



FISHING COMMUNITIES COALITION

Young Fishermen's Development Program

Purpose: To establish a national program exclusively dedicated to training and assisting the next generation of commercial fishermen so that they are well equipped to support our nation's sustainable fisheries.

As the average age of commercial fishermen continues to increase, we need to make sure we have a strong fleet of young fishermen ready to take over the fisheries. This includes providing them with the training and resources necessary to make smart business plans and fish sustainably.

What's missing: Right now, we lack a coordinated, national effort. There are varying levels of efforts in different regions that address the needs of young fishermen, but no cohesive effort at the federal level. This program is modeled after the work already underway in Alaska where young fishermen are taking the helm and creating a network of their own. This network has been an incredible way for them to share information, resources, collective knowledge, skills, etc. We want to elevate this work and ensure that young fishermen across the nation have access to similar resources, knowledge, and trainings through regional partnerships and programs. Additionally, we envision a national network, similar to that found in Alaska, where fishermen and communities around the country can share success stories and facilitate the transfer of knowledge from region to region.

What can Congress do: We want Congress to pass legislation authorizing this new program. The proposed YFDP will solidify and unite current piecemeal efforts going on in different coastal regions into a cohesive, national program that helps support and train our nation's young fishermen. By doing so, Congress is signaling that they are committed to properly training our young fishermen in sustainable fishing *and* business practices, and ensuring that these young fishermen are able to access the resources necessary to be savvy on and off the water.

What exactly does this legislation do: This bill *authorizes* (creates) this program which means it includes an authorization of funding for \$2M a year for six years. This legislation is paid for by using monies from the Asset Forfeiture Fund (the fund where fines and penalties paid by fishermen are deposited), which means that the Young Fishermen's Development Program will be paid for by monies coming from fishermen who are found guilty of violating fishing rules.

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Gulf of Mexico Reef Fish Shareholders' Alliance • Half Moon Bay Groundfish Marketing Association • Maine Coast Fishermen's Association



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Some program specifics:

Eligibility:

Applicants: Those applying for funds from the YFDP must be a collaborative regional, state, local, or tribal network or partnership of public and/or private entities, which may include: State Sea Grant programs; federal, state, local, or tribal agencies; a community-based and/or nongovernmental organization; fishermen's cooperatives or associations; colleges, universities, or a foundation maintained by a college or university; or any other appropriate applicant, as determined by the Secretary.

In accordance with the authorizing legislation, priority will be given to partnerships and collaborations led by or including nongovernmental, community-based organizations, school-based fisheries, or marine educational organizations with expertise in new fisheries training and outreach.

Participants: Those wishing to participate in this program must be an individual who desires to participate in the commercial fisheries of the United States, including the Great Lake fisheries. We recognize that the definition of a 'young' fishermen varies from community to community and throughout regions; however, it is our intent that their cumulative service on a commercial fishing vessel as a captain, crew member, deckhand, or other at-sea position not exceed 120 months, which can be earned over multiple fishing seasons. Participants will be selected by grant recipients.

Grants:

- Grants may not exceed a period of longer than 3 years, with a maximum grant amount of \$200,000 per year
- A 25 percent cash or in-kind match is required for each grant
- In awarding grants, the Secretary shall seek a balanced geographic distribution with priority given to projects servicing fishing communities (as defined in MSA)
- Grant recipients must submit annual project evaluation reports to the Secretary for public distribution

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Grant uses:

Grants can be used for a number of types of trainings including, but not limited to:

- Training in seamanship, navigation, safety, and electronics
- Training in vessel and engine care, maintenance, and repair
- Training in gear technology (for reducing bycatch, conservation, etc. purposes)
- Education and training in entrepreneurship and good business practices including: accounting, loans, taxes, insurance, direct marketing
- Training in financial and risk management, including vessel and quota purchasing
- Education in state and federal legal requirements for specific fisheries, including reporting, licenses, regulations, etc.
- Education in state and federal fisheries management and policy, including the Council process
- Mentoring, apprenticeships, and internships to facilitate the transfer of knowledge from the older generation of fishermen to the younger fishermen
- Any other opportunities as determined appropriate by the Secretary

Program Implementation:

Grant recipients (outlined above) receive federal funds to support the specific training or education program detailed in their grant application. Upon receipt of funds, the grantee will publicize the opportunity for young fishermen to participate in the program and solicit applications. The grantee will then determine which young fishermen will be accepted in the program and advise them of any requirements. Participating fishermen enrolled in the program will receive the training/education for free. Upon completion, each beginning fishermen will receive official notification of successfully completing the course/training.

Additional points:

- **NONE** of these federal funds may be used to purchase fishing licenses, permits, quota, or other harvesting rights

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