



P.U.H.A. NEWSLETTER

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President's Report—mike featherstone



"Fall down seven times. Stand up eight" Japanese proverb

Our industry has faced major challenges this season just to keep standing and it is a credit to the fishermen, packers and processors that we have been able to keep going. It would be naïve to say that things are going to turn around anytime soon. The global pressures from the Russian IUU fishery, the strength of the Canadian dollar and the increased costs due to escalating oil prices have all combined to put a serious dent in our bottom line. On the biological side the continued expansion of sea otters is a growing threat to the sustainability of our industry.

PUHA has responded to the Russian IUU problem by continuing pressure to keep the issue on the government's agenda. I was in Ottawa 2 weeks ago and brought the issue front and center at the Agri-Food Canada Value Chain Roundtable discussions on benchmarking the sea urchin industry against global competitors. PUHA received 100% funding for the benchmarking report which our consultant Geoff Krause should submit later this month. We hope to use the recommendations in the report to get more action from the government on this issue.

Along the same line, the benchmarking report will point out the high costs born by industry to support the programs for research, monitoring and validation. No other sea urchin industry in the world bears the same responsibilities. Unfortunately given the current market conditions PUHA and government need to look for other solutions as PUHA will not be able to meet these commitments next year. PUHA is developing options to present at the Spring AGM and then to DFO regarding the use of the resource to offset industry fees. The preliminary idea was presented last week at the Red Urchin Sectoral meeting in Nanaimo.

While on the topic of the Sectoral, I am disappointed to announce that Juanita Rogers has accepted the job as the lead geoduck manager. Juanita has been with us over 8 years and she has always been a great asset to our industry. Juanita epitomizes what co-management is all about. I know I speak for everyone when I wish Juanita congratulations and all the best in her future endeavors! Other issues from the sectoral included a heated discussion on the expansion of the sea otters particularly as the otters have now reached Tofino.



Ken Ridgway reported that the otters have devastated our research study area and are continuing to expand southward. Two otters have been discovered dead one from lead poisoning (shot gun) and the other from starvation. It seems the otter population on W. Vancouver Island has reached carrying capacity and they are running out of food. The Ahousat native representatives have said they will take matters into their own hands and urged PUHA to support their plans. PUHA urged the SARA representative to write a letter outlining all the concerns expressed at the meeting and encourage the COSEWIC to develop a plan to remove these pests from the endangered list so they can be properly managed.

The season is winding down and thankfully the past 2 months have gone smoothly. Although we still have close to 2.5 million lbs in the water and 9 licences not validated the situation could have been much worse. If the fleet can keep finding some quality and we maintain steady production we should be in a better situation by the end of the month.

The quota planning meeting will be held in late April or early May—watch for the announcement! This is the most important meeting of the year and PUHA encourages all divers to attend!

Biologist Report—dan leus

PUHA research activities for the 2005/2006 season were recently presented to the red sea urchin sectoral committee at a public meeting in Nanaimo on April 6. Accomplishments, in conjunction with Fisheries & Oceans Canada, included:

- Publication of 9 technical reports on stock assessment surveys
- Successful experimental harvest in the QCI (draft report in review)
- Development of a new shoreline length model for RSU stocks in B.C.
- Presentation and acceptance of Shoreline Length model to PSARC (Pacific Scientific Advice Review Committee)
- Partial implementation of Shoreline Length model
- Research plans for 2006/2007

Progress was well received by the committee with encouragement for the upcoming year.

The major issue discussed by the committee, in terms of stock assessment, seems to be the expansion of sea otters into once harvestable RSU habitat. Lengthy discussions with S.A.R.A. (Species at Risk Act) representatives produced no viable solutions to the issue.

The 2006 field season schedule has been determined with an eagerly awaited survey for the QCI experimental site scheduled from May 29 to June 9. With recent reports of otter expansion into the Tofino experimental site, a survey has been scheduled for June 19 to 23rd in hopes of measuring the effects of otter re-introduction. The third field project for the summer focuses on stock assessment in portions of the South Coast with dates still to be set.

This year's quota will continue to be based on the same model used for the previous several years, with the expectation to implement the new Shoreline Length model for the 2007/2008 fishing season. The new model is dependant upon input from several sources including industry.

If you are interested in participating in any of the research activities, please contact PUHA research biologist Dan Leus at LeusD@pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca.

Dan Leus
250 756-7147

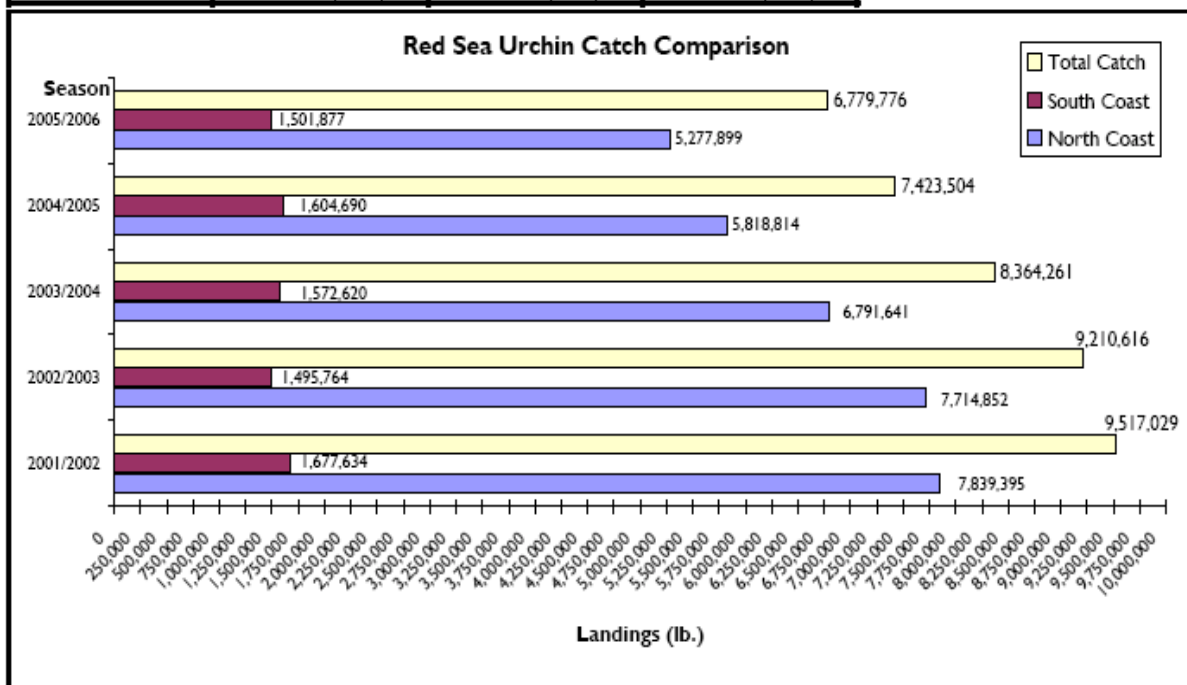


Red Sea Urchin Catch Comparison—d. & d. pacific

Red Sea Urchin Catch Comparison

Landing Period: beginning of each season to Mar.09

Season	North Coast	% Quota Taken	# Active Lic.	South Coast	% Quota Taken	# Active Lic.	Total Catch	% Quota Taken	Total # Active Lic.	Coastwide Difference to current season	North Difference to current season	South Difference to current season
2001/2002	7,839,395	88%	91	1,677,634	90%	19	9,517,029	88%	110	-2,737,253	-2,561,496	-175,757
2002/2003	7,714,852	85%	92	1,495,764	90%	17	9,210,616	86%	109	-2,430,840	-2,436,953	6,113
2003/2004	6,791,641	75%	85	1,572,620	94%	17	8,364,261	78%	102	-1,584,485	-1,513,742	-70,743
2004/2005	5,818,814	64%	82	1,604,690	96%	17	7,423,504	69%	99	-643,728	-540,915	-102,813
2005/2006	5,277,899	58%	73	1,501,877	90%	17	6,779,776	62%	90			



D&D Pacific Fisheries Ltd.

2006-03-10

Marine Industry Training

Upcoming Courses

Small Vessel Operator — May 9

Marine Emergency Duties A3 — May 8

Marine Emergency Duties A1 & A2 — May 15

Restricted Operator Certificate: Maritime Commercial — May 18

Master Limited (60-ton Ticket) — May 24

Marine Advanced First Aid — May 27

To register, call the centre for Continuing Studies at:

Malaspina University-College 1-866-734-6252

Marketing

—geoff krause

I was planning on making it up to the grounds in February - March see how things were going and to get more of those temperature loggers moving around. These units basically record the temperature once every 5 to 45 minutes- or more- and will collect the info for months at a time. The problem I noticed last year was that the urchins were warming up to upwards of about 17 °C. This cannot be a good thing. I have been looking for information on what sort of damage this might be doing but there does not seem to be anything published. Failing that I figured we could start our own little project to get some numbers on what happens over time. We do not know what sort of temperatures the product is exposed to and if there is damage - probably in the texture, maybe the colour and almost definitely on the shelf life- some real numbers are going to be needed to figure it out.

I sent out the loggers back in December to circulate around on the packers figuring I'd run up for a visit with you guys towards the end of January at which point I'd get to reset them. Unfortunately - I guess I did not explain how they were to be used well enough because they just got filed away in the engine room on one of the packers for a couple of months. Ah well- nice try.

After they turned up again, I re-programmed them and sent out in mid-February with Dave McRae figuring he could just stick a couple a day into his urchin bags and they would ride along as part of the load all the way down to Vancouver where I could then pick them up. I guess we had some more crossed wires again because while I talked to everyone along the route and warned them on what to expect, every one of them disappeared en route and are again missing in action.

So - if anyone remembers seeing some white plastic jars (about as big as a mid-sized RSU) with a plastic bag stuffed inside- help me out would you.

I was sort of thinking we could start something similar with the uni colour and seeing how it might be changing en route. The idea would be to have you guys grab some pictures when the urchins come on board and then I- or someone else, would grab some more from the same load when it arrives at the plant and then we could compare how each group of pictures was similar or different. It would be best to coordinate so the samples are drawn from the same dive bag at both ends. On that one too it seems we still have to work out some of the details.

So what else is up ? you say- We have submitted a proposal to extend the CAFI program funding for another couple of years but - well- we have a new government and a new federal budget coming. That's supposed to be out sometime in April but we probably won't hear about where the proposal stands until closer to May sometime. Hopefully the CAFI won't get the deep-six.

We are also still working on the enhanced PUHA website. Again- we need your help and are looking for good pictures and stories from you guys that we can load up on the website as content. We are also looking to develop promotional and marketing ideas for Japan with our domestic outlets and consumers as a testbed- that way we can get a quicker turn-around on what sorts of things do and do not work. Any ideas from you guys will be appreciated