

ON THE CHARTS

NOAA Fish Fry

The Oregon Trawl Commission hosted a booth at the NOAA Fish Fry in the courtyard of the Commerce Building in Washington DC on June 8. Director Brad Pettinger and Commissioner Mark Cooper (Newport) served smoked Black Cod to NOAA and NMFS staff, along with Congressional staffers.

The fish fry gave Pettinger an opportunity to interact with top NOAA/NMFS personnel, discussing key issues such as the trawl rationalization program and the buyback loan. The day before the event, Pettinger and Cooper visited the offices of Oregon's congressional delegation.

Scholarship renamed

The trawl industry lost a friend and advocate this winter with the passing of Joe Easley, who served as OTC administrator for 23 years. During his career, he served on numerous boards and committees representing the fishing industry.

To honor Joe's service, the OTC scholarship program will be renamed the Joe Easley Memorial Scholarship program.

Trawl rationalization starts out slow

Six months into the trawl rationalization of the groundfish fishery, it's safe to call the results a mixed bag.

On one side, the groundfish landings are running about 60 percent of what they were this time last year. Possible reasons for the decline include an 11-day delay in the start of the season, inclement weather this spring, a good crab season and an excellent shrimp season that kept fishing efforts down. Also, there seems to be quite a bit of quota being held onto until the whiting season is over.

On the flip side, ex-vessel prices are up 20-30 percent, landings of overfished species are down significantly and the discard rate in the fishery is an astonishing 5 percent. As a former editor of a popular west coast fishing publication put it: ***"That's rock star status for a fishery discard rate."***

Given those issues, it'll take at least 12 months or more to evaluate the program. However, if what we have seen so far is any indication, issues that critics have hammered the trawl industry for years (discards and catch of overfished species, for example), are now off the table.

With many of the positive aspects of this program coming to fruition, it's now up to the fleet and the fishery's managers to make the necessary adjustments and make this program the success story that many envisioned it to be.

August Quota Deadline

Don't forget that August 31st is the last day to move your quota pounds from your Quota Account into a Vessel Account. Any quota pounds left in a Quota Account after that date will be lost for the year, so don't wait until the last minute.

Stock assessment cycle begins

It's been said that: "stock assessments are like a box of chocolates -- you never know what your going to get until you bite into one of them."

That seems to sum up this year's stock assessment cycle, as updates for five overfished rockfish species were reviewed at the June Council meeting. New catch reconstructions showed higher historic landings for some species, which resulted in some species status not looking as optimistic as originally thought.

With that, there were enough issues to send the Bocaccio and Darkblotch Rockfish updates to a mop up panel in September.

The mid-June results of the Stock Assessment Review (STAR) panel for Petrale and POP will be evaluated at the September Council meeting, as well as the STAR panel results for Widow Rockfish and Spiny Dogfish (Seattle, July 11-15) and Sablefish and Dover Sole (Newport, July 25-29).

Marine Stewardship Council updates

Shrimp

It's hard to believe, but it's already time to start planning for the recertification of the Oregon Pink Shrimp fishery. In a May conference call meeting, OTC commissioners voted to enter into a contract with Moody Marine to recertify the fishery by the December 2012 deadline.

While the benefits from certification in the marketplace seemed to be slow in coming, MSC certification has definitely added value for the European market, where you need to have the MSC's blue logo to participate.

The recertification's site visit should eliminate the final annual audit of the fishery and its associated costs.

Whiting

As the client for the Oregon portion of the shoreside sector of the whiting fishery, the OTC is working with the rest of the client group preparing for the fishery's second annual audit.

One of the conditions on the fishery to be addressed, is determining the amount of incidences that the fishing gear touches the seafloor. With that, the OTC will be working on a way to survey the fleet this summer.

Groundfish

OTC signed a contract last year with Moody Marine to certify to the MSC standard 15 species in the West Coast groundfish trawl fishery. The species to be certified include Dover Sole, Rex Sole, English Sole, Petrale Sole, Arrowtooth Flounder, Pacific Sand Dabs, Yellowtail Rockfish, Widow Rockfish, Chilipepper Rockfish, Splitnose Rockfish, Shortspine Thornyheads, Longspine Thornyheads, Sablefish, Ling Cod and Longnose Skates.

The certification is currently about eight months into a 20-month-long process, with completion scheduled for next summer. So far, the OTC has received grants in excess of \$200,000 from the Bandon Submarine Cable Council and the Fort Bragg and Morro Bay cable committees to help cover the cost of the certification, which will cover all three states.

OZCMA film available online

The OZCMA film, "Oregon's Ocean Fisheries: a Conservation Story" is now available to view on the web at YouTube.com. Just type "OZCMA" into the YouTube search bar and select one of the 13 different segments from the film.

Buyback loan review

Updated numbers on the status of the Federal Buyback loan obtained from NMFS this past May showed, while many of the fisheries are gaining ground on the debt, the Groundfish portion is still almost \$3 million underwater. There have been numerous discussions with officials over possible options -- the latest occurring in June at the NOAA Fish Fry -- but there hasn't been any movement yet. The OTC continues to work on addressing this issue.

<u>Fishery</u>	<u>Original Loan</u>	<u>Current Loan</u>
Groundfish	\$ 28,428,718.88	\$ 31,330,715.43
CA crab	\$ 2,334,334.20	\$ 1,199,135.80
CA shrimp	\$ 674,202.18	\$ 857,798.94
OR crab	\$ 1,367,545.28	\$ 805,502.25
OR shrimp	\$ 2,228,844.53	\$ 1,133,912.74
WA crab	\$ 369,425.93	\$ 290,712.14
WA shrimp	\$ 259,399.63	\$ 193,585.34
Total	\$ 35,662,470.63	\$ 35,811,362.64

From NMFS - Totals as of 5/9/11

From the Wheelhouse is published by the
 Oregon Trawl Commission
 16289 Highway 101 S. Suite C
 Brookings, OR 97415
 e-mail: info@ortrawl.org Phone: (541) 469-7830

Brad Pettinger, Director
 Kathy Hall, Administrative Assistant

Oregon Trawl Commissioners
 Ted Gibson, Chairman - Newport
 Rex Leach, Vice Chair - Coos Bay
 Paul Kujala, - Astoria
 Doug Heater - Astoria
 Mark Cooper - Newport
 Scott Adams - Coos Bay
 Todd Whaley - Brookings
 Tad Thornberry - Portland