



# A-TLEGAY FISHERIES LP

## CFE PROFILE

### OVERVIEW

A-Tlegay Fisheries LP was formed in early 2013 to focus solely on the commercial fishing and training enterprises for the five member Nations of A-Tlegay Fisheries Society: We Wai Kai, Wei Wai Kum, K'ómoks, Tlowitsis and Kwiakah. Its primary purpose is to acquire and manage licences and quota purchased from government programs and the open market to create opportunities for the communities' individual harvesters to earn a sustainable living in commercial fisheries. A-Tlegay's community history and training initiatives have resulted in a high capacity of trained fishers and high demand for licences.

### PICFI SUPPORT

Through the administration of commercial fishing training programs, and leasing commercial licences to members, A-Tlegay Fisheries LP is improving the viability of existing commercial harvesters and helping to build new fishing capacity. The partnership with Pacific Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiative (PICFI) has helped enhance the breadth of training and licences A-Tlegay can offer its members and has allowed the communities to diversify into new fisheries. Licence acquisitions made by the A-Tlegay include: salmon seine – area B, prawn, herring seine, herring gillnet, halibut and salmon gillnet – area C & D.

### SUPPORTING CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

Fish and fishing have been at the heart of the lives of We Wai Kai, Wei Wai Kum, K'ómoks, Tlowitsis and Kwiakah people since time immemorial.

“Our community has been involved in the commercial fishing industry since its inception,” says Brian Assu, chairperson of A-Tlegay Fisheries LP board of directors. “Historically 75-80 per cent of our community members relied on the commercial salmon and herring industry.”

With those industries becoming less profitable in recent years for member fishers, A-Tlegay has helped its fishers stay competitive in existing markets and to diversify into more profitable fisheries such as prawn, halibut and black cod. Assu says, “the PICFI program has helped to bring people back into the fishing industry, not just salmon and herring.”

### DEVELOPING ECONOMY, JOBS AND OPPORTUNITIES

We Wai Kai, Wei Wai Kum, K'ómoks, Tlowitsis and Kwiakah have experienced a similar trend seen in other communities: that the age of commercial fishers is rising, leading to a concern that vital skills could be lost forever. A-Tlegay Fisheries LP is helping to turn that trend around for a new generation of fishers. Extensive training across a range of areas – from essential services like marine emergency duties and marine first aid to small vessel operator proficiency and 60-tonne operating tickets - has significantly increased commercial fisheries capacity in the five communities. A-Tlegay has trained close to 200 members in: small vessel operators proficiency (SVOP), marine emergency duties (MED), radio operators certificate (ROC), marine first aid, vessel masters IV, vessel stability, fisheries observer for commercial fisheries – test fisheries and scuba/dive training.

Mentorship programs have also become a big part of the community, creating opportunities for young fishers.



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Certified mentors are used for mentoring in longline, herring gillnet, salmon gillnet and prawn fisheries.

At any given time, A-Tlegay Fisheries LP is leasing out between two and six licences to members. The leases are accessed by community members through a lease fee, which is based on a percentage of production. This approach helps individual members set up fishing careers in a feasible way.

### THE FUTURE

A-Tlegay Fisheries LP will continue to offer support to its members in the commercial fishing industry through training, as well as purchasing more licences and quota in diverse categories to try and create more growth in the fishing community. It is currently running feasibility studies for land-based opportunities that would grow fisheries employment, like processing or storage.

## TED ASSU-FISHER

Ted, now 63, has been fishing since he was 11 and started running boats when was 22. His knowledge and training was passed to him from previous generations by spending time on boats in his youth with family members.

Before partnering with A-Tlegay Fisheries LP, Ted had a family-owned vessel but no licences to fish. After the creation of A-Tlegay Fisheries LP, he was able to apply for, and receive, licences to fish. He says, "this organization has made it a lot easier to be successful from a community basis and get consistency and comfort of access."