

Northern Red Urchin Fishery Disaster Relief: Overview and Options for Consideration



***California Sea Urchin Commission Meeting
March 2020***

Disaster Relief Steps

- ✓ Submit request for disaster relief funds (Feb 2019)
- ✓ Disaster request approved and fund award announced (Oct 2019)

\$3,329,343 Disaster Award Amount (Feb 2020)

- ❑ CDFW prepare Spending Plan with public input
- ❑ Submit Spending Plan to PSMFC/NOAA for approval
- ❑ Spending Plan Approval
- ❑ Fund award released with disbursement through PSMFC
 - Applications sent via PSMFC
 - Payment of completed applications

NOAA and CDFW Guidance on Disaster Relief Funds

NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration)



Address range of fishery impacts

Encourages use of funds for MITIGATION
(activities that restore the fishery or prevent a
similar future failure)

Assist fishing communities affected by failure

Strengthen long-term economic and
environmental sustainability of the fishery
(e.g., habitat restoration, research, capacity
reduction, etc.)

CDFW (California Department of Fish and Wildlife)



Emphasis on funding MITIGATION

If direct payments to divers and businesses,
use the most simplified calculation possible

- Ensure better chances for approval by PSMFC/NOAA
- Will help streamline the spending process and expedite payments

Key Questions for Industry to Consider

- 1. What proportion of the disaster funds should be allocated to mitigation versus direct payments?**
- 2. How should payments be divided between fishing sectors (fishermen versus processors)?**
- 3. What qualifying criteria should be used to determine eligibility and amount of disaster relief funds?**

Research Proposals for Mitigation

- **Kelp Forest Restoration**

- Funding commercial fishermen to harvest purple urchins
- Purple urchin trapping efforts
- Continuing yearly urchin larvae brush studies and/or adding more sites in northern California
- Establishing water quality monitors (i.e. temperature, oxygen, etc.)
- Testing methods for urchin removals (e.g. culling vs. collecting, most effective method for culling urchin)
- Any other projects that would restore kelp forest habitat?

- **Others?**

Determining Qualification

- **Data Sources:** can only include state landing receipts, logbooks, and permitting information in ALDS.
- **Qualification Criteria:**
 - Held an urchin diver permit/fish business license during one or both disaster years (2016 and/or 2017). Includes fishing seasons 2015/2016, 2016/2017, and 2017/2018.
 - AND have landings/receiving activity in northern management zone (north of SLO/Monterey county line)
 - Set a minimum activity level (e.g., one landing during qualifying period or cumulative pounds total)

Calculating Disbursement Options

- **What is the activity baseline?**
 - The 3-year or 5-year prior history of landings/landing receipts in northern ports?
 - Are landings in 2016 & 2017 considered?
- **What options are most appropriate?**
 - Option 1: Equal Sharing
 - Option 2: Weighted by qualifying pounds of landings/receipt of landings
 - Option 3: Proportional to qualifying pounds of landings/receipt of landings
- **Allow sectors to use different qualifying criteria?**

Next Steps

- **Potential Eligible Permittees, Individuals and Businesses:**
 - Ensure that CDFW contact information is up to date in permitting/licensing database
 - Marine Region staff can verify information, but individuals must contact License and Revenue branch staff to update information
- **Communications**
 - First public webinar will be scheduled in mid-April (TBD)
 - Divers and processors can work with port representatives and CSUC board to discuss options
 - A dedicated urchin disaster relief email will be set up for inquiries