



Marine Resources

Albacore Tuna Fishery Newsletter

2021

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Read the Annual Report

To read this year's annual report please visit:

dfw.state.or.us/MRP/publications/

A Slow Year

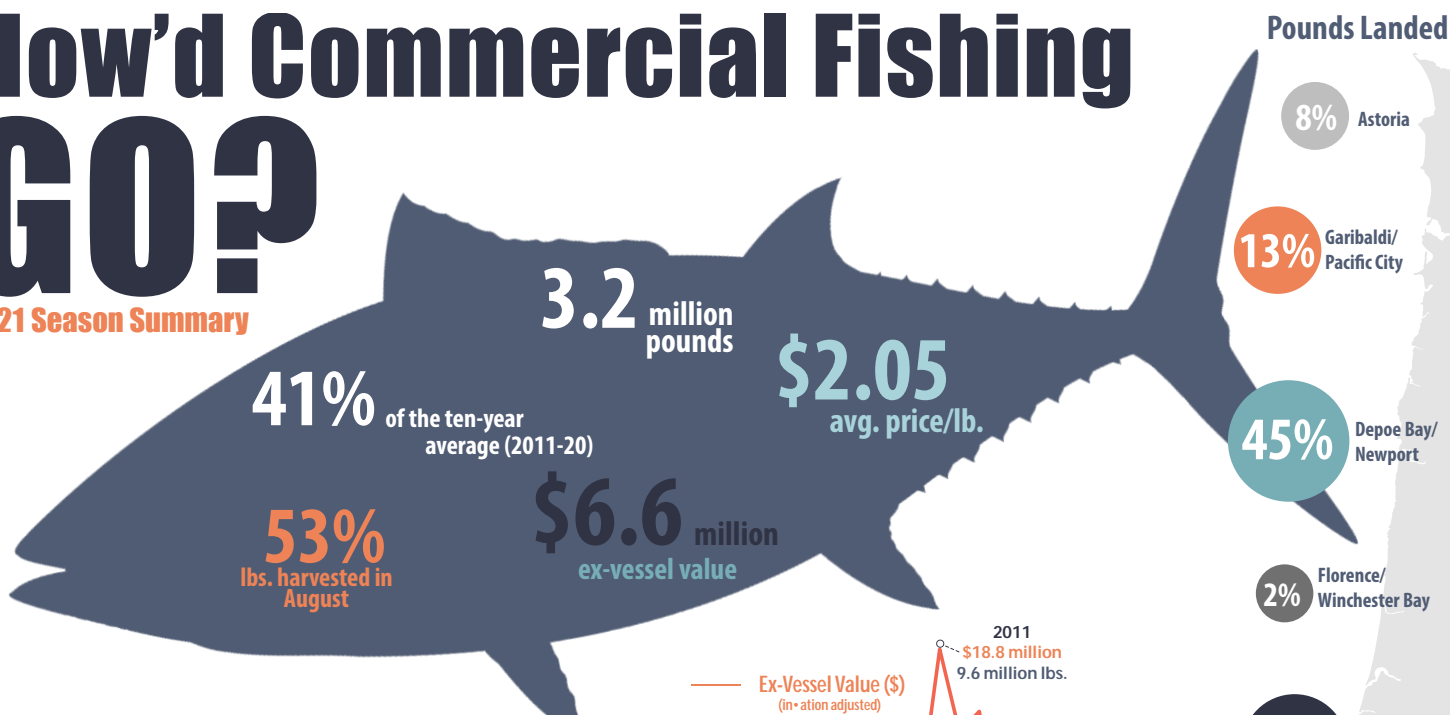
The 2021 season was slow to start. Nearly a month later than is considered normal, fishing came on strong in August with 1.7 million pounds landed, or 53% of the total for the year.

Newport had the highest albacore landings of any Oregon port in 2021, with 45% of the total weight. Charleston landed 31% of the total weight, followed by Garibaldi. The only other port with landings of over 100,000 pounds was Astoria.

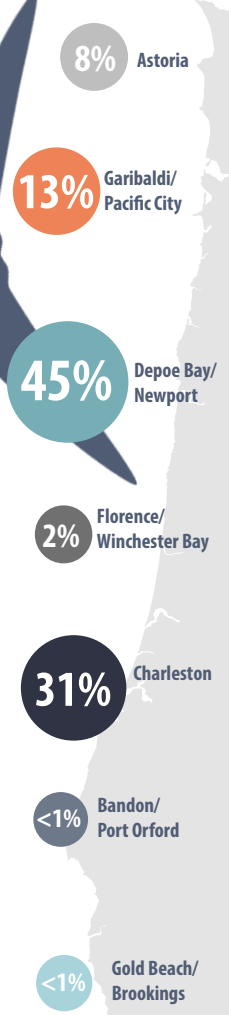
The average size of all albacore landings in 2021 was 6,441 pounds, similar to the average landing size from 2013-2020 of 6,201 pounds. This indicates that vessels of all sizes were able to make trips this season and there were no substantial limiting factors, such as weather or distance to the fishing grounds, that kept the smaller vessels in port.

How'd Commercial Fishing GO?

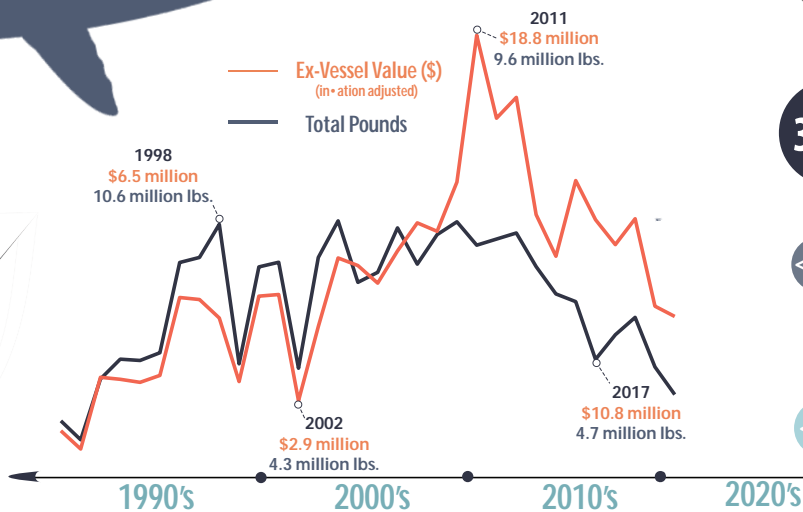
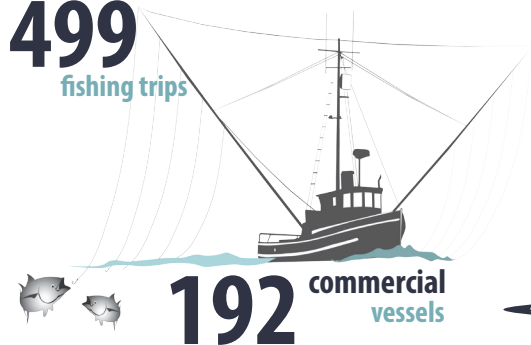
2021 Season Summary



Pounds Landed

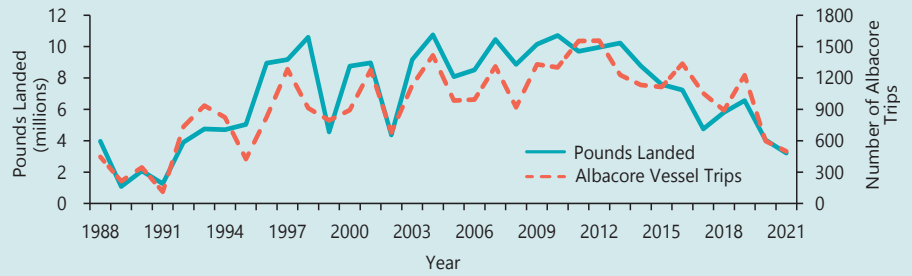


499 fishing trips



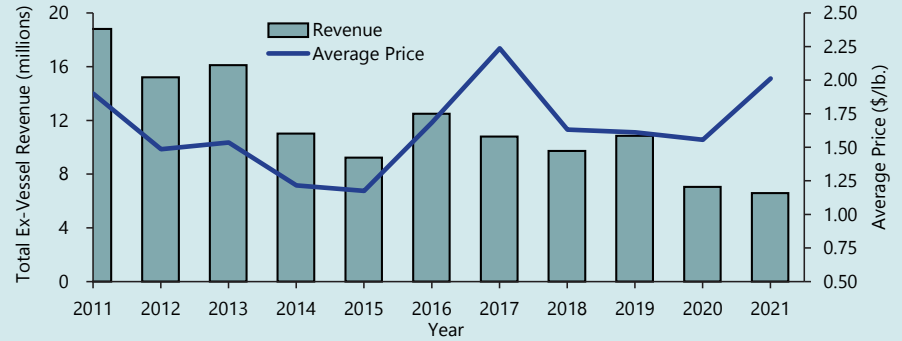
Season Summary (cont'd)

Total landings were down for 2021, with 3.2 million pounds landed in Oregon, only 41% of the ten-year average (2011-20) of 7.7 million pounds. Tuna fishers collectively made 499 trips on 192 different commercial vessels.



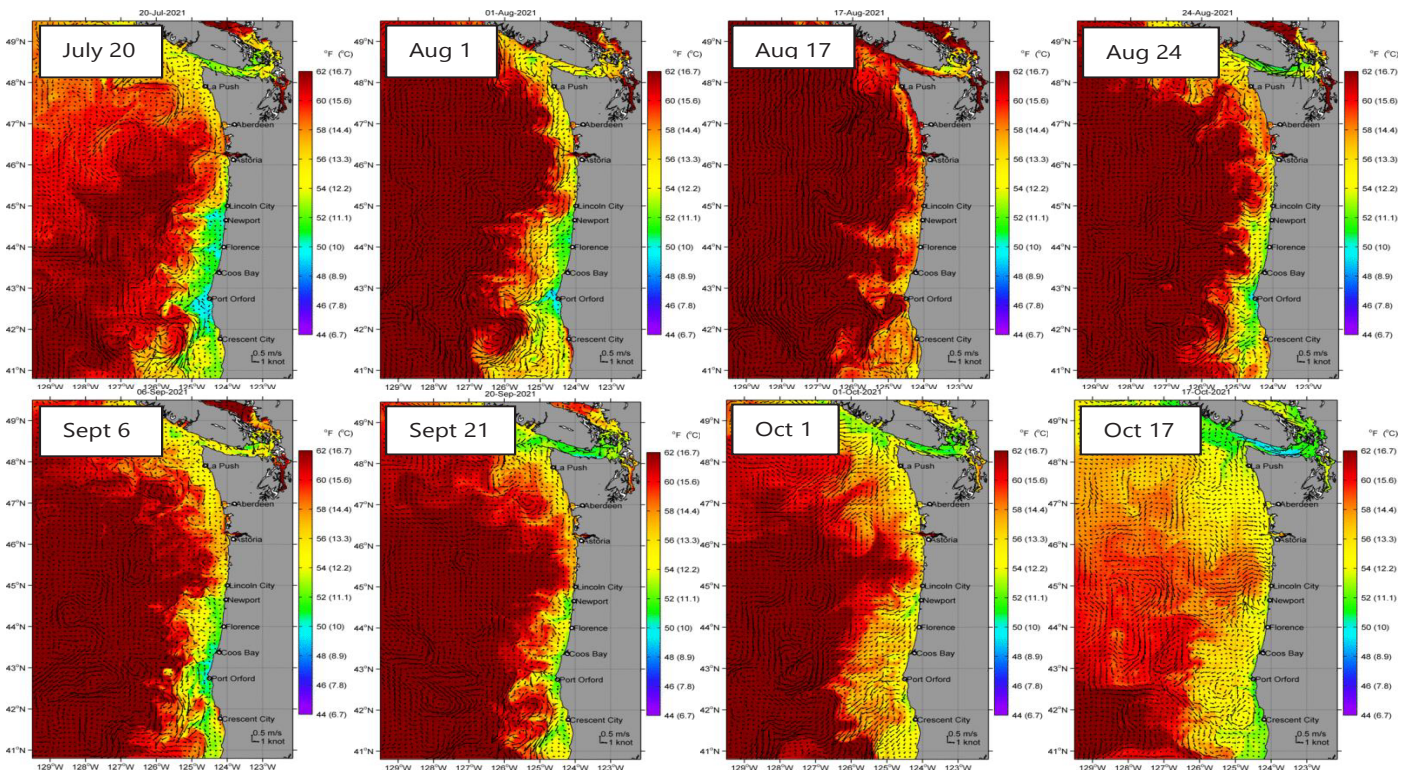
No Canadian vessels made albacore landings in Oregon.

The 2021 Oregon albacore season generated \$6,593,384 in total value paid to vessels. The average price was \$2.05 per pound, a 46 cents increase from 2020, and up from the ten-year average of \$1.60 per pound.



Ocean Conditions

Warm water temperatures began approaching the Oregon coast from the southwest in mid-June, bringing with it hopes for an early albacore season. The warm waters dissipated before settling in for the season in the latter half of July, and the season was off to a slow start due to the distance to the albacore grounds. Sea surface temperatures steadily increased through August with fluctuations in temperature as wind events caused upwelling to occur on occasion. Weather remained favorable until mid-August when gale winds from the north and swell nearing 20 feet forced the fleet into port. Due to this weather event, September was off to a slow start, effort improved as the month progressed and weather allowed. Reports of an improved bite in late September resulted in renewed effort. However, as October arrived, fall weather patterns caused warm sea surface temperatures to disperse and effort dwindled.

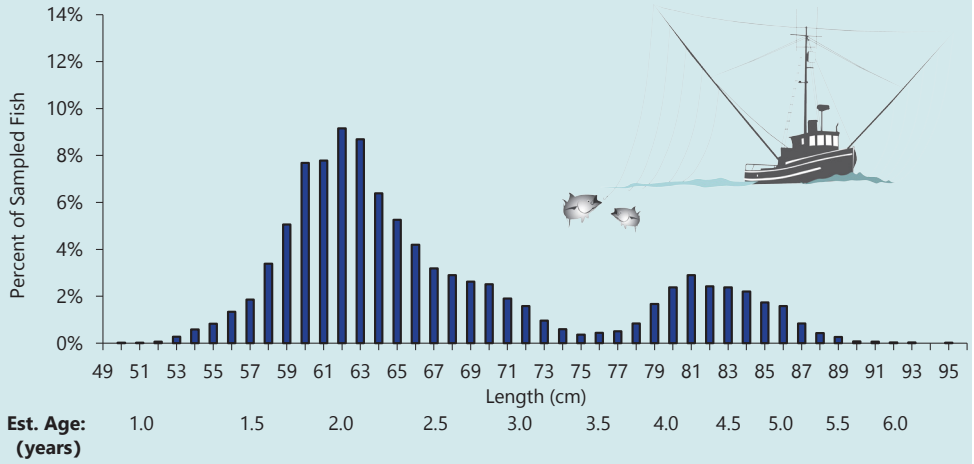


Nowcast sea surface temperature plots off Oregon and Washington out to 129°W from June 20 through October 17, 2021. Dark red areas indicate the warmest surface waters at or above 17° C (62° F), and lighter yellow, green, and blue areas the cooler waters. Images courtesy Craig Risien, Oregon State University, Northwest Association of Networked Ocean Observing Systems (NANOOS).

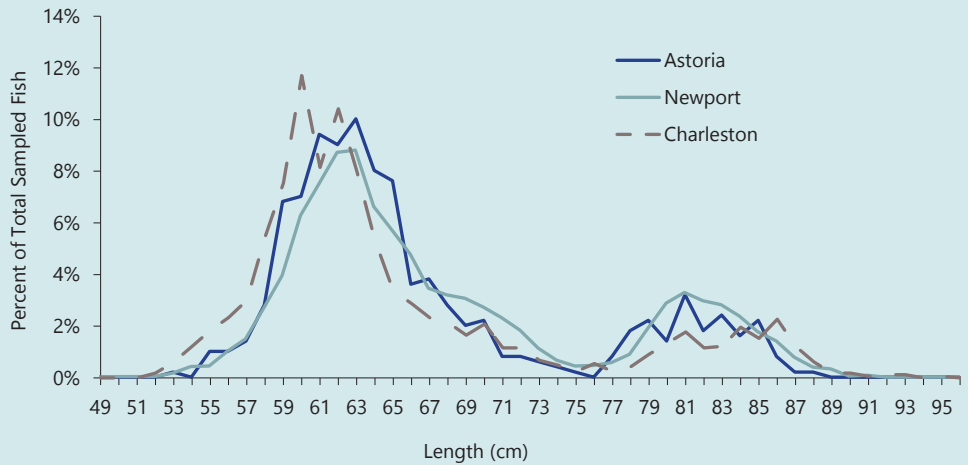
Fish Lengths

Commercial Albacore

Albacore samplers collected fork length measurements from unsorted commercially harvested albacore during offloading from July through October of 2021. Samplers measured 6,524 albacore tuna in the ports of Astoria, Newport, and Charleston. A frequency distribution of the length data displays a strong mode at 62 cm, with the distribution skewed to the right. The 62 cm mode represents an age-class of 2-year-old tuna, while the shoulder extending to the right (81 cm) represents older 4-year-old fish.

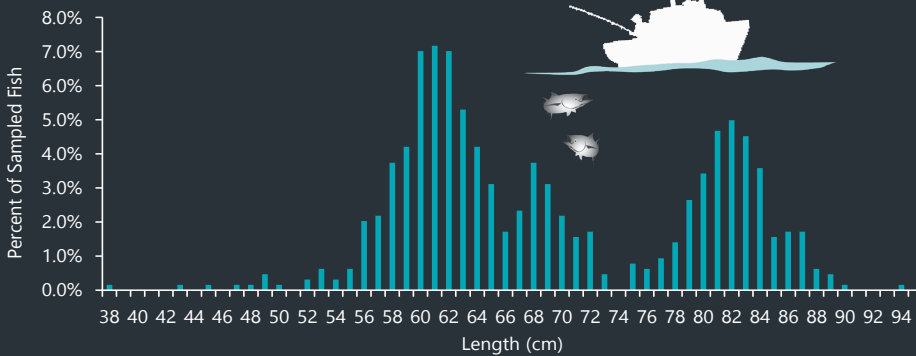


A comparison of the length distributions of the sampled catches in the three primary Oregon ports does not suggest any differences between ports.



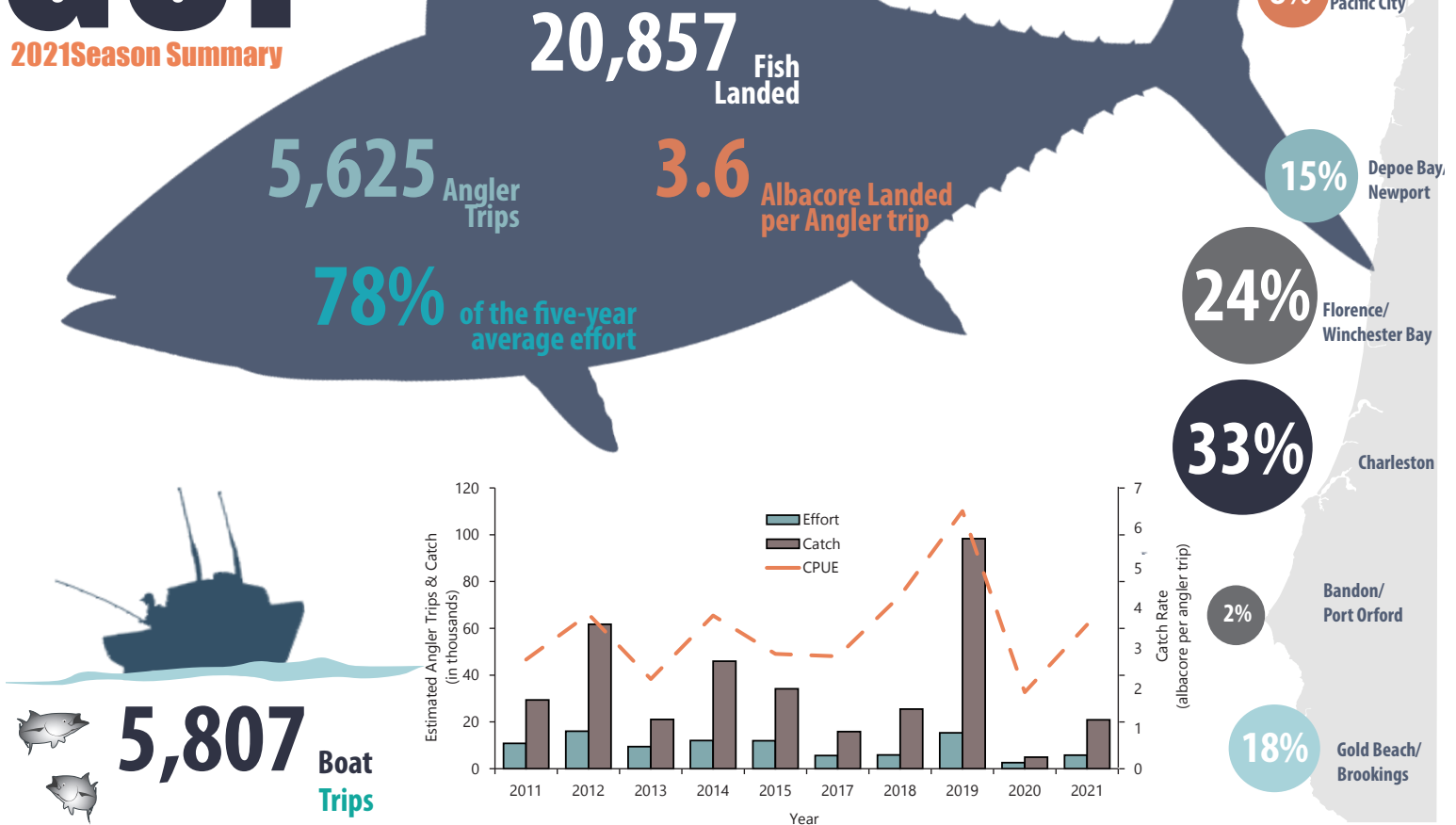
Recreational Albacore

Despite the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, ORBS samplers collected length frequency information on 643 recreationally caught albacore in 2021. The graph on the left shows the length frequency distribution of nonsorted, randomly sampled albacore during the 2021 recreational season.



How'd Recreational Fishing GO?

2021 Season Summary



Recreational Catch

Access to albacore for recreational vessels off Oregon can be highly variable, depending on weather conditions and distance offshore to the fish. The same weather patterns that dictated commercial fleet movement also limited recreational vessels in mid to late August and mid-September. Distance to the albacore grounds deterred recreational fishing effort in July and early August. However, as albacore moved closer to the coast in August, recreational trips and albacore catch peaked mid-month. The recreational season tapered after this, with no trips sampled in October. The overall recreational catch volume shows a rebound from a slow year in 2020 and is representative of recent years' catch trends.

Charter trips totaled 182 for the season, which is just 25% of the five-year average of 716 trips. The total estimated recreational fishing effort for albacore was 5,625 angler trips in 2021, roughly 78% of the five-year average angler trips. The number of albacore tuna landed from tuna-specific trips was 20,857 fish, or 59% of the five-year average. While trip and catch totals were down compared to previous years, the catch rate was slightly higher than the five-year average producing a CPUE (catch per unit effort) of 3.6 compared to the 3.5 average.

The highest volume port this year in terms of recreational albacore landed is Charleston with 33% of the volume. Although few trips were taken out of Florence, it boasts the highest catch rate with a CPUE of 5.5 albacore caught per angler trip. Winchester Bay is a close second with a CPUE of 4.4.

Albacore Fishery Monitoring Update

How Does MRP Monitor the Albacore Fishery?

ODFW's Marine Resources Program (MRP) has multiple fishery monitoring programs to collect critical recreational and commercial albacore fishery information to inform management recommendations. Sampling of Oregon's commercial albacore fishery is a cooperative effort between the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW), the NMFS Southwest Fisheries Science Center (SWFSC) and the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission (PSMFC). Recreational albacore fishery sampling is conducted by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's Ocean Recreational Boat Survey (ORBS). The ORBS survey adjusted its sampling protocol beginning in 2000 to better estimate effort and catch in the growing recreational albacore fishery off Oregon. Sport fishing for albacore off Oregon has grown in popularity since 2000, especially in the past decade. We would like to thank all our samplers and the industry for remaining flexible and maintaining safety when collecting samples this past year.

Commercial Monitoring



MRP port samplers conduct dockside sampling of commercial albacore fishery vessels in the major ports.

Logbook data which includes species caught, incidental catch, trip dates, fishing area, and landing port to estimate effort go directly to the National Marine Fisheries Service.



MRP dockside samplers collect length information from several hundred vessels over the course of the season in order to describe the year-classes of tuna that are being landed.

MRP staff review fish ticket data on catch counts, weights, grade, and value to calculate the ex-vessel revenue for the fishery.



Recreational Monitoring



ORBS port samplers randomly conduct dockside boat interviews and collect information on trip target species, total catch, number of anglers on the boat, general location, and the number of released fish.

ORBS port samplers estimate the total effort by counting the number of ocean sport boat trips by the type of boat (i.e. Charter or private vessels).



ORBS port samplers also collect lengths from a portion of the sampled catch to convert numbers of fish into weight.

For more information on the ORBS survey and the Oregon recreational albacore fishery please visit our website at:

<https://www.dfw.state.or.us/MRP/sportalbacore/index.asp>

Other Updates and Reminders

Want More Information?

Here's how you get it

Visit Our Website



For more information about Albacore please visit:

<https://www.dfw.state.or.us/fish/commercial/>

<https://www.dfw.state.or.us/MPR/sportalbacore/index.asp>



Marine Resources

We are always interested in hearing from you about your fishery and the issues that are important to you.

Please give us a call any time!

Lindsey Noordman
Albacore Sampling Coordinator
(541) 961-3147
Lindsey.L.Noordman@odfw.oregon.gov

Jessica Watson
Marine Resources Policy Project Leader
(541) 351-1196
Jessica.L.Watson@odfw.oregon.gov

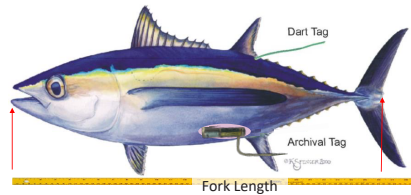
LOOK OUT FOR TAGGED FISH

REWARD: TAGGED ALBACORE

Tagged Albacore have a green dart tag in their back

Archival tags are data recording devices that are implanted in the belly with a stalk sticking out.

\$500: Whole fish w/Archival tag/ **\$300:** Archival tag only/ **\$20:** Dart tag only



TO CLAIM YOUR REWARD

Record

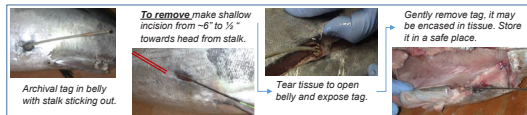
- 1) Date
- 2) Catch latitude and longitude
- 3) Fork Length and unit (cm or in)
- 4) Dart and/or Archival Number
- 5) Fisherman/ gear type/ contact info

Contact

Ericka Carlson +1 (971) 209-2030
erickac@afrrf.org OR
Owyn Snodgrass +1 (858) 546-7000
owyn.snodgrass@noaa.gov

- US Commercial: Fish and/or tags can be delivered to the nearest processor.
- US Recreational: Contact above to coordinate shipping and reward.
- Outside the US: Contact National Fishery Agency or people listed above.

NOTE: All shipping costs will be paid for by NOAA



Research funded by the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration and the American Fishermen's Research Foundation

The South West Fisheries Science Center (SWFSC) recently worked with the American Fishermen's Research Foundation to deploy 78 archival tags in albacore tuna off Oregon. A critical part of this effort is recovering the tags. As such there is cash reward offered for the return of information from tagged albacore. Tagged albacore have a green dart tag in their back. The reward is \$500 for the whole fish, \$300 for the tag only, and \$20 for the dart tag.

For more information contact:

Ericka Carlson (971)-209-2030
erickac@afrrf.org
OR
Owyn Snodgrass (858)546-7000
owyn.snodgrass@noaa.gov

ALBACORE LANDING LICENSE REMINDER

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's "Albacore Tuna Landing License" is a special license that allows a boat to commercially land albacore tuna only. This license acts in lieu of all other Oregon commercial fishing licenses for a boat landing only albacore, therefore a vessel is not required to have an Oregon commercial boat license or crew licenses. The "Albacore Tuna Landing License" does not eliminate other federal permit and logbook requirements. Any vessel fishing under an "Albacore Tuna Landing License" is a commercial fishing vessel and must also meet all commercial vessel requirements as prescribed by the US Coast Guard.

DO YOU NEED AN ALBACORE LANDING LICENSE?

