

CENTRAL COAST JOINT CABLE/FISHERIES LIAISON COMMITTEE  
COMMERCIAL FISHING INDUSTRY IMPROVEMENT FUND

Attn: Grant Committee  
P.O. Box 2033  
Morro Bay, CA 93443-2033

GRANT APPLICATION—NOVEMBER,2018

PROJECT TITLE: REVISED LEGISLATION TO RESTORE MONTEREY BAY  
HALIBUT TRAWLING AND PORT SAN LUIS OUTSIDE 1 MILE

AMOUNT REQUESTED:.....\$5,000

MATCHING FUNDS AND/OR IN-KIND SERVICES:

No salary to any person will be paid during the course of this effort to regain lost fishing grounds in Monterey Bay. It is expected that to continue this legislative effort, from two to three fishermen will be involved in travel to planning and regulatory meetings to regain Monterey Bay trawl grounds. Matching funds calculated with the following assumptions:

- Fisherman-representative day-rate of \$475/day
- Legislation to change Fish & Game code will be required
  - minimum of six legislative hearings in Assembly, six in Senate, total 12
  - three planning meetings

IN-KIND DAY RATE SERVICES: 3 fisheries reps (minimum), \$475/day, 10 meetings..... \$4,750

OTHER DIRECT COSTS @ IN-KIND

Telephone, administrative and copy services, misc. .... \$1,000

TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENTS:

Most of the funds requested is to pay for travel expenses to attend both planning meetings, meetings with Bill authors, potential bill supporters (agencies, cities, etc.) and legislative hearings in Sacramento through both the Assembly and Senate to work a revised bill through the process to amend the designated California Halibut Trawl Grounds to re-open a small triangle of fishing grounds outside 3 miles out to 40 fathoms, and south of Port San Luis outside a mile for about eight miles of coastline.

Airfare at prevailing Rates

Lodging Rate: \$150 per night

Per Diem Rate: \$50 per day

Parking, Rental car/cab, other incidentals at Cost

Total for Travel/Lodging/Per Diem/Incidentals..... \$5,000

TOTAL REQUESTED ..... \$5,000

ASSOCIATION INVOLVED: Southern California Trawlers Association  
P.O. Box 713  
Summerland, CA 93067

PROJECT SUPERVISORS: Mike McCorkle, President, Southern CA Trawlers Association  
Bill Ward, Member, SCTA, and former Monterey Bay halibut trawler

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

**Background**

As before, the California Halibut Trawl bill (SB 1459), enacted in 2004, closed halibut trawling “in all state waters,” which includes outside 3 miles in Monterey Bay. Prior to this, Fish and Game Code Section 8836 governed trawling outside three miles from the nearest point of land within waters of Monterey Bay (Fish and Game Management District 17, defined by Code Sec. 11025). Before the prohibition, trawlers caught various flatfish including halibut, flounder, sole and sanddabs in Bay waters. Waters off Soquel between 3 miles and about 60 fathoms was very productive. As late as 2006, members of our Association and other trawlers from Santa Cruz and elsewhere caught up to half of their annual landings from these trawl grounds, especially in later years when the live halibut market fully developed. This is a high-value, low-volume fishery, like the current ocean conservation community is steering the State towards.

Negotiations with the SB 1459 sponsors (NRDC, Oceana, The Ocean Conservancy, and United Anglers of Southern California) were unsuccessful in eliminating problem language in the Bill [now F&G Code Sec. 8841(h)] that says “Except as provided in Section 8495 or 8842 [the pink shrimp grounds in northern California State waters, and the California Halibut Trawl Grounds between Pt. Conception and Pt. Mugu], it is unlawful to engage in bottom trawling in ocean waters of the state.” This was the true purpose of SB 1459, which was, on its face, a bill only to develop a permit for trawling for halibut. We continued to object to the language during negotiations, and commented at every step of the way during a hostile legislative committee hearing procedure that the language was not relevant to developing a halibut trawl permit and should be stricken from the bill. The bill’s author, Senator Dede Alpert, then Chair of the powerful Senate Appropriations Committee, was swayed by the bill’s sponsors (and in particular by United Anglers of CA) to keep the language in the bill, and so it was. No other legislator would dare to intervene or their bills would not pass Alpert’s funding committee.

At this time, we will be working with Senator Mike McGuire’s office, in tandem with the Executive Director of PFCCA, to ensure that our bill language is inserted into a fisheries bill Senator McGuire will introduce into the next legislation session.

**The Project**

After early efforts with a new group formed in Monterey to answer the question “how do we support sustainable fisheries in the Monterey Bay?” failed thanks to Oceana’s control and interference with the group’s meetings, we seek another legislator who can agree to take a look at our concerns.

DFW and NMFS finally finished a study/survey in our trawl area, and The Nature Conservancy Central Coast Groundfish study also came out in the last two years. Both of these studies results support the concept that the “light-touch” halibut trawl fishery is sustainable. Additionally, a new study has just found that trawling has similar effects on the bottom as large winter storms. This works in our favor.

The point of participating in these studies is to put to rest the notion that “if you’ve seen one trawl net you’ve seen ‘em all” and to use the positive results of three studies (now) to persuade another legislator to carry a bill that will make a simple amendment to the statute that designates the “California Halibut Trawl Grounds” to include the two areas we have described.

This proposal seeks principally travel funding for amendment sponsors to travel to Sacramento to shepherd the legislative change through several Assembly and Senate Committee hearings (natural resources and appropriations, at minimum, sometimes more than once in each Committee), and to meet with key legislators and other potential key supporters to explain the case and why the amendment to DFG Code is appropriate.

Given the ever more restrictive noose tightening around commercial fisheries, particularly trawling when it can be demonstrated to minimize bycatch and in all other respects be sustainable, it is important that we work hard to maintain what little access is left to fishing grounds, and not lose further ground. That is the intent of the proposed work here. It is expected that three key trawl representatives will need to travel to Monterey and Sacramento regularly for the next year to accomplish this. Other trawlers may be asked to come to Monterey to participate in these group meetings, and/or to Sacramento from time to time to testify before specific committee hearings that will be critical to passage of the amendment as to the importance of these grounds to their overall fishing strategy and annual income.

#### WHO WILL BENEFIT:

Clearly, all those who have historically trawled in Monterey Bay would benefit from having these grounds re-opened for 2008. That includes SCTA members, as well as trawlers from Santa Cruz, Moss Landing, and Morro Bay. Further, this is the first of a set of dominos for the waters of Monterey Bay, and it is clear that baitfish harvesting and purse seining in general will be the next target for sports fishing interests and ocean conservation groups. It is not clear where this will end, but it is clear that between the Marine Life Protection Act, the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary, and sport fishing interests up and down the coast, commercial fishing is a distinct target in the waters of Monterey Bay in the future. What can be done, now, to prevent this domino effect, should be done, now.

Other groups that will benefit, of course, include seafood buyers, processors, retailers and local restaurants that can continue to provide fresh local seafood to Monterey and regional markets. In fact, the recently completed DFW/NMFS study in Monterey Bay included an economic performance analysis of trawling for halibut in the area we proposed. See

<http://www.dfg.ca.gov/mwr/pz/sfzp/halibut-studies.asp>

The “bottom line” of the economic analysis is that somewhere between \$900,000 and \$1 million is being lost to fishermen, buyers, processors and retailers annually (since closure in 2006) due to the loss off halibut and starry flounder landings just in Monterey Bay.

This is one of the most natural and effective outreach avenues remaining to seafood harvesters: their natural allies, the seafood consumer. While ocean conservation groups are touting “low volume/high value” fisheries as the model for the future, they have thrown one out right in their own back yard. We propose to regain this one, at least.

## BEGINNING AND COMPLETION DATES

Work on regaining waters of Monterey Bay to trawling will continue immediately upon notification of project approval and receipt of funding. It will continue until the amendment is included in a bill that is successfully chaptered into legislation.

### Key Milestones

- insert legislative language for re-opening these two areas into a fisheries bill being sponsored by Sen. Mike McGuire
- Meet with supportive Assemblyperson to carry the bill in the legislature by February, 2018
- Submit amendments to California Halibut Trawl Grounds as a bill by February, 2018
- meet with key legislative committee leaders: March through September, 2018
- Meet with fishermen and port authorities in Santa Cruz, Monterey & Moss Landing to get letters of support for legislative changes, March through September, 2018
- (THE “DELIVERABLE”) Chaptered Legislation: Fall, 2018

### FAST TRACK:

Yes. We need funds as soon as possible to continue progress made on consensus bill language and not lose momentum gained in recent months with The Nature Conservancy, Oceana and legislative supporters.