



From Trends to Action: Strengthening Monterey Bay's Climate-Resilient Commercial Fisheries & Working Waterfronts

A pilot project under the Future of Blue Initiative

Lead Organization: Monterey Bay Fisheries Trust (MBFT)

Pilot Location: Moss Landing Harbor, California

Timeframe: 12 months (July 2026 - June 2027)

Focus: Commercial fisheries • Working waterfronts • Climate resilience • Economic Development

Why This Matters

Monterey Bay's commercial fisheries—essential to our local food system, coastal economy, and maritime heritage—are at a critical turning point.

Over the last decade, fishing communities have faced:

- Declining landings, revenue, and participation
- Climate-driven shifts in species availability and fishing seasons
- Regulatory and economic pressures on small-scale operators
- Aging infrastructure that limits adaptation and recovery



Without coordinated action, Monterey Bay risks losing working waterfront capacity, local seafood access, and a defining part of its coastal identity.

Our Approach: Turning Data into Action

This project pairs rigorous fisheries science with fishermen's lived experience to move from uncertainty to investable solutions.

MBFT is working with researchers from the University of California, Santa Cruz, the Monterey Bay Aquarium, and Stanford Hopkins Marin Station on the first comprehensive regional fisheries analysis in over a decade to produce Monterey Bay's Commercial Fisheries: Status & Trends (Summer 2026), the **region's first comprehensive fisheries analysis in more than a decade**. Drawing on 45+ years of fisheries, economic, and ecosystem data, the report will provide an evidence-based foundation for planning resilient working waterfronts. This pilot project transforms those findings into community-led solutions through place-based planning in Moss Landing that can be replicated statewide.

What We Will Do

★ Validate Fisheries Trends with the Fishing Community

Share findings with fishermen and local leaders to ground-truth data, build shared understanding, and identify priority challenges.

Outcome: Community-informed data for action.

★ Convene Stakeholders to Identify Priority Needs

Host a facilitated planning workshop with fishermen, harbor leaders, researchers, and economic development partners.

Outcome: Consensus on priority infrastructure and adaptation needs.

★ Develop a Working Waterfront Sustainability Plan

Develop a practical roadmap to strengthen fisheries viability, guide future infrastructure investment, and support climate resilience.

Outcome: An implementation-ready strategy for Moss Landing—and a model for other California

Why Moss Landing

Local stakeholders are aligned around proactive planning, making Moss Landing an ideal pilot with near-term impact and statewide relevance. Moss Landing Harbor is Monterey Bay's largest commercial fishing port and a regional hub for:

- Seafood production
- Marine science, research, and education
- Tourism and maritime trades

Expected Impact

By June 2027, we will deliver:

- A shared understanding of fisheries trends and climate risks for our region
- A prioritized list of infrastructure and adaptation needs
- A ready-to-implement community sustainability plan
- A scalable model for strengthening California working waterfronts

Long-term impact: stronger fisheries, more resilient harbors, and a healthier coastal economy.



Why Monterey Bay Fisheries Trust

MBFT is the only nonprofit in the region dedicated specifically to sustaining a **viable, community-based fishing economy**. We bridge between science, conservation, and commerce to ensure solutions are credible and actionable.

We bring:

- Trust with fishermen and harbor stakeholders
- Strong science partnerships
- Proven cross-sector convening capacity
- Existing financial and in-kind support from regional partners

Investment Opportunity

MBFT has secured \$120,000 in state and private funding for the 12-month Moss Landing pilot.

Additional investment will support:

- Implementation of Moss Landing priorities
- Expansion to Monterey Harbor and Santa Cruz harbors
- Planning convenings for additional blue economy sectors (e.g., ecotourism)



Together, we can ensure Monterey Bay's commercial fisheries remain viable—today and for generations to come. For more information or to get involved please contact:

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