cooked meals were driven to the drop-off points by a student driver hired by HCC to assist in this community service project. Sumiki has been an instructor in the HCC Culinary program for several years, and his assistant Hiro graduated from the program and is now an employee working with Sumiki. The two culinary professionals spent their summer vacation helping others instead of traveling or going to the beach. They

dedicated 14-hour days (4 a.m. to 6 p.m.) three times a week to help the displaced individuals, most of whom they never met.

As Sumiki quickly pointed out, this project would not have succeeded if it wasn't for the generous vendors in the community. Once the meal program was initiated, the HCC Agriculture Program under Lew Nakamura provided fresh, hydroponically grown vegetables as well as traditionally grown products such as corn. Sumiki and Hiro also said it would have been nearly impossible to provide this community service without the help of the many volunteers that assisted in the kitchen to prepare the meals, including Jesse Jimbo, Bellia Poy, Naomi Beals, Melanie, Nancy Hiro, Grant Correa, Ethan Buyuan, Karen Danials, Kanani Yamada and Evan Stephenson.

This project is a great example of the fishing, business and academic communities coming together to get help those in need. Congratulations to all those involved.



Shawn Sumiki with fish fillets donated by the Hilo Trollers Club for victims of the volcanic eruption.



Wailoa Small Boat Harbor

Data You Can Bank On



Length and other data from fish can be used to help inform stock assessments.

When you balance your bank account, it's important to know how much money you took out and how often so you know how much money remains and you don't bounce checks. The same thing goes with fisheries. Scientists need to know how many fish were caught and how often, so they can estimate how many fish are left in the ocean. If the best information available is inaccurate or just "okay," fishery managers proceed with caution. As a result, fishermen may find themselves faced with closed areas, strict quotas and/or minimum allowable harvest sizes. This is why it is important for fishermen to report both their catch and effort data.

Currently, the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council is working with local fishery agencies in Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) on efforts to collect better fishery data by developing commercial fishing licenses. These licenses would be mandatory and require reporting of catch and effort. The commercial license will serve as a pilot for eventual non-commercial fishing licenses and reporting as well. Activities are underway to develop rule packages and provide an outreach program to gain fishermen support and compliance.

Catch data refers to what, where and how many fish is caught. Effort data includes location, gear types, fishing time, number of trips, etc. When combined, the data provides an indirect measurement of abundance, or how much fish are in the stock. Coupling this data with biological information (fish size, age, growth,



Eric Cruz, National Marine Fisheries Service's Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center, collecting fish data from a spearfishing tournament in Guam.

reproductive rates, etc.) provides scientists with information necessary to accurately assess fish stocks, or balance the account. While this process is a lot more detailed than the checkbook analogy, the idea is the same: we need to know what is coming out in order to know what we have left.

The easiest way to get the information is straight from the fishermen by asking them. In the Western Pacific Region, creel surveys do just that. Fishermen voluntarily provide information on what they caught, where they caught it and how they caught it. These surveys provide a glimpse at what the stock status might be, but the approach has limitations. Because these surveys are a random sample of fishermen rather than a complete census, the data is expanded to represent those who were not sampled. Surveys are also limited to certain areas, days and times which may inaccurately capture the fishing catch and/or effort. Most importantly, the survey is voluntary so there is no requirement for fishermen to cooperate. Creel surveys provide scientists with an idea of the available fish stock, but there's a chance of overfishing, i.e., overspending.

Ideally, managers would like to know precisely what is taken out of the ocean,

when, where and how. Complete information provided through a mandatory reporting system can eliminate errors and biases and reduce uncertainties. Fishermen would provide the information directly through reporting forms or logbooks. This is done already for all federal fisheries in the Western Pacific Region and the commercial fishery in the State of Hawai'i. In order to do this, however, one must first know who the fishermen are.

The issuance of licenses would identify who is participating in the fishery allowing for either a mandatory reporting requirement or for targeted surveys of those with fishing licenses. Licenses provide fishermen the right to operate in a fishery according to the terms established by the fishery managers. Just like if you want to drive a car on the road, you need to have a driver's license, if you want to go fishing, then you would need a fishing license.

Knowing the importance of the data in managing their fisheries, both CNMI and Guam are working to ensure that their fishery resource accounts are balanced so they can avoid potential bankruptcy. For more information on fishery data collection in the Western Pacific, visit wpcouncil.org.

New Family Charter Business Succeeds on Guam

By Felix S. Reyes, Guam Advisory Panel chair



Don Pedro Cruz



Joaquin "Kin" Cruz

He started fishing when very young and small and quickly developed an elevated passion for the sport, which he attributes to his dad who took him often to the beach and eventually on a boat. His father, the late Pedro "Pete" Cruz, was a well-known and respected boat fisherman who won several Guam derbies in his time. From the knowledge his father passed down, he learned about deep and shallow bottom fishing, shore casting and, his specialty, trolling for pelagic fish.

Joaquin, or Kin as he is better known, has been fishing practically all his life. His youth betrays his fishing prowess. The skills he learned from his dad he now teaches to his young son, Don Pedro Makaveli Cruz, as well as to his daughter Sensimillia Marie and his wife Christina Taitano Cruz. The three of them make up a family charter business.



The company is popular with Asian tourists and local military members.

Kin's first boat was a 17-foot Boston Whaler Montauk he used to fish all around Guam wherever there is access to the ocean. He perfected his skills hugging the reefs on the east side and trolling the fish aggregation devices and banks in the south and the north. He fished wherever and whenever he could. When the water was rough in the north, he fished south. When the weather reversed, he fished where it was calm. He

was always honing his skills and adding to what his dad had taught him.

His reputation for catching fish grew. Friends and family would ask Kin to take them fishing and to experience a day in his fishing life. He did, and the rest is history.

Over time, his confidence in his fishing abilities led him to purchase a bigger boat and start a family fishing charter business which he appropriately and humorously called ShutUp&Fish Guam. It is a testament to how serious he is when it comes to catching fish.

To support his growing charter business, Kin acquired a 26-foot Sea Cat twin-hulled boat. Demand for his fish catching skills on charters grew so quickly he needed to add to his fleet and so he shortly bought another boat, a larger twin-hulled 29-foot Shark Cat. He named the boats *Don Pedro* and *Don Pedro II* in his son's namesake. The growth of his business continued so he also added to the fleet his own personal Boston Whaler and called that *Don Pedro III*.

Even though his primary marketing tool remains word-of-mouth, his charter has become increasingly popular with local military members as well as with visiting Korean, Chinese and Japanese tourists. In recognition of his contribution to Guam's tourism base, the Guam Visitors Bureau featured his charter business on its Tourism Works Weekly Profile in May 2018 and was posted on the Bureau's YouTube channel.

The lures he uses to assure a good catch remain his secret, but, assuredly, Kin and ShutUp&Fish catch a lot of fish. Intense, focused, determined and skilled, Kin is a successful charter captain who runs a true family business. Kin, his wife Christina and children Don Pedro and Sensimillia make a

formidable fishing charter team. Christina supports the charter from shore doing the books and posting photos and videos on social media. Kin braves the weather taking customers out almost daily. He does everything else on the boat, including deckhand, photographer and fish cutter, proving his customers filets to enjoy after a rough day at sea.

While not on a charter, Kin likes to take his family and friends on a cruise to fish for leisure and to provide food for the table.

ShutUp&Fish regularly enters local derbies such as the Saipan Derby, Rota Fiesta Derby and the Guam International Fishing Derby. This past July 2018, he took his family to Saipan by boat and with his son Don Pedro fished the Saipan International Fishing Derby. While they did not place they had a great time and the experience gave the team a better understanding on how and where to fish next year. Fishermen beware—ShutUpandFish will be back to Saipan and may bring the championship trophy to Guam. As a family, they have fished the Saipan derby three years in a row. In fact, six-year-old Don Pedro was recognized for being the youngest angler.

Kin is driven by his passion for fishing and his desire to instill the same love of the sport in his son that his father instilled in him. Each day is different but Kin's enthusiasm remains the same, which his customers like so much that his return business is very high.

Kin says starting a fishing charter business has not been easy. He and his family sacrifice a lot. He advises other boat fishermen to respect those who fished before them, appreciate what the ocean provides and always leave some behind for another day.

Fagatogo Market to Ship Fish to the US Mainland

The fortunes of the Fagatogo Fish Market are on the upswing following two changes in 2018. First, the American Samoa government transferred its management from the Territory's Department of Commerce (DOC) to the Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources (DMWR). Second, a new local company, Island Fisheries, plans to use the facility to prepare and store fresh fish purchased from *alia* (small double-hull fishing boats) and recreational fishermen for export to US mainland markets. The company is a partnership between local farmer and fisherman Dustin Snow and the local freight forwarding company Island Cargo Support. If all goes according to plan, Island Fisheries anticipates kicking off its operations before the fall of this year.

Island Fisheries will utilize the weekly Friday cargo flight to ship fish to US West Coast buyers. The focus will be on tuna, but other pelagic fish such as wahoo and mahimahi as well as bottomfish will be shipped. The first shipments will improve understanding of the prices American Samoa fish can fetch, which in turn will be used to set purchase rates with the local fishermen. Operating procedures for the purchase of fish have been established and include meeting quality standards (e.g., fish delivered in a timely manner, kept at the

proper temperature and packed in ice) and completing a catch slip for all fish sales, which should benefit the data collection process for the Territory's fisheries.

Snow acknowledges the challenges that exist and the failure of previous fish exporting businesses attempted in the Territory to sustain their operations long-term. The once-a-week cargo flight provides a tight window for both the local fishermen to deliver the fish and the Island Fisheries team to prep boxes and get them to the airport. Hawaiian Airlines may be a future alternative for shipping the fish, but its priority is passenger service and there are other challenges involved with regular freight shipping with the airline.

Additionally, most local fishermen are inexperienced with fish export and the strict requirements to fetch the best prices in the US mainland. Snow said the local government could support its small boat fishermen by providing opportunities for seafood handling courses. The Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council provided similar training for both fishermen and seafood vendors in 2014 and 2015.

Another shortcoming is the lack of adequate cold storage on many small boats. Most fishermen use coolers, which may not hold larger fish or large numbers of fish sufficiently. Fishermen are also forced to use bags of cubed ice, which melts fast, especially in coolers in American Samoa's warm weather. Snow says the fishermen need

flake ice to successfully provide the quality of fish Island Fisheries is hoping to ship to the US mainland markets. DMWR purchased a flake ice machine with the disaster relief funds the Council assisted them in obtaining following the 2009 tsunami. However, that machine has not been installed and a proper housing for it has not been constructed pending required local and federal permits.

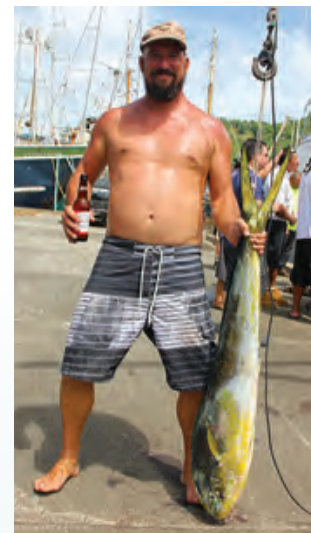


The Council-funded Fagatogo Fish Market was constructed in 2010 and renovated in 2014 with a table saw for large fish, a prep area and refrigerated displays like the one pictured for value added products.

Despite the challenges, Snow is optimistic that the endeavor has the potential not only to be a profitable business but also to provide local fishermen with an economic opportunity. He feels that opening off-island markets to the Territory's fishermen would build upon government efforts to develop local fisheries and improve fishing effort. The local government has dedicated funds to repair of *alia* on Tutuila (and planned for Manu'a), to purchase of safety equipment for boat owners and to assist fishermen in keeping operating costs down through a fuel subsidy program.

The Council has also supported American Samoa's small boat fishery through various initiatives. It funded construction of the Fagatogo Fish Market in 2009 and its renovation in 2014 to make it more suitable to retail value-added seafood products such as fish fillets and *oka* (a traditional Samoan dish of raw fish, coconut milk and vegetables). Included in the renovation were refrigerated glass display cases, a walk-in refrigerator, a prep area with stainless steel counters and a large sink with pull-down pre-rinse spray faucets, a freezer and a commercial grade table saw to cut large fish. The plan was to have the fish market operate as a co-operative, similar to the highly successful Guam Fishermen's Cooperative Association, with the local *alia* association sharing ownership of the market and costs for operating the market. Unfortunately, that plan was not realized, and the American Samoa Government leased the fish market to various fishermen to run individually over the past three years with very limited success. The fishermen who operated the fish market cited high operating costs and high monthly lease payments as the main reason they ended their lease with the government. In 2017 the DOC staff took on the task of operating the fish market, but it never became the hub for fish sales that it was originally intended to be.

In addition to the fish market construction, the Council has funded the construction of ice and fuel facilities on the islands of Ta'u and Ofu in Manu'a and developed a framework for new, all-purpose fishing vessels to replace the aging *alia* fleet, including an updated vessel concept design, a fishermen lending scheme with the American Samoa Development Bank and a fishermen training program.



Dustin Snow, pictured here at the Council's Pago Pago Open Fishing Tournament in 2016, will run Island Fisheries operations in American Samoa.

12 American Samoa Students Complete the High School Summer Fisheries Course



Students and instructor Joseph Fa'a'ita with their catch after a successful fishing trip with Pago Pago Marine Charters.

Twelve students successfully completed the three-week 2018 American Samoa High School Summer Course on Fisheries and Marine Resources, organized and sponsored by the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council with funding support from the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). Local fisherman and paramedic supervisor Joseph Fa'a'ita was contracted to instruct the course, an intensive set of in-class discussions, field trips and hands-on instruction. The course bridges high school students with the US Pacific Territories Capacity-Building Scholarship Program, which provides college-level educational opportunities for American Samoa, Guam and Northern Mariana students while also increasing the qualified capacity of these local governments' workforce. The scholarship program is run by the Council with funding support from NMFS.

During the classroom portion of the summer course, the students received introductory-level information on American Samoa's fisheries and the federal fishery management decision-making process, which engages the fishing community, local and federal agencies and other members of the public. Lessons stressed the importance of the Council's mission to provide education and awareness of fisheries management as well as the Council's unique place in the federal government to ensure US Pacific island

culture and traditions are incorporated in the decision-making process. By the end of the classroom module, students better understood the cultural and economic importance of fisheries to the people of American Samoa, both currently and historically. Also in the classroom setting, students were taught critical skills needed to respond to and manage an emergency in the first few minutes before medical services arrive, including cardiopulmonary resuscitation, automated external defibrillator use and basic first aid.

Out in the field, students learned about modern and historical seafaring from the American Samoa Sailing Association and South Pacific Watersports. During a two-day, fun, hands-on lesson on seamanship and sailing, they learned nautical skills and built self-confidence on the water. Boating safety and past and present seafaring techniques were emphasized as students learned such sailing basics as launching and rigging a boat, basic knot tying, sail trim, tacking and jibing and righting a capsized boat. With the team at South Pacific Watersports, students learned the importance of physical conditioning required for ocean activities and the need for people of American Samoa to be good stewards of the coastal and ocean resources. Students learned proper swimming technique and how to handle themselves in the water. When they were comfortable, they were shown how to operate a paddle board and the techniques to use it. They also learned canoe paddling, the history of paddling and how the Samoan culture's seafaring past is intertwined with the sport of canoe paddling. On the second day, the class competed in sprints to put their technique to the test.

The students were given a two-part lesson in coral reef monitoring from the Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources (DMWR) Coral Reef Advisory Group (CRAG). Students learned that coral reefs are one of the world's most highly productive and diverse ecosystems. CRAG staffer Trevor Kaituu taught the class about threat factors ranging from local point-source pollution to climate change and the key biological aspects of reef-building corals and the fish that depend on them for food and habitat. The class

conducted transect surveys at Faga'alū Beach Park, examining the coral reef environments and sampling the numerous organisms from specific sections of the reef.

Students were given a tour of StarKist Samoa's plant by its public relations manager Archie Soliai, who is also a Council vice chair. Soliai provided information on the business side of the fisheries and its importance to American Samoa's economic survival. From the offloading of the large tuna fishing boats to the cleaning stations to the canning and pouching operations, students got a firsthand look at the company's day-to-day operations. At the end of the tour, they were able to taste some of the cannery's new premium products.



Students tour StarKist Samoa with Archie Soliai, the company's public relations manager and Council vice chair for American Samoa.

During another fieldtrip, the student toured the NOAA Tula Observatory, where station chief Marisa Gedney shared information on the importance of monitoring atmospheric conditions on a daily basis, the methods used to collect samples and how they are packaged and sent off island for analysis. The students also toured the Tauese P.F. Sunia Ocean Center, where they learned about the various National Marine Sanctuary Units in American Samoa, had a seafood cooking demonstration on how to properly prepare a variety of fish dishes and then were able to eat the prepared dishes for lunch.

During the presentation of certificates of completion of the course, both students and their parents expressed extreme appreciation to the Council and the instructor for the course.

New Outreach Materials

2017 ANNUAL FISHERIES REPORTS

The *Western Pacific Region Status of the Fisheries 2017* summarizes highlights from the 2017 annual reports on fisheries in Hawai'i and the U.S. Pacific Islands. Annual reports are produced for each of five fishery ecosystem plans (FEPs) that have been developed, monitored and amended by the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council. They include the Pelagic FEP, the Pacific Remote Island Areas FEP, and FEPs for the Hawai'i, American Samoa and Mariana (i.e., Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands) Archipelagos. These reports provide data and trends about last year's fishery participation, catch rates, landings and other fishery performance factors. Each report also covers ecological components that may impact fishery outcomes, such as protected species interactions, climate and oceanographic conditions and socioeconomic factors. The summary report is available at www.wpcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/2017-annual-report.pdf. The complete annual reports are available at www.wpcouncil.org/fishery-plans-policies-reports/fishery-reports-2/.



2019 LUNAR CALENDARS

The 2019 traditional lunar calendars for Hawai'i, American Samoa, Guam and CNMI are now available for download from the Council's website at www.wpcouncil.org/education-and-outreach/lunar-calendars-2/. Each calendar features the moon phases, moon rise and set times, tide graphs and traditional knowledge for the corresponding island area.

The Hawai'i calendar is offered in two versions. The classroom version is a 15-month calendar that begins Oct. 1, 2018. It measures 8.5- x 11-inch for hanging on the wall. Produced in partnership with YWCA O'ahu, it features *mo'olelo* (stories) of the many forms of Hina, the Hawaiian goddess of the moon, and accompanying work from a variety of artists including

women of the YWCA Fernhurst facility. The cover illustration by Oliver Kenney, a gifted Hawaiian artist, depicts Hinahānaiakamalama and is available as a poster at www.wpcouncil.org/education-and-outreach/educational-posters/. Videos of the Hina stories are available on the Council's YouTube and Vimeo stations at youtube.com/wpcouncil and vimeo.com/wprfmc.

The Hawai'i fishermen's 13-month calendar begins Dec. 8, 2018. It is pocketsize and

waterproof for keeping on the boat or in the glovebox. For hard copies, contact the Advisory Panel (AP) member on your island. The list of AP members can be found at www.wpcouncil.org/about-us/council-advisory-panels/advisory-panel/.

The American Samoa calendar is a 15-month calendar that begins Nov. 8, 2018. The CNMI calendar is a 13-month calendar that begins Jan. 7, 2019, and the 12-month Guam calendar covers the period of the 2019 lunar year, Feb. 5, 2019, to Feb. 22, 2020.

Council Family Updates



Edwin N. Watamura has been appointed by the US Department of Commerce to fill the Hawai'i obligatory seat to the Western Pacific Regional

Fishery Management Council for the 2018 to 2021 term. He previously served on the Council's Advisory Panel from 2009 to 2016, including as its chair 2011–2014 and vice chair 2009–2019 and 2015–2016. Watamura has also served as president of the Wailua Boat Club and a member of Hawaii Fishermen's Alliance for Culture and Tradition (HFACT). He was part of the Western Pacific Regional contingent at the National Saltwater Recreational Fisheries Summit in April 2018.

Michael P. Duenas (Guam) was reappointed for the 2018 to 2021 term to fill Guam's obligatory seat.

Michael K. Goto (Hawai'i) was appointed out of cycle to fill a vacant at-large seat, which runs through Aug. 10, 2020.



Mark Fitchett has joined the Council staff as its pelagic fisheries ecosystem scientist. Fitchett has been involved in fisheries research

and management since 2004. He has worked and published on a variety of fisheries issues from Florida spiny lobster recruitment dynamics, to Atlantic billfish stock assessments, to comprehensive billfish research in the eastern Pacific Ocean.

His research foci are population dynamics and identifying ecosystem drivers that impact pelagic fisheries. His duties with Council include leading and facilitating a pelagic fisheries research program in Hawai'i and the Pacific Islands. A native of North Carolina, Fitchett holds a PhD and master's degree in marine biology and fisheries from the University of Miami Rosenstiel School, and bachelor's degrees in both zoology and in marine resources from North Carolina State University.



Eric Kingma, International Fisheries, Pelagic, Enforcement and NEPA Coordinator, who has been on the Council staff since August 2003, was recently

awarded a PhD from the Australia National Center for Ocean Resources and Security (ANCORS), University of Wollongong. Eric's doctoral thesis pertained to the field of international fisheries law and policy and was titled, "The Principle of Compatibility: Its application within the world's largest tuna fishery." Eric received an International Postgraduate Research Award from the Australian Government to complete his research. His primary supervisor was Dr. Martin Tsamenyi, ANCORS professor emeritus and former legal advisor to the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission.

Christofer Boggs, who has served as the Pelagic Team for decades and as its chair from 1996 to 2003, has retired from the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center (PIFSC). At his retirement party, the Council presented him with a gift for his dedication

to and support of science-based fisheries in the region.

Emily Crigler (NMFS Pacific Islands Regional Office) and **Joshua Lee** (NMFS PIFSC) have joined the Pelagic Plan Team.

Brett Schumacher (NMFS PIFSC) has joined the Archipelagic Plan Team.

PACIFIC ISLANDS FISHERY NEWS

is published by the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council
1164 Bishop St., Suite 1400
Honolulu, HI 96813
www.wpcouncil.org
Telephone: (808) 522-8220
Fax: (808) 522-8226
info.wpcouncil@noaa.gov

CHAIR

John Gourley (acting)

VICE CHAIRS

Michael Duenas - Guam
Dean Sensui - Hawai'i
John Gourley - CNMI
Archie Soliai - American Samoa

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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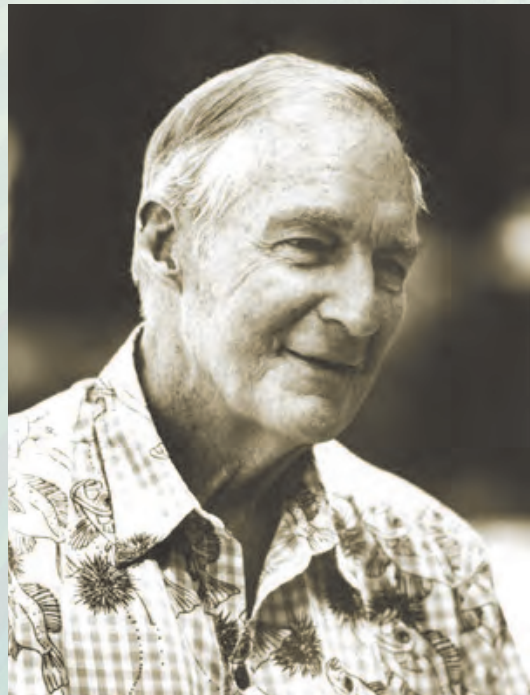
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In Memoriam



EDWIN A. EBISUI JR

EDWIN A. EBISUI JR., Council chair and long-time member of the Council family, passed away in July. Ebusui first joined the Council family in 1985 as a member of the Bottomfish, Seamount and Groundfish Advisory Panel. In 1987, Gov. John Waihee nominated him as Council member. He subsequently completed six three-year terms (1987-1996, 2001-2007 and 2012-2015) and was serving the last year of his seventh three-year term (2015-2018) as a Council member. During this time, he served as the Council chair for seven years (1994-1996 and 2014-2018) and as the Council vice chair representing Hawaii for five years (1990-1991, 2002, 2013-2014). When not a Council member, he remained active with the Council serving on its Advisory Panel from 2007 through 2012 and as its chair from 2007-2010. Ebusui navigated his responsibilities with insight and wisdom, calling upon his decades of experience as an attorney and avid fisherman, during some of the most difficult years in the Council's history. Under his watch, the Council developed one on the nation's first limited entry programs in the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands (NWHI) bottomfish fishery; leveraged emerging technology in the early 1990s to establish the nation's first vessel monitoring system for fisheries; and created the NWHI 50-mile protected species zone, the Hawaii longline limited entry program, spatial management of the main Hawaiian Islands and a sweeping new management regime for the main Hawaiian Islands bottomfish fishery.



WILLIAM WOODS PATY II

WILLIAM WOODS PATY II, former Council chair, passed away on Aug. 12 at the age of 97. Paty served on the Council as the State of Hawai'i designated representative from 1987 to 1999, as the Council chair 1987-1991 and as the vice chair 1992-1997. Born and raised in Honolulu, Paty was a World War II prisoner of war and was awarded a Purple Heart and Bronze Star for his service. He graduated from Cornell University with a bachelor's degree in agriculture in 1942 and had a 38-year career at Wai'aleale Sugar. He chaired and John Waihee (Hawai'i governor 1986-1994) vice chaired the landmark 1978 Hawaii Constitutional Convention. Paty chaired two of Waihee's successful gubernatorial campaigns and served in his administration as the director of the Department of Land and Natural Resources.

ROBERT "BOB" FRAM, co-founder and co-owner of Garden & Valley Isle Seafoods, passed away in September. Fram started Garden Isle Prawn Distribution with high school classmate Mark Reed in 1981. After Reed left the company, Fram and his childhood friend Dave Marabella grew the company to become one of the state's finest fish and seafood corporations. Fram was a fearless voice of support for the local fishing industry during times of controversy such as the establishment of marine national monuments that have closed off millions of acres of fishing grounds and the amendment to the Billfish Conservation Act, which banned distribution of sustainable, locally caught US billfish to the US mainland.

Postcard from The Pacific Islands

Capt. Alvin Iglesias (fifth from the left) of *Team 10-7* with anglers Keith Torres, Phil Babauta, CJ Echalico and John Jemeno and family members with their winning Pacific blue marlin during the 34th Annual Saipan International Fishing Tournament held from July 14 and 15, 2018. The team members bested 70 other boats from Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands with their grand prize billfish landed before noon on the first day and weighing in at 445 pounds. In addition to the grand prize trophy and their team name engrave on the perpetual trophy, the winning team won \$3,000 during the banquet following the two-day tournament held at the Pacific Islands Club. Photo courtesy of Floyd Masga.



RECIPE

ASIAN TOSTADA WITH UMEBOSHI VINAIGRETTE

Courtesy of Chef Dave Kodama, Sansei Seafood Restaurant & Sushi Bar, Waikiki and Maui

Serves 4

Ingredients

4 oz marlin
12 pcs wonton skin
¼ cup shichimi
4 oz rock shrimp
1 tsp carrot, grated
1 oz cucumber, seedless, sliced thin
Pinch of cilantro
1 oz tomato
8 oz Umeboshi Vinaigrette
Pinch of white sesame seeds



Umeboshi Vinaigrette

2 ½ cups ume paste
2 cup ume sauce
6¼ cup rice vinegar
2½ cup sugar
⅝ cup hondashi
1½ tbsp white pepper
5 oz soy sauce
2½ tbsp Coleman mustard
2½ tbsp garlic, chopped
72 oz cottonseed oil

Puree ume paste and sauce until very smooth. Remove and place in large mixing bowl. Add remaining ingredients except oil and whip until blended. Add oil and blend.

Preparation

Fry wonton skin and set aside. Coat marlin with shichimi and lightly bake. Blanch rock shrimp in salt water. Mix marlin, rock shrimp, carrot, cucumber, tomato and cilantro together.

Plating

To plate, place three pieces of fried wonton in middle of plate. On top, add a quarter of the fish mixture. Top fish with 2 oz of Umeboshi Vinaigrette. Garnish with white sesame seeds.

(Featured at the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council booth at the 2005 NOAA Fish Fry)



For more Pacific island recipes, download the Council's Fish Forever Favorites recipe booklet at www.wpcouncil.org/education-and-outreach/educational-library/.



2018 Council Calendar

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Vimeo (vimeo.com/wprfmc)

September

26 – Oct. 2

14th Regular Session of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) Technical and Compliance Committee, Majuro, Republic of Marshall Islands (RMI)*

October

1-5

2018 International Pacific Marine Educator Network Conference, Keelung, Taiwan*

3

3rd meeting of the WCPFC Fish Aggregation Device Management Options Intersessional Working Group, Marjuro, RMI*

9-12

Tuna Stock Structure Workshop, Noumea, New Caledonia*

11

American Samoa Archipelago FEP Advisory Panel, Pavaia, American Samoa

11-12

US Permanent Advisory Committee of the Western and Central Fisheries Commission, Honolulu*

14-16

Council Member Training, Silver Spring, Md.*

15-17

130th Scientific and Statistical Committee Meeting, Hilo, Hawai'i

20

Mariana Archipelago FEP Advisory Panel, Tumon, Guam

22

CNMI Regional Ecosystem Advisory Committee (REAC), Saipan, CNMI

22

Pelagic and International Standing Committee, Saipan, CNMI

22

Fishery Data Collection and Research Committee, Saipan, CNMI

22

Executive and Budget Standing Committee, Saipan, CNMI

23-24

174th Council Meeting, Saipan, CNMI

23

Fishers Forum, Saipan, CNMI

25

Guam REAC, Tumon, Guam

26-27

174th Council Meeting, Tumon, Guam

26

Fishers Forum, Tumon, Guam

December

10-14

WCPFC 15th Regular Session, Honolulu*

*Meetings are not hosted by the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council.

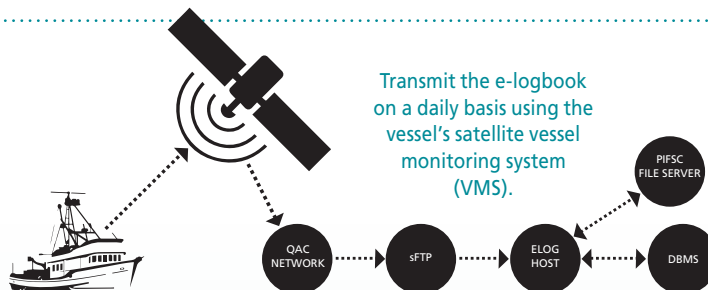
Upcoming Events

174th COUNCIL MEETING

The Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council will convene its 174th meeting from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Oct. 23 and 24 at the Fiesta Resort & Spa, Garapan, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) and Oct. 26 and 27 at the Hilton Guam Resort & Spa, Tumon, Guam. Four regulatory items are on the agenda.

Mandatory electronic reporting for the Hawai'i longline fishery: After several years of development, tablets equipped with logbook software approved by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) will soon be made available to the entire Hawai'i longline fleet. Based on this new development, the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council will consider recommending mandatory electronic reporting by the fishery. If mandated, industry costs for e-reporting would likely be funded by NMFS initially, but future annual software subscriptions and data transmission costs may become the responsibility of fishery participants. Final action will be taken by the Council in 2019.

E-reporting involves software that contains logbook data fields that replicate those in the paper logbooks. Fishermen fill in the data using an electronic device (phone, tablet or computer) and transmit the e-logbook on a daily basis using the vessel's satellite vessel monitoring system (VMS). Information such as



vessel name, permit number, arrival and departure, fishing dates and times and global positioning system (GPS) locations of longline set and haul are automatically populated, which saves time for the captain and improves data accuracy.

Daily transmission of fishing data through e-reporting has several other advantages. By reducing time delays associated with the processing of traditional logbook data, e-reporting improves dissemination of information to fishery managers, fishery participants and the public and facilitates monitoring of big-eye longline quotas applied in the Eastern Pacific Ocean and Western and Central Pacific Ocean and forecasting when these will be reached.

Currently, fishery managers are unable to access information generated by the Hawai'i longline fleet for at least three weeks. Logbook data are submitted as hardcopy to NMFS at the end of a vessel's trip, which is generally three weeks long. NMFS quality controls the data before and after the information is key-punched into fishery monitoring databases by its

Transmit the e-logbook
on a daily basis using the
vessel's satellite vessel
monitoring system
(VMS).

Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center (PIFSC). Typically there is at least a three-week delay for the logbook information to be collected, quality controlled, entered and stored. This delay complicates estimating bigeye tuna catch.

Regulations under the Pelagic FEP have allowed the optional use of e-reporting of fishing logbook information to NMFS since 2007. PIFSC in consultation with the Council developed associated e-reporting software associated guidelines in 2009. However, e-reporting in the fishery has had a slow uptake despite concerted efforts by NMFS and the Council since 2014 to increase e-reporting by the Hawai'i-based fleet with the main objective of improving efficiency and timeliness in fisheries data collection and longline quota management.

Annual catch limits: The Council will specify multi-year annual catch limits (ACLs) for main Hawaiian Islands (MHI) deep-water shrimp, precious corals and non-Deep 7 bottomfish for fishing years 2019, 2020 and 2021. The Council will also specify a single-

year ACLs for Territory bottomfish and the MHI Kona crab fisheries for fishing year 2019.

Sea turtle management: The Council will review and may revise its 173rd Council meeting recommendation that would amend the Pelagic Fishery Ecosystem Plan (FEP) to establish a management framework for the Hawai'i shallow-set longline fishery.

Precious coral essential fish habitat: The Council will consider whether new information warrants update of its essential fish habitat (EFH) descriptions for precious corals in the Western Pacific Region. EFH information was reviewed through the 2015 and 2016 Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation (SAFE) report cycles and will be provided to the Council in the form of options to consider for management. New observations of precious corals have occurred throughout the region, with research concentrated in the Hawai'i Archipelago.

FISHERS FORUM

As part of its 174th meeting, the Council will hold Fishers Forums on the noncommercial spear fisheries of Saipan and Guam from 6 to 9 p.m.

Oct. 23 at the Saipan Fiesta Resort & Spa and Oct. 26 at the Hilton Guam Resort and Spa. Enjoy informational tables, presentations, refreshments, door prizes, free parking and more at these free and family friendly events.