Pat White was a dedicated man. White, who passed away in April at age 76 while vacationing in Florida, was dedicated to his wife, Enid, his three children, and for twenty years, to the Maine Lobstermen’s Association (MLA), where he served as executive director from 1992 to 2002 and as chief executive officer and Board member until 2010. “He was pretty forceful. He would smile and shake your hand and laugh but when he wanted to get something resolved, he was persistent,” said David Cousens, MLA president.

White did many things during the course of his life. Born in Salem, Massachusetts, he began lobstering at 16. He later joined the Peace Corps and was assigned to the West African country of Togo, where he worked with fishermen and met his future wife, Enid Wardwell of Castine. They returned to Maine and married in 1962. At first White worked as a traveling ski salesman based in Conway, New Hampshire. Then he became the manager of the Mt. Agamenticus ski slopes in York. Eventually White and his wife bought a farm and garden center which they ran together for 15 years.

But White always wanted to lobster again. The time came when he could return to the water, lobstering full-time from York. He joined the MLA. MLA president Ed Blackmore soon asked White if he would serve on the organization’s board. Once an MLA board member, White found that the Maine lobster fishery was a whole lot more complicated on land than it was on the water. When Ed Blackmore stepped down as president in 1992, David Cousens became president and White became the MLA’s first executive director.

At that time, the lobster fishery was managed by the New England Fisheries Management Council (NEFMC). The Council wanted to increase the legal size at which a lobster could be harvested in order to protect what they considered a vulnerable stock. White and the MLA board fought against the proposed gauge increase.

He was asked to co-chair the Lobster Industry Working Group established by the NEFMC. White argued convincingly that the lobster fishery was primarily

Continued on page 21
During his first presidential campaign, Bill Clinton famously said “It’s all about the economy.” Here in Maine lobstermen are learning to say, “It’s all about the quality.”

Maintaining the well-being of a lobster at every stage of its journey from the trap to the wharf and the final consumer is key to ensuring that Maine lobster is known for consistently high quality and Maine lobstermen get the best price possible for their catches. Keeping a lobster — both hard- and soft-shell — lively is not that complicated, as lobster veterinarian Jean Lavallée pointed out during his presentations along the coast in late April. Landings features a summary of his informative talks in this issue.

Department of Marine Resources Commissioner Patrick Keliher highlights his agency’s responsibility for maintaining the health of the state’s many marine species and the economic health of Maine’s fishermen. Lobster landings make up the majority of the state’s landed value, causing many coastal communities to become dependent on that fishery for their economic vitality. Keliher explains that the DMR is rethinking its role in lobster science and monitoring to enhance the agency’s ability to foresee any changes that may be on the distant horizon.

We also hear this month from Charlie McGeoghegan, chair of Prince Edward Island’s (PEI) new Lobster Marketing Board. The board was formed this spring to oversee development of a marketing plan for PEI’s lobsters. Their efforts will be funded by the first one-cent-per-pound-levy on lobsters paid by lobstermen and lobster processors on the island. The levy was long in the making and McGeoghegan tells us about his board’s hopes for the future.

On a different note entirely, businessman Stephen Conant writes about a new undersea electrical cable being proposed off the coast of Maine and New Hampshire. The Maine Green Line project would carry up to 1200 megawatts of electricity from northern Maine to areas in highly populated southern New England. The high-voltage direct-current cables would run 220 miles from Penobscot Bay to Massachusetts. Conant offers a clear description of this project, which currently is in its initial design and permitting phase, in an effort to keep the industry informed and to solicit feedback on potential solutions.

Later this month the New England Fisheries Management Council will hold an important public meeting, on May 16 and 17 in Portland, devoted to discussing new ways to determine how much herring can be caught in any given year. At the root of the meeting is the complex question of whether to set maximum allowed herring catches for the main species that eat the fish as prey while meeting the needs of lobstermen who rely on the fish as bait. Landings provides an overview of the purpose of the meeting and the Council’s new Management Strategy Evaluation approach designed to elicit public input at an early stage.

Lobstermen and other fishermen generally make sure that they and their boat are safe on the water, but tragedies do happen. To help fishing families and fishing communities better prepare for such traumatic events, a new manual called RESCUES (Responding to Emergencies at Sea and to Communities under Extreme Stress) was created through a collaboration of Massachusetts organizations. The manual outlines what measures can be taken at the personal and community levels to ensure that help and recovery are accessed as soon as possible. Ann Backus, one of the manual’s co-authors, takes us through RESCUES chapter by chapter.

Alisha Keezer, the MLA health insurance Navigator, continues her look at the features of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) and health insurance options. Her topic in Landings this month is preventive health care services that are included in all ACA health insurance plans and how to take advantage of them.

Finally in this issue Landings says good-bye to Pat White, former head of the Maine Lobstermen’s Association and the Gulf of Maine Lobster Foundation. Pat wore many hats during his life, moving easily among lobstermen, bureaucrats and scientists. He made many things happen, for the MLA, for the state and for his friends. We bid him farewell and following seas. He will be deeply missed.

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Times are good in Maine’s lobster industry and the future looks bright. But it is important that we keep an eye on the horizon to make sure we can sustain this vital fishery for future generations.

While we continue to see signs of a strong lobster resource in the Gulf of Maine, we’re monitoring the population closely to prepare for potential changes. As I’ve said before, the best time to prepare for the future is when times are good.

For this reason DMR will be working on our own Maine lobster fishery management plan to guide us through change in the future. Although State fishery management plans do not have the weight of law or regulation, they will be a useful tool when the time for change comes along.

The annual settlement survey — the only assessment of newly settled young lobstermen to participate in this lucrative industry and will provide much-needed support and recognition for the critical role the Marine Patrol plays in protecting Maine’s lobster resource.

While times are good and the foreseeable future appears bright, we must not ignore the indicators that give us a look at a future horizon. Paying attention to those indicators is how we can sustain this industry that is so vital to our coastal economy and heritage.

I wish you all a safe and prosperous year as you prepare to set over for the season or start to shift gear in preparation for the summer harvest.
By Charlie McGeoghegan
PEI Lobster Marketing Board Chair

Let the lines go! We are charting a new course in marketing waters. Prince Edward Island fishers have the first Lobster Marketing Board in Canada, and it’s in place for the 2016 season.

The Board of twelve represents fishers from North Lake to Seacow Pond on the north side, and Souris to Skinners Pond on the south side, along with all harbors in between. This is all new to us here, and the Board is proceeding carefully, as we have a lot to learn and we want to make informed decisions in regards to promoting our great resource.

What is our goal? It’s simple: to put more dollars in the hands of every fisherman and woman on PEI.

While we have ideas on how to go forward, our ultimate goal is to return profit and pride to our industry once again. We need to add value to the supply chain, open new markets, help increase sales in current markets, and tell the PEI story. After all, both live shippers and processors know that our quality is second to none. When the ice clears and our boats hit the water, our lobsters have amazing protein levels and meat yield from 28 - 38%. This is a good thing, and consumers need to know it.

Three years ago, the whole southern Gulf of Saint Lawrence lobster fleet (3000 boats strong) went on strike, tying their boats to the dock in protest of shore prices that had dropped from $5.50 per pound for canner size and $6.50 per pound for market size six years earlier to $2.75 for canners and $3.25 for market size in 2013. That’s a 50% drop in price! All the while fuel continued to increase in cost as did bait, traps, supplies, maintenance, boats, engines, gear, pickup trucks, etc. It doesn’t take much of an accountant to tell you that you cannot keep doing this. The math is NOT there.

Can you think of five products that have gone down 50% in value over that same time frame? Now narrow that to five food products.

And it was interesting that the cost to the consumer dropped very little on live product and little to none in the restaurants during the same period. Restaurants received $35-$50 (Canadian) for a one-pound lobster on a plate when the price was $6.50 per pound to fishers and the same when it was $3.25 to fishers.

In the middle of this supply chain are about four to five other sets of hands before a lobster gets to the restaurant. None of those took the hit that the fishers did. In some cases there are too many hands in the pie; that’s what the industry needs to find out.

This is a multi-billion-dollar industry in North America, however, the people who risk their lives in all kinds of weather conditions in both Canada and the U.S. are not receiving a fair return for the effort they put in to bring the raw product to the dock. This has to change.

A few years ago, Maine lobstermen and their legislature realized that enough was enough and decided to collect a levy to start marketing lobster at the ground level. We take our hats off to them for getting this started. Keep up the good work!

In Canada, various governments — mostly federal — have invested in lobster and seafood marketing over the years. However, most of the results of those efforts have not made it to sea level. The fishers saw little or no benefit on their end.

So here we are trying to make a difference again. This new levy for PEI fishers was birthed from the lobster strike in 2013. The Maritime Provinces’ lobster panel was formed by the provincial and federal governments at that time. They went on a Maritime-wide road show, collecting data and meeting with fishers, buyers, dealers, and processors to get their take on the situation. When they were done, they wrote a report on the state of the lobster industry and made recommendations. While fishers on PEI did not agree with all of the report’s findings, there were some that they did agree on. One was to collect a one cent levy from all lobster fishers in Atlantic Canada and all first point-of-sale lobster buyers to be used for marketing lobster.

In early 2014, the PEI Fisherman’s Association (PEIFA) was ready to send out orders for the fall of 2015 or spring of 2016. Lead time on orders is getting longer. Get your orders in early to assure a timely delivery.

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In early 2014, the PEI Fisherman’s Association (PEIFA) was ready to send out an information package and a ballot to see what the majority of island fishers wanted to do. The neighboring provinces were not ready to do this so PEI was

Continued on page 18

Prince Edward Island lobstermen became the first in the Maritime provinces to agree to a levy on their catches in order to fund a marketing program. Photo courtesy of C. McGeoghegan.
It’s hard being an Atlantic herring. Lobstermen want you as bait for their traps. Large marine animals, like tuna and whales, want you for dinner. And many others want you for their own ends, whether that be recreational fishermen or large-scale bait companies. Balancing all these different consumers is the task of the New England Fisheries Management Council (NEFMC), which will be holding a public meeting on the topic on May 16 and 17 at the Holiday Inn by the Bay in Portland.

During its January 2015 meeting, the Council initiated Amendment 8 to the Atlantic Herring Fishery Management Plan. The goals of Amendment 8 are to account for the role of Atlantic herring within the ecosystem, including its role as a forage fish; to stabilize the fishery at a level designed to achieve Optimum Age Fish; to stabilize the fishery at a certain level across the years; to restrict herring fishing to acceptable biological catches (ABCs) for herring. The ABC dictates the annual quota in the herring fishery.

Typically in creating a fisheries management plan amendment, after the Council sets the amendment’s goals, it then moves directly into creation of alternatives to achieve those goals. After a range of possible alternatives is approved, a Plan Development Team evaluates each alternative in terms of socioeconomic, environmental and other impacts. The resulting draft impact statement returns to the Council for consideration, and the Council approves the impact statement and chooses alternatives. The chosen alternatives go out for public comment, the Council reviews those comments, amends its preferences as it deems necessary, and then forwards the amendment to NOAA for final approval. “Through the MSE approach, there is more opportunity for public input in developing alternatives,” Feeney said.

A trained facilitator from outside New England will conduct the two-day meeting. That person will explain the workshop’s goals and help participants set the ground rules for the meeting. After gathering as a large group for brief scientific and technical presentations, the participants will move into smaller work groups to discuss the issues relating to the herring fishery. Each group will have its own facilitator. “It’s important that everyone be heard,” Feeney said. By the end of the workshop participants will have identified an array of objectives and approaches for setting the acceptable biological catch. “It’s OK for the workshop participants to have conflicting objectives for the control rule,” Feeney added. “We want to evaluate a range. We don’t need consensus.”

Consensus might be hard to achieve. Herring management brings out pointed opinions from many quarters. Mid-water trawlers and purse seiners each accuse the other of causing “localized depletion” of herring stocks. Localized depletion means a higher bycatch of haddock, which are often found around herring schools, in order to keep fishing for herring.

Feeney emphasizes that the May workshop will focus on issues surrounding the appropriate control rule, not localized depletion or haddock bycatch. The discussion will concentrate on how precautionary the Council should be when it comes to restricting herring fishing to account for the needs of the ecosystem.

“What do we want the acceptable biological catch control rule to accomplish? Do we want to maintain catch at a certain level across the years? How might we account for herring’s role in the ecosystem? What sort of a buffer do we want to have in place? Those are some of the questions we’ll discuss at the workshop,” Feeney said.

The results of the workshop will be reviewed by the Herring Committee and Council in June before a technical evaluation and modelling of control rules relative to objectives. Those results are expected to be made public in early fall.

The May 16-17 Herring Workshop is open to all but preregistration by May 9 is requested. For more information or to register, go to www.nefmc.org/calendar/may-16-17-2016-herring-workshop.

**By Melissa Waterman**

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Like many of you, I attended the 2016 Maine Fishermen’s Forum in Rockland. A recurrent theme this year was the warming waters in the Gulf of Maine and the impact this is having on the state’s critically important fishing industries. In one session, I learned that Maine’s waters are warming faster than almost all other water bodies around the world. The effects are already impacting Rhode Island and Massachusetts, where lobster catches are down and shell disease is increasingly common. In Maine, southern species not previously prominent, such as blue crab and black sea bass, are increasingly common.

My company, Green Line Design, is working on a project called the Maine Green Line, a high-voltage direct-current (HVDC) submarine electric transmission cable. The project will transmit up to 1200 megawatts (MWs) of low carbon electrical energy from northern Maine and eastern Canada to southern New England. The project will help the region make the transition to cleaner electric energy supplies with less impact on our climate – but because the project will run through areas in “your backyard,” we are reaching out early to fishermen with more detailed information about the project.

We plan to bury two 320 kilovolt (kV) direct-current cables bundled together 220 miles across the Gulf of Maine from Penobscot Bay to Plymouth, Massachusetts. One of the bundle’s two cables is positively charged, the other is negatively charged. The central conductor of each cable is surrounded by a layer of cross-linked polyethylene (XLPE) to act as a dielectric insulation, which also serves to absorb heat. Around that is a layer of lead, steel cable, and other armor to shield emissions and protect the cable. Each conductor is roughly the diameter of a standard DVD.

About 25 miles of cable can be loaded aboard a cable-laying vessel. The cable will be installed four to six feet beneath the ocean floor at a rate of about one-half to one mile per day, primarily by means of a jet plow. This is a technique where soft bottom material is displaced by plows, aided by a jet of water, for a period long enough to position the cable at the required burial depth while the plow is towed along by the cable-laying vessel. The sediment then settles over the installed cable. In areas where the cable cannot be buried, it will be covered with protective matting.

Since the two cables (positive and negative) are bundled together, any electromagnetic field effects are minimized to values lower than the natural background of Earth’s magnetic field. At least one year prior to installation, a survey vessel will traverse the planned cable corridor using side scan radar to determine bottom conditions and the least disruptive path. Once the cable is buried, the corridor will be charted by the National Ocean Service and there will be no restriction on lobstering, dragging or other fishing activity over the cable. Prior to and during installation, the Maine Green Line team will coordinate with all mariners on lobstering, dragging or any other fishing activity over the cable. Prior to and during installation, the Maine Green Line team will coordinate with all mariners on lobstering, dragging or any other fishing activity over the cable. Prior to and during installation, the Maine Green Line team will coordinate with all mariners on lobstering, dragging or any other fishing activity over the cable.

Firsthand knowledge is equally important in engaging local communities that could be affected by these systems. For many months, members of our development team have met with representatives of Maine’s fishing, environmental, political and regulatory communities to introduce the Maine Green Line. The purpose: to listen to concerns about potential impacts prior to a formal permitting process, especially from those whose fishing areas we will traverse.

The feedback is helping us to design a project that minimizes impacts by analyzing alternative routes, appropriate times of the year for construction, and other environmental factors. Such experience has proven useful in other projects, especially in the U.K. where the fishing community has seen projects constructed and operated without incident. We’ll use that cross-Atlantic experience in developing the Maine Green Line by creating opportunities for local fishermen to talk to North Sea fishermen.

I’d like to claim that the Maine Green Line alone will end the problems concerning the warming waters in the Gulf of Maine – it won’t, but it’s a step toward ending the dependency of our electric system on fossil fuels and the associated impacts of climate change. I look forward to working with everyone in the years ahead on a project that can do its part in preserving a fishing industry in Maine.

For more information, visit our website at www.maine greenline.com. Representatives are also available to meet with groups, or one-on-one, to discuss the project.

Stephen Conant is President of Green Line Design, LLC, where he leads the development of Anbaric’s Maine Green Line project. Photo courtesy of S. Conant.

**By Stephen Conant**

The Neptune Project is a HVDC undersea and underground power cable that links the PJM grid to New York and serves the Long Island Power Authority (LIPA) with 660 MW of power. The cable runs approximately 65 miles between Sayreville, New Jersey, and New Cassel (North Hempstead) on Long Island. It was developed, permitted, financed, and constructed and is now operating as the Neptune Regional Transmission System (Neptune RTS).

The Hudson Transmission Project is a 660 MW electric transmission link between New York City and the PJM Interconnection. Its main purpose is to provide a new source of electric power for New York City customers as well as significant upgrades and reinforcements to the transmission system in New Jersey. The Hudson transmission line is entirely underground and underwater, using back-to-back high-voltage direct-current (HVDC) technology and an AC tie across the Hudson River.

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**GUEST COLUMN: New underwater cable proposed for Gulf of Maine**

Stephen Conant

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STEAMING AHEAD

I was sad to learn that Pat White passed away on April 15 while vacationing in Florida. Actually, I was shocked to hear the news. Like so many in the lobster industry, I saw Pat recently at the Maine Fishermen’s Forum in March, ever-fun-loving and full of the brightness and energy that made him who he was.

I met Pat back in 1998 when I began working for the New England Aquarium. I worked closely with him to organize the International Lobster Summit as part of the Maine Fishermen’s Forum. Through Pat, I got to know many people in the Maine lobster industry. I quickly realized that I had almost instant credibility because I was with Pat.

By the time I met him, he and David Cousens had already led the lobster fishery through some very formative, but difficult, times. In his early tenure with the MLA, Pat saw the organization through many challenges. Significantly, he got the MLA back on its feet financially, and then he and Cousens held the organization together after losing Ruth Lane, the MLA’s longtime executive assistant.

With the organization on its feet, Pat took on the enormous task of convincing bureaucrats to move lobster management from the New England Fisheries Management Council — which wanted to implement gauge increases and large trap cuts — over to the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC). As part of that struggle, he and Cousens worked with Senator Snowe to get the first limits in place on landing dragger-caught lobster. It would be impossible to measure the conservation impact that action alone has had on our resource, given the decline of the groundfish industry since then.

As the ASMFC plan took shape, Pat and Dave earned their stripes as industry leaders, advocating for an 800 trap limit and 16” vent size as necessary compromises to avoid severe trap reductions and gauge increases. These measures were extremely controversial at the time and the MLA lost a lot of members over it — especially those infuriated by the vent size increase. Pat stuck to his guns and stood out as a true leader.

He was really good at that. Pat was one of those special people who could see the big picture while others got lost in the weeds. Those were high-stakes issues with far-reaching impacts on all lobstermen. Despite the controversy and undeserved criticism, he remained good-natured and managed to keep his cool during it all.

Pat’s personality was larger than life. I remember three walking into various management meetings where you could cut the tension with a knife. But there was no need for anxiety because I could immediately feel the mood change when Pat entered the room. His physical presence, warm smile and commanding voice somehow put everyone at ease. If Pat was around, you had the sense that everything would be OK. He made everyone feel like they mattered and that they belonged.

That was certainly the case with me. Pat invited me to come work for the MLA way back in 2000. One might expect a Massachusetts girl with no fishing background to be a bit apprehensive about taking on such a challenge. That was certainly partly true. But with Pat as my mentor, I just knew that this was where I belonged.

True to his generation, Pat was old school. Back when I started, he wasn’t using a computer and most of what he managed was either in his head, or neatly filed away somewhere in his office by his wife Enid. Lobstering, fisheries management and dealing with people came natural to Pat. It was intuitive and not something you would find in a training manual. My training for the job was pretty straightforward. We sat down and he went through his little black book of contacts. He talked through who everyone was and how the MLA worked with them. He handed that book off to me, and that was that.

In my mind, I was ready for the job! He actually had bought a new black book for himself in which he carefully transcribed all his contacts.

Over the years, I observed him fighting for the lobster industry in a variety of arenas. He was strong and persuasive, but always a gentleman and always professional. No matter what the issue was, Pat was able to see the big picture and focus on what mattered most to lobstermen. He was a strong leader with strong ideas, yet he always had time to stop and listen to fishermen and seek a compromise that would work for them. It seemed that wherever we would go, everyone knew, loved and respected Pat.

I am blessed to have worked so closely with Pat for many years. He was my boss, my mentor and my friend. He was a genuinely thoughtful and caring person and a great role model. I watched him move seamlessly from being a devoted family man, so proud of his wife, kids, grandchildren and dogs, to an industry leader and staunch supporter of Maine lobstermen, to a friend to so many. Pat truly understood the importance of the work-life balance. I consider that one of the most precious gifts he gave me. Pat was an incredible person — I learned a lot and am a better person for having known him.

Pat, you certainly made your mark while you were here, but I can’t help but feel that we lost you too soon. I wish you farewell and following seas. You will truly be missed.

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MAINE LOBSTERMEN’S ASSOCIATION UPDATE

Maine Lobstermen’s Association

Adovcating for a sustainable lobster resource and the fishermen and communities that depend on it since 1954.

President: David Cousens
So. Thomaston, 594-7718

1st VP: Jim Dear
Bass Harbor, 288-9846

Navigator: Patrice Marriner
Carrabassett Valley, 253-3506

Sec/Treasurer: Arnold Gamgge, Jr.
So. Bristol, 644-8110

Directors

Bob Barnes, Spruce Head, 596-0777
Dwight Carver, Beals, 497-2895
Herman Combs, Orr’s Island, 807-8596
Jerry Cushman, Port Clyde, 372-6429
Dustin Delano, Monhegan, 542-7241
Robert Ingalls, Bucks Harbor, 253-3418
Mark Jones, Boothby, 633-6054
Jami Joyce, Swan’s Island, 526-4619
Jack Merrill, Islesford, 244-8147
Ted Miller, MARINEC, 372-6941
Willis Spear, Yarmouth, 846-9279
Jay Smith, Nobleboro, 563-5208
Craig Stewart, Long Island, 829-2109
Bob Baines, Spruce Head, 596-0177
Arnold Gamage, Jr.
Bass Harbor, 288-9846

Bass Harbor, 288-9846

1st VP

Sec/Treasurer

President

May 4, 5 p.m.
June 4, 5 p.m.

www.mainelobstermen.org

MAINE LOBSTERMEN'S ASSOCIATION UPDATE

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Advocating for a sustainable lobster resource and the fishermen and communities that depend on it since 1954.

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Craig Stewart, Long Island, 829-2109
John Tripp, Spruce Head, 633-6054
Chris Welch, Kennebunk, 205-2933
John Williams, Stonington, 367-2731
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Board of Directors’ Meeting Schedule

May 4, 5 p.m.
June 4, 5 p.m.

MLA DIRECTORS MEETING

The Maine Lobster Marketing Collaborative (MLMC) provided media training for MLA board members in April. Sixteen lobstermen completed the three-hour training and are now able to assist in MLMC’s marketing events, particularly upcoming regional events conducted with professional chefs. During the training, board members learned the key messages that should be stressed when talking about Maine lobster, and how to deal with reporters who may have an alternate agenda for their story. They learned that any interview with the media is an opportunity for a compromise that would work for them. It seemed that wherever we would go, everyone knew, loved and respected Pat.

I am blessed to have worked so closely with Pat for many years. He was my boss, my mentor and my friend. He was a genuinely thoughtful and caring person and a great role model. I watched him move seamlessly from being a devoted family man, so proud of his wife, kids, grandchildren and dogs, to an industry leader and staunch supporter of Maine lobstermen, to a friend to so many. Pat truly understood the importance of the work-life balance. I consider that one of the most precious gifts he gave me. Pat was an incredible person — I learned a lot and am a better person for having known him.

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Steve Mariner

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Staying “on message” takes training! MLA photo.
LOBSTER QUALITY TOUR A SUCCESS

The MLA was joined by several members of the CHOIR coalition (a group of recreational and commercial marine businesses) who voiced concern over the status of the herring stock which, according to NOAA, is not overfished and overfishing is not occurring.

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The tows will be 200 feet wide and 1.5 nautical miles long. The vessel phone will be...

Test fishermen’s hypothesis about GOM cod redistributing offshore in response to warming water and changes...

A GOM cod IBS will:

- Enable minimum estimates of swept-area biomass
- Acquire additional scientific data on other groundfish stocks in the survey area
- Provide another science source (resource data and information) for use in this study will:

- Provide another science source (resource data and information) for use in many fishermen’s claims that the cod status is better than currently assessed, or the moratorium was unnecessarily severe.

Maine. Given the poor stock of Gulf of Maine (GOM) cod, low catch limits, and the Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF) has begun a three-year survey.

The Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF) has begun a three-year industry-based survey on cod stocks in the southwestern portion of the Gulf of Maine. Given the poor stock of Gulf of Maine (GOM) cod, low catch limits, and many fishermen’s claims that the cod status is better than currently assessed, this study will:

- Provide another science source (resource data and information) for use in assessments
- Test fishermen’s hypothesis about GOM cod redistributing offshore in response to warming water
- Demonstrate relevance and importance of a GOM cod IBS for improving our understanding of the distribution of cod at times and in areas when the NEFSC surveys are not performed
- Acquire additional scientific data on other groundfish stocks in the survey area
- Enable minimum estimates of swept-area biomass
- Determine the survey’s potential for providing indices of abundance.

The survey follows a stratified-random design with stations occurring from 10 fathoms to 160 fathoms, including waters west of 69° 30’ within the GOM cod stock boundary. A total of eight survey cruises will be conducted between April 1 through July 31 and between October 1 and January 31, 2017. Ten days of sampling will occur in each of the eight cruises, making 30-minute tows and, in areas where the NEFSC surveys are not performed.

ICES surveys are not performed

DMR HERRING UPDATE

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) Herring Section met on April 26 to discuss management of herring landings in Area 1A. They set the “days out” effort control measures for the 2016 Area 1A Trimester 2 (June 1 - September 30) as follows:

- June 1 - 30: Vessels may land herring three (3) consecutive days a week. All other days are designated as “days out” of the fishery (e.g., vessels may not land herring).
- July 1 - 14: Vessels may land herring four (4) consecutive days a week. All other days are designated as “days out” of the fishery.
- July 15 - September 30: Vessels may land herring five (5) consecutive days a week until further notice. All other days are designated as “days out” of the fishery.

The initial Area 1A sub-annual catch limit (ACL) is 30,397 metric tons after adjusting for a carryover from 2014. The Area 1A sub-ACL will be adjusted after the final rule for the 2016-2018 herring specifications is released. The final 2016 Area 1A sub-ACL will include the following reductions: 8% bycatch, 3% search set-aside and 295 metric tons fixed gear set-aside. The Section allocated 72.8% of the sub-ACL to Trimester 2.

By starting with three landings days per week and then adjusting to four and then five days during Trimester 2, the allocation is projected to extend through the end of the trimester. Landings will be monitored closely and the directed fishery will be adjusted to zero landings days when the trimester’s allocation is projected to be reached. The Atlantic Herring Section is scheduled to reconvene via conference call to review fishing effort and adjust landing days as necessary on July 11. Fishermen are prohibited from landing more than 2,000 pounds of Atlantic herring per trip from Area 1A until June 1.

DMR HERRING UPDATE

The Maine DMR is in the process of developing rule-making for the 2016 herring fishery. DMR will regulate the daily landings during the Area 1A sub-ACL period 2 (June 1 - September 30). The regulations are intended to manage the

to keep nautical charts up to date. Once the survey is complete, updated nautical charts will be available through NOAA.

AGENCIES TO CONSIDER MARINE DEBRIS

The Legislature has directed several departments within state government to consider ways to reduce the impact of marine debris on Maine's coastal ecosystems through passage of LD 427 Resolve, Directing Certain State Agencies To Consider the Effects of Marine Debris.

The new law directs four state agencies -- Department of Marine Resources, Department of Environmental Protection, Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife or Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry -- to consider the effects of marine debris and how the potential marine debris may be managed and mitigated whenever the agency takes any action. This is in place until January 2019. Marine debris comes in several forms and sizes, from tiny 5 to 10-micron flakes of plastic to large chunks of metal or Styrofoam. The oceans annually receive an estimated 4,800,000 to 12,700,000 metric tons of plastic waste.

DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES

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MASSACHUSETTS TRAWL SURVEY OFF SOUTHERN MAINE

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ity of entanglement and breaking strength of the rope. The report states, “Our study examined 132 ropes from 70 cases and measured the rope type, severity to immediately implement further limitations on fishing and landing days, herring, DMR will utilize the Commissioner’s emergency rule-making authority to immediately implement further limitations on fishing and landing days, to impose daily landing limits.

BYCATCH CONSORTIUM

The Consortium for Wildlife Bycatch Reduction, based at the New England Aquarium, held a meeting in April to discuss the potential to develop and test fishing ropes with breaking strengths of about 1700 pounds as a potential whale mitigation strategy. A recent study published in Conservation Biology examined the ropes removed from entangled whales from 1994 to 2010. The study examined 132 ropes from 70 cases and measured the rope type, severity of entanglement and breaking strength of the rope. The report states, "Our results suggest that broad adoption of ropes with breaking strengths of < 1700 pounds could reduce the number of life-threatening entanglements for large whales by at least 72%, and yet could provide sufficient strength to withstand the routine forces involved in many fishing operations."
The Consortium meeting brought together industry stakeholders, scientists, rope engineers and manufacturers to discuss the potential to develop and fish ropes which meet these criteria.

DREDGE TEAM MEETING SUMMARY

The Maine Dredge Team met in early March to discuss the status of dredge projects in Maine.

Piscataqua River: The Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) has received required environmental approvals from both Maine and New Hampshire and the ACOE’s Chief of Engineers has issued the "Chief’s report." The project now awaits Congressional authorization to proceed and remains in the design phase.

 Searsport Harbor: The ACOE has suspended this project pending the outcome of discussions between upper-level decision makers at the ACOE and the Maine Department of Transportation (MDOT) aimed at identifying a plan for moving forward. ACOE expects work on the project to be reinstated in the near future.

 Portland Harbor: There is an “open resolution” for this project which would enable the ACOE to deepen the federal channel if so requested by the local sponsor; the ACOE has received no such request.

Status of Smaller Navigation Improvement Projects in Maine

Blue Hill: Blue Hill and the ACOE are moving forward with a feasibility study. Environmental sampling showed gasoline contamination in some areas where dredging was planned. They are now considering options for revising the dredging plan to avoid contamination.

Caisson: ACOE approved federal involvement in a feasibility study of a proposal to improve the existing breakwater. Work on this project is on-hold pending execution of feasibility cost-sharing agreement obligating the town to fund 50% of the study’s cost.

Great Chebeague Island: The Town of Chebeague Island has decided to pursue its plan to dredge the channel to the wharf used by the ferry service but not the anchor area included in its earlier plans. In order for the project to move forward, the town needs to sign a feasibility cost-sharing agreement with the ACOE obligating the town to fund 50% of the study’s cost.

Saco-Camp Ellis: Regarding the ACOE shore damage mitigation project at Camp Ellis Beach in Saco, the ACOE and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service have concluded Endangered Species Act-related consultations. ACOE is now updating the previously completed feasibility study. Project design may be undertaken next year and application for requisite state environmental approvals would be made after the design is completed. ACOE will request state water quality certification prior to the end of 2016. The project’s scope is limited to construction of the proposed spur jetty, beach nourishment, and post-construction maintenance of the spur jetty and on-going beach re-nourishment. The ACOE anticipates beginning the one-year design of the project in 2017. The local sponsor will be required to pay 50% of the cost of post-construction beach re-nourishment, up to the $26 million federal federal authorization for the project. After that, the local sponsor would be responsible for all beach nourishment costs as well as costs of maintaining the jetty.

Non-navigation projects in Maine

• Erosion control project in Perry, Maine, in cooperation with the Passamaquoddy Tribe.
• Meduxnekeag River fish restoration project, in cooperation with the Houlton Band of Maileseets.
• Penobscot River flood and erosion control project at Indian Island, Maine, in cooperation with the Penobscot Indian Nation.
• Salt marsh restoration project on the West Branch of the Pleasant River, in cooperation with the Maine Department of Transportation.
• Ice flow control project at Chererryfield dam.

Maintenance Dredge Projects

Royal River: A contractor completed dredging and disposal operations for this project in 2015.

Beals Harbor and Pig Island Gut: The project went out for bid in December 2015 and that bid is now under contract. Assuming timely resolution affirming the ACOE’s decision, which awarded the contract to the contractor, dredging could begin in the fall of 2016.

Saco River: The project involves dredging about 150,000 cubic yards, 45,000 cubic yards of which is in the up-river section of the project. The balance of the dredged materials would be used for beach nourishment at Camp Ellis. This 100%-federally funded maintenance dredge is not provided for in the
Administration's pending federal budget proposal. The ACOE intends to submit requests for state water quality certification and federal consistency concurrence in the near future.

Biddeford Pool and Wood Island. This project involves dredging about 40,000 cubic yards of material. Disposal of silty materials would be at a previously-used disposal site in Saco Bay and sandy materials would be used for beach nourishment at Camp Ellis. ACOE intends to submit requests for state water quality certification and federal consistency concurrence in the near future. Funding for this project is not provided for in the Administration’s pending federal budget proposal.

York Harbor. This project involves dredging and disposal of about 50,000 cubic yards of dredged materials at the Cape Arundel Disposal Site. It has received all requisite environmental approvals but is not yet funded.

Cape Porpoise. ACOE estimates this project would generate about 100,000 cubic yards of dredged materials, some of which would be disposed at the Cape Arundel site. Additional sampling and testing needs to be done to determine the materials’ suitability for ocean disposal.

Pepperell Cove. ACOE is awaiting sampling and testing results for this project and intends to initiate consultation regarding required environmental reviews and approvals in summer 2016.

Union River. ACOE is in the early stages of evaluating this project and sediment sampling and testing need to be conducted.

Searsport Harbor. ACOE is not addressing maintenance dredging of the existing federal project as a separate project, pending the outcome of above-noted discussion between decision makers at ACOE and Maine DOT.

Josias River and Stonington Harbor. ACOE has not identified a need for maintenance dredging for these projects.

Portland CAD cell. Tom Dobbins, Portland Harbor Commission, spoke about efforts to site a combined aquatic disposal cell (CAD cell) to serve Portland Harbor. A contract has been awarded to design the CAD cell. Another contract was awarded pursuant to an EPA brownfields grant to assess the nature of sediment contamination around select Portland piers. The contractor will study berthing areas and estimate the amount of dredged material that would need to be placed in the CAD cell. The proposed location of the CAD cell is off Fish Point at the east end of the Portland peninsula; the proposed location has been discussed with local fishermen who indicated its use would not have a major impact on fishing. Discussion of the proposed location and any related concerns regarding potential adverse effects on fishermen will be part of the siting process as it moves forward.

Maine Lobster Marketing Collaborative is excited to kick off the harvest with robust media efforts and social support. Activities include:

· Unveiling a five-part video series on social and digital channels that provides an overview of the Maine Lobster industry and how the product goes from sea to table.
· Inviting top-tier media to visit Maine for an immersive look at what makes Maine Lobster so unique.
· Activating a robust Fourth of July amplification plan that drives demand for Maine Lobster through recipes, positioning it as a holiday must-have.
· Executing “Maine After Midnight” tent pole events in Atlanta, Washington DC and New York City to educate chefs and create awareness and demand for Maine Lobster.

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- Available colors:  RED, BLACK, YELLOW & WHITE
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**Heat Shrink Tubing**

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- **Lobster Crate**
- **Fish Basket**
- **Anti-Fatigue Mat**
- **Premium Adult Universal Immersion Suit**

**Description**

- **High Performance LED Lights**
- **In-Sight Automatic Manual Inflatable Offshore FPD**
- **Offshore Life Vest**
- **Premium Adult Universal Immersion Suit**
- **Oil Absorbent Sheets**
- **High Visibility Buoy**
- **Lobster Crate**
- **Fish Basket**
- **Anti-Fatigue Mat**

**Additional Information**

- **Premium Adult Universal Immersion Suit**
- **Oil Absorbent Sheets**
- **High Visibility Buoy**
- **Lobster Crate**
- **Fish Basket**
- **Anti-Fatigue Mat**

**Ordering Information**

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I really enjoy providing helpful information to our customers. I see what’s working along the coast and can provide ideas that can help them design their traps. Effort spent getting their traps just the way they need them pays off!”

—Jerry Wadsworth, Friendship Trap road sales

As a younger fisherman, I always want to experiment and try new ideas so I can catch more lobster. The folks at Friendship Trap are always there to help me develop these ideas and get the traps just the way I want them. AND, I get a top quality trap that’s built to last delivered when I need it.

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MLA SELECT BUSINESS MEMBERS Show your support for these businesses!
DON’T LOSE OUT ON FREE HEALTH SERVICES

By Alisha Keezer

Identifying and treating a health problem before symptoms start, or, better yet, preventing a sickness entirely is beneficial to your overall health. Aside from physiological benefits, it can also alleviate potential financial difficulties in the future. Most chronic conditions and many serious diseases may worsen over time, even with medications. Still, treating a disease sooner rather than later can limit its impact on your health.

For these reasons, federal law requires that all health insurance plans cover specific preventive care services, including vaccinations, some disease screenings, and specific forms of counseling. When the Affordable Care Act first came into effect, it provided for free preventive care. Yet even today, three years after the Act began, many people are unaware of these preventive health benefits and how to use them.

Services covered by all ACA health insurance plans

Covered preventive services for all adults:
- Colonoscopy for adults over 50
- Alcohol and tobacco misuse screening
- Blood pressure screening
- Depression screening
- Obesity screening and counseling
- Diabetes (blood sugar) screening for adults with high blood pressure
- HIV tests for everyone ages 15 to 65, and other ages at increased risk
- Up to three “well visits” per year
- Colonoscopy for adults over 50

Immunizations:
- Hepatitis A
- Hepatitis B
- Shingles
- Human papillomavirus
- Influenza (flu shot)
- Meningococcus
- Pneumococcus
- Tetanus
- Diphtheria
- Varicella (Chicken pox)
- Measles, Mumps, Rubella

Covered preventive services for women:
- Free contraceptives
- Well-women visits
- Osteoporosis and anemia screenings
- Prenatal care
- Mammograms & breast cancer counseling

Covered preventive services for children:
- Immunizations
- Developmental & Autism screenings
- Screening for certain genetic disorders
- Depression screening and behavioral assessments
- Vision and oral health screenings
- Iron and fluoride supplements

Health insurance plans must cover these services without asking you to pay an additional fee. This is true even if you have not met your yearly deductible. You may take advantage of most of these preventive services when you go in for a yearly physical or, if you are a woman, at your well-woman visit. Technically, these services aren’t free; they are paid for by the health insurance company through the money collected from your monthly premium. You cannot be charged a copay, coinsurance, or deductible to take advantage of them. Simply put, you pay nothing out of pocket.

When you schedule an appointment for any free preventive services, make it known that you are interested in getting your free preventive screenings and want to be informed if any services fall outside the list of approved “free” services.

If you are visiting your doctor, don’t be afraid to speak up when he or she recommends additional testing and treatment. If these items aren’t covered, know that you’ll likely have some cost-sharing responsibilities. Your doctor should have a general idea of which screenings and services fall under free preventive care, but you should also call your insurance company for confirmation.

Note: If you go “out of network,” you may be charged for these services. When making an appointment, tell the provider that it is only for “well visit services.”

THE MLA WORKS FOR YOU

“It’s important to have a heads up to what is coming down the road. If you don’t hear it firsthand from the MLA, you’ll hear it second-hand and won’t know how true it is.”

Mark Jones, Boothbay

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NEW RESOURCE TO HELP FISHING FAMILIES, COMMUNITIES PREPARE FOR THE WORST

by Ann Backus, MS
Harvard University School of Public Health

It seems to be a hallmark of fishing communities that they come together after a fatality or disabling injury of a fisherman to support the family and each other. Community members provide food and financial assistance as well as emotional support at least in the short-term, and community service agencies, churches, banks and others often come forward to assist over the long term. So when we step back and take a look from 30,000 feet, what does this mix look like in typical fishing communities?

What happens first? Who is involved? Who should be involved? How does the process move from first responders to support for the families involved? What are the short-term and long-term needs? And of course, the critical question: how can we prevent serious fishing casualties in the first place?

The Fishing Partnership Support Services (FPSS) in Massachusetts was interested in answering these questions. Several years ago, FPSS President J.J. Bartlett asked Madeleine Hall-Arber of the MIT Sea Grant Program and me (of Harvard’s T.H. Chan School of Public Health) to undertake a study in New Bedford and Gloucester, primarily, in an effort to understand how communities respond after tragedies and to learn what constitutes resilience in these communities. The thought was that we could present a report that was both specific to fishing communities and which could be a template for any community, fishing or non-fishing, that wants to be prepared for tragedy or disaster.

The manual RESCUES (which stands for Responding to Emergencies at Sea and to Communities under Extreme Stress) was the result of a broad-based research effort that included published research literature on community resilience, a list of fishing fatalities and casualties from the U.S. Coast Guard District 1 database covering 1998 to 2010 and from accounts in regional newspapers, and over 30 interviews with survivors, families of deceased fishermen, high-profile community leaders, and U.S. Coast Guard responders, NVIVO, a computer program that helps social science researchers identify recurring themes, was used to analyze the interview transcripts.

Prevention and Preparation: The Fisherman and the Family

At the level of the individual and the family we discovered a number of best practices that help ensure that a fisherman and his family will be prepared in the event of a fatality or disabling injury or illness. Some of these practices are familiar to fishing families, but a number of them are either not familiar or not carried out. Prevention is the first priority: fishermen should take advantage of the training offered through various organizations including FPSS, private companies, and the Coast Guard. Each fisherman should ensure that the vessel is outfitted with survival suits (that fit), EPIRBs, life rafts as required, flares, horns, radio, etc. and that he knows how to use the equipment and make a Mayday call.

On shore, best practices suggest that family members should share and store information about each fisherman’s trip (see the Search and Rescue Information Sheets in Appendix F) and have current U.S. Coast Guard phone numbers (see Appendix A). Often overlooked is the idea that responsible members of families should know where all the household documents are kept (insurance policies, mortgages and loans, bank and credit card account documents, wills, car titles, etc.), and have password access to phone, computer, and online bank accounts, etc. Contact information for people who serve the family in various capacities such as pastors, attorneys, doctors, and insurance agents will be needed should the family experience an injury or fatality. And, if a family has a safe deposit box, someone needs to know the bank, the box number and where the keys are kept.

Preparation: Community Resilience

Simply put, resilient communities are prepared communities. Things are in place, such as a disaster response team that can call on local resources and rapidly set up a service delivery infrastructure when tragedy strikes. Relationships are well-established between the community and its agencies; face-to-face meetings between service and industry sectors are common; people know each other and frequently work together on small community-based projects. The RESCUES Manual (pages 8-10) provides suggestions to help a community develop resilience. As communities are dynamic, not static entities, relationships need to be renewed when the captain of the port changes, for example, or a new mayor or town manager is elected, or a new industry moves into town.

Risks, Response, Recovery

Chapter 2 discusses potential dangers at sea and Chapter 3 outlines the emergency response roles of the U.S. Coast Guard and how the Coast Guard works with families and the community after a tragedy. Chapter 4 returns to the family and issues pertaining to recovery of the body and the family’s recovery with respect to financial, legal, spiritual and counseling needs and well-being.

There are eight appendices (A through H) that contain everything from Fred Mattera’s Maintenance Check List (first published in Commercial Fisheries News in February, 2015), a crew check list, and a revised version of my article on the FYI Lady of Grace tragic community to community profiles of Gloucester and New Bedford along with their respective resources. Members of any community could easily replicate the profiles and resource sections for their community and be well on the way toward an improved response capability.

The RESCUES manual also provides a review of resilience literature by FPSS intern Bernadette Stadler and concludes with eight lessons learned from at-sea incidents.

The authors sincerely hope you will find this manual helpful for your community, whether it is a fishing community or not. Tragedy and disaster befell us all, often without warning. Just within the past five days of writing this article, twin earthquakes in Japan have displaced 100,000 people, a magnitude 7.8 earthquake in Ecuador resulted in more than 500 deaths, heavy rains that flooded Houston stranded 400 people and ruined dozens of homes, and the Popocatepetl volcano erupted in Mexico. And this list doesn’t mention the many war-torn communities around the world or our local drug over-dose tragedies. Clearly we need resilient people and resilient communities that can mount a quick response and bounce back over time.

You may download the entire RESCUES Manual or individual chapters and appendices at http://fishingpartnership.org/services/rescuelmanual/.
CRABS, ONCE PESTS, NOW VALUABLE

By Melissa Waterman

We spend a lot of time talking about lobster in the state of Maine, but there are other crustaceans that are popular among both the dining public and fishermen: Jonah crab and rock crab.

Jonah crab (Cancer borealis) are found from Newfoundland to Florida. They are the larger of the two crab species, with an average carapace width of 7 inches and large claws tipped with black. Rock crab (Cancer irroratus), also known as peekytoe, is smaller, with a smooth fan-shaped body marked by reddish or purple spots. They have two short front claws; they are crawling crabs and tend to move very little. Rock crab live in shallower water and are harvested primarily in the summer, while Jonah crab are caught year-round by inshore and offshore lobstermen. Both species were once considered annoyances by lobstermen because they would enter a trap and quickly devour all the lobster bait. Like lobsters, the two crab species can live out of the water for a limited period of time. Crabs use their gills to extract oxygen from the water. As long as they can keep their gills moist, oxygen from the air will diffuse into the moisture and then into the gills. They have articulating plates around their gills that help seal the gills to the air. In the ocean, water is drawn in over the gills and then expelled through the crab’s mouth. Out of the water, the crab will blow bubbles to draw oxygen in over the gills and transfer CO₂ out.

In the late 1990s, a commercial fishery developed for Jonah crabs, the meat of which is comparable to the much more expensive West coast Dungeness crab. Since then the fishery has seen a rapid increase in annual landings. In the early 2000s, landings were roughly 2.6 million pounds and the fishery was valued at $1.5 million. By 2014, landings increased to over 17 million pounds with a value exceeding $12 million. The majority of Jonah crab is landed in Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

Jonah crab had no fishery management plan for many years, due in part to limited data on its population, growth rates, and distribution. There still is no federal stock assessment for the species. In addition, dealer reports typically don’t differentiate by species, lumping Jonah crabs in with rock crab and other crab species.

In May, 2014, the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) voted unanimously to develop a fishery management plan and stock assessment for Jonah crab. The Commission approved a fishery management plan in August, 2015 that includes minimum size restrictions, prohibition of berried female harvest, requirement to land the whole crab (no claws-only) and licensing and trap restrictions. While many states have already implemented the new regulations, all states on the East coast will be required to implement measures by June, 2016. A proposed Draft Addendum to the plan would change the incidental bycatch limits for non-trap gear (such as gillnets) and non-lostebcr trap gear (such as fish, crab, and whelk pots) in order to cap incidental landings of Jonah crab.

The growth in Jonah crab landings in southern New England coincides with the decline of the lobster fishery in that region. Massachusetts and Rhode Island lobstermen need to make only minor adjustments to their traps to be able to catch Jonah crabs. In certain areas of Maine, local seafood companies are processing Jonah crab on their own. Port Clyde Fresh Catch concentrates on Jonah crab for its customers during the winter months, now that the shrimp fishery has disappeared.

The market for rock crab is credited to Rod Mitchell, founder of Brownie’s Trading Company in Portland. He sold the delicate crab meat as peekytoe crab to prominent chefs in New York City in the late 1990s with great success. Rock crab, however, is still caught in such low volumes that neither the ASMFC nor the Maine Department of Marine Resources has a fishery management plan for the species.

This is true. However, more than twice as many people around the world are now eating lobster than before. With people in Asia, Europe and domestically learning of the quality we have to offer, the tide has turned.

Homarus americanus is only caught in waters between the Carolinas and Newfoundland. That is a very minute geographical section of the world. That means we have something very valuable and very unique. Other natural products can be raised or planted basically anywhere in the world. Ours cannot!

The industry as a whole — fishers, truck drivers, buyers, dealers, brokers, processors, live shippers and restaurant owners — needs to realize that without fishing families continuing the 200-year tradition of catching lobsters and bringing them to shore, no one else will have product to sell. The fishers are the most important blade on the propeller and it’s about time they get rewarded for it.

We, the PEI lobster marketing board, want all fishers on both sides of the border and the whole industry to have a safe, prosperous and successful 2016 season!
After 63 years of being owned by Kennebunkport native Sonny Hutchins, Port Lobster changed hands in April when fellow Kennebunkport native and town Selectman Allen Daggett, who also owns Cape Porpoise Lobster Company, Cape Pier Chowder House and Cape Porpoise Bait Company, bought the tiny retail fish market that has been a mainstay in the town for well over half a century.

Sonny Hutchins founded Port Lobster in 1953. Hutchins explained how he got into the retail end of the business. "I had been in the lobstering business before I went into the Army. I grew up in it. My father was a lobsterman for 44 years and then I fished too. I thought by doing this [selling retail and take-out] I would be getting into the easier part of it, but I found out it wasn't," Hutchins said with a chuckle.

Just like Hutchins, Daggett also grew up in the business. He began lobstering at the age of 12 and fished until his early twenties when he began selling lobsters, doing business as Daggett's Lobster Company beginning in 1969.

Eventually he gave up fishing to sell lobsters full-time. Over the years he expanded and ventured into other fish-related businesses, such as the Chowder House he runs in Cape Porpoise and his bait company.

Daggett and Hutchins are not strangers to one another: both are Kennebunkport natives from longtime lobstering families. Daggett’s father grew up with Hutchins. "I've known Sonny for as long as I've been on this earth. We used to live next door to each other," Daggett said.

Though it was never aggressively marketed, Port Lobster had been on the market from time to time over the years. There were a couple of interested buyers, but nothing ever panned out. "One day Allen and I were talking and I said to him 'why don't you buy the business?' I guess he thought about it and decided it would be a good idea," Hutchins said.

Although the business has a new owner, both Daggett and Hutchins agree that "nothing will change." Hutchins will still be there every day just as he always has been and his daughter, Kathy Anueszewski, will still manage the place.

All of the employees and associates will also stay on, including the lobstermen who sell there. "Allen and I both feel if it ain't broke, don't fix it," Hutchins said. "I am happy to have someone local who knows the business buy it."

Daggett said he is equally happy that it all worked out the way it did. "I'm not worried about a thing. It will be business as usual. When you walk in and do business here, you'll never know anything changed at all. Sonny has been good to me over the years, and I feel real good about buying this place."

Daggett said he feels that by buying Port Lobster, everything has come full circle. "It will be named Daggett’s Lobster Company, doing business as Port Lobster. This way my original business name and Sonny's original business name will be honored."
about the unusual physiology of the lobster and commonsense practices lobstermen can employ to ensure the highest-quality catch regardless of the number of pounds hauled each day.

Lavallée began each workshop by explaining the odd way a lobster’s body works. For example, a lobster’s kidneys are located just behind the eye sockets. They excrete urine from small holes behind the eyes. “That’s how they talk to each other, from certain chemicals in their urine,” Lavallée said.

“Quality is as important to the processing sector as it is to the live sector; Processors live and die by meat yield. They want a high quality, non-injured lobster to start with.”

A lobster may appear to be as armored as a tank, yet its internal structures make it prone to injury. For example, a lobster’s nerve cord runs down its belly, without the protection of vertebrae. A cut from another lobster or a rough toss by a lobsterman can sever that cord, resulting in paralysis of the lobster’s tail and eventual death. A lobster’s heart is on its back, where the carapace meets the tail. Whack a lobster on the back and it’s likely the heart will rupture. Furthermore, unlike a human being, a lobster has a semi-open blood circulation system. That means the heart pumps blood through ever smaller arteries until finally the blood vessels simply spill the blood into the animal’s tissues; it doesn’t recirculate. “The tissues are bathed in blood all the time. As soon as the shell is broken, then the blood comes out,” Lavallée explained. Lobsters have a powerful clotting system, which prevents something like a V-notch from harming them. But if they suffer serious injuries, they can bleed to death.

The problem for the lobsters is that CO₂ and ammonia wastes build up in their blood; if they stay out of water too long, those wastes will kill them. Molting is the most vulnerable time for a mature lobster. A molt is triggered by water temperature and length of daylight but also by the presence of other molting lobsters. “The males will molt within two to four weeks of each other. The females stagger their molt,” Lavallée explained. When a lobster gets ready to molt, often its shell gets thin and cracksly to the touch. That is because the animal is drawing calcium and other minerals from its shell to store in nodules, called gastroliths, in its stomach. After the molt, it can reabsorb those minerals to strengthen its shell.

A lobster stops drinking water in order to shrink the mass of its tissues just before it molts. During that time, proteins in its blood increase as the blood becomes thicker. To molt, it will suddenly drink a lot of water to crack the old shell. The lobster then drinks even more water to bulk up in size while its new shell is still soft. “That means its blood proteins will be low. That tells you that the lobster hasn’t recovered from its molt yet,” Lavallée said.

When it comes to what makes a high-quality lobster, Lavallée pointed out that the answer depends on your point of view. In his opinion, the best prices are paid for intact lobsters with a hard shell, low expected shrink rate, high meat yields and maximum shippability. Together, Canada and the U.S. land more than 350 million pounds of lobster annually, light years ahead of other lobster fishing countries like Australia, Indonesia and Chile. However, the shrink rate in the U.S. and Canada is also very high, from 5% to 10% each year. In absolute numbers, “That’s more than most of these other countries land in one year!” Lavallée said, “That’s a lot of lobsters.”

Careful handling of lobsters, based on a better understanding of their anatomy and biology, can reduce losses and save millions of dollars. “Quality is like a one-way gas tank. You can take the quality out of the lobster but it’s very hard to put it back in,” he said. All sorts of things stress out a lobster, weakening it over time. Rapid hauling from the bottom is one stressor. Researchers looked at lobsters hauled at the typical 500-feet-per-minute rate and those hauled more slowly, at 80 feet per minute. “They [lobsters] work should vigorous,” he said. Other things, like variations in temperature, the amount of oxygen in the tank, exposure to fresh water or ice, all cause stress on the lobster. “Stress has a snowball effect on lobsters. They don’t recover from it as quickly as we do.”

Minor injuries to lobsters also add up to lost money, he said. Practices such as tossing lobsters, handling traps roughly, and overstuffing, dropping or banging crates can increase limb loss and bleeding. “Lobsters that bleed lose fluid. That means they lose weight. When you think about it, a one- to three-pound loss of weight per every 100 pounds caught is about $10 per crate. Think of the number of crates you’ve landed in your life,” Lavallée said.

Lavallée offered simple suggestions such as “one hand, one lobster” when handling lobsters and treating them as if they were eggs. “It doesn’t take a lot of money,” he said. “It doesn’t take a lot of time.”

Slow down your hauler. Bring the trap over the rail smoothly and don’t bang it around so that lobsters’ small legs are snapped off. Don’t throw the shorts back into the water while the boat is moving. “It’s like hitting concrete. It will snap their claws off,” Lavallée explained.

He advises placing lobsters in the crate all going the same way. At the dock, wharf workers should lift the crate horizontally by two handles, not by one, which smashes all the lobsters over to one side. Don’t drop the crate. Don’t over pack it either because the lobsters will inevitably stab each other with their nose or horns.

“Quality is as important to the processing sector as it is to the live sector,” Lavallée emphasized. “Processors live and die by meat yield. They want a high-quality non-injured lobster to start with.”

Jean Lavallée addresses lobstermen at a lobster quality workshop held at the B silently Laboratories in East Boothbay, MLA photo.
Pat White continued from page 1

In 1996 the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Team was formed by the National Marine Fisheries Service. Its aim was to devise ways to reduce whale entanglement and death from fishery gear as required by the changes to the Marine Mammal Protection Act in 1994. The plan developed by the team became known disparagingly by lobstermen as “the whale rules.”

Environmental organizations were adamantly that everything possible must be done to save the whales. White, who was a member of the Team, found himself attacked for the fishing practices of Maine lobstermen. “He had a temper but he rarely showed it. He was a master at smiling even when steam was coming out of his ears,” Cousens said. “Through steady and persistent arguments, White and others made sure that a significant portion of Maine state waters were specifically exempted from most whale regulations.”

Cousens found after becoming MLA president in 1992 that he and White worked together like a well-oiled machine. “We always had a game plan,” Cousens recalled. “I would come in as the bad guy and ask for the world and then Pat would come in and say ‘Well, you know, this is what we really could live with.’ We could just look at each other and know what to do. I’d say we talked to each other daily for fourteen years.”

White was appointed by Governor King to represent Maine on the ASMFC in 1995. He became chair of the commission’s lobster board, shrimp section, and menhaden board. He also was a member of the NEFMC from 1996 to 1999. It was during the mid-1990s that White became involved on behalf of the MLA with an issue that troubles Maine lobstermen to this day: protection of endangered North Atlantic right whales.

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When White became MLA executive director, the organization had to borrow money to get through the year. Due to increasing rates the MLA was no longer able to offer its members health insurance, which had been a significant revenue producer. It still offered vessel insurance but White thought that program could be improved. He searched for the best hull insurance deal available and found it with Smithwick and Mariners Insurance in Falmouth, an arrangement that continues today.

The MLA was becoming involved in more and more issues during the 1990s. The lobster zones council system was created. Groundfishermen again petitioned to land lobsters caught in offshore trawl nets. “It always seemed that Pat was there. There just seemed to be so much more to it [than in Ed Blackmore’s time],” Pat handled the politics so well,” Gamage said.

Somehow White also found time to serve on the prestigious Pew Oceans Commission, chaired by Senator Leon Panetta, in 2002. The Commission was a bipartisan, independent group whose mission was to identify actions that could restore and protect the country’s marine resources and protect biodiversity. Members included David Rockefeller Jr., New York Governor George Pataki, Jane Lubchenco, soon to be head of NOAA, and other leaders in science, government, and business.

White was a valued member of the Commission, bringing a real-world perspective to the discussions. “They loved Pat,” Cousens said. “He took all that in stride. He treated people, whoever they were, the same way, with respect.”

In 2011, White received the ASMFC’s highest honor, the Captain David H. Hart Award, in recognition of his years of work. Jack Travelstead, then chair of ASMFC’s award committee, said, “Pat White believes that the only way for fisheries management to succeed – for both the resource and the fisherman – is for fishermen to be knowledgeable and personally involved in the management process. He has conducted himself as a true gentleman and, in doing so, has elevated the role of fishermen in the fisheries management process.”

Good-bye, Pat. You will be missed.

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TWO NEW ENGLAND STOCKS CONSIDERED IN JEOPARDY


Two New England fish stocks were added to the overfishing and overfished lists — Southern New England yellowtail flounder and Georges Bank winter flounder — as well as three stocks of Chinook salmon and individual stocks of Coho salmon on the west coast.

ANOTHER WHARF SAVED FOR FISHERMEN

A significant property in Tenants Harbor was added to the growing list of commercial waterfront properties protected by Maine’s Working Waterfront Access Protection Program, part of Land for Maine’s Future Program. Miller’s Wharf in Tenants Harbor is owned by four brothers, all of whom are commercial fishermen. The wharf currently serves lobstermen, scallopers, urchin boats and seaweed harvesters. “My parents worked hard to keep this property as a working waterfront, now, despite increased pressure along the coast from developers, this property will continue to provide access for commercial fishermen for generations,” said Hale Miller. Four generations of Millers have fished from the wharf.

Since the four brothers inherited the property from their parents in 2002, they have undertaken considerable improvements to the wharf including dredging to provide access for loading bait and unloading catch regardless of tide and the addition of four hydraulic hoists to increase efficiencies. Millers’ Wharf currently supports over 100 people engaged in commercial fishing activities including lobstermen and sternmen, urchin divers and student license holders.

RIGHT WHALES MAKE TRACKS FOR CAPE COD BAY

Experts tracking North Atlantic right whales say nearly half the estimated global population of 500 or so animals has been spotted in Cape Cod Bay over the past few springs. They are back this year in what looks like record numbers. “It’s rather extraordinary and somewhat mindblowing,” said Charles “Stormy” Mayo, a senior scientist and director of right whale ecology at the Center for Coastal Studies in Provincetown.

For a stretch in the late 1990s, fewer than 30 whales were sighted each year, said Mayo. Their increasing presence in Cape Cod Bay has caught scientists by surprise. Mayo theorizes that shifting ocean currents — possibly due to global climate change — are pumping more plankton into the bay, even as the whales’ traditional feeding grounds off the Maine coast falter. Federal law forbids getting within 500 yards of a right whale and requires ships to slow to 10 knots.

SCALLOP RESURGENCE BRINGS CONFLICT

A conflict is brewing in the northern Gulf of Maine between small scallop boats and larger vessels. A larger-than-usual harvest of scallops this year in the area and the competitive price that the shellfish demand attracted a larger number of boats than usual. Small state-licensed boats are limited to 200 pounds of scallops each trip until the boats reach 70,000 pounds. But other boats that have permits distributed in the 1990s are allowed to haul up to 40 million pounds within the 34 days they are permitted in the area. The New England Fishery Management Council will be considering changes to federal sea scallop regulations in 2017 that would prohibit vessels with permits from collecting more than 50 bushels of in-shell scallops in a demarcated area next year.

DMR HOLDS MEETINGS TO DISCUSS FUTURE OF SHRIMP FISHERY

The Department of Marine Resources (DMR) hosted three meetings in March to discuss the future of Maine’s northern shrimp fishery. The three meetings, held in Portland, Augusta and Ellsworth, brought DMRs policy and science staff together with fishermen and others to discuss the science and management of the fishery which has been under a moratorium since 2014.

Among the science issues discussed was the condition and capability of the research vessel Gloria Michelle. The 72-foot steel-hulled vessel built in 1974 is used for summer Gulf of Maine shrimp surveys and is showing signs of age. Some industry members expressed a desire to incorporate an industry vessel into the survey work.

The meetings also provided an opportunity to review the Total Allowable Catch allocation by gear type; some fishermen expressed interest in a state-by-state allocation. Historically Maine has landed approximately 85% to 90% of the annual catch among the three states in the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission Northern Shrimp Section (Maine, Massachusetts and New Hampshire). Industry members expressed a desire for a Maine-specific allocation and for Maine to develop management measures that would protect opportunity for the fishery. The shrimp fishery typically has provided an important additional source of income for Maine lobstermen during winter months.

Despite moratoria instituted for the 2014, 2015, and 2016 fishing seasons, some suggested having a late season in 2017 after the shrimp have spawned. The two-to-three-week season would allow spawning to occur but would also provide a brief window for fishermen to harvest adults before they move offshore.

Also discussed was the possibility of implementing a swipe-card system in the shrimp fishery. Maine began using the swipe-card system with the elver fishery in 2014 to record landings and manage both individual and statewide quota. The state plans to roll out a swipe-card system in the scallop and urchin fisheries sometime in 2016.

The Department also indicated that it plans to select a small, geographically diverse group of fishermen, including trappers and travelers, to provide input on next steps in the fishery. Commissioner Patrick Keliher and external affairs director Terry Stockwell will bring the group together to outline a plan for engaging all shrimp industry members. Outcomes from the broader meetings will inform Maine’s contributions at the next Northern Shrimp Section meeting, which had not been scheduled at press time.
Wanted: position as sternman
A very hard worker with strength, stamina. Easy to get along with and a team player. Don’t use any drugs and have a vehicle. Willing to work whatever amount of time is needed. My name is Andrew; I can be contacted at 207-509-0811.

May 4
MLA Directors Meeting, 5 p.m., Belfast, ME. FMI: 967-4555.

May 7

May 12
“Mayday: Crisis in the World’s Oceans,” talk by Colin Woodard, 7 p.m., GMRI, Portland. FMI: 228-1699.

May 14
Annual Benton Alewife Festival, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Benton. FMI: 453-7191.

May 16-17
NEFMC Herring Workshop on setting future quotas for herring, Location TBD. FMI: www.nefmc.org.

May 22
“Merrymaking Day: Discover the Bay” 11 a.m.-3 p.m., Maine Maritime Museum, Bath. FMI: 443-1316.

May 24
DMR Public Hearing on Herring Rules, 3 p.m., DMR Office, Augusta.

May 27

May 28-29
Alewife Fish Ladder Restoration Festival, 10 a.m.-6 p.m., Damarcscotta Mills. FMI: https://damariscottamills.org

May 30
Maine Lobster Marketing Collaborative meeting, Island Institute, Rockland.

June 1
MLA Directors meeting, 5 p.m., Darby’s in Belfast, FMI: 967-4555.

June 4
“Meeting the Boat: Steam Travel along Maine Waters” exhibit, opening June 4, Maine Maritime Museum, Bath. FMI: 443-1316.

June 5
Maine Lobster Marketing Collaborative meeting, Island Institute, Rockland.

June 17-19
LAUNCH, a Maine Maritime Festival including blessing of the fleet, Kennebunkport.

June 18
Lobster Boat Race, Boothbay Harbor. FMI: 633-3915

June 19
Lobster Boat Race, Rockland. FMI: 975-9690

June 21-23
New England Fisheries Management Council meeting, Holiday Inn by the Bay, Portland.

June 26
Lobster Boat Race, Bass Harbor. FMI: 244-9623.

LOBSTER PRICES REACH 15-YEAR HIGH
by Emma Jayne Smith

Prices for U.S. lobster meat have climbed to a 15-year high in April, and are up 48% year-over-year. The main reason behind this dramatic rise in the past 12 months has been high demand for lobster products in U.S. food service and retail.

So why has processed lobster meat become so popular over the last couple of years? Lobster processing involves extracting the meat from the shell, making it much more consumer-friendly. Processed lobster meat has a longer shelf life and can be stored and shipped better than a live lobster. This, combined with low prices seen in 2014, made the product popular in food service and retail, leading to heavy and successful advertising of processed lobster based products.

Versatility and convenience of processed lobster meat appeals to consumers as their appetite for easy-to-prepare food continues to increase. All of these factors have led to a sharp increase in demand in 2015 and 2016.

Another factor that pushed prices up was constraints in processing capacity. Around 122,000 tonnes of lobster is caught on the Atlantic coast annually, predominantly in the New England area, from where it is exported all over the world, with Canada being the largest importer of U.S. lobster.

Fresh lobster, imported from the U.S., is processed in Canada and lobster-based products are then exported back to the U.S. Canada is the largest supplier of processed lobster meat to the U.S., responsible for 57% of all processed lobster meat supplied to the country. Excellent fishing conditions in 2014 resulted in high catches, with 160,000 tonnes of lobster landing in Canada and the U.S. Another good year was seen in 2015, although final figures are not available yet. However, production capacity for lobster processing has not expanded in line with demand. As a result, processed lobster availability has been unable to keep up with the increased demand, causing prices to soar.

As Canada struggles to increase its output, the U.S. is moving to process more of its own lobster catch as this becomes more profitable, in an attempt to keep up with higher consumer demand. This could potentially cause a shift in the industry away from Canadian lobster factories, leading to lower prices. However, uncertainty around the scale and pace of the capacity expansion in the U.S. makes it difficult to say when prices are expected to come down.
Supporters of the Maine Lobstermen’s Community Alliance, the Maine Lobstermen’s Association, and Landings.

It wasn’t a particularly warm day in April for the U.S. Coast Guard-approved drill conductor training class in Rockland. Still, the students participating learned those things critical to safety at sea, such as putting on a survival suit properly, accessing the life raft, fire suppression techniques and other skills critical in an emergency situation.

Federal law requires that a certified drill conductor conduct monthly drills for all fishing vessel crews. If you need more information on safety training opportunities, call Alisha Keezer at the MLA at 967-4555. MLA photos.

Spruce Head Fishermen’s Co-operative

Stonington Lobstermen’s Co-operative

Swan’s Island Fishermen’s Co-operative

Vinalhaven Fishermen’s Co-operative

Organized by lobstermen for lobstermen
Supporters of the Maine Lobstermen’s Community Alliance, the Maine Lobstermen’s Association, and Landings.