Science, Service, Stewardship

Surf Clam/Ocean Quahog ITQ

National Catch Shares Workshop

La Jolla, CA

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Surf Clam Ocean Quahog ITQ

- Hydraulic Clam Dredge
- Gulf of Maine/ Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic
- Implemented 1990
- Quota unit in terms of cages
- Tag affixed to each cage

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Available Trend Data

- Season length: *Before Program*: Six hours every other week; *After Program*: Year-round
- Ex-vessel value:
- *Before Program*: 1990 ~ $44 M
- *After Program*: 2007 ~ $49 M (worth $30.8 million in 1990 value)
- Consolidation (1990-1997): 74% reduction in surf clam fishery; 40% in ocean quahog fishery.
- Stock status:
- *Before Program* (1990): Overfishing: NO; Overfished: NO
- *After Program* (2008): Overfishing: NO; Overfished: NO

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Nature of Harvest Privilege

- Eligibility: No foreign ownership but otherwise anyone can buy and fish quota.
- Duration: Open ended. Council can end the program through the normal Council process.
- Transferability: Fully tradable and there has been an active market.
- Accumulation: No control parameters.
- Initial Allocation: Initial ITQ shares of the fishery quota were issued to vessel owners based on a formula of historical catches (80%) and vessel size (20%).

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Management Context/Issues

- Primary objective to promote economic efficiency
- Shift from vessel ownership share to processors
- Growing level of vertical integration and use of harvesting contracts
- Subject of GAO review
  - —Cost recovery
  - —Excessive share