



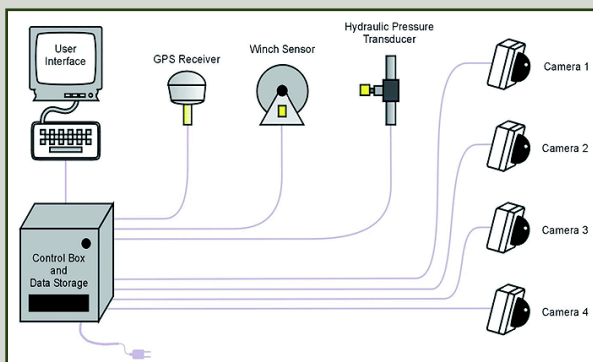
OBSERVER PROGRAM UPDATE

Electronic Monitoring and The Fixed Gear Alliance

In January NMFS implemented the Alaska restructured observer program, which authorizes NMFS to assign observers to federal groundfish and halibut boats of any size, with this year's deployment on selected vessels over 40' in length. Boats 57.5 feet and longer are in the "trip selection" pool and have to register their trips on-line 72 hours prior to leaving on a trip to determine if that trip will be observed; vessels less than 57.5 feet are in the "vessel selection pool" and if selected have to carry an observer on every trip for a two month period. Deployment this year assigns a 15% observer rate to trawl fisheries with halibut, salmon or crab bycatch caps and an 11% observer rate to the small fixed gear boats in the vessel selection pool.

The Council directed NMFS to provide observer releases to boats that do not have bunk space to accommodate an observer. They also recommended NMFS provide releases to boats willing to carry electronic monitoring (EM). NMFS is not following the Council recommendation on the later at all, and is sometimes following the first recommendation. NMFS' attitude, as reflected in the Final Rule that implemented the program, is that boats will need to be adapted to accommodate observers. In other words, NMFS did not build a program to work for the small boat fleet; instead they expect the small boat fleet to make their boats work for the program. Given that the small fixed gear boats represent 85% of the boats covered under the restructured program, NMFS' arrogance is stunning.

As the fleet is aware, ALFA led a two year EM pilot program to ensure EM would be an alternative to human observers for small fixed gear boats. You can read the EM Pilot Program report on the ALFA website listed below. Despite the success of this pilot program and EM programs in place around the world (including the Canadian halibut and groundfish fisheries), EM now appears to be AT BEST four years away from actual implementation in Alaska.



In January longline and pot fishermen formed the FIXED GEAR ALLIANCE to seek observer program reforms. In February the FGA intervened in the Boat Company's lawsuit against the observer program. The lawsuit seeks to increase

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www.alfafish.org
Click the FCN tab "Observer Program/
Electronic Monitoring" for the final
report on our EM Pilot Project

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Watch for an action alert before the June Council meeting and provide feedback to ALFA staff on: observer impacts to your operation; two month vs. trip by trip selection; fee collection process.



- Volunteer for the NMFS EM pilot program. More boats are needed! Please call or email Liz Chilton at NOAA: (206) 526-4197; Elizabeth.Chilton@noaa.gov

THANK YOU'S

Carter Hughes, Gary Egerton, Lorraine Daly and Carolyn Nichols

Great thank you's to these folks for their letters to the Council prior to the April discussion of the observer program. Your letters help the Council understand why the observer program needs to change. More action on that scheduled for the June Council meeting in Juneau.

observer coverage on trawl vessels with halibut, salmon and crab bycatch; require NMFS to take a "hard look" at program impacts on the resource and Alaska's fishermen; and consider alternative monitoring system (such as logbooks, dockside monitoring and EM). If successful, the observer program will be remanded to the Council for improvement. You can join the FGA by sending an email to: fixedgearalliance@gmail.com and mail a contribution to help with lawsuit costs to:

**FGA
PO Box 3274
Seward, AK 99664**

In June the Council will review a number of observer program provisions, including:

- 1) The two month deployment for vessel selection boats, which could add small boats to the on-line trip selection system;
- 2) The fee collection system;
- 3) NMFS' EM Strategic Plan.

Questions? Contact ALFA
alfastaff@gmail.com or
(907) 747-3400

COMMUNITY FISHERIES NETWORK

**Sharing Information
Across the Nation**



Over the past three years, ALFA has been working with fishermen from around the Nation who face similar regulatory or economic challenges. Last year the groups officially established the Community Fisheries Network, which now has 16 community-based fishing organizations and supporting organizations from around the United. While the fisheries differ from community to community, members find common ground by sharing information about our fisheries, the management challenges we face, and what has helped one group create change or adapt to it. The goal of the Network is to increase the long-term sustainability of commercial fishing communities by building business-planning acumen, strengthening social networks, and creating economic resilience through expanding markets. To learn more about the Community Fisheries Network:

www.communityfisheriesnetwork.org



HALIBUT CHARTER CSP

The Proposed Rule to implement the halibut charter Catch Sharing Plan Round 2 is scheduled for June publication in the Federal Register. The CSP establishes an abundance-based allocation for the Area 2C and 3A charter sectors, creates a timely process for adjusting charter management regulations, and authorizes charter operators to lease a limited amount of quota from commercial IFQ holders. Although the Proposed Rule publication date has slipped, NMFS still claims implementation will be in 2014 provided the CSP is approved by the Secretary of Commerce. Once the CSP is published, ALFA and the Halibut Coalition will send action alerts requesting comments. The comment period will likely be 45 days and will start when the rule is published (terrible timing for fishermen!). Since the Alaska Charter Association is already lobbying against the CSP, successful passage will demand a flood of comments in support. Please watch for an action alert and save some time to write a letter.

WORKING WATERFRONTS

NOAA is developing a new strategic plan to guide policy over the next decade. One developing focus is Working Waterfronts. In some states (e.g. Maine) laws protect lands designated as “working waterfront” from development that would block commercial fishermen’s access to necessary wharves and harbor facilities. These laws were triggered by the encroachment of non-fishing related use of

waterfront property. The working waterfront also includes the fishermen and marine service industries who make the waterfront work.

In March, NOAA invited Linda, ALFA’s executive director, to speak at a national conference on working waterfronts in Tacoma. Some talks focused on marine infrastructure; others focused on management policy that supports or undermines the fisheries critical to healthy waterfronts. Proceedings from the conference will form the catalyst for developing a national working waterfront policy.

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Hoonah Cold Storage ~ Channel Club ~ Sea Mart Quality Foods ~ Precision Boatworks
Troller Point Fisheries (Anchorage) ~ First Bank ~ Murray Pacific

Contributing Businesses: Shaffer & Co., CPAs ~ Fishermen’s Eye Gallery

FISHERY CONSERVATION NETWORK

In 2009, ALFA started a Fishery Conservation Network (FCN). With generous and on-going support from the Oak Foundation, the network promotes resource stewardship by engaging fishermen in marine research and collaboration. FCN fishermen have worked together to reduce bycatch, map habitat, develop deterrents to reduce whale predation on longline gear, and provide fish to Alaska's first Community Supported Fishery program—Alaskans Own. Here is an update on FCN projects.

Rockfish Bycatch Network and Bathymetric Mapping

FCN longliners log and report their catch and rockfish bycatch rates in the halibut and sablefish fisheries and provide logbook pages, plus a copy of fish tickets, to ALFA to map bycatch hot spots. In the first two years of the program participating halibut fishermen reduced bycatch rates by 20% and sablefish fishermen reduced bycatch rates by 5%. For the past two years FCN fishermen have focused on keeping bycatch below the allowed rates. Multi-beam sonar

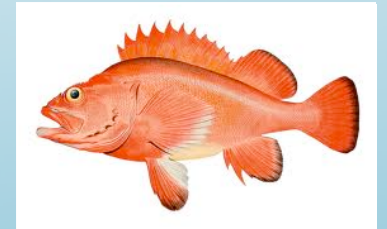
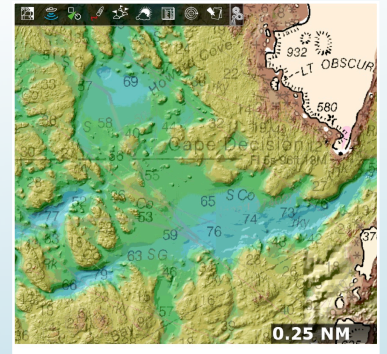
maps and maps created from bathymetric data collected by FCN members helps fishermen carefully and efficiently target halibut and sablefish while controlling bycatch. The bathymetric maps also help FCN members during the summer salmon season—with the maps, trollers effectively target salmon while avoiding seafloor contact.

Wish you had these maps on your boat? Sign up today for ALFA's FCN!

Fuel Efficiency

This year the FCN launched a fuel efficiency initiative to help fishermen identify strategies to reduce fuel consumption during fishing trips. Participating fishermen will receive technical assistance in designing fuel monitoring systems for their vessels. The ALFA website has information available on Floscan and Maretron fuel monitoring systems to help members design the best system for their vessel. Special pricing is available to ALFA members who purchase a fuel monitoring system. Contact ALFA staff member Dan Falvey (738-8710) for specific information.

FCN fishermen may also elect to participate in focused research on operational and equipment changes to improve fuel efficiency and reduce emissions. Planning is under way to gather base line quantitative data on operational patterns and fuel use, as well as experimental testing of fuel reducing strategies such as smaller Para-vane stabilizers, hydrogen generators, inverters, and other innovative ideas. These volunteer fishermen will receive a small stipend in return for adhering to a simple experimental design and allowing the results to be shared with others. Contact Linda or Dan Falvey for specific information.



To participate in the FCN, you must be an ALFA member in good standing (current dues paid). That's it! Call the office to sign up and get involved in these great projects!
(907) 747-3400

**Join the FCN
Today!**

FCN PROJECTS, CONT.

Whale Deterrents

Thanks to on-going funding from the Central Bering Sea Fishermen's Association, this summer the Southeast Alaska Sperm Whale Avoidance Project (SEASWAP) will beta-test whale decoy buoys and look for opportunities to satellite tag both sperm whales (SE Alaska) and killer whales (Prince William Sound).

The decoy buoys are set 3-6 miles from an actual longline set and include a playback device that is activated from the fishing vessel shortly before the vessel starts hauling a longline set. The playback device broadcasts the sounds of hydraulics engaging and the engine shifting in and out of gear, which has been identified through SEASWAP research as the "dinner bell" that calls sperm whales to the hauling party. Tests last year lured sperm whales away from actual sets for 2-4 hours, depending on the whale. ALFA is looking for boats to deploy the decoy buoys this spring/summer. We have stipends to compensate fishermen for their time deploying the decoys, but even more importantly you can contribute to testing the decoys and helping identify successful whale predation deterrents. Call Linda 738-3615 or Ashia 747-3400 to sign up.



Baked Rockfish Fillets with Tarragon Tartar Sauce

- 1 1/2 lbs. rockfish fillets, rinsed
- Italian seasoned breadcrumbs
- 1/2 T pepper
- Sea salt to taste
- 1/2 lemon

For the tartar sauce:

- 1 cup mayonnaise
- 2-3 T finely chopped pickles
- 1 T lemon juice
- 1 T chopped fresh tarragon
- Salt to taste
- 1/4 tsp pepper



Easy for Home or the Boat

Preheat oven to 350°F. Coat damp fish fillets in mix of breadcrumbs, salt and pepper. Arrange in single layer in glass oven-proof pan. Drizzle with lemon juice. Bake until done, usually about 15-20 minutes, depending on thickness of fillets.

Combine all ingredients in a medium sized bowl, mixing well. May be refrigerated up to one week.

BECOME A 2013 MEMBER!

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Mail this slip with your dues to
ALFA ~ PO Box 1229 ~ Sitka, AK 99835
Or use your credit card through our secure website:
www.alfafish.org

_____ Deckhand \$100 _____ Basic \$250

_____ Supporting \$600 _____ Highliner \$1,000

_____ Business \$250

Thank you for your support!

ALASKAN'S OWN CSF

In 2010 ALFA worked with project partners at the Alaska Sustainable Fisheries Trust to launch the first Community Supported Fisheries (CSF) program in Alaska. Patterned after successful Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) programs, Alaskans Own provides locally caught and processed high quality seafood to

For More Info:
[thealaskatrust.org/
alaskans-own.php](http://thealaskatrust.org/alaskans-own.php)

Sitka and Juneau residents through monthly subscription fulfillments. Along with great seafood, subscribers receive information on the people who caught their fish, the issues important to local fisheries, and tips on how to properly store and cook great seafood. Revenue from Alaskans Own helps support ALFA's FCN and strengthen the connection between fishermen and consumers. Both Seafood Producers Cooperative and Sitka Sound Seafoods work with AO to provide subscribers portioned, vacuum packed and frozen seafood harvested by FCN



**Local Fish
Subscriptions!**

fishermen. This year Alaskans Own will include specials of Kodiak crab and Washington troll caught albacore tuna. Check out Alaskans Own online.

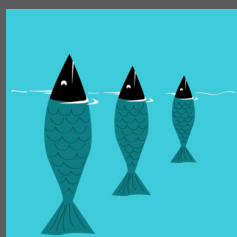
~ Good Fishing!

ALASKA LONGLINE FISHERMEN'S ASSOCIATION

PO Box 1229

Sitka, AK 99835

CALENDAR



MAY

**Managing Our
Nation's
Fisheries**
May 7-9th,
2013
Washington,
DC

JUNE

**North
Pacific
Fishery
Management
Council**
June 3-11th,
2013
Juneau, AK