



Alaska Fisheries Development Foundation, Inc.

BULLETIN

JANUARY 1982

POLLOCK CONFERENCE: A STEP FORWARD

"The Alaska fishing industry has got to develop other fisheries to keep their vessels alive," says Ron Jensen of Castle & Cooke.

To that end, over 120 members of the fishing industry, including representatives from foreign countries, gathered for a two-day Pollock Conference at the Sheraton Hotel in Anchorage in November.

The conference was led primarily by Dr. Lee Alverson and Dr. James Crutchfield. Other featured speakers included Mr. Kunio Yonezawa of the Japanese Fisheries Association, and Mr. K.W. Lee of the Korean Deep Sea Fisheries Association, who spoke both wit and wisdom over a luncheon of Alaska walleye pollock, which was procured from the Arctic Trawler.

At the outset of the conference, Dr. Alverson presented for the first time a report entitled, "Pacific Pollock: Resources, Fisheries, Products and Markets", which analyzes the feasibility of developing Pacific pollock as a U.S. fishery. Assimilating personal income growth, world harvest, and marketing alternatives, the report concludes that through joint venture agreements and shrewd market predictions, American pollock fisheries may face a bright future.

Perhaps the most exciting aspect of the conference was the high level of participation in discussions and debates. Positions and opinions of the domestic industry seemed to evolve right there over the scratch pads and water glasses, as ideas were exchanged and understanding gained.

Dr. Alverson and especially Dr. Crutchfield laid out quite bleak prospects, fortified with lots of facts, for the entry of the domestic industry into pollock fisheries. But on the second day, during panel discussions involving industry people, economic and technical aspects and options were discussed and optimism ran high. It was an opportunity to test new ideas against the experience of experts; it was a time of thinking, speaking out, and generating new ideas.

**POLLOCK
CONFERENCE:
A STEP
FORWARD
(continued)**

The result was an educational and productive period of viewing various new approaches to becoming involved in the pollock industry. Although there may be little room for competition by U.S. firms, especially processors, because of the way pollock is currently caught, processed and marketed, there may be profit in creative alternatives. With discussions for and against joint ventures in the forefront, the thrust was on finding a way for the successful joint ventures to stimulate even greater U.S. involvement in the pollock fishery.

As Barry Fisher said, "If this conference accomplishes nothing else, it lets the Japanese know that we're not going to let them control our resource."

(Proceedings and tapes from the Pollock Conference are available through the AFDF office.)

**ANUGA WORLD
FOOD FAIR:
A SMASHING
SUCCESS**

Perhaps the most exciting event for the seafood industry this year was the 1981 ANUGA World Food Fair last October in Cologne, West Germany.

The U.S. Seafood Pavilion was a popular spot indeed, with the Alaska/Pacific Northwest booths outshining all the rest in the arena of visitor attraction and media coverage. The star of the show was a freezer case holding a 325-pound halibut, a 60-pound troll-caught king, and a whole king crab.

According to John Doyle, contents of our freezer were donated to the Lord Mayor of Cologne to be given to a home for the aged -- an event that attracted widespread news coverage.

In a telegram to "High Level Government Bureaucrats", William Folsom called our display, "the most successful regional exhibition...which provided participants and visitors with a carefully organized and highly effective program of briefings, product demonstrations (using a French Chef), receptions, press conferences, publications, and product display. Alaska's 250-pound halibut was a centerpiece attracting crowds of admiring visitors."

Many new contacts were made and much was learned. One of the bright stars on our horizon resulting from the fair is a visit to Alaska and the Pacific Northwest by Jochen Haas, a top West German seafood chef and photographer. The visit is tentatively set for May 1982, and may include editors of several other European magazines with a combined professional readership of nearly 3 million people in the food business.

1983 PROGRAM
TAKES SHAPE

The Foundation is currently knee-deep in planning its 1983 program of projects. Here's where your input is immeasurably valued.

AFDF issued a questionnaire to 400 people in the Alaska fisheries industry about the kinds of projects they felt would have the most significant impact on the development of fisheries in Alaska. The areas addressed were harvesting, processing, domestic marketing and export marketing.

In addition, priorities and comments were invited from industry members who were individually contacted by AFDF, and these results as well as the feedback from the survey, are available at AFDF.

A request for preliminary proposals was also sent out to the same 400 people. At press time, thirty proposals had been received for fisheries development projects to be undertaken in 1982-83. Though the Foundation deadline for preliminary Saltonstall-Kennedy proposals has passed, we maintain a continual search for progressive ideas and projects that can be funded through other sources. Also, we are always interested in industry comments and suggestions on what the Foundation's priorities should be in the coming years.

After reviewing and selecting among the preliminary proposals it has received, the Foundation will prepare full S-K proposals and assemble them into a proposal package. That package will be submitted to the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) in response to its request for S-K proposals, expected to be issued soon. The Foundation's goal is to secure funding for a group of projects that form a cohesive network and address significant practical business concerns. The proposal package is designed to be consistent with an industry long range plan for orderly growth and expansion of Alaska's commercial fisheries.

PROJECT
UPDATES

MODEL
WHITE FISH
PROCESSING
PROJECT

AFDF Staff spent much of December with Trident Seafoods Corporation on refining plans for the Model White Fish Processing Project, doing diligent background work prior to signing a contract with Trident in early January.

AFDF is proud to be working with such a strong, innovative company. Trident has an excellent reputation--not only for its high-quality product, but also its "ram-charger" president, Chuck Bundrant.

Construction is now underway on a building to house the new facility at Akutan. Trident's first project, producing split, salted Pacific cod, begins in March of 1982. Baader has been providing technical assistance in the layout of equipment in the plant.

With this modern large-scale facility, it looks like the bottomfish industry in Alaska is on the threshold of a new era. All of the processing industry will be eagerly watching this project as it proceeds.

THE SECOND
STEP:
ALEUTIAN
MISTRESS
UPDATE

The ALEUTIAN MISTRESS is beginning Phase II of her demonstration program, which will involve 45 fishing days in the Bering Sea and the Gulf of Alaska this winter.

The ship is now equipped with a Baader 419 header and a Baader 99 filleting machine. The Mustad autoline system on board has been modified to speed up the overhauling process between retrieving and setting the gear. Instead of a "last in-first out" setup, the gear now moves on a rotating system, requiring less time.

A Baader technician and a Mustad representative are right on board, and the word from them after a few days of test fishing, is that all systems are functioning properly.

The emphasis in this second phase of the ALEUTIAN MISTRESS project is on increasing on-board efficiency. Efforts are focused on combining the systems so the crew can fish and process concurrently, to make the entire system of components operate as efficiently as possible.

As the ALEUTIAN MISTRESS embarks on Phase II of the project, two reports on Phase I go public. The first is the Longline Demonstration Project Interim Report, prepared by Frank Orth & Associates. This is the summary of information gathered over a period of 48 observation days in early 1981. Over this period, some significant lessons were learned by the crew and the observer. These included:

- Trade-off time between fishing and processing hampered productivity of the vessel.
- The original arrangement of equipment on deck, and the difficulty of matching processing machinery to the broad size range of the fish, resulted in less-than-viable overall efficiency levels.
- Some problems arose with freezing methods; several alternatives were experimented with.
- Equipment maintenance on an automated longliner-processor is a crucial, full-time job.

The report summarizes, however, on a positive note: that paying strict attention to production efficiency and product quality, the concept of a combination crabber/longliner can be a feasible idea and a successful operation.

The second report entitled "Conversion of a Crabber to an Auto-Longlining Catcher/Processor" provides a detailed expose of the conversion process, and comes with an Executive Summary. The report analyzes decisions made on equipment selection, processing systems, deck conversion, and vessel selection.

Both reports are available from the AFDF office.

PROJECT
UPDATES
(continued)

SABLEFISH
MARKETING
PROJECT

One of next year's projects -- the Sablefish Marketing Project -- has begun with the participation of the Alaska Longline Fishermen's Association (ALFA) at the ANUGA World Food Fair. ALFA worked with Halibut Producers Cooperative (HPC) to study and promote sablefish sales in Europe. As a result, several inquiries and requests for sablefish product have come from abroad.

The Sablefish Marketing Project is being conducted with the cooperation of the Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute, and will focus on domestic markets. Project manager Greg Baker of ALFA has been analyzing the relative potential of several apparent market opportunities, in preparation for a focused effort targeted on one market sector.

AFDF
PUBLICATIONS
AVAILABLE

-FRIEDRICH
BUSSE

"This project was a unique experiment in international cooperation in the fishing industry."

So begins the report on the FRIEDRICH BUSSE project, entitled "Operations of a European Factory Trawler in the Alaska Bering Sea Groundfish Fishery". The report details not only the production statistics of the vessel for two months in 1980, but also the more subjective aspects of fishing techniques, crew organization, and personnel management.

It is hoped that through evaluating this information, "U.S. fishermen can gain a realistic picture of how a sophisticated European catcher-processor vessel and her crew learned to exploit an initially unfamiliar resource, the Bering Sea pollock".

Though the FRIEDRICH BUSSE herself "fared well" in the experimental venture, it is suggested that "an American factory trawler similar to the FRIEDRICH BUSSE would have little chance of economic survival, mainly due to the high cost of building a new American vessel equivalent to the FRIEDRICH BUSSE". (Consultants estimate that cost at approximately \$25 million.)

PUBLICATIONS
(continued)

-SALT FISH
WORKSHOP

Proceedings from the Salt Fish Workshop are now published. This 111-page report provides a detailed review of the two-day workshop, including results of a critique sheet filled out by participants, as well as copies of presentations and fact sheets given by industry experts.

Both the workshop and the published proceedings were designed to speak to the "increasing interest in the commercial applications of salted fish from both the domestic processors and harvesters, and from several Norwegian firms seeking to assist in the development of Alaska's salt cod industry".

As quoted from the proceedings: "We feel this document, as well as the workbook from the Workshop will answer many of the questions that have been asked, while giving birth to hundreds more..."

The workbook and the Proceedings may be purchased from the Foundation at \$10 and \$5 respectively to cover printing and postage costs.

PUBLICATIONS
(continued)

-ROCKFISH/
JIGGING
REPORT

The report entitled "Exploratory Fishing for Rockfish in South-central Alaska using Jigging Machines" is published and available now at the AFDF office.

This report analyzes an exploratory fishing project conducted from August through October, 1980, outside of Seward, Alaska. The project focused on the potential for a new inshore commercial fishery utilizing jigging machines to harvest rockfish on a small vessel.

The report outlines the purposes, plans and equipment used in the project. Also discussed are techniques of assessing the volume and accessibility of the rockfish resource, gear evaluation, and fish handling methods. The importance of successful marketing is also emphasized.

Summarizing the report is a discussion of the economic feasibility of this particular fishery for small vessels in Alaska's fleet. The report concludes: "The results of this project indicate that there are two major keys to economic viability for rockfish jigging operations in the coastal waters of Southcentral Alaska. The fisherman must receive a premium price for a high quality line-caught product, and time on the grounds must be maximized."

AFDF
BIDS
FAREWELL
TO...

The Board regrettably accepted the resignation of Ken Allread of Western Alaska Fisheries in Kodiak. Many thanks are due to Ken for his active participation in helping to develop and refine Foundation projects. He is well respected both for his sensible, practical approach to fisheries development, and for his own pioneering efforts in the field.

Executive Director Sara S. Hemphill submitted her formal resignation, to be effective in March, 1982. Hemphill has served as Executive Director since the Foundation's conception in March, 1978. In that time the Foundation has developed and monitored over ten major projects, coordinated and funded numerous workshops, seminars, and this year the successful participation by Alaska and the Pacific Northwest fishing industry in the World Food Fair in Cologne, West Germany. AFDF has received 4.5 million dollars in state and federal funding over the past three years.

Hemphill has no specific plans at this writing other than spending time with her family before looking for new employment. Asked why she is leaving, Hemphill states, "It's time to pass the torch; this job requires new ideas and a fresh approach."

ANNUAL
MEETING
NOTES

The Foundation held its Annual Meeting on December 1, 1981 at the Captain Cook Hotel in Anchorage. As AFDF President, Bob Andersen noted in his introductory remarks, the occasion was special, being the first Annual Meeting at which the membership could share pride in a healthy program of completed, continuing, and newly acquired fisheries development projects. The Foundation now counts ten publications to its credit and several more reports in progress, as well as a group of fourteen ongoing projects funded with a total of about 2 million dollars.

The newly elected Board of Directors is:

G.R. "Bob" Andersen, Chugach Alaska Fisheries
Al Burch, Alaska Dragners Association
Greg Cushing, Alaska Longline Fishermen's Association
Hank Eaton, Koniag, Inc.
John Enge, Icicle Seafoods
Greg Favretto, FAVCO, Inc.
Dan Flynn, North Pacific Fisheries Association
Jesse Foster, Bering Sea Fishermen's Association
Dick Pace, Universal Seafoods Ltd.
Bill Woods, Pan-Alaska Fisheries

**ANNUAL
MEETING
NOTES
(continued)**

The keynote speaker for the Annual Meeting was Sig Jaeger of North Pacific Fisheries Development, Inc., a veteran longline fisherman who has authored numerous publications and served in many positions of responsibility related to the commercial fishing industry. Sig presented an informative and interesting talk on the St. Paul Small Boat Project, which involves vessel design and training of fishermen in this remote small community in the Bering Sea. Despite the unique setting for this project, Sig's talk made it clear that there are some common critical elements in effective fisheries development projects. Careful planning and an open-minded attitude, he says, are keys to success.

**NEW
MEMBERS**

We are proud to add the North Pacific Fishing Vessel Owners Association for the Harvesters sector, Region IV, and Trident Seafoods for the Processing sector, to our voting membership list. We feel that both organizations will greatly enhance our capacity to meet the needs and concerns of the developing Alaska seafood industry.

**Alaska Fisheries
Development Foundation, Inc.**

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