

Ben Platt

Ben Platt is a second generation California commercial fisherman whose current homeport is Crescent City, California. He started working on his family's commercial fishing boats at the age of nine years old in the summers while growing up in Pt. Arena. Ben worked his way through high school on his family's boats and then college at Humboldt State University between 1980-1985 on other salmon and crab boats based out of Eureka and Ft. Bragg. He left fishing for 10 years after college to pursue a career as a scenic artist in Hollywood, returning in 1997 when his father became ill, taking over operation of one of his family's smaller vessels.

He and his wife started boat ownership with a 17' skiff with an outboard motor fishing nearshore rock cod out of Noyo Harbor 22 years ago, bought their first small salmon troller the next year and have owned two other boats in the ensuing years until this fall launching the Miss Heidi, a 58'x25' steel combination steel combination vessel that is rigged for salmon, tuna, crab, shrimp trawl and tendering salmon in Alaska. In the last twenty years, Ben has spent most of his summers trolling for salmon or albacore from Morro Bay, California to the Fairweather Grounds in the Gulf of Alaska. He has spent fall, winter and spring fishing for crabs out of nearly every port in California. The Miss Heidi and Ben's previous crab boats employ 3-4 crewmen during the crab seasons.

Ben has long been active in advocacy work for the crab and salmon fisheries. He has served on the California Salmon Council for eight years, and is its current Vice President. He represented the Salmon Trollers Marketing Association of Ft. Bragg between 2005-2010 at the Pacific Fisheries Management Council salmon season meetings. Ben is a founding board member and current President of the California Coast Crab Association, which was formed in the wake of the CBD vs. Bonham out-of-court settlement agreement, to establish strong industry representation for working with CDFW to find workable RAMP guidelines for the interim fishing period while also providing legal, scientific and political cover for industry to achieve fair and practical regulations under the eventual Incidental Take Permit.