

MORRO BAY COMMUNITY QUOTA FUND



POTENTIAL 2015 GROUND FISH FISHING OPPORTUNITY

In 2014, a new non-profit organization, the Morro Bay Community Quota Fund (MBCQF) acquired five trawl permits and a portfolio of quota share (QS) in the West Coast trawl fishery. The permits and QS acquired by MBCQF were the trawl permits that operated in the Morro Bay area during the early 2000s, which The Nature Conservancy (TNC) then acquired in 2005 as a part of an effort to establish an industry supported plan for adopting trawl Essential Fish Habitat designations on the west coast. On January 1, 2011, the West Coast trawl fishery was converted to an Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) management system. This conversion still requires each participating boat in the fishery to have a trawl permit, but vessels can use fixed gear (e.g. pots, long lines) or trawl gear to catch the quota.

The purpose of forming the MBCQF was to secure, in the community, the historic QS and local fishing permits that TNC had purchased in 2005. The MBCQF is completely independent of TNC and governed by a seven member board of directors comprised of fishermen, community leaders and representatives from science and academia. The long term goal of the MBCQF is to promote a financially stable and environmentally sustainable Morro Bay groundfish fishery, built upon sufficient local landing to support fishing infrastructure and local stewardship of groundfish resources. Further information on how the MBCQF works, the MBCQF mission, history on the fishery and a biography of the Board of Directors can be found at www.morrobaycommunityquotafund.org.

Derived from the QS, the MBCQF receives annual Quota Pounds (QP) in all trawl species and has some uncommitted QP and permits in 2015 in species including Widow Rockfish, Dover Sole, Chillipepper Rockfish, Slope Rockfish (Bank and Blackgill) and Conception area Sablefish (Sablefish south of 36° N.). The MBCQF seeks fishermen who can operate under the conditions of the West Coast trawl IFQ fishery. At this time, that includes taking human observers on every trip (\$500-700 daily cost paid by fisherman), willingness to cooperate with other fishermen/MBCQF on fishing plans that reduce/eliminate overfished species (OFS) interactions, and paying approximately 8% of gross landing revenue for special trawl fishery fees (e.g. trawl buyback loan and program cost recovery fee).

The MBCQF is working to reduce some of the costs, but at this time the groundfish fishery is an expensive fishery to participate in. Although there are reduced lease rates on QP and permits that are available from the MBCQF, this fishery does require boats to accommodate human observers on 100% of the trips (until such a time those costs are reduced).

If you're interested in this potential opportunity or would like to find out more information about the Morro Bay Community Quota Fund, there are a number of ways to contact us:

Stop by the MBCQF Office, 695 Harbor Street, Morro Bay

Check out the website at www.morrobaycommunityquotafund.org

E-mail andrea@morrobaycommunityquotafund.org or

E-mail rick@morrobaycommunityquotafund.org

Call 805.550.3909 (Executive Director) or 805.772.4467 (Office Phone)