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Lobster Bulletin

Lobster Institute

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Spring 2013

## The Lobster Bulletin, Spring 2013

Lobster Institute, University of Maine

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Spring 2013

*“News, research updates, and information on lobsters and the lobster industry.”*

**Published by the Lobster Institute**

*“Protecting and conserving the lobster resource, and enhancing lobstering as an industry...and a way of life.”*

## **“Sharing a Common Resource” Theme of Lobster Institute’s 2013 Canadian/U.S Lobstermen’s Town Meeting**

The Lobster Institute’s 2013 Canadian/U.S. Lobstermen’s Town Meeting stirred a lot of conversation on far-ranging topics such as sustainability certification, handling lobsters to preserve quality, effects of high-speed trap hauling, and many others.

The one and a half day event; which brings lobstermen and others connected to the fishery together to share ideas, questions, and concerns; was held in Saint John New Brunswick on March 22 and 23. A major goal of the Town Meeting is to foster collaboration and communication between all geographic areas and all sectors of the fishery; and this was evident with fishermen, processors and managers traveled from Massachusetts, Nova Scotia and every place in between. With close to 80 people in attendance, the discussions were at times lively, at times humorous, yet always focused on the good of the fishery – reinforcing the fact that all share and rely on a common resource that must be protected.

Following the abundance and early landings of new-shell or soft-shell lobsters in 2012, lobster quality was discussed at length. Key components of that discussion where questions such as: “How do we incentivize quality?” “Will I get a better price if I take steps to improve quality?” “Will grading of lobsters become an industry standard; and if so, how could that be implemented?” Several fishermen noted that proper handling of lobsters must extend from the boat to the handlers on the wharf, to the processors, and to everyone along the chain from boat to plate.

Many noted they take pride in delivering a quality product regardless of the price they receive, and all should be encouraged to do the same. The conversation also took a public relations tack when it was suggested that lobstermen might work to eliminate what could be

**—cont. on page 4**

## **Nova Scotia Sets Up Panel to Develop Rules for Fish Farms by End of 2014**

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A panel has been created in Nova Scotia to recommend new regulations to govern the aquaculture industry by the end of next year, the provincial government announced Wednesday [May 1, 2013].

Aquaculture Minister Sterling Belliveau said the panel and a seven-member committee have been struck to come up with ideas on updating 15-year-old regulations for the sector. Belliveau said the move is intended to encourage the growth of the aquaculture industry while protecting coastal communities. “Our intent is to make sure that it is done in a sustainable manner, protecting the environment and yet creating good jobs in Nova Scotia,” Belliveau said.

The panel will be led by two environmental law experts from Dalhousie University, Meinhard Doelle and William Lahey. They will be advised by a committee that includes representation from industry and environmental groups, the Mi’kmaq and the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities.

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**LOBSTER INSTITUTE**

5763 Rogers Hall, Room #210  
The University of Maine, Orono, ME 04469-5763  
Phone: 207-581-2751 Fax: 207-581-2744

[www.lobsterinstitute.org](http://www.lobsterinstitute.org)

Cathy Billings, Editor [cathy.billings@umit.maine.edu](mailto:cathy.billings@umit.maine.edu)  
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## Downeast Maine Fisheries Inspire Online Literary Journal

*The Catch: Writings from Downeast Maine* is a new, place-based online literary journal featuring works of poetry, fiction, essay and other prose inspired by the fisheries and coastal heritage of Downeast Maine. According to journal editor Catherine Schmitt of Maine Sea Grant, *The Catch* is related to the Downeast Fisheries Trail, a maritime heritage education effort that highlights 45 sites of current and historic fishing heritage in Maine's two eastern coastal counties.

"The Downeast Fisheries Trail is sharing knowledge of fisheries past and present with visitors and residents. But information alone is not enough. We need art, too," says Schmitt. "As keepers of culture, artists help us remember the past, not for pure nostalgia, but so we might imagine new futures. With this journal, we hope to inspire writers near and far to visit Downeast Maine, perhaps using the Downeast Fisheries Trail as their guide, and to send us their own perspectives on the meaning of this place."



Nancy Tancredi shares her poetry at Downeast Fisheries Trail Celebration

The Downeast Fisheries Trail recently celebrated the first anniversary of its revival at a special celebration in Columbia Falls for Trail site managers. The celebration featured a poetry reading from *The Catch* contributor, Nancy Tancredi of Great Wass.

*The Catch* reviews submissions from September 1 through April 1 with publication in May.

*The Catch* is supported by the Maine Sea Grant College Program, Raymond H. Fogler Library, and DigitalCommons at the University of Maine.

The first issue of *The Catch* can be found at [www.digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/the\\_catch](http://www.digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/the_catch). The Downeast Fisheries Trail map and other details can be found at [www.downeastfisheriestrail.org](http://www.downeastfisheriestrail.org). ☞

## Nova Scotia to Develop Rules for Fish Farms

—Cont. from Page 1

Belliveau said the government will not approve any new applications for marine-based aquaculture sites until the new regulations are in place, with the exception of one application that has already been filed. There has been opposition to open pen fish farming around Nova Scotia and several groups have asked for a moratorium until a full environmental assessment can be done.



Lobster Institute stock photo of Canadian salmon pen.

Karen Traversy with the Coastal Coalition of Nova Scotia said the network of about 40 organizations is concerned about the government's intent to expand aquaculture in bays around the province. But Traversy said her group welcomes the opportunity to be part of the advisory committee because of the reputations of those on the panel. "Basically, the public and communities have lost confidence in the credibility of the regulatory regime we have now," she said. "We feel community views have to be known."

Bruce Hancock, executive director of the Aquaculture Association of Nova Scotia, said the industry also welcomes the chance to provide its input. "Having some sort of predictability and certainty is a good thing for business and if we can gain more public acceptance, then that's a good thing too."

Belliveau said it will cost between \$200,000 and \$300,000 to set up the panel and committee. Public consultations are expected to begin this summer.

### Lobster Institute Web Site Takes on a New Look

You can still access the Lobster Institute's Web site at [www.lobsterinstitute.org](http://www.lobsterinstitute.org) – yet you'll see a brand new format. The look is fresh, while the content is still as informative and comprehensive as ever. The site is now being hosted by the University of Maine and can also be accessed at [www.umaine.edu/lobsterinstitute](http://www.umaine.edu/lobsterinstitute).

**As a Non-profit, the Lobster Institute relies on industry and private support to continue its work for and with the lobster fishery. Please consider donating as a Friend of the Lobster Institute today. Call 207-581-2751 or visit [www.lobsterinstitute.org](http://www.lobsterinstitute.org)**





Contact us at 207-581-2751 if you would like to sponsor our “Research Report” and see your logo here!

# RESEARCH REPORT

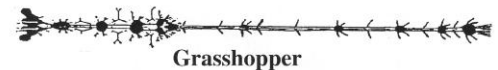
*Readers may contact the Lobster Institute for more detailed information on any of these projects.*

➤ **Wind Farm Sites Tested as Possible Habitat for European Lobsters** – According to an article in Reuters on May 2, 2013, German biologists at the Alfred-Wegener Institute for Polar and Marine Research are planning to release 3,000 laboratory reared lobsters (*Homarus gammarus*) into the Borkum Riffgat offshore wind farm near Heligoland, off the German-Dutch coast. There was a thriving fishing community on this small island prior to bombardment by Allied forces in World War II. The island has seen a 90 percent decrease in lobster landings over the past 70 years. Some scientists say the explosives are one reason for the depletion of lobster stocks in the area, including one of the largest non-nuclear explosions on record when in 1947 Britain set of 7,000 tons of explosives to blow up U-boat pens near Heligoland. It is hypothesized that toxins from the bombs may have impacted the lobsters sense of smell, which plays a critical role in mating – thus hindering reproduction.

With the introduction of wind farms to the area, a stony foundation will be created, which project leader Heinz-Deiter Franke says will “offer a favorable environment” reports article author Madeline Chambers. Further, Chambers notes that, “The 700,000 euro (\$923,500) scheme is funded by compensation paid to the state of Lower Saxony by utility EWE for any potential ecological damage caused by the construction of its wind park. The money will fund breeding, reintroduction and monitoring of the lobsters for roughly two years.” Given Germany’s strong initiative to create renewable sources of energy, according to Franke’s estimates, reports Chambers, “wind farms could help increase the lobster population to as many as 300,000 lobsters in the area around Heligoland in the long run, from 50,000 to 100,000 now.

*Citation: Chamber, Madeline. 2013. Wind farms to lure back German lobsters decimated by WW2. Reuters. [www.reuters.com/article/2013/05/02](http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/05/02)*

➤ **Refresher on Primitive Lobster Nervous System** – As summer approaches, the Lobster Institute is frequently asked about the ability of lobsters to feel pain. It is the Lobster Institute’s position that, while it is impossible to prove beyond any doubt, a preponderance of research indicates that lobsters do not have the capability of processing the sensation of pain. The nervous system of a lobster is extremely primitive – akin to that of insects. This position was recently confirmed by researchers at the University of Oslo, and is further substantiated by marine biologists from the University of Aberdeen who noted that lobsters and other invertebrates have only approximately 100,000 neurons while humans have over 100 billion.



Grasshopper



Lobster

*The primitive nervous system of a Grasshopper as compared to a lobster.*

Concerning the display of live lobsters on ice, this is a suitable technique for a short period of time (1-2 days) as long as the water from the melting ice is allowed to drain. Lobsters will not survive if held in fresh water. The best method for long-term holding of lobsters is a well-filtered and well-cooled saltwater tank system.

➤ **Correction:** In our Winter 2013 edition of the *Lobster Bulletin* we reported on the Size at Maturity Study reviewed by Dr. Angelica Silva of Fisheries and Oceans in Canada at the FSRS Science Workshop held in February 2013. We incorrectly indicate that 98% of sublegal lobsters were immature for LFA 31A,. Dr. Silva informed us that it actually is the opposite- in recent years up to 98% of sublegal lobsters have been deemed mature. We apologize for any inconvenience. ❀

Access a literature search and summary report compiled by the Lobster Institute on Impacts to Crustaceans from Construction of Wind Farms on their Web site at <http://umaine.edu/lobsterinstitute/publications/institute-reports-manuals/>





## **LOBSTER INSTITUTE**

### ***Lobster Bulletin, Spring 2013***

perceived as negative terminology when talking about newly molted lobster – terms such as “junk”

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Many noted they take pride in delivering a quality product regardless of the price they receive, and all should be encouraged to do the same. The conversation also took a public relations tack when it was suggested that lobstermen might work to eliminate what could be perceived as negative terminology when talking about newly molted lobster – terms such as “junk”.

Another goal of the Town Meeting is to help set the agenda for research for the lobster fishery on an industry-wide basis, geared toward the responsible use of the resource while maintaining the vitality of the industry. The lobstermen in attendance suggested priorities should include: the impact of pesticides and herbicides on all life stages of the lobster; obtaining



*Togue Brawn representing the Fund for the Advancement of Sustainable Maine Lobster has the floor at the Lobster Institute's 2013 Canadian/U.S. Lobstermen's Town Meeting.*

baseline data on the impacts of aquaculture on the lobster; and in the socio-economic realm, studies on corporate ownership of fisheries and possible impacts on coastal communities & ocean stewardship.

This year, 2013, marked the tenth anniversary of the Lobster Institute's Canadian/U.S. Lobstermen's Town Meeting. The idea for the Town Meeting was first suggested by Dana Rice and other members of the Institute's Board of Advisors. Rice returned as Co-Chair of the 2013 event, joined by fellow co-chair Dr. Jean Lavallee.

Special sponsors who have supported the Town Meeting each of its ten years, Primary Sponsor Darden Restaurants, and Reception Sponsor High Liner Foods/ Fishery Products International, were recognized with framed certificates. Riverdale Mills and founder James Knott were also recognized as a 2013 Primary Sponsor.

All discussions at the Town Meeting were recorded and a complete transcript has been compiled by the Lobster Institute, along with a summary report. Copies are available (written or mp3) by contacting the Lobster Institute at 207-581-1443 or lobsterinstitute@maine.edu. The report will also be available at the Lobster Institute's Web site at [www.lobsterinstitute.org](http://www.lobsterinstitute.org). ☘

### **Heard at the 2013 Canadian/U.S. Lobstermen's Town Meeting:**

*I would just like to say after listening yesterday and listening today, I might as well make my summation. I thought it was a really good conversation here. I thought there were strong points. I thought people had some really good points to make and it reminds me of a line that I heard some time ago and that was that a smart man knows his one-way street but a wise man looks both ways.*

Kenny Drake, Lobsterman, PEI