

Albatross Bycatch Avoidance in Alaska Longline Fisheries

Please join us for an albatross bycatch information meeting

Meetings will be held at the following locations:

20 April 2015	11am – 1pm	Fishermen's Hall	403 Marine Way, Kodiak, AK
22 April 2015	2pm – 4pm	Alaska Islands and Oceans Visitor Center	95 Sterling Hwy., Homer, AK
24 April 2015	11am – 1pm	Seward Library	239 6th Ave., Seward, AK

Refreshments provided • Free streamer lines to participants

Share your experiences with seabird bycatch avoidance and learn about:

- Why the conservation of albatrosses and other seabirds in Alaskan fisheries is important
- What fleets are catching albatrosses from recent fisheries observer data
- How to set up your streamer lines for optimal performance
- Identifying albatross species
- What to do if you hook an albatross

For the most up-to-date information on non-regulatory aspects of seabird bycatch, see seabirdbycatch.washington.edu or contact Ed Melvin, Washington Sea Grant, 206.543.9968 or edmelvin@uw.edu.



Seabird Bycatch Outreach to Alaska Longline Fisheries

Fishermen Workshops in April 2015 in Alaska Ports---Kodiak, Homer, Seward

Research in the late 1990s by the Washington Sea Grant at the University of Washington (UW) set the standard for industry collaborative research and problem solving with respect to seabird bycatch mitigation. The importance of industry investment in bycatch solutions was illustrated by some vessels having chronically high bycatch rates while other vessel captains were striving to completely eliminate seabird bycatch. Initial studies by Ed Melvin (UW) and others demonstrated the use of paired streamer lines in the Alaskan groundfish fishery reduced seabird bycatch by over 90% in some circumstances. Prior to the implementation of seabird bycatch deterrents in Alaskan longline fisheries, seabird bycatch ranged from 10,000-28,000 birds per year. After fleet-wide use of deterrents in 2002, bycatch was reduced to 5,000 birds per year (20% of maximum levels). Over the next decade, however, seabird bycatch (including albatrosses) in Alaskan longline fisheries showed some increase, but also considerable variability, indicating a need for a review of existing data to identify potential causes and re-engagement with the fleet to promote seabird safe fishing practices. Furthermore, recent changes to the National Marine Fisheries Service's North Pacific Groundfish (and Halibut) Observer Program provided data from the previously unobserved halibut fishery and highlighted the need for seabird bycatch reduction outreach to this fleet. In a project with funding from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, Oregon State University (OSU) in partnership with UW, the National Marine Fisheries Service, and the International Pacific Halibut Commission will analyze the complete 20 year time series of North Pacific Groundfish (and Halibut) Observer Program data to identify key sectors needed for outreach and conduct targeted port visits to engage the fleet and provide seabird bycatch reduction training sessions. The goals of this effort will be to reduce and maintain albatross (and all seabird) bycatch to or below the lowest levels observed.

Workshop/meetings will occur in the Alaska ports of Kodiak, Homer, and Seward in April (see flyer) <http://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/protectedresources/seabirds/workshop-akalbatross2015.pdf>

For additional information contact Ed Melvin, Washington Sea Grant, 206-543-9968 or edmelvin@uw.edu