

Sustainable Seafood Saturday – Program

September 26, 2015
10 am to 1 pm



College of San Mateo
1700 W Hillsdale Blvd.
San Mateo

Choral Room (Building 2 – Music), Recommended Parking: Beethoven Lot 2

10:10 Welcome – Nicole David, San Mateo County Harbor Commissioner

10:20 Introduction – Why we care about sustainable seafood

Peter Halmay, San Diego Fishermen's Working Group, President

10:40 Presentation – What fishermen have done to fish sustainably and protect the ocean

Steve Fitz, F/V Mr. Morgan, HMB Groundfish Marketing Association, Vice President

11:10 Presentation – Working with local fishers and industry to keep fish populations stable

Tom Dempsey, Senior Fisheries Project Director at The Nature Conservancy

11:40 Presentation – Hungry? - The benefits of seafood in a human diet

Margy Gassel, PhD, Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment

12:10 Overview – The choices we have every day – **Peter Halmay**

12:20 Podium Discussion and Q&A

Peter Halmay



After working as a consulting engineer for seven years after graduation, I decided to take a couple of years off to pursue my diving hobby and work as a full time abalone diver. That was in 1970 and I never went back.

Over the years, I noted that what was holding fishermen back was the lack of organization, and I have spent the past 30 years of my life developing social capital in the sea urchin fishery. I was the founding director of SUHAC, the statewide sea urchin dive association, which led to the formation of the California Sea Urchin Commission, a quasi-

government body under the California Department of Food and Ag.

I was elected a director of CSUC and appointed Vice chairman. However I noted a lack of involvement, or proper foundation at the Port level, and formed a fishing co-operative, the San Diego Watermen's Association (SDWA). This effort expanded to include all San Diego fishermen and led to the development of a San Diego Community Based Association, San Diego Fishermen's Working Group (SDFWG), the San Diego Seafood Harvesters LLC, and the Fishermen's Marketing Association of San Diego. During this entire time I have remained a full time sea urchin diver working about 150-220 days a year under water. Maybe I will retire in about 30 years, but the prospect of my wife being the boss instead of my being the Captain with complete authority does not sit well with me.

Steve Fitz



Steve Fitz is a second generation fisherman and captain of the family run fishing vessel Mr. Morgan, out of Pillar Point Harbor. As a young boy he witnessed the "glory days" of the early 70's, watching his father and uncle return from Georges Bank on various boats with abundant loads of Atlantic cod. Following in their footsteps, Steve began his fishing career after his freshman year at the University of Denver. Working summers and winter breaks allowed him to help finance his college tuition and earn a degree in business.

After twenty-five years and multiple fisheries, the Mr. Morgan has become his passion. It is the only vessel outfitted with Scottish seine gear in the United

States. Over the past several years the Fitzs have developed a strong relationship working with The Nature Conservancy, hoping to secure a brighter future in the fishing industry during these extremely challenging times. Steve lives in Moss Beach with his wife Stephanie, daughter Cora and son Bowden.

Tom Dempsey



Tom Dempsey is The Nature Conservancy's Senior Fisheries Project Director in California. Prior to joining the Conservancy, Tom held various positions spanning roles from a crew member on commercial fishing boats, to the Policy Director of the Cape Cod Commercial Fishermen's Association, to an appointed member of the New England Fishery Management Council. He is focused on advancing a new paradigm for fishery management and ocean conservation, one that is driven by local leadership and collaborations between fishermen, community leaders, and scientists who aim to better manage the resource they depend on.

Margy Gassel, PH.D.



Dr. Margy Gassel is a Research Scientist with the California Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment. She received a bachelor's degree in biology from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, and a master's degree and Ph.D. in integrative biology from the University of California at Berkeley. Margy has worked with the Fish Advisory Program ("Good Catch California") since 1994 evaluating the health risks and benefits from fish consumption and developing and issuing advisories. In 2009, Margy represented her agency on a marine debris research expedition to the North Pacific Gyre (aka "Great Pacific Garbage Patch") to investigate the role of marine debris in food web contamination.