

**THE OREGON 2000 COMMERCIAL FISHERY
FOR ALBACORE (*THUNNUS ALALUNGA*)**

Prepared by

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ALBACORE PORT SAMPLING PROGRAM
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INTRODUCTION

Oregon has had a directed commercial fishery for albacore (*Thunnus alalunga*) since 1936. Albacore landings have been highly variable, ranging from under a half-million pounds to over 37 million pounds annually. In the last decade, catches have averaged about 6 million pounds per year.

Sampling of Oregon's albacore fishery is a cooperative effort between the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, the National Marine Fisheries Service, and the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission. This report documents the progress of the 2000 fishery off Oregon, and the associated sampling activities.

2000 FISHERY DEVELOPMENT

Landings of albacore into Oregon ports began in June and continued through early November with the peak occurring in August (Table 1, Figure 1). The preliminary total for 2000 commercial landings is 8,759,394 lb; this is a 92% increase from 1999 (Table 2, Figure 2). Astoria received the majority of the deliveries (46%), followed by Newport at 43% and Charleston at about 6%. Nine other ports also received deliveries (Table 3, Figure 3).

Albacore markets held up well this year with fish going to various places such as cannery, blast-bled, sashimi, European and specialty markets. In 2000, ex-vessel price paid for frozen fish ranged from \$.75 to \$.83/lb until late in the season when it rose to \$1.00 /lb. Price paid for fresh fish was about \$.65 to \$.70/lb. Most fishermen selling off their vessels asked \$1.50/lb.

Most of the albacore landed into Oregon this year were caught inside the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). Much of the fishery occurred off coastal Oregon and Washington.

Approximately 372 vessels landed albacore into Oregon in 2000, which is a 22% increase from 1999. The estimated number of trips landed into Oregon ports increased from 786 in 1999 to 882 in 2000. The average landing was about 9,900 lb and the average size of albacore delivered to Oregon buyers was quite variable, ranging from 10 to 20+ lb. Most of the fish landed were three and four year old fish.

During 2000, the recreational albacore fishery off Oregon contributed approximately 52,000 lb (less than 1%) to total albacore landings. The charter boat fishery accounted for about 90% of the recreational landings with most of the effort occurring out of Depoe Bay and Newport. Private boats made up the remaining 10% of landings with effort on the northern and central coast.

Two major concerns voiced by some albacore fishermen during the 2000 season were the possibility of limited entry and the influx of Canadian vessels into U.S. waters.

The Pacific Fisheries Management Council (PFMC) adopted a control date of March 9, 2000 for limited entry into highly migratory species fisheries. This date only serves as a notice that limited entry may be adopted in the future. The biggest concern was among fishers wishing to buy a new or different vessel, and wondering if they would qualify to fish albacore under a limited entry program. However, these questions could not be answered as PFMC will not address the limited entry issue again until sometime in 2001.

Again in 2000, a large number of Canadian vessels fished inside the U.S. EEZ, raising concerns about overcrowded fishing grounds and the desire to limit Canadian effort in U.S. waters. The Western Fishboat Owner's Association (WFOA) addressed this issue at their November 2000 meeting. The WFOA voted to support suspension of the U.S./Canada Treaty until it can be amended to limit participation to historical levels in each others EEZ's. Meetings were also held in November between the U.S. and Canadian governments to discuss data exchange and accuracy of data in the albacore fishery.

Oregon albacore sampling in 2000 followed the same guidelines as in 1999. Funding cuts again limited sampling to one port. In Newport, logbooks were distributed, completed logbooks were collected or interviews conducted, and length frequencies were obtained as often as possible throughout the season. The Oregon Albacore Summary form (attached as Appendix A) presents the data requested in Oregon's contractual agreement for albacore sampling funding. These are:

- a. number of logbooks issued by port.
- b. number of logbook collections attempted by port.
- c. number of interviews/transcriptions collected by port.
- d. number of logbooks collected by port.
- e. estimated total landings of albacore by port.
- f. estimated number of trips by port.
- g. estimated number of vessels by port.
- h. estimated landings (lb) by gear type.
- i. total landings for sampled trips.

Also included in the season summary are the number of trips sampled for length-frequency and the number of fish measured.

Thirty-seven logbooks were distributed to fishermen. Logbook collections attempted (contacts) numbered 283, a 44% increase from 1999. These contacts resulted in the collection of 133 North Pacific Albacore Voluntary Logbooks and 52 logbook transcriptions, for a total of 185 trips from which data were collected; this is a 49% increase from the total number collected in 1999. During 2000, 93 trips were sampled for length frequency, and 7,822 fish were measured. The number of measured fish increased 34% from 1999.

SUMMARY

Oregon's albacore landings in 2000 totaled about 8.76 million lb, a 92% increase from 1999 and above the 10 year average. Most of the fishery was centered off coastal Oregon and Washington. The recreational fishery contributed an estimated 52,000 lb in 2000. Reductions in contract funding again limited sampling to only one port in Oregon. In spite of this, the quantity of logbooks and length frequencies collected increased over 1999 levels.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I want to thank the many albacore fishing vessel operators who cooperated during our sampling program. Some of these busy people gave significant amounts of their time during fishing trip interviews. The sampling help provided by Nancy McLean-Cooper was also greatly appreciated.

Table 1. Oregon commercial albacore landings by month, 2000.

Month	Pounds
June	66,121
July	1,141,461
August	3,874,619
September	2,403,436
October	1,189,418
November	84,339
December	
Total	8,759,394 *

Table 2. Oregon commercial albacore landings by year, 1991-2000.

Year	Pounds
1991	1,258,818
1992	3,895,618
1993	4,754,450
1994	4,698,223
1995	5,033,810
1996	8,948,355
1997	9,167,738
1998	10,600,614
1999	4,550,635
2000	8,759,394 *

Table 3. Oregon commercial albacore landings by port, 2000.

Port	Pounds
Astoria	4,004,283
Seaside	1,278
Garibaldi	191,624
Pacific City	1,649
Depoe Bay	4,481
Newport	3,805,420
Florence	51,939
Winchst. Bay	76,281
Charleston	541,781
Bandon	5,472
Port Orford	6,438
Brookings	68,748
Total	8,759,394 *

* Preliminary
 updated 6/11/01 R. Haynes

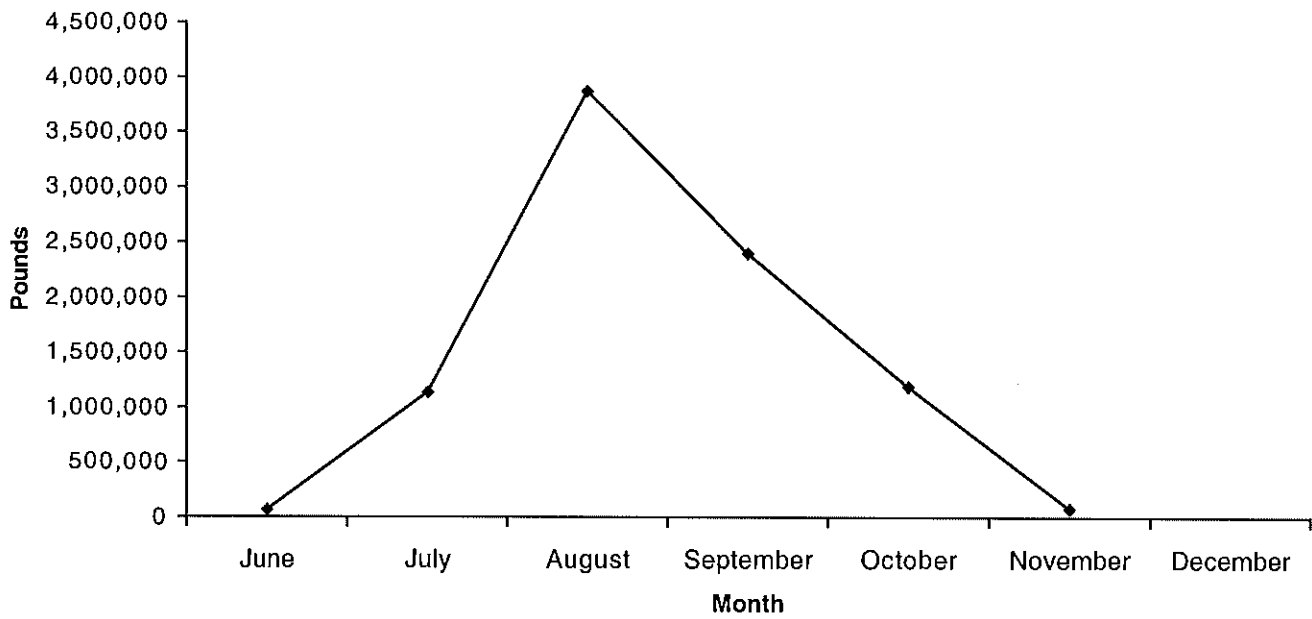


Figure 1. Oregon commercial albacore landings by month, 2000.

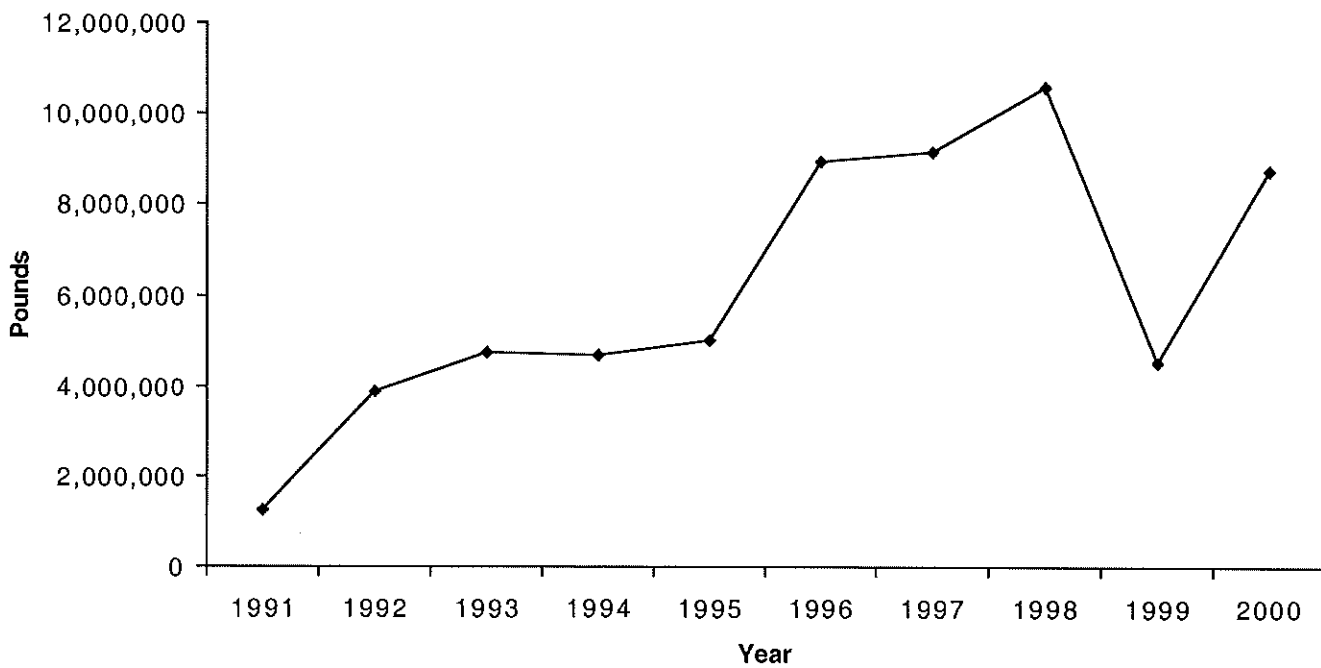


Figure 2. Oregon commercial albacore landings by year, 1991-2000.

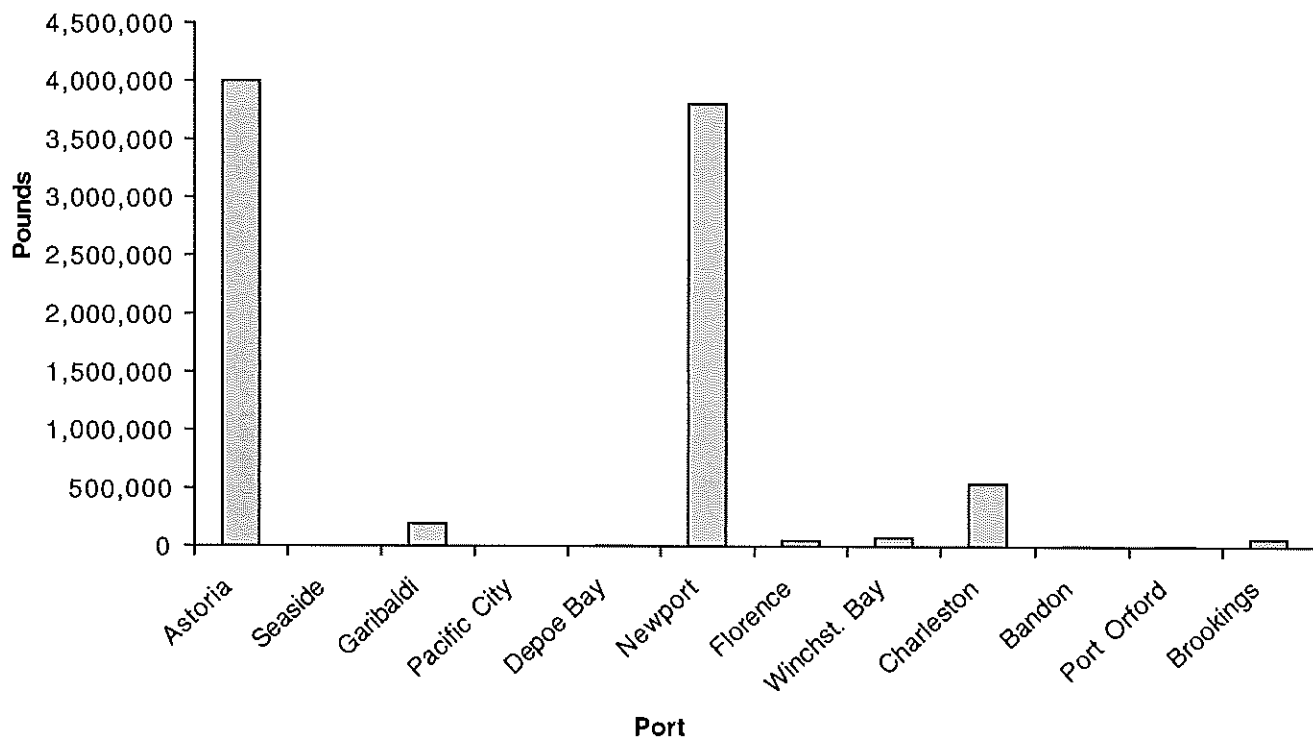


Figure 3. Oregon commercial albacore landings by port, 2000.

Appendix A. Oregon Albacore Summary for 2000

PORT CODE OR NAME	ASTORIA	NEWPORT	CHARLESTON	TOTAL COAST
No. of Logbooks Issued		37		37
No. of Data Collections Attempted (sampled)		283		283
No. of Logs Transcribed by Samplers		52		52
No. of Voluntarily-Completed Logs Collected		133		133
Total Landings from Sampled Vessels (Lbs)*		3,202,344		3,202,344
No. of Trips Sampled for Length-Frequency		93		93
No. of Fish Measured		7,822		7,822
Estimated Total No. of Trips **	184	448	104	882
Estimated Total No. of Vessels***	108	196	51	372
Estimated Total Jig Landings (Lbs)	4,004,283	3,805,420	541,781	8,759,394
Estimated Total Bait Landings (Lbs)				
Estimated Total Jig & Bait Landings (Lbs)				
Estimated Total Gillnet Landings (Lbs)				
Estimated Sport Total Landings (Lbs)				52,000
Estimated Total Landings for Other Gear Types (Lbs)				
Estimated Total Landings (Lbs)				8,811,394

* Includes landings from all collection attempts, whether successful or not, except for trips where landing weight was unavailable. Landings from logbook-sampled trips may exceed total landings because some logbooks/interviews were collected from vessels which delivered to other states.

** May be an overestimate as often a trip had multiple fish tickets associated with it, though an effort was made to combine such tickets into one trip.

*** Some vessels landed in more than one port during the season.

updated 6/11/01 R.Haynes