

the **Mail Buoy**

A publication of the Association for Professional Observers
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OBSERVERS VICTORIOUSLY UNIONIZE - CONGRATULATIONS!

All five elections are now complete. Observers voted by a sweeping majority, 197 YES vs. 26 NO, to be represented in contract negotiations by the Alaska Fishermen’s Union (AFU) located in Seattle, WA. Organizers at the Washington Labor Council and the AFU were surprised by the margin of victory--88% of the vote supporting the union. Only 50% plus 1 vote was needed in the election for union representation to occur. Elections are normally much closer. We hope the employers accept that a convincing majority of their workers chose to unionize and agree to bargain in good faith. We also hope that industry will see this signal from observers and take the opportunity to help fix the currently flawed system. The following summary lists by contractor the voting statistics.

CONTRACTOR	YES	NO	Unopened*
AOI	67	1	2
DCI	9	1	0
FOA	25	0	4
NWO	32	1	2
SWI	64	23	13
TOTAL	197	26	21

*Unopened ballots were challenged: 1) by the contractor because the observer was pending decertification or didn’t work during the qualification period; 2) by the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) because the name didn’t occur on the contractor provided excelsior list or because the ballot envelope was unsigned; or 3) by the AFU/APO because the observers were new and didn’t work during the qualification period but were submitted on the excelsior list.

The AFU was established in 1902 and originally represented Bristol Bay gillnetters. Over the years cannery workers, tender crews, beach crews, and culinary workers at shore side processing plants were added to the list of represented workers. Gillnetters ceased to be represented with the onset of limited entry around 1974.

The AFU currently represents approximately 1250 employees working in all facets of shore side processing plus approximately 160 tender vessel crew. Representation is primarily at salmon processing facilities but two represented processors operate year round processing all species. The addition of observers into its suite of workers represents a new, larger presence in the groundfish sector.

The AFU is affiliated with the United Industrial Workers (UIW), a division of the Seafarer’s International Union of North America (SIUNA), AFL-CIO. The AFU operates with a great deal of autonomy but has the benefit of any necessary support such as legal council, additional insurance plans and political influence from its affiliates. Mark Coles is the president and the only current employee at the local office. Harold Holton is the vice-president and has an office in Anchorage.

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OBSERVER ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETS SEPT. 8, 1997

The OAC met on Sept. 8 to review the progress of the Joint Partnership Agreement (JPA) between NMFS and Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission (PSMFC). At the June Council meeting, the Council asked NMFS to pursue a modified pay-as-you-go observer program structure with the ultimate goal of collecting quality observer data necessary for management and conservation of the resource. Vessels would continue to pay for observer costs directly but all fees would be collected by PSMFC who would subcontract for observer services. There are 8 objectives that this alternative should address: 1) Eliminate concerns about conflict of interest when fishing companies enter into private negotiations with observer companies; 2) Provide adequate compensation to observers; 3) Meet industry demands for observer services; 4) Retain quality observers; 5) Maintain a cost effective infrastructure for providing observer services to industry; 6) Improve the working relationship between NMFS and observers; 7) Provide assurance that observer coverage needs could be met in event the JPA is discontinued; and 8) Provide the ability to implement an alternative procurement program for observers services no later than January 1999.

Three JPA options were presented. The options ranged significantly in the level PSMFC would be involved. JPA Option 1 is similar to status quo. PSMFC would provide only the "arms length" relationship between vessels and observer contractors. Vessels would contract with PSMFC and PSMFC would assign them a (sub)contractor. Vessels would then coordinate directly with observer (sub)contractors to arrange for observer services. The observer (sub)contractor would then bill PSMFC for observer-related & travel costs.

JPA Option 2 would maintain the "arms length" benefits and PSMFC would also be responsible for port coordinators and travel arrangements. Vessels would contract with PSMFC and PSMFC would assign them a (sub)contractor. Vessels would contact observer contractors to arrange for the observers but the contractors would go to PSMFC for travel arrangements. Observer contractors would bill PSMFC for observer costs.

JPA Option 3 has the highest level of involvement by PSMFC. Vessels would contract with PSMFC. PSMFC would be responsible for all logistics, vessel assignments, travel, port coordinators. Contractors would be responsible for recruitment, hiring and payment of observers.

At this time the OAC chose only to review and comment on the various options and recommend that further development of the JPA structure continue through the

fall. Overall, JPA Options 1 and 3 seemed to be more favorable than Option 2, the PSMFC presented cost of any JPA option isn't significantly more than status quo if wages stay the same, and the ability for NMFS/PSMFC to determine an adequate wages and benefits is addressed. For more detailed information regarding the various options, contact Bill Karp at the Observer Program, Al Didier at PSMFC or the APO. Public comments are welcome.

September Council Meeting by Teresa Turk

Discussion of the proposed JPA agreement structure for observer procurement was on the Council agenda for the September meeting in Seattle. Once again, Inshore/Offshore #3 dominated the Council's time and attention (complete with hired picketers culminating in a fist fight between opposing sectors of industry outside the Doubletree Hotel). On the 4th day of Council deliberation, the Council decided to drop the observer items from the agenda. According to Bill Karp and Dave Hanson (PSMFC), the Council's action to delay discussion until the December meeting will not delay implementation of the JPA if the decision is made to go forward with this plan. However, many tough issues will be discussed and hopefully decided at the next Observer Advisory Committee meeting. See previous article for discussion of the options.

**PROPOSED RULE TO EXTEND
EXISTING OBSERVER PROGRAM**

(Teresa Turk)

There were no extraordinary changes proposed in the regulations to extend the current observer program through 12/31/98 published in the Federal Register. APO commented on the following:

- 1) General comments: The proposed rule lacks rules and structure to repair the damaged program. We suggest implementation of regulations limiting the number of contractors to the suite of contractors supplying observers right now. We suggest an annual recertification process that evaluates contractors on a variety of criteria with significant stress placed on employee input;
- 2) Conflict of interest: The APO supported the proposed conflict of interest standards where observers are banned from serving as an observer on

board a vessel or plant where they were previously employed. The 1997 language was stricter stating that observers couldn't work for 12 months after working in ANY North Pacific fishery;

- 3) Sexual harassment: The APO supported the inclusion of sexual harassment and bribery as unlawful interference with the observer;
- 4) 30% coverage: The APO did not support revising the 30% observer coverage requirement by quarter **and by gear type** unless pot gear is excluded from the proposal;
- 5) Contractor information: Specific language was added requiring contractors to supply NMFS with copies of vessel/contractor and observer/contractor contracts. We understand the reason for inclusion of this language is that certain contractors have not provided NMFS with all variations of their contracts. However, we are confused how a contractor certified by NMFS has the ability to withhold information from the certifying agency. If observers were to withhold information, observers would be decertified.
- 6) Non-codified elements:
 - a) Dichotomous keys: The regulation states "extensive" use of dichotomous keys in a course is required. The APO believes that "extensive" is ambiguous and subjective. It should be defined more specifically and practical work with dichotomous keys in lieu of course work should be acceptable;
 - b) Revision of observer briefing requirements to a 4-day briefing the first time an observer briefs in a calendar year and a 1-day briefing for all subsequent briefings (if the previous cruise was satisfactory). The proposed change increases the number of days observers are NOT paid for their work. We are opposed to increasing the required briefing days **IF** observers continue to not get paid for their time;
 - c) 18 month retraining: We disagree with the proposed 18 month retraining requirement versus the 2 year retraining requirement that currently exists.

AFU Begins Negotiations with 4 Contractors

The AFU with advise from the APO has drafted an initial contract between observer contractors and observers. We used a similar format to existing union contracts and incorporated observer suggestions. The contractors declined to form their own association so we're unfortunately negotiating 3 separate contracts. Two sets of contractors [(AOI + FOA) and (SWI + DCI)] are bargaining as units while NWO is acting alone (see article "Attn.: NWO Observers"). Although negotiations are underway with the other contractors, they are

proceeding slowly. Much of the tenuous pace has been due to scheduling difficulties and to the process of negotiating agreements between a Union and a company. Other stumbling blocks to this process have been questions regarding various state laws and differences of opinion regarding the proposed seniority system. It is the goal of the Union to not be in conflict with any guidelines already in place by NMFS, ADF&G or any other agency but rather to strengthen and tighten those provisions protecting observers.

WHAT OBSERVERS CAN DO NOW

- 1) Make comments to the AFU & APO regarding the proposed contract;
- 2) Call your contractor and ask how negotiations are progressing. Express your interest in working (if this is the case) but stress that the union contract is important to you. They cannot offer nor can you except employment for 1998 until negotiations are complete;
- 3) If you are contacted or you initiate contact with a new contractor, please stress that you will not work for less wages and benefits than what the union negotiated contract guarantees;
- 4) Write to Steve Pennoyer, ask him for an administrative rule limiting new contractor certification and/or asking that no new contractors be certified until negotiations are complete.

ATTN: NWO OBSERVERS by Mark Coles

The Alaska Fishermen's Union was informed recently that NWO will be represented in collective bargaining by attorney William Grimm. Mr. Grimm is a partner in a Seattle law firm Davis, Grimm & Payne. Mr. Grimm has represented Trident Seafoods in their labor negotiations with Unions (including the AFU). We have some concerns about that connection since NWO is currently supplying Trident with observers and Trident has been stridently anti-union. It is interesting NWO made contact with Mr. Grimm of Seattle when they are located in Sisters, Oregon. We don't know that the relationship is prohibited by regulation but it does have an appearance of a potential conflict of interest and the APO has suggested NMFS may want to look at the connection in that context. We are hoping NWO did not hire Mr. Grimm for his well deserved reputation in the labor community as a union breaker.

Davis, Grimm & Payne is an expensive law firm. There is no question using Mr. Grimm in the bargaining process is very expensive for NWO and we question, if they are sincere about reaching a contract, why they would choose

such representation? Mr. Grimm rate is probably three times per hour what we observers receive in a day! Its not hard to think of better ways for NWO to invest their money - rewarding their employees perhaps! We encourage all NWO observers and those considering working for them to call NWO and tell them you are concerned about the message their action is sending. Encourage them to come to the bargaining table with a goal of reaching a contract with the Union. Meanwhile we will keep an eye on this situation, follow any leads, keep asking questions and keep you posted on any further developments.

Observer/Contractor "Contracts"- Editorial

Mel Kahn

As an observer, before you go out to sea, do you ever stop to think what could happen when you sign your John or Joanna Hancock of to one of the existing contracts put out by the contractors? It really doesn't take the proverbial rocket scientist to figure out that the contractor's contracts are stacked heavily in favor of the contractor.

Take their pay schedule for example--you get paid next to nothing until the end of the contract at which time you get the majority of the money in the form of bonuses, debriefing pay, etc. Now what happens if something beyond your control goes wrong during the time period of the contract? True, there could be justifiable reasons on the part of contractors to withhold pay (i.e. decertification, the observer didn't accomplish anything, bad or faulty data, etc.) but what happens if you have an unscrupulous contractor who is ready, willing and able to take advantage of their "contracts" and the observer? **You, as an observer, could not only be out a lot of money, you could find yourself fighting the contractor in court (which as anyone knows, can drag on and on and on, ad nauseam).** In the meantime, you've collected very little in the way of payment for what *may* be the major part of the contract - that's pay for what we all know can be a very demanding, exhausting, and sometimes *dangerous* job!

Say, for example, you have an accident. Well, if its something like a broken arm in a way you're lucky! It's pretty obvious you can't work, the insurance isn't (or shouldn't be) questionable, and everything is pretty cut and dry.

Ah... but let's say the observer has an accident where the conditions aren't quite so "clear" such as an injury on the vessel but while not performing observer duties or off the vessel but still in the field. It doesn't necessarily have to be an accident, it could be an illness as well. If the observer gets hurt in one of those "gray" areas - look out! You're pretty much on your own - at least under the existing system - you better hope and pray, **nothing** goes wrong during your time under contract!

*[Editor's Note: My advice to all observers who are injured or cannot work due to illness while in the field: you **must** report the injury or illness to your employer and you have the right to medical attention at their expense. Once you seek medical attention always get a copy **in writing** of a work release form stating any limitations on your work ability. If you feel you've been negligently or wrongly diagnosed, contact your employer and the AFU. You should have the option to seek a second opinion. Some cases of questionable work release at the clinic in Dutch Harbor have been investigated.]*

OBSERVER OPINION-Anonymous

Dear Mail Buoy,

First, thanks for all that you do for observers. I've been observing for a couple of years and have, I think, about 16 boats behind me. I enjoy the work I do more than most of the jobs I've had in my 20 year working career. Being out at sea whether its in calm conditions or in 20' seas I always see it as an adventure. I've been north of the Pribilofs to west of the 180° and have been up and down the chain several times on both sides. I've been able to set foot on and explore several of the islands which has been just too cool for words. I've also gone out of every port from Kodiak to Ketchikan and have been totally awestruck by all of the beauty out there. I don't know how much longer I'll continue [observing], realistically there's no long term future in it. With the over-abundance of "politics" infecting my optimism, I have an eye open for other opportunities.

To my way of thinking, I've been providing the nation and ultimately the world with precise and very important data on one of this earth's last great fisheries. But it always seems as if our role is being downplayed by those who receive our information and decide what's best for us. Sometimes I wonder how many of the decision makers have pulled on some Xtratuffs and wiped some fish slime from their eyes within the last 2 years. How many can say they've stood on a rolling deck with a

skipper on one side and a crew on the other all treating you as the necessary evil whose presence is tolerated?

Just once I'd like to hear someone up there say thanks and recognize our work as being more important than keeping the grounds manicured and all the plants that adorn the hallways and offices watered and happy. Just once I'd like to hear about a positive change being proposed that these people didn't have to sleep on for two years before implementing.

I crossed by fingers and voted on this unionization ballot knowing that the outcome will be determined by the majority of observers who will have voted without all of the information available. The only 3 things that seem guaranteed are:

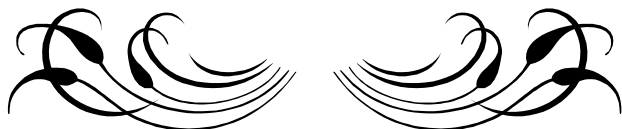
- 1) That nothing is guaranteed;
- 2) That we will pay initiation and monthly dues if passed (no one seems to know how much of my little piece of pie the Union will take);
- 3) That if it isn't passed we're guaranteed to keep on receiving these "burger-flippin" wages and the Feds will continue to pay garage sale prices for our information.

What a deal! Keep up the good work APO!

[Editor's Note: Author's name was not printed because I didn't get permission before going to press.]

APO SPEAKS TO INDUSTRY ABOUT UNION ISSUES by Kim Dietrich

The APO has received a barrage of questions from the fishing industry regarding the decision to pursue unionization. **I think** that industry was surprised at our success and now wonder how they fit into the process. Teresa Turk, Mark Coles and myself have met with several industry groups and/or their legal council to try to answer as many questions as possible so that there aren't wild, unrealistic rumors being perpetuated. During the Council meeting we were asked to send out a letter answering some of industry's questions. We faxed or sent our responses to the various industry groups. If you're an industry member and did not receive our literature or would just like to talk, please feel free to contact the APO or the AFU.



ENFORCEMENT CHANGES ON THE WAY

by Becky Rencko

Special Agent Todd Dubois from NMFS Enforcement in Kodiak has recently been assigned to work specifically with the Observer Program. He will relocate to Anchorage in the near future. The Observer Program has also been told that an agent from the NW region will be assigned observer issues. These changes may not sound like much, but they really are. Because of the extreme shortage of enforcement agents in the Alaska region agents often carry heavy case loads. Observer cases frequently require a significant time investment. Much of the time needed to handle observer cases results from the nature of the cases and the learning process the agent must go through to understand observer issues. With one individual as the contact person, and as someone who is familiar with the Program and observer issues, we hope it will help to deal with some of the current frustration that observers have expressed.

Observer Programs Workshop - Update by Howard McElderry

THE CONCEPT: Last July, Bill Karp and I sent out a letter to measure the level of interest for a workshop to promote communication and technical exchange among the different observer groups in North America. The letter sparked quite a bit of interest with responses from around 40 individuals or groups. From Canada, interest came from fisheries personnel in science and enforcement as well as the contracted supplier firms in all coastal provinces. Within the USA there were responses from the regions of Washington, Alaska, California and New England, respondents being from science, program operations and observers. Based upon this level of interest Bill and I thought it would be very worthwhile to proceed with putting together a workshop for 30-50 participants to share ideas and hopefully make progress on some of our common problems. This notice is to bring you up to date on where we are at with this idea.

THE DATE: March 10-12, 1998. One of the issues we recognized almost immediately was that trying to hold a meeting of this type in the fall of '97 was too ambitious. We felt that there was not enough time available and our 'real jobs' would suffer if we tried to put the meeting together during this short time frame. Consequently, we thought we should strive for a meeting date a bit further in the future. After looking at our own schedules and checking with as many people as possible we have settled

on March 10, 11, and 12, 1998 to convene this meeting. So, with a date fixed we can move toward some of the other planning and organization issues.

THE LOCATION: Seattle. Upon reviewing the responses to our 'Call for Interest' letter, it seems that Seattle would be the most convenient location for everyone. (The Canadian delegation votes were tied between Hawaii and Barbados). Holding the meeting at the Alaska Fisheries Science Center is very appropriate given that this group coordinates the largest observer program in North America (over 35,000 observer days at sea per annum). I'm sure many workshop participants will be interested in touring their facilities.

MEETING FORMAT: The meeting format itself is also beginning to take shape. We thought the workshop should occur over a three day period, with time divided between a general session (one day) and a number of concurrent workshops (two days). The general discussion is intended to provide participants with regional perspective of observer programs in North America as well as objectives of the different workshop topics. The workshops are intended to provide in depth discussion on a variety of program issues. The meeting will conclude with workshop presentations to the general session.

REGISTRATION: A meeting announcement and registration forms will be available in the next few weeks. There will be a nominal charge for workshop attendance in order to cover hospitality expenses. We appreciate any ideas or suggestions concerning this meeting. Please contact myself or one of the other steering committee members. Please forward this message to others that you feel might be interested in participating.

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THE SHORT-TAILED ALBATROSS by Liz Mitchell

The short-tailed albatross breeds on two islands in Japan, the majority of the population on one side of a volcano at Torishima in the Izu Islands south of Tokyo. Currently there are only an estimated 180 breeding pairs.

THREATS: The feather industry (down, quills) is to blame for its near extinction, as feather hunters killed over 5 million of this species in 17 years. Although officially protected when the numbers began to plummet, poaching continued. Volcanic eruptions in the late 1930's killed all inhabitants on the island and destroyed the last nesting habitat. The bird was thought to be extinct until about 8-10 birds were discovered in the early 1950's.

It is from this minute gene pool that the current estimated population of 800 originates. This alone poses a serious risk to the short-tailed albatross' survival, though the immediate risk is the danger of habitat destruction from a volcanic eruption or mudslides. In addition, marine pollution and bycatch on longline vessels are possible sources of mortality. This year there was a short-tailed albatross sighting near Hawaii, where longline fleets are estimated to have taken more than 3,000 albatrosses annually. Over the years a few short-tailed albatrosses have been returning annually to the northwestern Hawaiian Islands, though no breeding has yet occurred there.

REPORTING SIGHTINGS: Short-tailed albatross sightings in Alaska by fishermen, observers and researchers seem to be increasing. These reports contribute to the paucity of data on its pelagic range. The only way to know their age is from the color combinations of the leg bands which were placed on them as chicks. Including plumage descriptions along with the color combination of leg bands will contribute to the knowledge of plumage change rates, which is scarcely known for long-lived birds.

With all short-tailed albatross sightings, please record the following:

1) Time and date; 2) Vessel's position; 3) Plumage characteristics; 4) Leg band combinations (both right and left leg); 5) Behavior (distance from vessel, social behavior with same and other species, length of stay with vessel).

BASIC LIFE HISTORY: North Pacific albatrosses live to be 45 or more years of age. They spend their first several years entirely at sea and begin breeding by about 6-10 years of age. Years prior to breeding, young albatrosses will return annually to breeding islands to learn nest-building skills and courtship behavior. It is during this time that they choose their life-long mate. Albatrosses are tenaciously loyal to their nests, both mates returning annually (usually) to the same one. When they begin breeding, both sexes share in the raising of a single chick, which takes 5-6 months. The greatest chance of mortality for albatrosses is during their initial nesting years and during their first year of flight.

DARK BILLED STAGE: There is a stage during the short-tailed albatross' first two months of flight, and a remote possibility in Alaskan waters, where they are completely brown and may have a **gray bill and legs**. As chicks, their bill is dark gray to black. By the time they fledge in mid-May to early June they are full-size and their bills are already turning a lighter gray, showing traces of pink. It is thought that the bill turns the distinctive pink color within its first two months at sea. The young fledglings are thought to probably take around two weeks to arrive in Alaskan waters from Japan.

It is during this stage that the possibility of misidentifying a short-tailed albatross for a juvenile black-footed albatross (and vice versa) would be the greatest because both species will be all brown, have dark legs and gray bills. The bill of the black-footed albatross would be darker, though, and the black-footed face always has white at the base of its bill. **FOR THIS REASON IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO USE THE LIFE-SIZE BILL OUTLINES FOR ALL SEABIRD BYCATCH, BUT ESPECIALLY FOR ALBATROSSES.** It is the only sure-fire method of ID for dead specimens.

When the albatrosses are around the longline vessels, they often congregate quite close to the vessel, taking off and landing frequently. Sightings of birds in this stage of development will be critically examined because of the ease of misidentification. If you see a weird black-footed and it has a band, try to get a good look at the leg band and numbers and describe the bird as much as possible. Take photographs, if possible, of the bird in flight, showing the leg band.

LATER STAGES: After the short-tailed albatross' bill turns pink, identifying should be fairly obvious until the fully grown adult stage. Their brown plumage is gradually replaced with white patches until the adult form, which has a mostly white body; white and dark brown wings; a white head with an amber tinge; and, of course, the gargantuan pink bill we've all been told to look for. The easiest way to distinguish the adult short-tailed albatross from the Laysan albatross (which stays the same color always) is by the **white back** of the adult short-tailed albatross. Laysan albatrosses also have a pink bill and white body and head but their **wings and back are solid brown from wing tip to wing tip**.

There are hybrid black-footed X Laysan albatrosses also, as well as aberrant color morphs. Some old black-footed albatrosses have lots of white on their faces and these sometimes have a lighter colored bill.

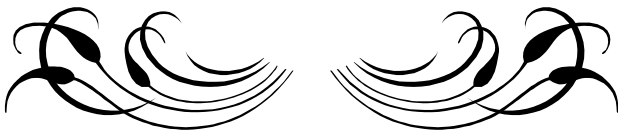
Current Banding Information on the Short-tailed Albatross: The following information was compiled by Dr. Hiroshi Hasegawa, Toho University, Japan, who has studied and banded the short-tailed albatross since the mid-1970's. Not all short-tailed albatrosses are banded, so reports of birds without bands are also valuable.

Year	Left	Right
1962	none	metal
1963	none	metal
1964	none	metal
1965	metal	none
1966-72	no banding information	
1973	white	white
1974	none	metal
1975-76	no banding information	
1977	none	metal
1978	no banding information	
1979	white	metal
1980	red	metal
1981	blue	metal
Year	Left	Right
1982	yellow	metal
1983	orange	metal
1984	green	metal
1985	black	metal
1986	metal	white
1987	metal	red
1988	metal	blue
1989	metal	yellow
1990	metal	orange
1991	metal	green
1992	metal	black
1993	black	metal
1993	yellow	metal
1994	orange	metal

1994	red	metal
1994	green	metal
1994	blue	metal
1995	red*	metal
1995	blue*	metal
1996	yellow	metal
1997	orange	metal
1997	blue*	metal

COLOR OF NUMERICAL FIGURES ON BANDS:
COLOR OF BAND

BLACK	WHITE, YELLOW
WHITE	RED, BLUE, ORANGE, GREEN, BLACK
YELLOW	RED*, BLUE*



JOB OPPORTUNITIES

VOLUNTEER SEABIRD RESEARCH

ASSISTANTS (5-6) needed for spring/summer 1998 on Southeast Farallon Island. RA duties include censusing and monitoring seabird and marine mammal populations, conducting demographic investigations on cormorants, gulls, and alcids, and conducting feeding ecology studies on alcids. RAs also contribute to the upkeep and maintenance of the research station. RAs will work full-time, 7 days a week, with a variable schedule that includes long days and night work. Applicants should enjoy working independently with a high level of responsibility in field work and data entry as well as working frequently with a partner or team. Preference will be given to applicants with a degree in biology or related field and prior ecological research experience. Enthusiasm for field work in windy, cold conditions essential. The ability to coexist on a small, isolated island with gulls and humans important. Positions available 15 March through 23 August with a minimum 8 week commitment. We provide great food and island housing. Transportation to boat in San Francisco not provided. Please send a cover letter explaining interests and dates of availability, resume, and names and phone numbers of 3 references to Kelly Hastings/Michelle Hester, Farallon Biologists, Point Reyes Bird Observatory, 4990 Shoreline Hwy., Stinson Beach, CA 94970. Applications accepted until December 31st; please apply early as positions fill quickly.

FISHERY BIOLOGIST, NMFS AFSC, Vacancy # W/NMF/AFSC/97455.LN. GS-5. Two positions. Duties include debriefing observers, completing performance evaluations of observers, editing and entering observer collected data. Closes 11/4/97. For more info. Call 206-526-6067 or via internet at: <http://www.rdc.noaa.gov>.

Marine Mammal Research Internships

The field of animal studies has reached a turning point. We no longer have the luxury of studying animals just to learn more about them. Now we must learn more about them to help protect them. Their survival and the health of our environment depends on our ability to understand the interdependence between humans and the natural world. The Ocean Mammal Institute is dedicated to doing ecologically-sensitive research on marine mammals and their interactions with humans.

As a research intern with OMI you will:

- Study the biology and behavior of whales and dolphins while you observe and record their spectacular behaviors from a shore station and from boats;
- Learn and apply the principles of field research designs as you participate in our ongoing field study on the impact of boats on the behavior of the humpback whale;
- Gain a personal understanding of the politics of protecting endangered species;
- Work with dedicated and knowledgeable scientists in a team effort to gather data to be used by government agencies around the world as they develop whale and dolphin protection plans;
- Learn about current research on whales and dolphins around the world and related conservation issues;
- Be introduced to the field of Ecopsychology which studies the relationship between humans and the natural world.

FIELD RESEARCH ON THE HAWAIIAN HUMPBACK WHALE - January 5-26, 1998 and FIELD RESEARCH ON THE HAWAIIAN SPINNER DOLPHIN - JUNE 1998

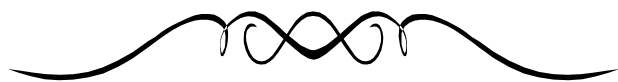
Cost: \$1200 for 3 weeks, \$799 per week includes tuition and accommodations* (*Accommodations are in a house with communal cooking.)

ECOEXPEDITIONS

If you prefer to join us on an ecoexpedition instead of a research project, OMI scientists and naturalists lead ecologically-sensitive trips worldwide where you can be in the company of whales and dolphins in restorative natural settings. In 1998 we have a trip to Baja, Mexico to see blue whales and grey

whales and a trip to the Azores to see blue whales and sperm whales. Write or call for more information:

OCEAN MAMMAL INSTITUTE
P.O. BOX 14422
READING, PA 19612
Phone & Fax: (610) 670-7386
800-226-8216
email: marshag@joe.alb.edu



MISC. NOTES & TIDBITS

Now available from the Council office "A Guide to Stock Assessment of Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Groundfish" Prepared by D. Witherell and J. Ianelli, September 1997.

Cool websites:

<http://www.uaf.edu/seagrant/Conferences/symosia.html>

<http://psmfc.org>

NEW MEMBERSHIP: if you want to become a member of the APO, please write, email or call Kim Dietrich. An annual donation of \$10 is required. Donations are used to publish and distribute the *Mail Buoy* and to pay for costs of testifying at Council meetings out of state. Also, if you aren't an observer but would like to receive your own copy of the *Mail Buoy*, there is an annual charge of \$15.

CURRENT MEMBERS: If you haven't sent your donation for this year, **THIS will be the last issue** of the *Mail Buoy* sent to you. The APO has been operating in the red for most of the year so your contributions will be greatly appreciated.

APO T-SHIRTS are still available. Contact Kim. There are L & XL in purple & teal. The price is \$15.

LOOKING FOR SOMETHING TO DO WHILE IN SEATTLE?

FISH EXPO SEATTLE There will be new product exhibits, lectures, and lots of networking opportunities. November 20-22, 1997. To register call 1-800-454-3005 or check the website @ www.fishexposeattle.com.

There are two fisheries related organizations which are always looking for volunteers.

The Women's Fisheries Network (WFN)

Northwest Chapter sponsors monthly dinner meetings on various fisheries related topics. The next meeting will be in Dec. due to EXPO. Attendance is not limited to women. Meetings are the 3rd Tues. of each month. Contact the WFN office @ 789-1987 for more information regarding the next program topic.

The Youth Maritime Training Association

(YMTA) is a non-profit organization dedicated to serving the youth of WA state. They seek to open new pathways to maritime employment and build awareness of the maritime industry's contribution to Pacific Northwest communities. For more information, contact Norm Manly @ 206-281-3821.

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS/email

Teresa Turk 206-860-5828/
turk@fish.washington.edu
Kim Dietrich 206-547-4228/kdiet@aa.net

Mark Coles, AFU 206-441-3425

NMFS staff (email format *first.last@noaa.gov*):

Bill Karp 206-526-4194
Shannon Fitzgerald 206-526-4553
Martin Loefflad 206-526-4194
Heather Weikart 206-526-4213

OTC 907-257-2770/

Council 907-271-2809

Al Didier, PSMFC 503-650-5400/

Al_Didier@psmfc.org

Dave Hanson, PSMFC 503-650-5400

dave_hanson@psmfc.org

NMFS BRIEFING/TRAINING SCHEDULE

(subject to change)

<u>Date</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Location</u>
11/4	2-day	Anchorage
11/11	2-day	Anchorage
11/18	4-day	Anchorage
11/25	2-day	Seattle
12/1	3-week	Anchorage
12/2	4-day	Anchorage
12/9	4-day	Anchorage
12/16	4-day	Seattle
12/21	4-day	Anchorage
12/22	3-week	Seattle
12/28	3-week	Anchorage

1/6	4-day	Seattle
1/12	4-day	Anchorage
1/19	4-day	Anchorage
1/20	4-day	Seattle
1/26	4-day	Anchorage
1/26	3-week	Seattle??

for all of you who contributed articles and have been commenting on the union contract. Your efforts are greatly appreciated. (KD)

MEETINGS & OPENINGS

- 11/14 Vessel Bycatch Accountability (VBA) Committee, Nordby Conference Center, Suite A, Fishermen’s Terminal, 1711 W Nickerson, 8:00 am

- 11/17-21 BSAI & GOA Groundfish Plan Teams, AFSC, Bldg.4, Rm 2079. They will be discussing the 1998 stock assessment & fishery evaluations (SAFE’s).

- 11/19 **School of Marine Affairs/Fisheries Industry Seminar Series.** Topic is Observer Unionization. Panelists will include industry, observer & union representatives. Starts @ 7:30pm in the Montlake Auditorium, Northwest Fisheries Science Center, Hamlin Road Entrance.

- 11/24 Observer Advisory Committee meeting, Observer Training Rm, Bldg. 4, AFSC, 8:30 a.m.

- 12/8-12 Council meeting in Anchorage

INTERESTED IN PUBLISHING THE MAIL BUOY IN DECEMBER??? Talk to Kim.

IN THE NEXT ISSUE updates on ATLAS, Enhanced Data Collection Project, Donut Hole fisheries, How observer reports benefit observers and Pacific Marine Conservation Council.

The APO continues to be interested in your ideas - if you have an idea for an article or story, would like to respond to a previous article, or think the APO has overlooked some issues, drop us a letter or call any time. Contributions from all sectors are welcome. Thanks again