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MEDIA CONTACT

OF THE SEA

A FILM ABOUT CALIFORNIA FISHERMEN

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Upcoming documentary features California fishermen and explores seafood and sustainability

Mendocino, California (April 14, 2014) – With complex regulations, high cost, and competition with cheap farmed and imported seafood, California’s population of commercial fishermen is steeply declining. In 1981 there were 6,900 fishing vessels in California. Only 1,800 exist today.

Last year, award-winning filmmaker Mischa Hedges and his production company TrimTab Media received initial funding from Cal Humanities to produce a documentary about commercial fishermen in California - to explore their work and document their lives. For five months, Hedges and his team have been capturing stories about fishermen, seafood and sustainability along the California coast, from Fort Bragg to San Francisco to Morro Bay.

“It’s a fascinating way of life – the fishermen we’ve met work incredibly hard, and care deeply about the ocean and its bounty,” says Hedges. “We’ve captured some pretty amazing stories, but there are so many more.” In addition to filming interviews with commercial fishermen, Hedges and his crew are capturing footage at sea, underwater shots of fishing boats in action, and timelapse footage of fishing communities. They are also featuring stories about entrepreneurs who are bringing local, sustainable seafood to the public using innovative business models. “I think it’s important to include hopeful stories in documentaries. As audience members, we have to know that we can DO something to help after watching a film – otherwise, what’s the point?” says Hedges.

The filmmakers recently launched a campaign to raise additional funding via Kickstarter. The funds will be used to continue production this summer, helping Hedges and his crew capture additional footage of fishermen who catch Salmon and Albacore Tuna off the California coast. Backers to the project will receive various “rewards” for their contributions, including tickets to the film’s premiere and an exclusive online screening.

The documentary is scheduled to be completed this fall, after which Hedges plans to submit to film festivals, host community screenings and make the film available online. A PBS broadcast is also planned for OF THE SEA in the San Francisco Bay Area.

“I am making this film to connect people who eat seafood with the people who catch it, and to inspire viewers to make responsible seafood choices,” said Hedges. “I believe that when conscious, committed people are empowered with information about how they can make the world a better place, they use it to do just that.” For more information and to become a backer of the film’s Kickstarter campaign, visit <http://www.oftheseamovie.com/kickstarter>