



PUHA NEWSLETTER



Presidents Report Mike Featherstone

The 2017 Red sea urchin season is winding down with a few boats still fishing in Prince Rupert. As with any season there have been highs and lows. The prices have been the highest on record but

the landings have dropped from the previous years (see D&D report). This breaks the upward trend of landings over the past 8 years. The weather certainly played a role in the decrease in

landings but also it was very difficult to find good product. The boats had to spend much more time just to get a load.



PRESIDENTS REPORT



MARKETING REPORT



D&D PACIFIC REPORT



Presidents Report / Continued



This has been attributed to the ocean conditions and warmer water prevalent over the past 2 years, as well some areas are becoming overgrown and barrenized.

Lower landings were reflected in small loads for the trucks which eventually resulted in the independent companies cooperating to combine loads to fill the trucks and lower costs. Cooperation has its own challenges – managing the fishermen to fish together, coordinating packing and offloading, managing totes and trucking schedules – there has to be give and take on all sides.

Higher prices are based on a combination of factors. Good quality and recoveries of course but the other factors such as logistic costs also play an important role. A partial truck load of product to Vancouver can add \$.15 or more to the cost and this money comes directly from the urchin bag. It is critical to manage all the aspects of the supply chain if the fishermen are to get the maximum value for their catch. On the marketing side, to date in 2018, PUHA representatives have attended the Boston Seafood Show and the European Seafood Show (see Geoff's marketing report). Clearly the demand and interest in sea urchin continues to grow. Geoff has completed the new funding application to carry the marketing program forward into 2020.

On the green urchin side we see a similar situation to the reds, although to a lesser extent. Prices were a little higher and landings were slightly lower. Good news is the green quotas will be increasing again over the 2018/19 season. The IFMP has been released for consultation and new areas have been added in Sooke and adjacent to the Seymour Narrows.

The area south of the Narrows had been closed for many years, due to a request from the sport diving sector. The effect of the closure was the explosion of the urchin population and large urchin barrens devoid of any other marine life. It is well known that not fishing sea urchins will result in negative ecological effects. What is not so clear is why the Government and 3rd party stakeholders continue to ignore the scientific facts.

PUHA and the other seafood harvesters have been involved in marine planning for the Gwaii Haanas Park as well as the MAPP process for the new proposed protected areas in the Northern Bio shelf and North Vancouver Island. In spite of the overwhelming evidence that the exclusion of sea urchin fishing from the protected areas will negatively impact the ecological goals the areas continue to be closed to sea urchin fishing. PUHA will continue to work with the Government and planners to develop programs to reach the intended results.



Presidents Report / Continued



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Presidents Report / Continued

On June 7, at the Dorchester Hotel (Opera Room) 9am to 1pm, the Gwaii Haanas Archipelago Management Board (ABM) revised map will be presented for review and discussion. PUHA encourages anyone interested in understanding the process and wants to participate in the review and discussion to attend, as this is the first of the planning processes, and will provide insight and understanding to the protected area process.

It is with great sadness to report the loss of 3 of our long time industry members. Clyde Dudoward passed away after the sinking of the Western Commander on April 9th, shortly after on April 29th Ken Gale passed away after a brief battle with cancer and in May, Jay Jenny from the West Port passed away in Vancouver.

The PUHA AGM is scheduled for August 27th, 9:30 am coffee, 10 am call to order, Beban Park Arena.

LINKS and NEWS

Clyde Dudoward passes away after the sinking of Western Commander

<https://www.thenorthernview.com/local-news/fishing-boat-sinks-off-of-haida-gwaii/>

Problems with Sea otters in Alaska

<http://vancouver.sun.com/pmn/news-pmn/alaska-fishermen-sea-otter-comeback-is-eating-into-profits/wcm/268d4c7e-ec6e-4c32-95ce-a10183c53354>

Ken Gale passes away after brief battle with cancer

<https://www.thenorthernview.com/obituaries/james-kenneth-gale/>

Jason Jenny passes away in Steveston - celebration of life to be announced

Sea otter court challenge in California

<http://mobile.wnd.com/2018/06/bureaucrats-power-on-trial-in-california-wildlife-dispute/>

Ahousat Court ruling comments

<http://vancouver.sun.com/news/national/courts-cant-do-politicians-job>

Minister decision on reallocation of surf clam licence raises questionable ethics

<https://www.theglobeandmail.com/politics/article-trudeau-defends-fisheries-minister-under-ethics-investigation/>

More surf clam articles

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/nova-scotia/clam-quote-federal-court-indigenous-1.4648081>

I encourage everyone to visit Dr. Ray Hillborn's website which is to "communicate the science, policies, and human dimensions of sustainable fisheries."

<http://sustainablefisheries-uw.org/>

Check out the Hakai Magazine

<https://www.hakaimagazine.com/about-us/>

Visit the PUHA Facebook site and post your comments and photos

<https://www.facebook.com/Pacific-Urchin-Harvesters-Association-153381171388169/>



Marketing Report / Geoff Krause

We are now looking at the final couple weeks of May and the close of another season. Things have been very busy over the past couple of months and I have not been able to keep up with how things have been going in anything more than general terms since the last newsletter in February, but what is done is done and hopefully it has been done well.

March saw a PUHA delegation made up of Mike Featherstone, David McRae, Lawrence Anderson and yours truly being joined by Ed and Brenda Sang, Cliff Liu and Melody Fan at the Sea Expo North America in Boston. This was our third consecutive visit to the show and we were again part of the BC booth. We are in a different part of the show than the rest of the Canadian Pavilion because BC was a bit of a late comer and the floor space is limited in the area near the main entrance, but it still seems to work well for us burly west coasters.

We again considered the show a success. There was good to high interest in BC urchin products even though we are not able to actually chase down business, something which is the remit of individual exporters. We qualified a total of 64 visitors, including 10 highly that present new market opportunities in the US, Canada and other parts of the world. There is still a real product shortage out of California, although the water is cooler now and the kelp should return. See [*“Perfect Storm” Decimates Northern California Kelp Forests*](#) for more information. The hope is the urchin harvest will also soon again be on the upswing but it may take a while. Just as a quick aside, we had about 50 sea cucumber pamphlets to pass out and they disappeared by early day 2 of the show, suggesting perhaps that there is some interest in the US for sea cucumber.

We also heard a couple of things about US customs that slows things down, which is of course kind of important when dealing with seafood like uni. The first was in regard to the difference between air and truck shipments. We all know the differences between the two modes of transport, the comparative advantages and shortcomings, but another one that you might not think of immediately are that all air shipments of food are subject to Federal Department of Agriculture (FDA) inspection while the same does not stand for truck shipments. These inspections can reportedly hold up a shipment for some days, it all apparently depends on the inspectors themselves - such is the nature and extent of their discretion. This might be construed as a non-tariff barrier because it unavoidably favours shipment of raw material so value-added processing occurs in the US, but that would not likely even register as a criticism in today's US trade environment. The upshot of the policy is that it makes more sense to truck even processed product across the border and then load it onto planes for distribution around the country. This applies even for samples being shipped to American seafood shows - it is apparently best to truck them into the US first and only then onto airfreight.

Another minor bomb shell that was dropped on us at the last minute was a requirement for a certain import permit nobody had heard of before. It was unfortunate but had the immediate effect of ensuring we could not get sample product to the show. Apparently sea urchin and sea cucumber for that matter are regulated by the Federal Fish and Wildlife (F&W) and a law was passed back in about 2006 in response to IUU fishing and the illegal trade in seafood around the world. It sat on the books and was not an issue until about 2012 when all of a sudden it was. Commercially fished products were supposed to be exempt from the import/export permitting process, but urchins and cukes were not explicitly mentioned so they are not recognized as such.



Marketing Report /Continued

At any rate, the broker advised us on Monday the 5 of March, 3 days after the product was dropped off so the SENA load could be consolidated for shipment to Boston, that a F&W Import/Export permit would be required and that this would unfortunately take at least 3 days at best to acquire. So it was a case of “touché” and we were done with the idea of providing samples to the show, something which we have done to every other show we have attended over the past 9 or so years. And that with our BFF the US, the most open trading nation in the world. To be fair it is also affecting US exporters. They too must obtain export permits at \$96 a pop for every load being shipped out. They too were surprised when they were shut down and they too were ticked off about the whole thing. They are still subject to the same rules and have not yet been able to get the situation corrected although they are trying.

As a bit of an aside, we also got to experience our first Nor’easter on the last day of the show. The first year we attended the weather was late spring-like, hitting the high teens (°C) temperature wise, sunny and just all round pleasant. Last year it was a tad chilly, warming up to about -6°C by late afternoon but sunny throughout with chill winds blowing out of the north (blame it on Canada of course). This year however there was end-to-end news coverage of an approaching storm, the third in a series that was sounding like it was going to be a storm to end all storms. Unsurprisingly there was near panic towards the end of the second day to get out of town before calamity hit. Also, perhaps unsurprisingly, it turned out to be just a snowstorm and not that big a deal. There was about 12-15 “of snow for sure, but it too was actually kind of pleasant. It did however show the power of TV news, especially the over-the-top type on display for the run-up, to shape peoples expectations and responses.

Lawrence Melody and Geoff as well as Stephen and Faye Liu also attended the 2018 Seafood Expo Global (SEG) in Brussels in late April. It is probably the world’s biggest seafood show but this year only yielded about 38 contacts for us, only about 3 of which seemed like high quality prospects, although they were from all parts of the world. Grand Hale was also in attendance so any serious enquiries were directed to them as, again, we cannot talk turkey when it comes to sales. At any rate, we (Canada) have a new trade agreement with Europe, the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA), but to take advantage of it the fish or seafood must be caught in Canadian waters. Product imported from say Alaska does not qualify. They have also prohibited the use of alum (generally potassium aluminum sulphate) in foods because of health concerns over persistent low level exposure. Rumour has the Japanese doing the same in the not too far future.

We have also run out our last International marketing Project and had to put together and submit a new proposal prior to leaving for Europe so that the trip could be covered. Geoff put together a three year proposal that includes continuing our efforts exhibiting at the Seafood Expo Asia and the China Fisheries and Seafood Expo in Hong Kong and China respectively as well as the Seafood Expo North America (Boston). We included a number of other shows, such as the above mentioned show in Brussels (SEG) though it is only in for the first year of the plan as we are focussing on Asia and the US. There are in fact competing shows at the same time as the Brussels show in Vietnam and Shanghai on alternate years followed very quickly by a show in Seoul South Korea every year. We decided to give that a try for a couple of years with the idea that we can then regroup and see what makes most sense.

We went for a good chunk of funding in the proposal each year with the idea that we want to encourage processors and members to join us as much as possible. The largest part of the budget is again for travel (@~ 60%) and we are looking for members and processors kicking in about \$12 and \$24 thousand a year respectively for 50% of their own travel costs to help out with the shows and follow through on other PUHA -business related international travel. comes through, probably around the mid to end of July. We will see how it all pans out in time but that is about all I have on that for now.



D&D Pacific Report

RED & GREEN SEA URCHIN FISHERY SEASON UPDATES

North Coast Fleet

January landings worst on record. February the fleets worked on QMAs until the weather allowed harvest in Haida Gwaii. In March, the fleet moved to Haida Gwaii and worked the East Side first - 25 vessels hailed. Difficulties with quality and sometimes the patience required for fishing Haida Gwaii caused a lot of quota to remain in the water. Flamingo Inlet was fished for the first time in a long time.

April proved hard to manage the fleet(s) especially on the west side of Haida Gwaii as communication, team work and patience broke down and then weather forced a move to Masset. Additional sadness in April was the sinking of the Western Commander and the loss of a captain. Our sympathies to all involved.....

May had the fleets winding down, looking for quality and vessels willing to continue. Quality was found, but fishing has yet to restart. Dive fleets for each buyer primarily low on average over the season compared to previous years.

North Coast Protocol established years ago is experiencing difficulties. Industry representatives will have to improve the adherence to the protocol or only one group will be allowed. It also must be noted that **not all** vessel masters are cleared by PUHA to be Coordinators. Vessels that have a VMS may have a Vessel Master who has not been approved as a Coordinator by PUHA and D&D. Fishery related offences, poor fishing practices, not a team player are basically the only grounds of refusal by PUHA.

Currently, We have achieved over 58% of our total quota in the North Coast to date and 68 North Coast tabs have been active so far.

South Coast Fleet

20 South Coast tabs have been active to date. Vessels worked very hard in Area 12 & 13 QMAs around weather and quality throughout the season.

Quota moved to, but not harvested from Northern Vancouver Island Special Management QMAs that were opened were returned to their original QMAs where the pounds were taking from. Vessels requested that PUHA allow movement of remaining pounds in the QMAs in area 12 to adjacent QMAs so harvest could continue in QMAs with quality. The request was delayed and ultimately a portion was moved to enable fishing to continue.

Currently, The fleet has achieved over 64% of the South Coast TAC.



D&D Pacific Report/Continued

Figure 1 – RSU Comparison by Month - 3-Year Trend

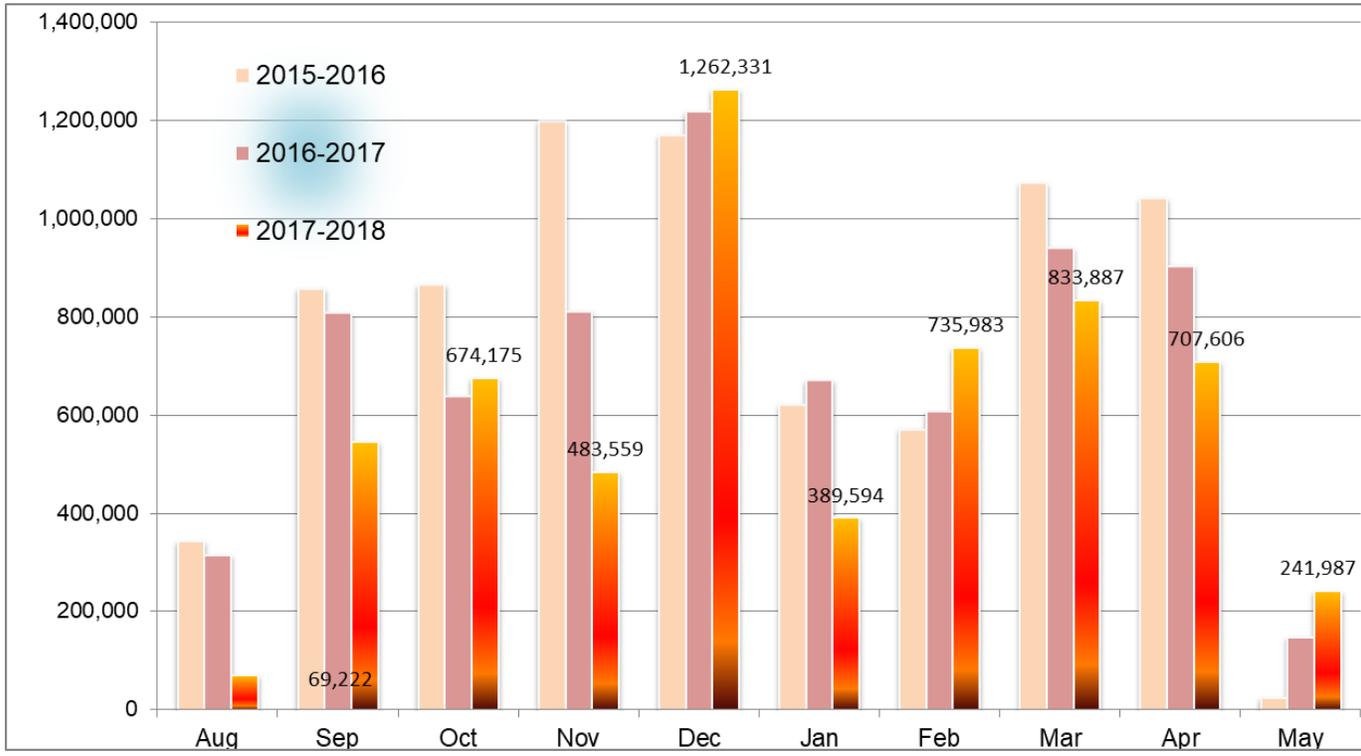
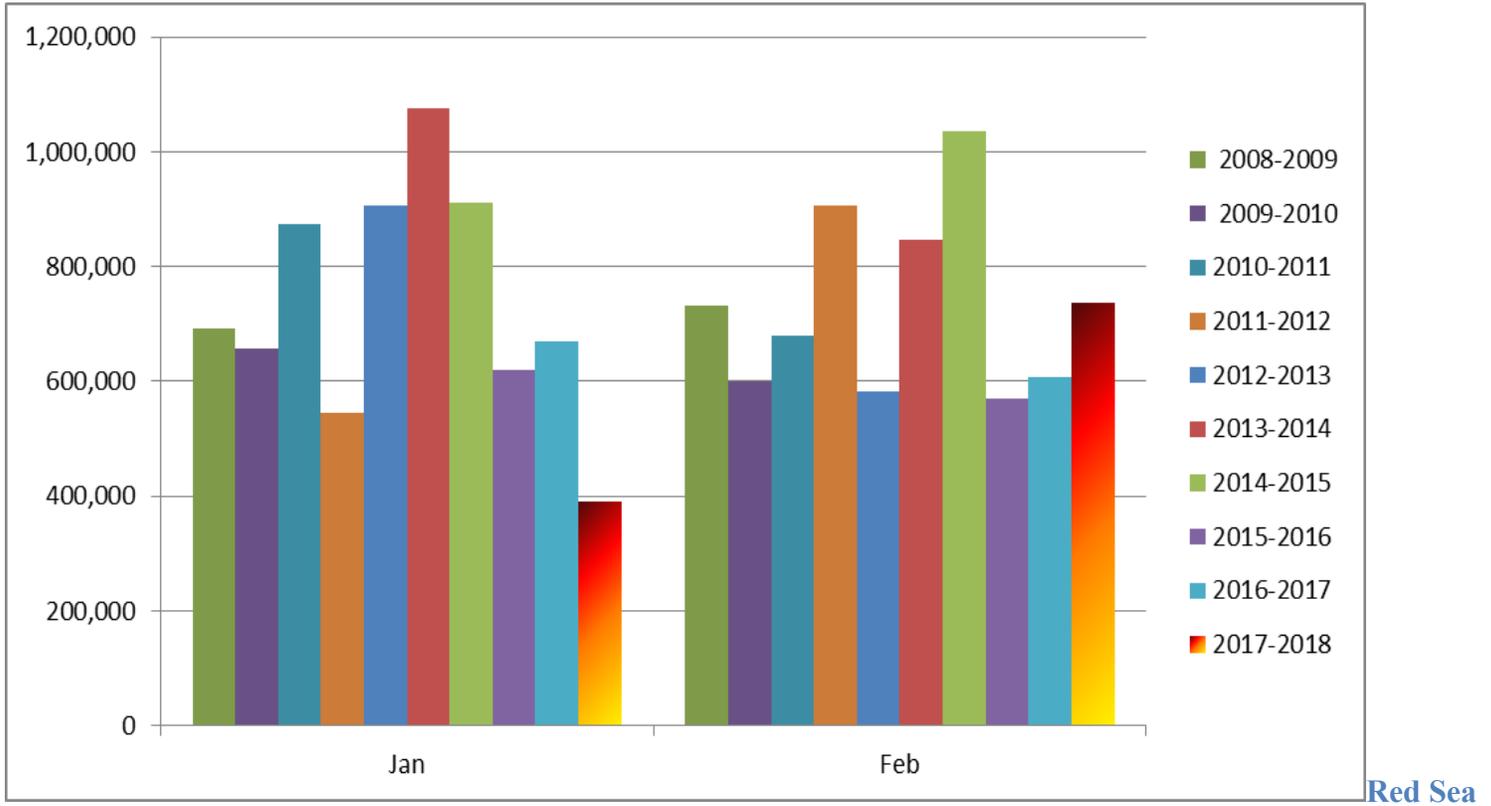


Figure 2

RSU Two-Month Harvest Comparison – 10-Year Trend



D&D Pacific Report/Continued



Red Sea Urchin Coastwide

January 2018 landings coast wide are the worst on record. Weather did play a role in the north, but, QMAs were requested and opened close to Prince Rupert that resulted in many vessels not fishing and staying in port for multiple reasons.

The south in January was plagued with quality issues. Overall, just over 59% of the Total Allowable Catch (TAC) has been landed. The bad news is that we are 1.2 plus million pounds behind last year's total to date. Quality and weather again have plagued the fleet(s), but as figure 1 shows, we are falling behind in monthly landings despite weather when you compare them to previous seasons.

Conditions of Licence - Red Sea Urchin

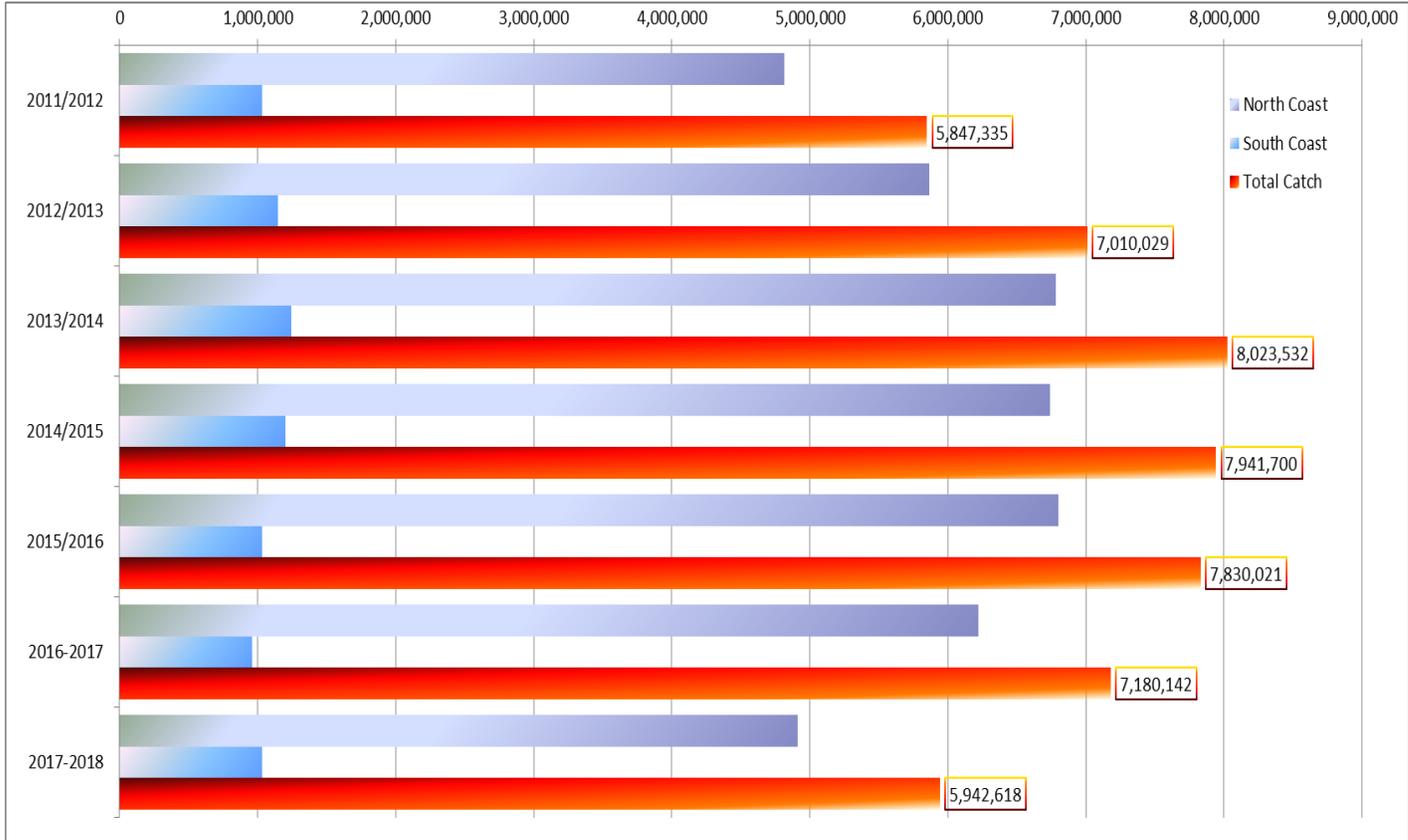
Conditions of Licence infractions are still on the rise, but better than last reported. Vessel Master's and the crew's knowledge of the Conditions has decreased since DFO's licence program went electronic.

Lack of communication, hail notifications and product not tagged properly for transshipment continue. Harvest chart delivery improving.

Figure 3 – RSU Landings Coastwide 7-Year Trend



D&D Pacific Report/Continued



2017-18 GSU FISHERY

The 2017-18 season tried hard to beat last season’s historical landings, but was the second highest landings in 12 years. The Green Sea Urchin fishery started strong in September, with average landings for October and November. December landings surpassed all seasons back to 2012. January’s weather and market dropped harvest down to almost half of last season’s landings. Overall, we are close to last season in effort.

D&D looked into the removal of FZA -01. This tab now sits in PICFI inventory and we are not sure when it will be issued. As a result, only 48 tabs were available this season.

There is currently no activity at this time. Last harvest was in February. Forty-seven ZA Tabs have been active to date. 90.6 % of the TAC landed. Quality in Area 13 & the revoked FZA-01 tab are the only reasons the total TAC was not achieved.

Over population in Area 13 has affected the ecosystem, effecting kelp and pushing out RSU in the areas around Cape Mudge. Support from First Nations, PUHA and DFO are working together to reverse this scenario. Sooke Area 20 has seen a positive recovery since Industry closed it years ago. Efforts are being made by PUHA to work the area before it turns into a Cape Mudge issue of over-population.

Landings in Steveston for the Live Market Program this year were minimal due to the quick landings of the commercial bound product. Increase in Greens being validated the next morning was noticed. The use of a packer was noticed this season in Greens. Holding product on the packer gave vessels more time in the morning to harvest.



D&D Pacific Report/Continued

Conditions of Licence - Green Sea Urchin

Conditions of Licence breaches are minimal in the GSU fishery. ZA licence copies, Personnel Commercial Fishery Cards dominate the infractions. Harvest charts are delivered at each landing so no issue on this topic. Hails prior to fishing have improved so thanks to all for that effort. A reminder, that a copy of the Conditions of Licence (as well as the licence) is required to be on board the vessel. This will assist crew in knowing what they are required to do.

A reminder the Limit (lbs) to Transfer a ZA Tab's Overage to Another Vessel's Tab is 200 lbs. As outlined in DFO's Conditions of Licence for Green Sea Urchin. Efforts are being made to request this increase to 500 lbs for the next season.

Figure 4 – GSU Landings by Month – 3-Season Trend

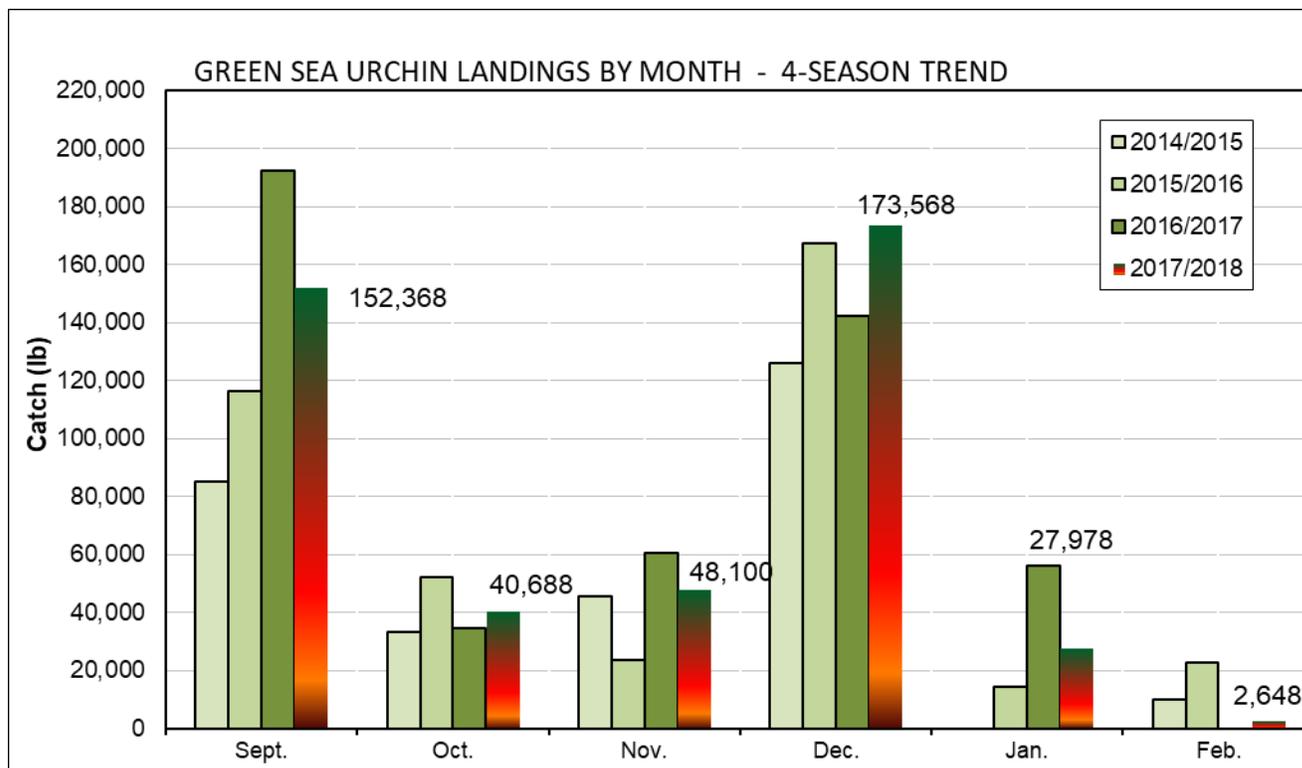


Figure 5 –

GSU Total Landings over a 12-Year Trend



D&D Pacific Report/Continued

