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## Landings, vol. 25, no. 3

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# LANDINGS

News & Views from Maine's Lobstering Community

March 2017 | Vol. 25, No. 3

## LEGISLATURE OFF TO A SLOW START ON LOBSTER BILLS

by Patrice McCarron

The first session of the 128th Legislature started slowly with regard to lobster-related bills. With more than 15 bills submitted that would affect the lobster industry, public hearings have been held on just three; eight bills had not yet been printed as of the end of February.

On February 13, the Marine Resources Committee co-chaired by Senator Joyce Maker (R-Calais) and Representative Walter Kumiega (D-Deer Isle) heard testimony on three lobster bills. *LD 14 An Act to Extend the Legal Hours for Harvesting Lobster*, sponsored by Rep. Kumiega, proposes to extend the legal hours to harvest lobsters during the month of October by changing the time fishing can begin in the morning from ½ before sunrise to 5 a.m. The DMR opposed this bill, citing concern that it would increase opportunity for night hauling and strain enforcement. The MLA and a few others from the lobster industry testified in favor of the bill. The MLA noted that the start time for hauling has been a long-standing issue for Downeast lobstermen and that LD 14 proposed a good compromise.

*LD 113 An Act to Stabilize Lobster Bait Prices*, sponsored by Rep. Alley of Beals, proposes to stabilize the price of lobster bait through measures such as increasing the number of people that may fish for bait; amending the limits on specific species of bait; and amending restrictions on the types of species that may be used as bait. The DMR, MLA and several representatives from the herring industry opposed this bill. The primary concern is that bait is managed through the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission and the New England Fishery

Continued on page 10



Department of Marine Resources Commissioner Patrick Keliher speaking before the Marine Resources Committee. The Department is proposing an increase in marine licenses to stem a budget shortfall. MLA photo.

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## MODEL HELPS FORECAST FUTURE FOR LOBSTER POPULATIONS

By Kisei Tanaka, University of Maine

American lobster is widely regarded as an iconic creature throughout the Northeastern U.S. The species has been commercially harvested for more than 150 years and now supports the most valuable fishery in the region. Approximately 83% of the total pounds of lobster caught in the U.S. were brought ashore by Maine fishermen in 2015, making them the heart of the U.S. lobster industry.

The coastal communities in Maine have observed a steady increase in lobster catch over the last 30 years. The communities also observed an abrupt increase in lobster landings in 2012, when water temperature was abnormally warmer at the beginning of the year. The warmth followed by unexpectedly high lobster abundance exposed how vulnerable lobsters are to abrupt changes in the environment. This was when my research took off.

I study associations (whether hidden or apparent) between lobsters and their environment. Because the demographics of lobster are hard to grasp in the wild, I rely on statistics to gauge how environmental parameters affect lobster populations over time and space. Lobsters are cold-blooded and seek areas with favorable water temperatures. This implies that changes in water temperature can have significant impacts on lobster movement and can introduce uncertainties into traditional management of lobster fisheries.

Water temperatures in the northwest Atlantic have increased over the last 30 years and continued increase is likely. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change predicts average bot-

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# COASTAL OUTLOOK Thoughts from MLCA President Patrice McCarron

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I'm often asked by people from out of state, "So what do you DO all winter?" They seem to think that we all huddle in our cabins amid 12 foot snowbanks and whittle wooden spoons for months at a time. Far from it! This month, for instance, kicks off with the three-day Maine Fishermen's Forum. The forum brings together a diverse group of fishermen and their families at the Samoset Resort in Rockport to catch up with each other and with the regulators, scientists and non-governmental organizations which play such significant roles in Maine's commercial fisheries. It's a high-octane event which many look forward to.

Later in the month, Seafood Expo North America, formerly the Boston Seafood Show, takes place in Boston. This international seafood show is the largest in north America, attracting vendors and visitors from around the world to learn about new products, trends and activities related to seafood. Maine lobster is represented through the Maine Lobster Marketing Collaborative's exhibit as well as their Sunday night lobster reception, which brings together lobstermen, chefs and potential clients. Several Maine lobster businesses also exhibit at the show. The Expo is another exciting event highlighting Maine's links to the world.

That global connection is one of the elements focused on at the Lobster Leadership Institute, which began its second session in February. As *Landings* notes, fifteen young lobstermen are taking part in the Institute to learn the tools and skills necessary to become the next generation of leaders in Maine's lobster industry. They are learning about the science, management, economic and marketing aspects of the lobster business, a business that grows more complicated by the year. In May, Institute participants will visit Prince Edward Island where they will stay and fish with P.E.I. lobstermen in order to learn more about that province's successful fishery.

Winter also marks the time when the Maine Legislature is back in full swing. *Landings* reviews the work of the Marine Resources Committee on lobster-related legislation, and looks ahead at additional bills under consideration. The Maine Department of Marine Resources has put forward its budget proposal for the next biennial. The budget proposes a controversial increase in all marine licenses to fill a projected \$600,000 shortfall. The Maine Lobstermen's Association testified before the Appropriations Committee in support of DMR's budget but opposed the fee increases, urging legislators to stand in support of Maine's lobster industry by funding the DMR's budget without raising commercial fishing license fees.

*Landings* continues its series this month on student research taking place at the University of Maine with an article by Kisei Tanaka. Tanaka, a doctoral student and National Science Fellow, uses a computer model to predict possible changes in lobster populations based on increased water temperatures at the seafloor. With warmer temperatures, it is likely that the distribution of lobsters

in the Gulf of Maine will shift and that certain biological patterns, such as the time of molt, will change as well. Tanaka's computer model has generated maps that show potential change, which could have great significance for Maine's coastal economy.

According to Bernie Berry, head of the Coldwater Fishermen's Association in southwest Nova Scotia, things have changed already in that part of the Gulf of Maine this winter. After a record breaking 2015-2016 lobster season, Berry reports that catches have dropped significantly this year, in part due to poor weather conditions. But Nova Scotian lobstermen face other issues, such as possible oil and gas exploration, that Maine lobstermen do not have to think about. Berry provides readers with a different view of the lobster fishery in *Landings* this month.

We also hear from Ben Martens, executive director of the Maine Coast Fishermen's Association (MCFCA). Martens writes about upcoming hearings being held by the New England Fisheries Management Council on an amendment to the region's groundfish management plan and the role that scientific data plays in that process. Groundfishermen have long complained that regulators do not know how to fish and thus do not have the means to estimate how many groundfish are in the ocean. The result has been inaccurate information resulting in poor regulations to manage the fisheries. In response, the MCFCA, in concert with other organizations, has outfitted groundfishing vessels with monitoring systems that use cameras. Fishermen can document what they catch and what they throw back on each trip, providing regulators with accurate and timely data. This technique, Martens says, "...is a chance to ensure managers no longer rely on sub-par information to regulate New England's fisheries..."

As March comes to a close we will begin to think about green grass, fresh leaves, and piles of newly painted buoys waiting to go into the water. We will also have to think about browntail moths. An invasive species, browntail moths decimated trees along the coast of Maine last year and, according to the Maine Forest Service, promise to do so again this spring. The moths are more than an unsightly mess. Hairs from the caterpillars' skin and cocoon cause a severe rash on human skin and for some people, extreme respiratory problems. The toxic hairs may remain in the environment for two to three years. Spraying pesticides is one way to control browntail moth outbreaks. The Maine Board of Pesticides Control recently reviewed the list of chemicals that are permitted within 250 of marine waters and amended that list in order to protect the lobster industry, as you will read in this month's issue.

Winter in Maine may be long, but as readers will learn in *Landings*, it's rarely quiet. We hope you will enjoy this month's issue and as ever, we welcome your ideas for additional articles.

*Patrice*



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## GUEST COLUMN: *The fine points of double tagging*

By Col. Jon Cornish

Recently, it has been brought to the department's attention that there is some confusion as to how the new double tagging requirement will work for the upcoming lobster season. Those fishing in zones F and G or B and C likely already have some experience working within this process since double tagging, or the use of secondary zone tags, is already in place there. So what does this change mean to everyone else?

Take the time to read the language in the new rule stated below:

### Fishing in a Non-Declared Lobster Zone

By June 1, 2017, all Class I, Class II or Class III lobster and crab fishing license holders must affix a second zone tag to their traps when fishing those traps in a zone other than their declared lobster zone. This second zone tag will be in addition to their declared lobster zone tag.

A person who holds a Class I, Class II or Class III lobster and crab fishing license may not fish more than 49% of that person's lobster traps in a zone other than their declared lobster zone unless that person's license identifies that zone as the declared lobster zone.

The tags must be obtained from the Department of Marine Resources.

The absence of a second tag on traps fished in a zone other than their declared lobster zone shall be prima facie evidence of a violation of this regulation.

Any fisherman that fishes lobster gear outside the boundaries of his/her declared zone must place a secondary zone tag in their trap as well as the declared zone tag. Only 49% of the gear that you are legally allowed to fish may be placed outside your declared zone. All of that gear must be double tagged.

### To Summarize:

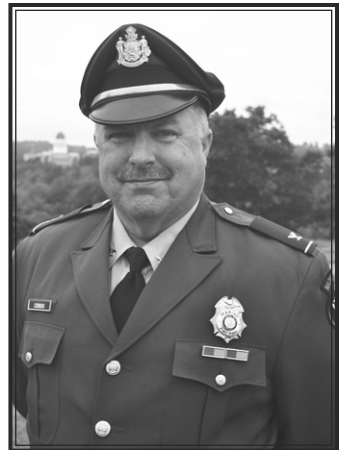
You may fish up to 49% of your lobster traps in any zone outside your declared zone (also referred to as home zone). Any lobster trap fished in your non-declared zone will have two tags attached to it. One of these tags will be your primary declared zone tag (no change) and the other tag will be a secondary zone tag and will display the letters SCND instead of the declared zone letter. The secondary zone tag will not have EEZ stamped on it even if you have a Federal Permit. Your declared zone tag will have EEZ stamped on it thus covering you.

Remember double tagging applies to both state and federal waters. There is no limit to how many secondary zones you may declare, up to 49%, as long as all gear that you fish outside your home zone is double tagged.

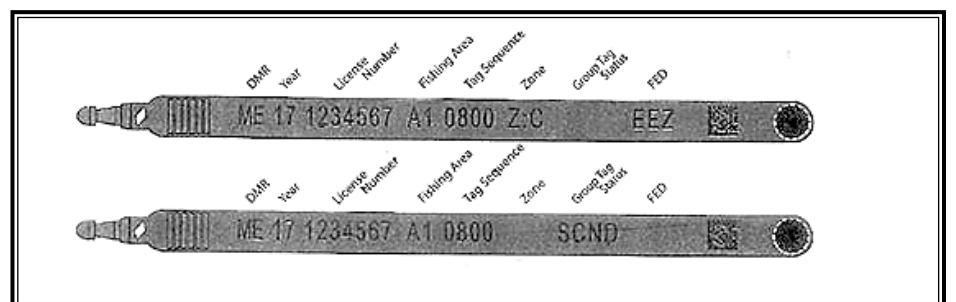
**All traps fished in a non-declared zone must have both trap tags attached to it.**

When you fill out your application you must declare your home zone and all additional zones you will be setting gear in. A fisherman who purchases 800 tags would be able to fish 392(49%) of their gear outside his home zone.

**EXCEPTION:** Any fisherman fishing within the Zone E boundaries will only be allowed to fish 600 traps total regardless if you have Zone E listed as your primary or secondary zone. In this case if your home zone was outside Zone E and you had 600 tags you can only fish 294 in Zone E.



Col. Cornish is the chief of Maine's Marine Patrol Bureau. DMR photo.




The top tag is the primary tag that has to be in all traps fished (EEZ means it can be fished in federal waters).

The bottom tag is the tag that needs to be in all traps fished outside the declared zone defined as the secondary zone.

**Some important things to remember:**


*Continued on page 4*

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## GUEST COLUMN: *Accurate monitoring critical in groundfishery*

By Ben Martens

The New England Fishery Management Council announced the development of Groundfish Amendment 23 and a series of scoping hearings throughout New England including one on Friday, March 3, at the Maine Fishermen's Forum. The purpose of this Amendment is to improve the reliability and accountability of the Council's monitoring program. In a press release, Council Executive Director Tom Nies further explained that "The Council, fishermen, and the public recognize the groundfish monitoring program needs improvement. This is the first and best opportunity for people to suggest ways to create a program that will give the accurate, reliable information needed to manage this fishery."

*The accuracy of the data gathered by these monitors is critical to the success of New England's groundfish fishery, as it helps tell the fishermen's side of the story during the stock assessment process.*

Fishery management is a data-hungry enterprise so it isn't surprising that there is a new focus on getting more reliable data into the scientific process. As much as we have seen movement toward incorporating "big data" into decision-making for marketing, finance and even baseball, fisheries managers are beginning to demand timely, accurate, and verifiable data to help them set regulations and establish catch limits. A lack of good data often forces managers to make decisions with a limited understanding of ecosystems, fish stocks and industry trends. This information gap puts fish stocks and fishing businesses at risk and is irresponsible when we have the tools to fix this problem.

Since the groundfish fishery moved to an allocation-based sector system in 2010, fishermen have been accountable for all fish caught on a trip, whether landed or discarded. While counting the landed catch is fairly simple, determining discards is more complicated. Currently, a set percentage of trips are observed by federal monitors, who collect information about discards observed on those trips. The accuracy of the data gathered by these monitors is critical to the success of New England's groundfish fishery, as it helps tell the

fishermen's side of the story during the stock assessment process.

In general, monitoring has a negative connotation within the fishing industry. No fisherman wants to have an extra body on the boat watching him fish. However, the stream of information coming directly from an active fishing vessel is crucial to painting a complete picture of our fisheries. A partnership of The Nature Conservancy, Cape Cod Commercial Fishermen's Alliance, the Gulf of Maine Research Institute, and the Maine Coast Fishermen's Association is currently conducting a project which puts monitoring technology using cameras onto groundfish vessels. These cameras monitor discards and develop a verified data stream with the hope of ultimately improving stock assessments, boosting fisheries' health and profitability and giving power back to our fishing communities.



*Ben Martens is the executive director of the Maine Coast Fishermen's Association located in Brunswick.*

For the 2016 fishing season, close to a dozen groundfish vessels were outfitted with cameras and participated in the project. While some of the participants were small vessels looking to remove the burden of having an additional body on board, a handful were focused on finding a better way to get their data into the scientific process. These boats ran their cameras on 100% of the trips they took. While the data are collected for management focused on discarded fish, other pieces of information may prove significant over time. For instance, one of the vessels noticed a significant increase in flatfish catch, even after the most recent stock assessment suggested these stocks were declining. So, in future years instead of simply telling regulators that he is seeing more fish, this fisherman will be able to deliver verified data to regulators showing how long it took him to harvest his catch and where it was caught. The information will have greater accuracy because everything was observed with a camera.

This kind of data can be significant with just one boat. With a fleet of vessels all collecting and supplying data streams we could be looking at a systematic shift in the importance of fisheries-dependent data in the management process.

In a fishery based on annual quotas, poor data causes problems to compound. Good data, on the other hand, can create a virtuous cycle in a well-managed fishery. No two fisheries are exactly alike, but those that have invested heavily in good stock assessment data and accurate reporting, such as the New England scallop fishery, have seen an unprecedented increase in value, sustainability and business security. For fisheries with poor accountability, like the New England groundfish fishery, data uncertainty has led to inaccurate stock assessments, a lack of faith in the science, and a federally-declared economic disaster.

The work done in 2016 by fishermen running camera systems and their partners shows a new path toward accurate data collection. There exists a fantastic opportunity for the fishing industry to begin producing valuable data and have a profound impact on science, management and the regulatory process. Amendment 23 to the Groundfish Fishery Management Plan is a chance to ensure managers no longer rely on sub-par information to regulate New England's fisheries and bring the industry back within the scientific process.

*Tags continued from page 3*

All trap tags must be placed in the trap as noted below and must be legible. (see prohibitions)

All fishermen need to know what the boundaries are of the zones they are fishing in order to avoid placing gear with only the primary tag in outside zones.

As you shift gear it is important that you always have gear outside your primary zone double tagged as noted.

### A. Prohibitions

(1) No person shall fish with or have on board a vessel a lobster trap unless a valid lobster trap tag issued by the Commissioner is securely attached to the frame of the trap. The lobster trap tag shall be affixed to the bridge of the lobster trap so that the tag information is clearly visible for inspection by a Marine Patrol Officer.

(2) No person shall fish with, lift, haul, raise, or transport any lobster trap with a tag which has been tampered with or where the tag number is illegible or missing.

*Lastly, please remember to order your 2017 tags as soon as possible. Plan ahead. Patrol will be enforcing the requirements to have traps properly tagged June 1st. Waiting too long to order tags is not an excuse to be fishing without them.*



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## GUEST COLUMN: *Update from southwest Nova Scotia*

By *Bernie Berry*

I am the president of the Coldwater Lobster Association which represents lobstermen throughout LFA 34 (Lobster Fishing Area for southwest Nova Scotia). Coldwater Lobster Association was formed in 2014 to give fishermen an united voice and a strong platform from which we collectively can deal with all the issues concerning the lobster industry. The individual approach will not work.

LFA 34 consists of 950 licence holders; the season runs from the last Monday in November to the last day of May. The fishery is conducted from the shoreline out to a maximum of fifty miles. Depths range from a few fathom to 120 fathom. So far this season (up to January 31) we have seen a decrease in landings from last year. Early indications show that we are down 20% (last Dec.-Jan. was a record year) from this time last year. This year also saw a reduction in opening price. This year's price was set at \$5.25Cdn/crate run compared to \$6.00Cdn/crate run last year.

Weather has also been a contributing factor this year. The number of hauling days this year is down, in particular in December when we had approximately 7 to 10 good days. January has been a more typical month, with fishermen getting out to haul pots a couple times each week. Since then the price has fluctuated a lot.

There are numerous issues on the horizon that could affect the fishery here. Among those are the push for Marine Protected Areas. This issue applies not just to LFA 34 but to the entire Canadian east coast. We must meet targets of 5% coverage by mid-2017 and 10% by 2020. We have taken a proactive approach by engaging the regulators in discussions. We are trying to see if there are advantages if we are involved in how these areas are developed and implemented. We have developed a working relationship with the regulators and, hopefully, a beneficial target can be reached. The initial fear from fishermen was the potential loss of a massive amount of fishing grounds. As we continue our discussions on this issue we believe we can minimize the potential loss of grounds.

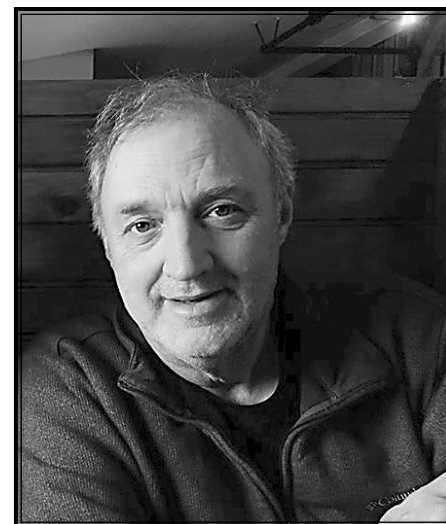
Another problematic issue is that of oil exploration. The issue here is the location of some of the potential lease sites (future drill sites). Several of these sites border on the U.S. Georges Bank moratorium area. Another area is LFA 40 (Browns Bank) which is a closed area to lobster fishing. It is not just the drilling process and the possibility of spills, but the lack of clean-up plans put forth by the oil companies. Most of the plans for clean-up will not work because certain methods such as skimmers and booms only work in less than three-

foot seas. The other clean-up method is to use chemicals that only hide the oil (sink it), not clean it up. As these chemicals react to the oil they develop a more toxic solution. The Nova Scotia government, in particular, seems to believe that an oil industry would help the poor financial shape that the province is in. Our opinion is that a royalty check from the oil industry will never replace a pay check from the lobster fishery in the local communities.

Tidal power is another looming issue. A tidal turbine was installed in the upper Bay of Fundy (LFA 35) in November. This went in against the wishes of area fishermen who wanted more science to establish a baseline of information to judge the effects of the turbine on fisheries in the local area. The Bay of Fundy Fishermen's Association went to court in November to get an injunction to stop installation of the turbine, but failed. They went back to court in early February to argue another part of their case. There is the potential that this venture will expand into 80-100 tidal turbines installed not only in LFA 35 but in the northern portion of LFA 34, displacing fishermen and possibly hurting different species of fish and invertebrates.

Like the Maine lobster fishery, the Nova Scotian lobster fishery is MSC (Marine Stewardship Council) certified. We are in our second year of our MSC program and progressing nicely in achieving the five conditions that were identified in the original listing. The conditions are harvest control rules, mackerel bait use and stock recovery, by-catch reduction and a lobster research plan.

Thank you for this opportunity to update you on the 2016-2017 season and other important issues. In the future, we hope to build a working relationship with the lobstermen of Maine and their representatives to achieve a better and a more prosperous future for all.



*Bernie Berry is the president of the Coldwater Lobster Association in Milton Highlands, Nova Scotia. The Association was established in 2014.*



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**BOARD OF DIRECTORS'  
MEETING SCHEDULE**  
All meetings take place  
at **Darby's Restaurant,**  
**Belfast, unless otherwise**  
**indicated.**

April 4, TUESDAY, noon.

## STEAMING AHEAD

In February, I had the privilege of welcoming 14 lobstermen to the second Maine Lobster Leadership Institute. The program kicked off with a two-day retreat at Point Lookout in Northport. The agenda was packed with presentations on the fundamentals of lobster management, science, lobster in a changing environment, financial and business planning, marketing and an overview of pressing issues such as whale rules, bait and coral protection zones.

This year's group includes men and women from York to Cutler, ranging in age from 17 to 40. The participants are intelligent, thoughtful and eager to learn. Each has a different interest and motivation for joining the leadership program. Yet they also have much in common. Each represents the future of the fishery. Each is an independent business owner who has made significant financial investment in the business. Each needs to become informed on how to manage his/her lobster business as well as how to protect the lobster resource in order to be successful over the decades. Each person has recognized that he or she has a responsibility to get involved.

It is no accident that the leadership program grew out of a strong desire by Maine Lobstermen's Association board members to get younger lobstermen involved. Since 1954, the MLA has weathered many storms, but has remained steadfast in its commitment to keeping Maine's lobster industry sustainable and profitable.

As I prepared for the leadership program, I reviewed the many issues the MLA has faced in its 63-year history. And it truly is staggering. A quick review reminds one of the MLA's contributions in every decade since the 1950s. I couldn't help but wonder what the fishery would look like without the MLA. Some would be quick to say that the industry would have been just fine anyway, but I disagree.

The MLA remains unique among fishery organizations principally because of the leadership of its board and members and their foresight for the future. The contrast between other organizations and the MLA is clear. When I bring an issue to the board for discussion, the directors first raise concerns that they believe lobstermen in their areas will have. But as the board members talk to each other, they realize that the solutions are often not about doing what may seem right for individual lobstermen or areas. The best solutions are about what is good for the Maine lobster industry as a whole, both today and in the future.

I attend lots of meetings in all parts of the coast. I often see lobstermen so consumed by what is going on in their area that they are not able to engage in the broader conversation or understand the full breadth of the issue being discussed. Many of these lobstermen have their set-in-stone opinions and are often intractable. It may be because they are stubborn, it may be because they are not well-informed, or it may be that they are not willing to make a small sacrifice or be inconvenienced in any way in order to benefit the industry as a whole.

I saw this play out recently during public testimony before the Appropriations Committee on the DMR budget. The DMR is facing a budget shortfall and has proposed across-the-board increases in license fees to plug a \$600,000 gap. Of course, no one wants to pay more for a license so the issue is inherently controversial. However, in the larger sense the lobster industry has a lot to lose if DMR is not adequately funded.

At their monthly meeting the MLA directors discussed the budget situation and were adamant that the DMR should be fully funded. A budget cut is not an option. However, the board questioned the premise that the citizen referendum passed in November will cause a financial burden requiring agencies to be under-funded and thus creating DMR's shortfall. The MLA argued that it is time for the state to recognize the enormous economic contribution of our commercial fisheries and coastal communities' economic dependence on the lobster industry. The MLA firmly stated

that it is time for the state to step up and find a way to fully fund DMR – without license increases.

The Lobstermen's Union took a different tactic. While they opposed the increase in license fees and supported funding the DMR budget, they claimed that any increase would be a significant financial hardship for lobstermen and then attacked the Maine Lobster Marketing Collaborative, which draws its budget from a surcharge on licenses instituted in 2013.

They urged the Appropriations Committee to take the MLMC budget and use it to backfill the DMR's budget. In the process, they made false claims about the value of the lobster industry since the inception of the MLMC and accused the MLMC of not sharing information. I thought it was odd that Union representatives who apparently have never attended an MLMC meeting, read the frequent columns by MLMC director Matt Jacobson in this paper, or listened to the MLMC's annual presentation at the Maine Fishermen's Forum should argue that the Collaborative was secretive.

Reality check: the boat price for lobster has increased each year since the MLMC was formed. In fact, the boat price in 2015, the last year for which data are available, was the third highest on record. Only during the few years prior to the 2008 global economic crisis was the boat price higher. And in each of those years the fishery landed only 65 million pounds. It's pretty amazing to think that the boat price has remained strong while lobstermen have nearly doubled their landings. Something seems to be working.

MLA board members and myself have followed the work of the MLMC closely and have been impressed with the strategy and discipline it has shown. This is in stark contrast to the lack of cohesive programming we saw during the latter years of the Maine Lobster Promotion Council. Whether you agree with the concept of the MLMC or not, I strongly urge you to find out what it has done over the past few years. They give their annual report back to the industry on Saturday afternoon during the Maine Fishermen's Forum.

The industry needs to stay focused. The issue that needs to be addressed is the DMR budget, not the existence of the MLMC. The state needs to be pushed to invest in our marine resources through the DMR because our coastal economy depends on those resources. The fate of the MLMC will be decided in 2018, when the organization presents an independent audit of its work to the Legislature. That check and balance was built into the law when the Collaborative was authorized.

I was reminded during the debate on DMR's budget that my job is more than just employment. I am proud to represent the MLA. Why? Because the board and members bring their collective vision and foresight to the table and convey that to me. It's not one person's thoughts but the hard-won decisions worked out by the group that makes the MLA so strong.

The MLA has ably represented this industry for more than 60 years and will continue to do so for 60 more. The lobster industry has changed significantly over the last 10 years; we truly need the next generation to step up to guide the fishery through an unknown future. I am encouraged that there are young lobstermen from throughout the coast who are willing to take part in the Lobster Leadership Institute. It's their actions that will determine the future of this amazing industry.

As always, stay safe on the water.

Patrice



## MAINE LOBSTERMEN'S ASSOCIATION UPDATE

### MLA BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

The MLA Board met on February 1 in Belfast. Peter Emerson from Mack Boring updated the board on EPA's new requirements for Tier 4 engines, due to go into effect in October. This will require any new boats or engines above 800 h.p. to reduce emissions significantly. Since the technology is not ready, most engines will need to be outfitted with additional equipment to meet this requirement. Recreational boats are exempt. Less than one-quarter of 1% of diesel engines are put into marine service. The work cycle of a lobster boat is more similar to that of a recreational boat; it transits to a position and then idles for long periods of time. The MLA Directors discussed this issue at length and will explore options to seek an exemption for the lobster fishery.

The Directors voted unanimously to present this slate of nominees to serve a three-year term on the MLA Board to the membership for a vote at the Annual Meeting: Bob Baines, Donnie Young, Gerry Cushman, Jack Merrill, Jason Joyce, Dwight Carver and Willis Spear. The Directors voted on the Golden V-Notch, Marine Patrol and other award recipients. The Board voted to recognize the late Pat White for his many years of service and leadership to MLA and the lobster industry at the MLA Annual meeting.



*MLA board members discussed the various lobster-related bills now before the Marine Resources Committee. MLA photo.*

The Directors reviewed and discussed lobster-related bills available to date. The board discussed the five DMR bills that have been put forward, however the final language for these bills was not available. There were no major concerns voiced. The board strongly supported DMR's budget request but opposed license fee increases to fill the budget gap. They did not agree with the premise that agencies should be flat-funded due to the passage of certain citizen referenda.

The MLA supported LD 14 to allow lobster fishing to begin at 5 a.m. during October. The MLA did not support LD 113 which is a concept draft regarding bait prices. The bill was very vague and the strategies presented seemed to run contrary to the management programs that are currently in place. MLA will follow this bill in case any ideas emerge that would benefit the lobster industry. MLA did not support LD 201 to allow lobstermen to purchase up to the maximum number of tags purchased under that license in any given year. The primary concern is that this would cost the state revenue, which then could impact funding for Marine Patrol and lobster science and management staff. Others were concerned that it would not accomplish anything at all.

The MLA put forward *An Act to Improve Enforcement of Maine's Lobster Laws* as a concept draft based on the results of its enforcement survey. The survey had an excellent response (400 people completed it). The bill is still in the Revisor's Office; it will provide a vehicle to move forward ideas such as establishing minimum penalties for some violations.

The MLA continues planning for the Happy Healthy Lobster Tour. Jean Lavallée will present at the Fishermen's Forum, followed by a series of workshops along the coast the following week. The Maine Lobster Leadership Program began on February 2 with a two-day retreat. Fifteen young lobstermen are participating in this session.

The MLA is concerned over the impact that some of President Trump's policies could have on the Maine lobster industry, particularly those affecting trade. MLA will be reaching out to the Congressional delegation to share these and other concerns. The MLA Annual Meeting will be held on Friday, March 3 at 9 a.m. at the Samoset Resort. The next regular board meeting will be Tuesday, April 4, at noon.

### ATLANTIC STATES MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION

#### Atlantic Herring

The ASMFC's Atlantic Section approved draft changes (addendum) to the herring plan for public comment. The draft addendum includes management options to ensure the seasonal quota is distributed throughout Trimester 2, are applied consistently by the states adjacent to Area 1A, and address excessive capacity.

The draft addendum was initiated in response to the accelerated rate of Area 1A Trimester 2 (June through September) landings in recent years and the increasingly dynamic nature of days out measures to control effort that have varied among states.

Landing reports indicate vessels are harvesting herring on days out of the fishery and transferring fish at-sea to carriers or larger vessels until landing is permitted. This practice has limited the effectiveness of the days out program to control the rate of harvest.

The draft addendum presents six management options to improve the performance of the Area 1A fishery, ranging from restricting a vessel from landing fish caught on days out to limiting transfers at sea as well as the amount a vessel can land per week. The document also seeks input on a tiered weekly landing limit for future management consideration. States have scheduled public hearings to gather public comment on the draft addendum.

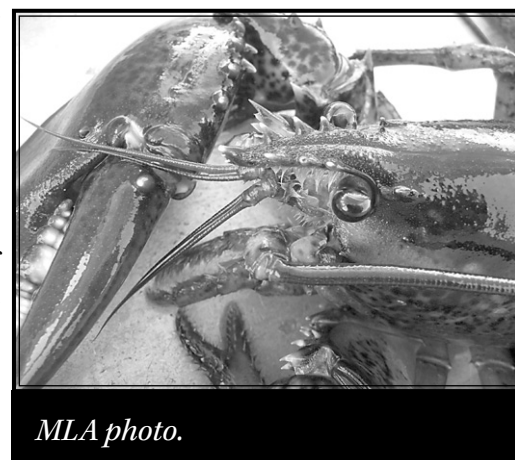
April 3, 6-8 PM, at the Lincoln County Communications Conference Room, Wiscasset.

April 4, 7 PM, at the Urban Forestry Center, Portsmouth, NH.

Public comment will be accepted until 5 PM (EST) on April 7, 2017 and should be forwarded to Ashton Harp, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, 1050 N. Highland St, Suite 200 A-N, Arlington, VA 22201; 703.842.0741 (FAX) or at [aharp@asmfc.org](mailto:aharp@asmfc.org) (Subject line: Draft Addendum I). The Section will review submitted public comment and consider final approval of Addendum I at the Commission's meeting in May.

#### American Lobster

The ASMFC American Lobster Management Board approved a draft addendum to the lobster plan for public comment. The draft addendum seeks to address the depleted condition of the Southern New England (SNE) stock while preserving a functional portion of that lobster fishery. The document presents a suite of management measures to increase egg production and lower fishing mortality through a combination of management tools including gauge size changes, season closures, and trap reductions.



*MLA photo.*

The draft addendum responds to the results of the 2015 American Lobster Benchmark Stock Assessment which found the SNE stock is severely depleted and experiencing recruitment failure. Declines in population abundance were most pronounced in the inshore portion of the stock where environmental conditions have remained unfavorable to lobster since the late 1990s. These stock declines are largely in response to adverse environmental conditions, including increasing water temperatures over the last 15 years, combined with continued fishing mortality.

The draft addendum focuses on increasing egg production so that, if environmental conditions become favorable, the SNE stock can benefit from a strong recruitment year. It includes six issues. The first proposes four targets to increase egg production, ranging from 20% to 60%, with an additional option for status quo. The second issue seeks input on proposed management tools to increase egg production and whether these tools should be used independently or in conjunction with one another. The third issue addresses the effects of proposed measures on the recreational fishery. The fourth issue explores the implementation of seasonal closures and potential impacts to the Jonah crab fishery. The fifth issue examines whether management measures should be uniform across Lobster Conservation Management Areas (LCMA) in SNE. The sixth issue asks how management measures should be applied to the offshore waters of LCMA 3, which spans both the Gulf of Maine/Georges Bank and SNE stock units.

States from Massachusetts through Virginia will conduct public hearings. The Board will review submitted public comment and consider action on the Addendum at the Commission's meeting in May.

The Board also initiated development of another draft addendum (XXVI) to respond to the need for improved harvest reporting and biological data collec-





## MAINE LOBSTERMEN'S ASSOCIATION UPDATE

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tion in state and federal waters. This draft addendum seeks to utilize the latest technology to improve reporting, increase the spatial resolution of harvester data, collect greater effort data, and advance the collection of biological data offshore. The Board will receive an update on the development of this addendum in May.

The Board heard a report from the American Lobster Technical Committee (TC) on changing stock conditions in the Gulf of Maine (GOM) and Georges Bank (GBK). This analysis was requested by the Board after surveys showed a recent decline in settlement. The report reviewed the role that ocean currents play in the life history of lobsters, investigated stock connectivity, provided evidence of decreased size at maturity, highlighted changes in the stock-recruit relationship, and explored management tools to increase the resiliency of the stock. In response to this information, the Board established a GOM/GBK Subcommittee to further review the TC's analysis and provide recommendations to the Board.

The TC also presented work on potential impacts to the lobster and Jonah crab fisheries as a result of the New England Fishery Management Council's Omnibus Deep Sea Coral Amendment. The analysis investigates potential impacts to effort and revenue as a result of closures proposed around the offshore canyons, Mount Desert Rock, and the Outer Schoodic Ridge. Prior to passing this analysis on to the Council, the Board tasked the Lobster Advisory Panel with reviewing the analysis and providing industry comments.

### Jonah Crab

The Commission's American Lobster Management Board approved management action to establish a coastwide standard for claw harvest and a definition of bycatch, based on a percent composition of catch, in order to minimize expansion of a small-scale fishery under the bycatch allowance. The Jonah Crab plan now permits claw harvest coastwide. Specifically, the plan allows Jonah crab fishermen to detach and harvest claws at sea, with a required minimum claw length of 2.75" if the volume of claws landed is greater than five gallons. Claw landings less than five gallons do not have to meet the minimum claw length standard. Fishermen may also harvest whole crabs which meet the 4.75" minimum carapace width.

The plan also establishes a definition of bycatch in the Jonah crab fishery, whereby the total pounds of Jonah crabs caught as bycatch must weigh less than the total amount of the targeted species at all times during a fishing trip. Prior to this Addendum, a non-trap or non-lobster trap fisherman could land 1,000 crabs as bycatch but was not required to have any other species of catch on-board. Through Addendum II, fishermen harvesting under the bycatch limit must have another species on board of greater weight than landed Jonah crabs.

### Atlantic Menhaden

The Atlantic Menhaden Management Board reviewed public comment on the Amendment 3 Public Information Document (PID), provided guidance on the management alternatives that should be included, and heard a report outlining the results of the socio-economic study on the commercial fishery.

The Board reviewed a public comment summary received from the approximately 300 individuals who attended the 14 public hearings held along the coast and 25,606 written comments from individuals and organizations. In response, the Board provided guidance on the management alternatives which should be included in Draft Amendment 3. In regard to reference points, the Board recommended continued work on menhaden-specific ERPs and exploration of interim reference points, including single-species reference points and existing guidelines for forage fish.



Lobstermen need menhaden as bait; fish oil companies need it for their products. Photo courtesy of VIMS.

The Board maintained all allocation methods included in the PID; however, the Board specified five timeframes for further analysis: 2009-2011, 1985-1995, 1985-2016, 2012-2016, and a weighted allocation between 1985-1995 and 2012-2016.

In regard to quota transfers, the Board recommended options be developed which explore quota reconciliation and a transfer process with greater guidelines. The Board also recommended that Draft Amendment 3 explore quota rollovers, with options rang-

ing from no rollovers to 100% of unused quota being rolled over into the subsequent year. The Board expressed the greatest interest in options which count all incidental catch in the Total Allowable Catch, including an option which allows for a small-scale fishery set-aside, as well as an option which maintains the current bycatch limit per vessel.

The Board also expressed interest in maintaining the episodic events program with New York included as a participant in the set-aside. For the Chesapeake Bay reduction fishing cap, the Board recommended three options: maintenance of the cap, removal of the cap, and reduction of the cap to a level which reflects the most recent five-year average of reduction harvest in the Bay. Finally, the Board agreed to include a research set-aside program as an adaptive management tool.

The Board also heard a report from Dr. John Whitehead and Dr. Jane Harrison on results of the socio-economic conducted on the menhaden commercial fishery. The study, which was initiated in March 2016, characterizes the coastwide commercial fisheries, including bait and reduction sectors and the fishing communities they support. As a part of the study, surveys and in-person interviews were conducted with fishermen, dealers, and end-users, and economic analysis was conducted on landings data to determine economic impacts that arise from changes in the Total Allowable Catch. A final report on the socio-economic study will be available in late March on the Commission's web site.

In order to maintain the current management of the cast net fishery throughout the development of Amendment 3, the Board approved continuing the provision which manages the cast net fishery under the bycatch provision until implementation of Amendment 3. Finally, the Board approved Vincent Balzano (Maine) to the Menhaden Advisory Panel.

### NEFMC HERRING MANAGEMENT UPDATE

The New England Fishery Management Council reviewed results from its second Atlantic Herring Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) workshop in December 2016. After considering extensive input from workshop attendees and Council advisors, the Council whittled down the list of potential acceptable biological catch (ABC) control rules to be analyzed for further deliberation.

The Council is developing a new ABC control rule as part of Amendment 8 to the Atlantic Herring Fishery Management Plan. A control rule is a method for establishing an annual catch limit or target fishing level based on scientific advice.

Workshop attendees were asked to provide input on potential trade-offs in the fishery, some of which involved choosing desired levels of herring yield and harvest while accounting for factors such as predator needs and uncertainty related to issues such as climate change. Given collective feedback, the Council took four types of control

rules off the table: constant catch; conditional constant catch; biomass-based for five years; and biomass-based for three years with restrictions. This move allows the PDT to focus on analyzing annual and three-year-based biomass control rules, which were favored by a majority of workshop attendees.

In March, an independent peer review panel will evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the MSE methods and data used to develop Atlantic herring ABC control rules and comment on any constraints that may hinder use of the MSE model and outcomes in preparing management alternatives. Amendment 8 also contains a set of alternatives to address potential localized depletion and user conflicts.

### NEFMC HERRING - HADDOCK BYCATCH ISSUES

The Council has been working on a range of alternatives to potentially modify the Georges Bank haddock accountability measures (AMs) that apply to the herring midwater trawl fishery. However, after reviewing the alternatives and receiving advice from the Herring AP and Committee, the Council voted to select "no action," which means existing regulations will continue to govern AMs for the herring midwater trawl fishery.

The Council had considered using "proactive" closures to prevent herring vessels from fishing in areas where haddock are prevalent at certain times of the year. Ultimately, the Council concluded that haddock distribution is too un-



Last year's herring supply problems remain on lobstermen's minds as spring rolls around. B. Waring photo.



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predictable to select fixed closures, and offshore closures have the potential of forcing the herring fleet closer to shore. Framework 5 included another option to seasonally split the haddock catch cap for herring midwater trawlers with 80% of the allocation made available on May 1 and 20% on November 1. However, monitoring concerns led the Council to reject this alternative as well. Technical analyses indicated that both the seasonal quota split and proactive seasonal closures could produce negative, unintended consequences, which factored heavily into the Council's final decision.



*The NEFMC raised the haddock bycatch in the herring fishery modestly in November. NEFSC photo.*

The Council's November vote to increase the herring midwater trawl fishery's Georges Bank haddock sub-annual catch limit from 1% to 1.5% also played a role in the decision. The higher haddock sub-ACL, if approved, will reduce the risk of triggering the herring AMs, which, in turn, will provide the midwater trawl fleet with more opportunity to maximize revenue from herring landings. The AMs that remain in place are 1) in-season closures when the haddock bycatch cap is reached, and 2) a pound-for-pound payback for any overages that do occur.

### MLA TESTIMONY ON LICENSE FEE INCREASE

MLA executive director Patrice McCarron provided testimony to the Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs in February on a proposed increase in commercial fishing license fees to support the Department of Marine Resources.

"Senator Hamper, Representative Gattine, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs, my name is Patrice McCarron. I am the Executive Director of the Maine Lobstermen's Association (MLA). MLA is Maine's oldest and largest fishing industry organization whose mission is to advocate for a sustainable lobster resource and the fishermen and communities that depend on it.

I am here today to ask you to reject the Department of Marine Resources' (DMR) proposal to increase commercial fishing license fees. However, the MLA strongly supports the DMR's budget request and urges you to identify funding to fill DMR's \$600,000 structural budget gap.

Lobster has long been an icon of the state of Maine, and an integral part of our culture, traditions and economy. In Maine, local, good-paying jobs are difficult to come by. Yet for more than a century Maine's lobster fishery has been a stable presence along our waterfronts.

The significance of Maine's lobster industry to the state's coastal economy cannot be overstated. In 2015, Maine lobstermen landed over 120 million pounds worth more than \$510 million. This figure represents only the value of lobster sold by the boat; it does not include the benefit derived from the many businesses connected to lobstering.

Maine lobster now represents 44% of Maine's commercial fisheries landings and more than 80% of the value. Landings and value of this magnitude are unprecedented for the fishery and we expect this trend to continue, at least in the near term. Looking back just 20 years ago, the lobster fishery landed less than 50 million pounds and was valued at \$138 million. We owe the success of the lobster industry to a number of factors. Certainly, Maine lobster's conservation program and mindful stewardship by lobstermen have been critical, but we've also been helped by favorable environmental conditions and a reduction in predators. One thing is certain, the lobster fishery and the ocean environment are changing rapidly and we face many unknowns moving forward.

But the significance of the economic benefits of the lobster industry's \$510 million in ex-vessel revenue is very clear. By law, every Maine lobsterman is a small business owner. Each runs his own boat and lives, works, and spends his earnings locally. There is no corporate ownership in Maine's lobster fishery, so no corporate headquarters to fund outside of our state. Lobstermen's profits stay in Maine and are spent in our communities.

As a business sector, commercial fishing is a primary economic driver. Lobstering income serves as the foundation of the local economy. Each dollar earned by a lobsterman generates several more. The multiplier for the lobster industry has been conservatively estimated at \$3. When lobstermen are paid for their product at the dock, they then spend those earnings on everything from meals at local restaurants and gas for their trucks and boats to new traps, boats, and homes. This means that hardworking lobstermen generate \$1.5 billion in economic activity for the state of Maine each year.

As you contemplate DMR's budget request, it is important to remember that commercial fisheries are part of the public trust, and thus, are highly regulated. The DMR is a small, yet very effective agency which responsibly manages our marine resources for the benefit of the greater public good. The agency does an excellent job supporting our commercial fisheries and working to ensure that they are sustainably managed. With so many livelihoods and Maine's coastal economy directly dependent upon the success of our commercial fisheries, it is imperative that DMR receive adequate funding to support this important economic sector.

The DMR cannot effectively operate without adequate funding. The MLA does not agree with the premise that a flat-funded budget scenario is necessary and we strongly oppose looking to the industry to fill that gap. Flat funding does not cover sorely needed raises to our Marine Patrol Officers approved by the Legislature during the last session, or basic salary increases for staff. Flat funding does not cover ballistic vests needed for our Marine Patrol Officers who are often put in harm's way. Flat funding does not allow the department to upgrade its data collection and management systems which are essential to efficiently meet the demands of fisheries science and management and free up staff to do much needed research. And flat funding does not add a lobster scientist to DMR's staff to support Maine's \$1.5 billion lobster industry. The Appropriations Committee must reject the flat funding scenario for DMR and find a way to fill the \$600,000 structural budget gap.

The MLA firmly rejects looking to the fishing industry to pay a 30% increase on our base license fees to fill this gap. Maine lobstermen have a long history of stepping up to the plate to raise revenue to support our industry. In 1990, lobstermen went to the Legislature to add a surcharge on their licenses raising \$350,000 to support marketing and promotion of Maine lobster. In 2013, in response to concern over the value of Maine lobster in the marketplace, the industry went back to the Legislature to request an increase in these fees to support expanded marketing of Maine lobster. The lobster industry now contributes \$2.7 million to market and promote our product.

Maine lobstermen also fund much of the DMR's staff which support the lobster industry. Through fees paid on lobster trap tags, Maine lobstermen raise approximately \$1.5 million annually to fund Marine Patrol, lobster science and management staff.

Fortunately, the DMR has been very creative over the years in identifying funding outside of the state's budget process to fund research essential to the management and sustainability of the lobster resource. When federal funding for lobster monitoring programs dried up, the DMR worked with the industry to redirect funds from the Lobster Seed Fund to support these essential programs, and has worked closely with the Lobster Research Education and Development Fund to help keep these programs going. Our fishery could not operate in the absence of these research programs.

And in recent years, the DMR has completed an effective restructuring process to further maximize their efficiency and effectiveness, making clear distinctions between their policy, enforcement and science programs. In this current budget proposal, the DMR has once again taken a hard look and included some cuts in their proposed budget.

Maine's lobster industry and the DMR have worked hard over the years to find ways to make ends meet. We have a long track record of working together to fund programs critical to the success of this industry. The lobster industry already contributes significantly to keeping the DMR funded and our essential programs operating.

In this time of unprecedented change in our oceans and our fishery, the state of Maine cannot afford to undercut the DMR's ability to do its job. Given the importance of the lobster fishery to the state of Maine, we should be here discussing how to enhance the DMR's efforts rather than undercut them or increase fees from the industry. It is time for the Appropriations Committee to take a stand in support of Maine's lobster industry by funding the DMR's budget as proposed, without raising commercial fishing license fees.

The MLA thanks you for your consideration of our position on this important matter."



*MLA board members at Marine Resources Committee meeting in Augusta. MLA photo.*

Lobster bill continued from page 1

Management Council and therefore the Legislature does not have the jurisdiction to override these management plans. Additionally, the proposals put forward are likely to destabilize the bait fishery.

*LD 201 An Act to Provide Flexibility in the Purchase of Lobster Trap Tags*, sponsored by Rep. Kumiega, proposes to allow a lobsterman to purchase up to the maximum number of trap tags purchased under that license in any previous year. The DMR supported this bill, citing that it could help the department manage latent effort by allowing lobstermen to purchase only the number of the tags they want to fish each year. The MLA opposed this bill, raising concern that it would have a fiscal impact on DMR at a time when the department is seeking to increase license fees.



Members of the Maine Lobstermen's Association meet to discuss lobster bills. MLA photo.

In February, the Appropriations and Financial Affairs and Marine Resources Committees held a joint public hearing on the DMR's budget that includes a proposed increase in marine license fees to fund a \$600,000 budget shortfall. The MLA testified that it does not agree with the premise that a flat-funded budget scenario is necessary and strongly opposed looking to the lobster industry to fill that gap. Given the lobster fishery's importance to the state, the MLA urged the Appropriations Committee to take a stand in support of Maine's lobstermen and fund the DMR's budget as proposed, without raising commercial fishing license fees.

The Marine Resources Committee scheduled public hearings on two lobster bills on March 1. *LD 373 An Act to Create Pathways to Enter Alternative Marine Industries*, sponsored by Rep. Alley, proposes to allow a person who has completed a lobster and crab fishing apprenticeship to enter a lottery to be allowed to engage in scallop harvesting during the lobstering off-season. *LD 392 An Act Regarding Legal Lobster Haul Times outside the 3-mile Line*, sponsored by Rep. Tuell, proposes to allow Zone A lobstermen to haul gear without any time of day restrictions in federal waters (outside 3 miles).

The Marine Resources Committee has scheduled public hearings on three additional lobster bills on March 6. *LD 149 An Act to Provide Additional Management for Limited-entry Lobster Zones*, sponsored by Rep. Hubbell, is a concept draft that proposes several ideas to limit the amount of traps lobstermen can fish outside of their declared home zone. Ideas include limiting lobstermen to no more than 25% outside their home zone; not allowing new entrants to fish traps outside their home zone; ensuring parity of effort of second zone tags between zones; and requiring that most restrictive management measures are followed. Rep. Hubbell also sponsored *LD 616 An Act to Ensure Consistent Access to Limited Entry Lobster Zones*, which proposes to prohibit new entrants to the lobster fishery from fishing lobster gear outside their declared lobster zone. *LD 575 An Act to Improve Enforcement of Maine's Lobster Laws*, sponsored by Sen. Langley, was put in at the request of the MLA based on feedback from an industry-wide survey on enforcement. This concept draft looks at establishing minimum penalties for certain lobster violations as a deterrent to violating



The Marine Resources Committee hears testimony on proposed bills. MLA photo.

the law. It also explores requiring lobster license holders found guilty of violating marine conservation laws to pay restitution to the state, and require lobster license holders convicted of marine resource violations resulting in a license suspension who re-enter the lobster fishery to re-enter as a new entrant and to have a vessel monitoring system aboard the vessel.

*LD 252 An Act to Improve the Safety in the Disposal of Marine Flares*, sponsored by Rep. McCreight, has not been scheduled for a public hearing before the Public Safety Committee. This bill proposes the establishment of a program for the collection and disposal of expired marine flares and for public education regarding expired marine flares.

Eight additional lobster bills, including four bills from DMR, have been submitted as bill titles, but have not yet been printed. *LR 743 An Act to Make Technical Changes to Maine's Marine Resources Laws*, submitted by DMR, proposes to allow lobster demonstration licenses to fish on Sunday; clarifies that it is illegal for lobstermen to use offal as bait and that it is illegal to sell offal as bait; and clarifies language that the Commissioner may permanently revoke a license for scrubbing lobsters.

*LR 745 An Act to Prevent Marine Debris*, submitted by DMR, proposes to make it illegal to take bait packaging aboard the vessel in order to prevent debris being dumped in the ocean. *LR 750 An Act Regarding Enforcement of Marine Resources Laws and Suspensions of Marine Resources Licenses*, submitted by DMR, proposes to allow the Commissioner to suspend marine resources licenses when certain crimes such as theft, offenses against public administrators, and arson and property destruction are committed. This bill also proposes that when a person signs for a marine license, he or she is also consenting to inspection, such the covert use of trackers on the vessel, if there is probable cause that he or she has violated a marine resource law. The DMR deems this legislative change necessary to get control of offshore violations. *LR 751 An Act to Extend the Time for an Appeal of License Denial for Military Members*, submitted by DMR, proposes that future veterans who want to get their lobster license back are no longer subject to any limit on length of time of military service as long as they had at least 50 landing days in the lobster fishery.

Four of the lobster-related bills submitted by legislators have not yet printed. *LR 1184 An Act to Give the Department of Marine Resources Flexibility with Licensing in the Herring Fishery* is sponsored by Rep. Parry. This bill proposes to give the DMR Commissioner the authority to manage herring fishermen depending on how recently they have had landings in Maine. This bill would enable Maine to comply with potential changes to the herring management plan through the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission. *LR 1746 An Act to Address Marine Debris Resulting for Commercial Activities* is sponsored by Rep. Devin. This is a concept bill to address marine debris resulting from commercial fishing and aquaculture lease sites. There is no information available on the proposed language of two of the bills, *LR 1348 An Act to Amend the Laws Regarding Marine Resources*, sponsored by Rep. Kumiega and *LR 1743 An Act to Incentivize Private Investment of Lobster Processing in Maine*, sponsored by Sen. Carson.

Bills can be tracked online at [www.legislature.maine.gov](http://www.legislature.maine.gov). Bills that begin with "LR" (Legislative Record) are not printed; bills that begin with "LD" (Legislative Document) are printed so the full text of the bill and tracking is available. An update on the Marine Resources Committee is distributed weekly. Contact the Committee clerk, Julia Brown at 207-287-1337 or email [Julia.Brown@Legislature.Maine.gov](mailto:Julia.Brown@Legislature.Maine.gov).

### Marine Resources Committee Members

Sen Joyce Maker - Chair (R), Calais  
[Joyce.Maker@legislature.maine.gov](mailto:Joyce.Maker@legislature.maine.gov) or  
 207-454-2327

Sen Eric Brakey (R), Auburn  
[Eric.Brakey@legislature.maine.gov](mailto:Eric.Brakey@legislature.maine.gov) or  
 207-406-0897

Sen Eloise Vitelli (D), Arrowsic  
[Vitelli@legislature.maine.gov](mailto:Vitelli@legislature.maine.gov) or 207-  
 443-4660

Rep Walter Kumiega Chair (D), Deer  
 Isle  
[Walter.kumiega@legislature.maine.gov](mailto:Walter.kumiega@legislature.maine.gov)  
 or 207-479-5459

Rep Robert Alley (D), Beals  
[Robert.Alley@legislature.maine.gov](mailto:Robert.Alley@legislature.maine.gov) or  
 207-263-4442

Rep Kevin Battle (R), South Portland  
[Kevin.Battle@legislature.maine.gov](mailto:Kevin.Battle@legislature.maine.gov) or  
 207-831-6962

Rep Lydia Blume (D), York Beach  
[Lydia.Blume@legislature.maine.gov](mailto:Lydia.Blume@legislature.maine.gov)

Rep Michael Devin (D), Newcastle  
[Michael.Devin@legislature.maine.gov](mailto:Michael.Devin@legislature.maine.gov)  
 or 207-975-3132

Rep David Haggan (R), Hampden  
[David.Haggan@legislature.maine.gov](mailto:David.Haggan@legislature.maine.gov)  
 or 207-944-7471

Rep Stephanie Hawke (R), Boothbay  
 Harbor  
[Stephanie.Hawke@legislature.maine.gov](mailto:Stephanie.Hawke@legislature.maine.gov)  
 or 207-380-6803

Rep Abden Simmons (R), Waldoboro  
[Abden.Simmons@legislature.maine.gov](mailto:Abden.Simmons@legislature.maine.gov)

Rep Paula Sutton (R), Warren  
[Paula.Sutton@legislature.maine.gov](mailto:Paula.Sutton@legislature.maine.gov)

Rep William Tuell (R), East Machias  
[Will.Tuell@legislature.maine.gov](mailto:Will.Tuell@legislature.maine.gov) or  
 207-271-8521

## 2017 HEALTHY AND HAPPY LOBSTER TOUR

Dr. Jean Lavallée, a lobster veterinarian and lobster health expert, is returning to Maine in March and will present a series of free workshops chronicling what it is like for a lobster to go from the comfort of the ocean floor to a processing plant or holding facility. For a lobster this is a long journey full of stress and surprise.

Lavallée speaks on behalf of the lobster, explaining how its body functions and how and why it experiences stress. Lobsters can be deceptive when it comes to their health. 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 the heart will likely rupture. Furthermore, a lobster has a semi-open blood circulation system. The blood doesn't recirculate; it flows over the tissues all the time. As soon as a lobster's shell is broken, then blood comes out, weakening the lobster.

All sorts of things weaken a lobster. Rapid hauling from the bottom is one stressor. Minor injuries to lobsters also add up to lost money. 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

which means they lose weight which means a lobsterman loses money. Plus that lobster is likely to be weak when it starts on its trip to the processor or dealer.

In addition, environmental factors such as diet, water temperatures and molt cycle can affect its health. Handling practices and holding environments can cause changes in the lobster's physiological state and therefore put stress on the animal. Minimizing stress and injury to lobsters will produce a healthier lobster and more profits for lobstermen. Lavallée will also talk about best practices that lobstermen can use on the boat, at the dock, and during transportation to minimize stress and injury maximize quality and value.

The free workshop will take place eight times in various locations along the coast, beginning with a presentation Saturday March 4 at 1 p.m. at the Fishermen's Forum in Rockport. The Maine Lobstermen's Community Alliance is grateful to Maine Sea Grant and to Maine's lobster co-ops and dealers for providing funding for these workshops.



Jean Lavallée returns for a series on maintaining lobster health and quality. MLA photo.

### Happy Healthy Lobster Tour dates

Saturday March 4th, 1 p.m., Samoset Resort/Fishermen's Forum  
Sponsored by Maine Sea Grant

Sunday March 5th, 2 p.m., Casco Bay Lines Ferry Terminal  
Sponsored by Maine Sea Grant and Island Seafood

Monday March 6th, 9 a.m., St George Town Hall  
Sponsored by Maine Sea Grant, Port Clyde Fisherman's Co-op and Tenants Harbor Fisherman's Co-op

Monday March 6th, 4 p.m., Deer Isle Stonington High School Cafeteria  
Sponsored by Maine Sea Grant and Stonington Lobster Co-op

Tuesday March 7th, 9 a.m., Swan's Island Fisherman's Co-op

Sponsored by Maine Sea Grant and Swan's Island Fisherman's Co-op

Tuesday March 7th, 4 p.m., Northeast Harbor Library, Mellon Room  
Sponsored by Maine Sea Grant and Cranberry Isle Fisherman's Co-op

Wednesday March 8th, 9:30 a.m., Gouldsboro Community Center  
Sponsored by Maine Sea Grant, Beals/Jonesport Lobster Co-op & Winter Harbor Lobster Co-op

For more information, contact Andi at 967-4555 or [www.mlcalliance.org](http://www.mlcalliance.org).



# DMR Ventless Lobster Trap Study

## Collaborative Fisheries Research



### Study Goal

The Ventless Lobster Trap Study, conducted by the Maine Department of Marine Resources (DMR) every year from June to August since 2006, is a collaborative research effort between industry and scientists in which juvenile lobster data are collected to be used in the stock assessment.

### Project Objectives

- 1) Characterize juvenile lobster relative abundance & size-distribution,
- 2) Determine which environmental factors may influence lobster distribution,
- 3) Promote collaboration between fishermen and DMR scientists,
- 4) Encourage industry participation in the lobster stock assessment process.

### Study Design

The Gulf of Maine is divided into three federal statistical areas. Sites are randomly selected in each area and 3 ventless traps will be deployed at each of the 276 total sites. Survey gear is tended by contracted lobstermen who are selected by competitive bid. All survey gear will have bright orange poly buoys marked with DMR contact information. This is a fishery independent study and DMR staff will be onboard each trip to measure lobsters. All lobsters will be discarded.

For more info: <http://www.maine.gov/dmr/about/rfps.html>

### Questions? Contact:

**Kathleen Reardon**  
Senior Lobster Biologist  
Kathleen.Reardon@Maine.gov  
Office: (207) 633-9404  
Cell: (207) 350-7440

**Katherine Thompson**  
Survey Coordinator  
Katherine.J.Thompson@Maine.gov  
Office: (207) 633-9565  
Cell: (207) 350-6380



### Contracted Boats



**Canadian border – Addison**  
Capt Trevor Jessiman  
F/V Miss Behavin'



**N. Penobscot Bay**  
Capt Travis Otis  
F/V First Team



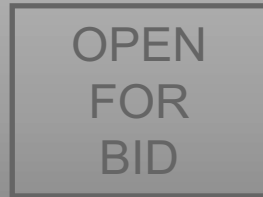
**Jonesport – MDI**  
Capt William Faulkingham  
F/V 51



**S. Penobscot Bay**



**MDI – Isle au Haut**



**Muscongus Bay**



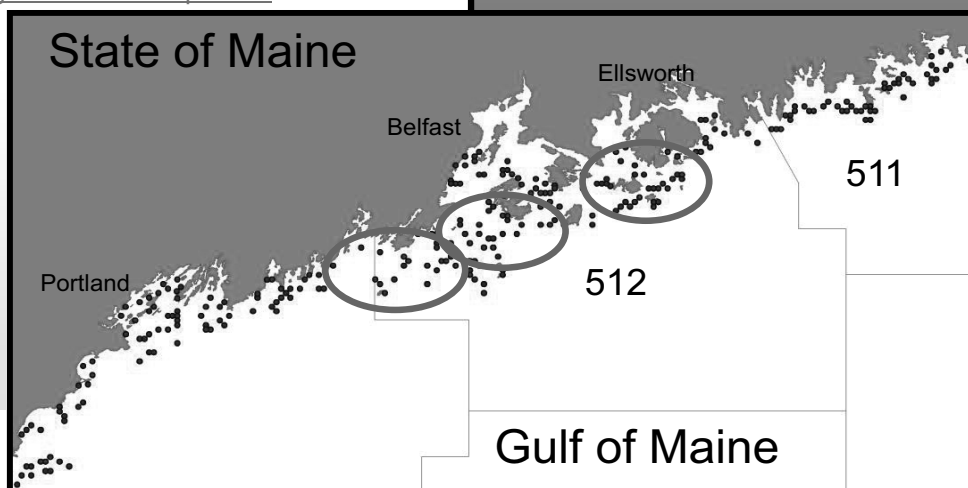
**Pemaquid – Casco Bay**  
Capt Terry Lagasse  
F/V Bossy Lady II



**Casco Bay**  
Capt Justin Papkee  
F/V Pull N Pray



**Cape Elizabeth – Boon Island**  
Capt Ryder Noyes  
F/V Shirley Girl





## MAINE LOBSTERMEN'S ASSOCIATION UPDATE

# If it's about lobster, MLA is there.



The Maine Lobstermen's Association (MLA) advocates for a sustainable lobster resource and the fishermen and communities that depend on it.



### Membership benefits that matter

#### Your voice matters

- MLA Members nominate and elect the MLA Board to lead the organization and connect with you. Monthly meetings are open to members.

#### Vessel Insurance

- Comprehensive vessel insurance at competitive rates through Smithwick & Mariners Insurance.
- Excellent claims record and no required lay-up period.
- Covers researchers aboard your vessel if you carry P&I.
- 5% discount for completing the Drill Conductor course.

#### Health Care Assistance

- Health insurance Navigator to help you and your family understand health insurance and help with enrollment.

#### For MLA members only

- More than 20 businesses offer MLA member discounts.
- Exclusive MLA member hat and bumper sticker
- Weekly e-mail of the latest lobster industry news
- Price report featuring a snapshot of lobster, bait and fuel prices along the coast.

### It's Spring Membership Time: Join Today.

- Call 207-967-4555
- [www.maine lobstermen.org/membership](http://www.maine lobstermen.org/membership)
- Or Sign up on Facebook



**We care about your future. Join the MLA and connect.**

## MLA MEMBERS DISCOUNT DIRECTORY

MLA MEMBERS DISCOUNT DIRECTORY		Lobster/Seafood/Wholesale
<b>Automotive</b> <b>Newcastle Chrysler-Dodge-Jeep</b> Newcastle, ME -- 3 years of oil changes (total of 12) for all vehicles, cars and trucks, when you purchase a new or used vehicle.	<b>Financial &amp; Investment</b> <b>Back River Financial Group</b> Farmingdale, ME -- Free initial consultation and review of previous tax returns.	<b>Atlantic Edge Lobster</b> Boothbay Harbor, ME -- Fuel discount for MLA members.
<b>Bait Dealers</b> <b>Bessy Bait, LLC</b> Seabrook, NH -- \$5 discount per drum on multiple drum purchases (must show current MLA card).	<b>Fishing, Marine &amp; Industrial</b> <b>Alliance Rubber</b> Hot Springs, AR -- 10% off custom printed lobster bands.	<b>Winter Harbor Fishermen's Coop</b> Winter Harbor, ME -- 10% off picked lobster meat.
<b>Boat Builders/Repairs</b> <b>Richard Stanley Custom Boats</b> Bass Harbor, ME -- \$1,000 off final price of hull with MLA membership.	<b>Hamilton Marine</b> Searsport, Rockland, Portland, Southwest Harbor, Jonesport, ME -- Discounts available to commercial fishermen.	<b>Newspapers</b> <b>Commercial Fisheries News</b> Deer Isle, ME -- Discounted annual subscription rate for \$18.75 with MLA membership noted on check.
<b>SW Boatworks</b> Lamonie, ME -- \$1000 discount for hull or top on a 38' CB or 44' CB	<b>North Atlantic Power Products</b> Exeter, NH -- 10% discount on parts and service.	<b>National Fisherman</b> North Hollywood, CA -- Special annual subscription rate.
<b>Documentation Services</b> <b>Maine Design Company</b> Appleton, ME -- 10% discount to surveys on lobster boats. Must be an MLA member & mention this listing to get discount.	<b>Gifts</b> <b>Maine Camp Outfitters</b> Sunset, ME -- 10% off all apparel and promotional product orders.	<b>Propellers</b> <b>Accutech Marine Propeller, Inc</b> Dover, NH -- 10% off propeller repair & new shafts. New propeller discounts vary.
<b>Education &amp; Trade Shows</b> <b>Maine Maritime Museum</b> Bath, ME -- Free admission to MLA members.	<b>Hydraulics</b> <b>Coastal Hydraulics</b> Seabrook, NH -- 10% discount on all in stock items for MLA members.	<b>New England Propeller Inc</b> Plymouth, MA -- Discounts on marine propeller, shafting, and related items, sales & repairs.
<b>Mount Desert Oceanarium</b> Bar Harbor, ME -- Free admission to commercial fishermen and their families.	<b>Hews Company, LLC</b> South Portland, ME -- 10% off hydraulic components and Cable Craft cables.	<b>Refrigeration Services</b> <b>Applied Refrigeration Services</b> Windham, ME -- \$250 off new installations.
<b>Penobscot Marine Museum</b> Searsport, ME -- Free admission for MLA members.	<b>Industry Organizations</b> <b>Maine Lobstermen's Association</b> Kennebunk, ME -- 10% off MLA merchandise.	<b>Safety Training &amp; Equipment</b> <b>Liferaft Services, LLC</b> York, ME -- 5% off liferaft repack with proof of MLA membership. CAN be combined with other promotions.
<b>Electronic Equipment</b> <b>Midcoast Marine Electronics</b> Rockland, ME -- 10% off list price on all marine electronic products.	<b>Insurance</b> <b>Smithwick &amp; Mariners Insurance</b> Falmouth, ME -- Discounted vessel insurance plus 5% discount with proof of CG approved Drill Conductor course within the last 5 years.	<b>McMillan Offshore Survival Training</b> Belfast, ME -- 10% discount on USCG Drill Conductor training.
<b>Navtronics, LLC</b> York, ME -- 5% off of purchases.	<b>Legal Services</b> <b>Nicholas H Walsh PA</b> Portland, ME -- 20% off legal services.	<b>Trap Builders, Stock &amp; Supplies</b> <b>Friendship Trap Company</b> Friendship, ME -- 5% off list price on traps purchased at the Friendship store. Cannot be combined with other discounts.
		<b>Sea Rose Trap Co</b> S. Portland -- 5% off list price on traps to MLA members.

Continued on page 21



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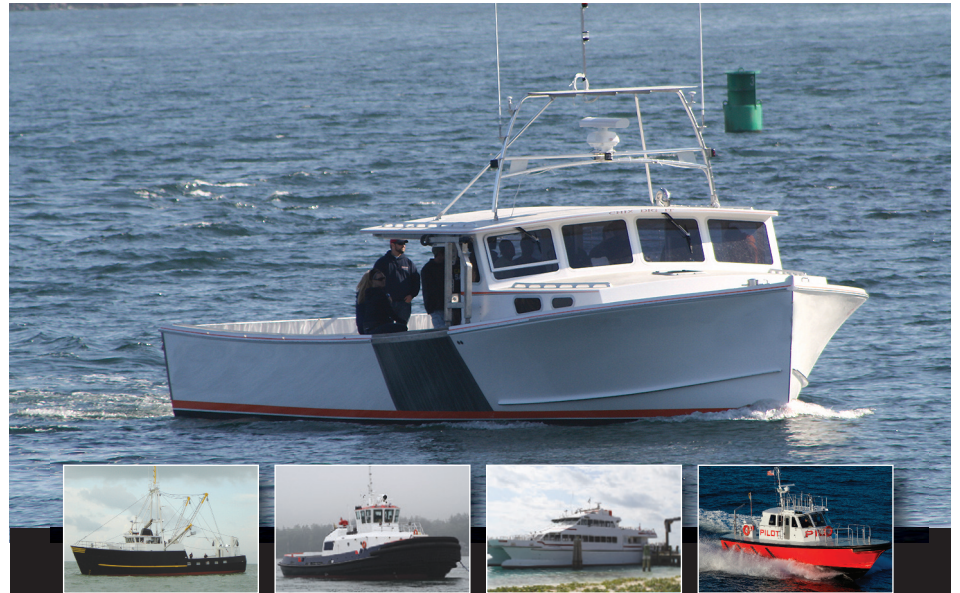
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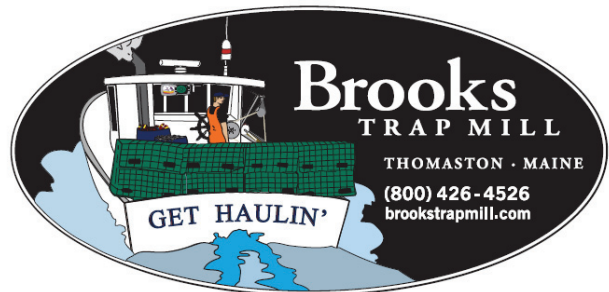
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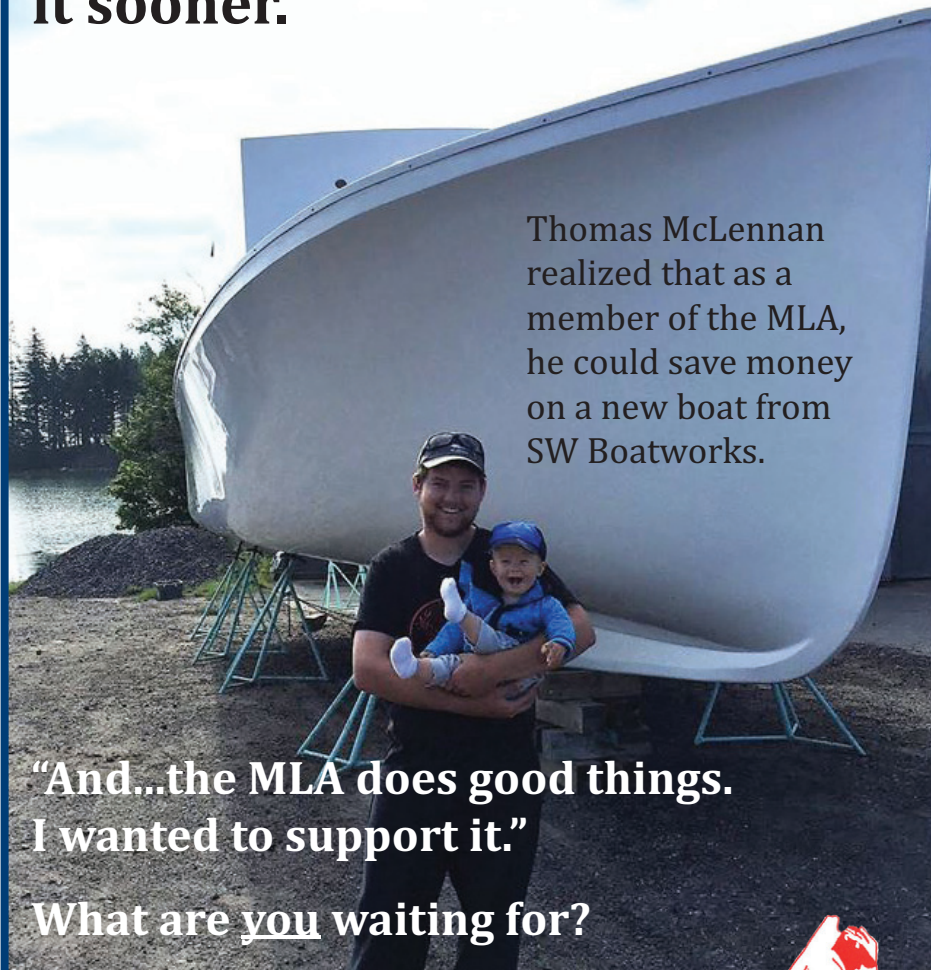
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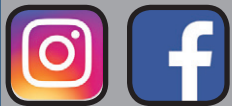
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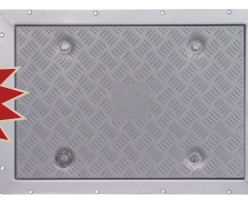


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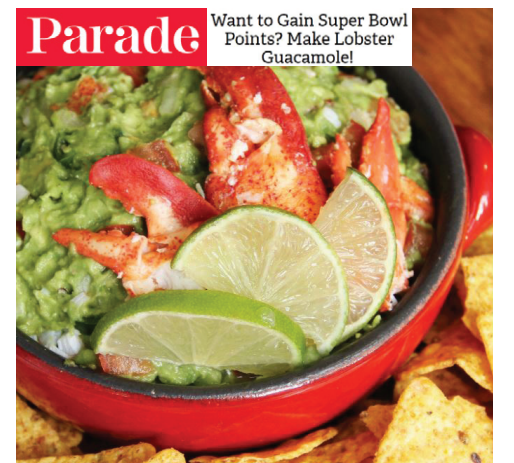
### THE MAINE LOBSTER MARKETING COLLABORATIVE KICKS OFF 2017 WITH FOOTBALL & FISHERMEN'S FORUM

In January and early February, all eyes were on football as The Big Game was approaching (and our local team clinched their spot as one of the contenders!). Nothing goes better with football than some tail-gating favorites, featuring New England's best dish, Maine Lobster. The MLMC leveraged the game day conversation to make Maine Lobster a must-have for celebrations across the country, which media shared in publications such as POPSUGAR.com, PARADE.com, Portland Press Herald, Down East Magazine, and The Ellsworth American, as well as newsletters for Parade and Down East. Overall, media coverage earned 10.2 million impressions.

Tailgating was also highlighted on Lobster from Maine's social channels, and a targeted social campaign generated more than 23,000 clicks to the MLMC recipe pages, more than 21,000 engagements and reached nearly 195,000 food-loving football fans.

The next stop for the MLMC is a presentation at the annual Fisherman's Forum on Saturday, March 4 at 2:45 p.m. Attendees are welcome to come and learn about the Marketing Collaborative's efforts from 2016 and what lies ahead for the 2017 season.

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## SECOND LOBSTER LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE LAUNCHED IN FEBRUARY

By Melissa Waterman

It was a brilliant day in early February when the participants in the second Lobster Leadership Institute gathered at Point Lookout in Northport. The fourteen men and women began their two-day exploration of lobster science, management, business and marketing with a welcome by MLA executive director Patrice McCarron. "You have made significant investments in your lobster business. You are the future of this industry. The leadership program is about giving you the tools you need to guide this industry into the future," said McCarron.

The Lobster Leadership Institute began in 2014 as an effort to give younger lobstermen and women the tools they would need to become advocates for their fishery at the state, local and regional levels. The average age of a Maine lobsterman is 50-plus," said MLA president David Cousens. "My generation is going to step down at some point. We need these younger people to take our places."

All lobstermen know certain things: how to fish, when to fish, how to maintain their boats and other practical matters. What many lobstermen don't know are the complex, inter-related elements that are part of the management and sale of those lobsters they catch. Add to that complexity the complications of a rapidly-changing Gulf of Maine. "It's a multifaceted fishery and the more you know, the better positioned you will be for the future," Cousens continued.

"I came because my older brother encouraged me to," said Peter Phillbrook, 18, whose brother Abe took part in the first Institute. "Plus I've been influenced by the co-op [Cranberry Island Co-op, on Islesford where Phillbrook lobsters]. They've been really active in marketing the lobsters and I wanted to know more about that."



Cody Stewart, left, and Elliott Nevells, right. M. Waterman photo.

The participants first heard from Department of Marine Resources (DMR) resource coordinator Sarah Cotnoir on the historical and current management structure for lobster in the Gulf of Maine. She highlighted the migration of lobster management authority from the New England Fisheries Management Council to the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission in the mid 1990s, a process in which MLA leaders were instrumental. Cotnoir also spoke about the workings of the Maine Legislature, the DMR rulemaking process and the inception of the

Lobster Zone Councils in 1996, when the DMR passed limited authority over lobster fishing to the seven councils.

"I want to learn more about the fishery management aspect," explained Jordan Drouin of Cutler. "I particularly want to know about the Canadian side of things. We [Zone A] are so close to them."

Kathleen Reardon, DMR's lobster biologist, followed with a summary of DMR's many monitoring and sampling programs related to lobster. The department monitors lobsters through most of its life stages so if there's a problem, it should show up in multiple surveys. The DMR monitors baby lobsters through the lobster settlement survey, juvenile lobsters through the ventless trap survey and spring and fall inshore trawls surveys, and the commercial catch through the state's comprehensive at-sea sampling program.

The settlement index has shown a decline over the past few years, but these data are difficult to interpret. "It could mean that there is a problem or it could mean that lobsters are now settling in deeper waters", explained

Reardon. There is some work underway to look at settlement offshore. And we haven't seen these signs of decline in our other surveys. The various sampling programs reinforce one another, Reardon said.

The lobstermen also heard from Rick Wahle, research professor at the University of Maine, who began the lobster settlement index in Maine in 1989. Wahle's

research focuses on the effects that climate change, particularly the increasing water temperature in the Gulf of Maine, is having on lobster populations. Wahle explained that with the Gulf of Maine warming faster than any other ocean in the world, the future for lobsters is uncertain. Wahle is developing models which seek to forecast future lobster landings.

Esperanza Stancioff, from the University of Maine Cooperative Extension, and Samuel Belknap, from the University of Maine, explained their work to develop a business model to help lobstermen plan for the future of unknowns in the lobster industry. Their research team worked with lobstermen from the Spruce Head area to populate the model with real data on the costs and income associated with running a lobster

business. Lobstermen can use this model to enter information to predict profits under different future business scenarios.

On the second day, the presentations focused on the business of lobstering, from business tools available to lobstermen to the intricate supply chain that a lobster follows from the trap to the table. Steve Barkhuff, from Fishing Partnership Support Services, a nonprofit organization in Massachusetts, spoke about the importance of financial planning for lobstermen and various options available to lobstermen as they first start out. He also discussed the importance of planning for the future of your business to ensure that you are proactive in keeping it profitable. Matt Jacobson, executive director of the Maine Lobster Marketing Collaborative (MLMC), gave a thorough overview of the lobster markets, the relationship between the Canadian and the United States lobster fisheries, and the efforts of the Collaborative to boost demand for Maine lobster, particularly Maine new-shell lobster.

Finally the lobstermen were given an overview of current and future state and regional issues facing the Maine lobster industry, including whale rules, bait availability and coral zones. The group then talked about ways to get younger lobstermen involved in tackling these issues at a time when the fishery is strong.

"I think it's very important to find out more," Elliott Nevells, age 17, of Deer Isle said. "I can count on my fingers the number of student license holders that are actually going to do something with it. There really aren't many coming up," he said.

The next step for the young lobstermen participating in the Lobster Leadership Institute will be to attend meetings of their choice. These meetings could include ones held by the Marine Resources Committee, the state Lobster Advisory Council, the MLMC, the MLA board of directors meeting, or the Boston Seafood Show, to name a few. "The point is to expose them to the various opportunities that exist for them to become more involved and show them that their opinions are valued and that they can make a difference," said McCarron. In May, the participants will travel to Prince Edward Island to stay and fish with lobstermen in that province in order to learn more about how lobstering is conducted outside of Maine.

"Those were good talks," Cody Stewart, 20, of Long Island commented. "It's good to know what's going on and to take on more knowledge."



Participants will travel to Prince Edward Island in May to explore that province's lobster fishery. MLA photo.



Jordan Drouin from Cutler. M. Waterman photo.



The two-day event was packed with lobster industry information. MLA photo.



## FROM THE DOCK: *Bangor International Airport key to coastal economy*

To the editor:

When most people look at contrails in the blue skies over Maine, they perhaps envision people flying to exotic destinations, visiting family and friends across the country or flying south to stay warm in places like Florida during the harsh winter months. But I see dollar signs evaporating as quickly as those contrails in the skies over our beautiful state.

Bangor has, at the ready, an airport with one of the longest runways in this nation, capable of accommodating the largest cargo aircraft in the world. For the last several years concerned citizens have attempted to contact municipal, state and federal representatives to discuss an incredible and long reaching financial opportunity. In 2014 Maine Maritime Academy's (MMA) Loeb-Sullivan School of International Business & Logistics developed a 125-page economic feasibility study that clearly showed the way forward. But as incredibly insightful as it was, this feasibility study must not have been good enough because the plan was shelved for all intents and purposes.

I am calling on municipal, state and federal representatives and the Governor's office to pick up the MMA report and use it as an economic guidebook for moving forward. According to an article in MaineBiz, passenger air travel was down in 2016. The best seafood-related web site in the country, Seafood.com, has consistently written about shipping lobsters and the problems inherent in doing so. Landings has shared stories of other airports making millions of dollars shipping lobsters. Ironically, we don't ship lobsters from Maine's airports! Boston does. There's an airport similar in many ways to Bangor's airport located in Anchorage, Alaska: falling passenger service, diminishing revenues and two of the nation's longest landing strips. But then the very forward-thinking Alaskan Senator Ted Stevens drafted an amendment to a bill that transformed the Anchorage airport into the 6th biggest air cargo airport in the world (that's right – in the world!). That airport now generates millions of dollars in revenues every year for the city of Anchorage and state of Alaska. Anchorage followed this "Ted Stevens Plan" to make the Ted Stevens Airport a success. This has been published in newspapers and printed media -- just Google it; it's no big secret. Those contrails in the Alaskan skies must look just as beautiful as the Aurora Borealis to those Anchorage folks!

Maine has not been standing still but we need to accelerate our pace. Bangor International Airport's management team informed folks that they were making progress. For instance, BIA now has an inspector from NOAA to inspect

lobsters and possibly could establish a weekly flight from Bangor to JFK so the lobsters can ride connecting flights to other destinations. Additionally, we need a building for refrigerated storage and as a U.S. Customs facility. But according to these airport officials, the wheels of government turn slowly and this could take another four to five years IF everything goes well!

Bangor's delay benefits competing airports like Halifax, Canada, and in Boston, Newark and JFK and Maine continues to be marginalized. Adding insult to injury, when Maine lobsters are shipped to countries like China, they are re-labeled as "Boston lobsters" because that is where most of them are shipped from! Way to go, Massachusetts, for shipping our lobsters with your name stamped on them...marketing genius. [Editor's note: the Chinese identify imported lobsters as Boston lobster; they are not labelled as such when shipped].

Every year Maine harvests most of the lobsters sold in this country. But why stop at lobsters? Maine needs to look out for Maine and consider the economic impact BIA could have for creating an economic boom, which could re-invigorate Bangor and the state's economy for years to come. In order to expedite this air cargo project, an exchange of ideas and opinions should take place between all participants directly affected by the creation of possibly the most important air cargo hub on the east coast, not only for Maine seafood, but for foreign and domestic cargo too.

In the last few years, the business climate, the population figures, and general goodwill of Maine have been ebbing without a return. To attract people, we need jobs! This effort will build valuable primary jobs and sizeable secondary job ripples through attracting international trade, helping local young people stay, and enticing others to relocate here. This conversation needs to take place quickly before the door closes on this potentially incredible opportunity.

Trust this thought: if we don't do it quickly, someone else will! The clock is ticking. Captain John Nicolai



*John Nicolai owned and operated the lobster fishing cruise vessel Lulu in Bar Harbor until January, 2017.*

## 2015 FISHERIES OF THE U.S. REPORT

Among the Fisheries of the United States 2015 report's highlights:

Alaska led all states in both volume and value of landings, increasing 6% in volume and 3% in value. In the Mid-Atlantic, volume increased by 7% and value increased by 9%. In the Gulf of Mexico region, landings increased 27%, while value decreased by 17%.

**The top 5 states by volume of landings were:**

1. Alaska (6.0 billion pounds)
2. Louisiana (1.1 billion pounds)
3. Virginia (410.3 million pounds)
4. Washington (363.0 million pounds)
5. Mississippi (304.1 million pounds)

**The top 5 states by value of landings were:**

1. Alaska (\$1.8 billion)
2. Maine (\$588.3 million)
3. Massachusetts (\$524.9 million)
4. Louisiana (\$339.8 million)
5. Washington (\$274.1 million)

For the 19th consecutive year, Dutch Harbor, Alaska led the nation as the port with the highest volume of seafood landed (785 million pounds valued at \$212 million). Alaska pollock (walleye) made up 88% of the volume and 43% of the value. High-value snow crabs and king crabs accounted for an additional 44% of the value of Dutch Harbor landings and 4.7% of the volume. For the 16th consecutive year, New Bedford, Massachusetts had the highest valued catch, due in large part to the highly-valued sea scallop fishery. Sea scallops account for 76% of the value of landings in New Bedford.

Americans consumed nearly 5 billion pounds of seafood in 2015. The U.S. is the world's second largest consumer of seafood after China according to data from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.



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Tanaka continued from page 1

tom temperature in the region to increase more than 1°C by 2050. Warmer water can cause changes in a lobster's biology and behavior, such as early molting and shifts in distribution. Thus there is a growing need to enhance our capacity for predicting changes in lobster distribution under different climate scenarios.

To address such a need, I am developing a statistical model that allows managers to predict the impact of climate change (i.e. rising bottom water temperature) on lobster distribution. The model incorporates more than 10 years of survey data collected by the Maine Department of Marine Resources, and based on climatic conditions it can predict the number of lobsters in approximately 800-square-meter grids. The outputs from the climate-lobster model can show changes in lobster abundance under two hypothetical "cold" and "warm" scenarios in the inshore Gulf of Maine, based on historical water temperature data in the area.

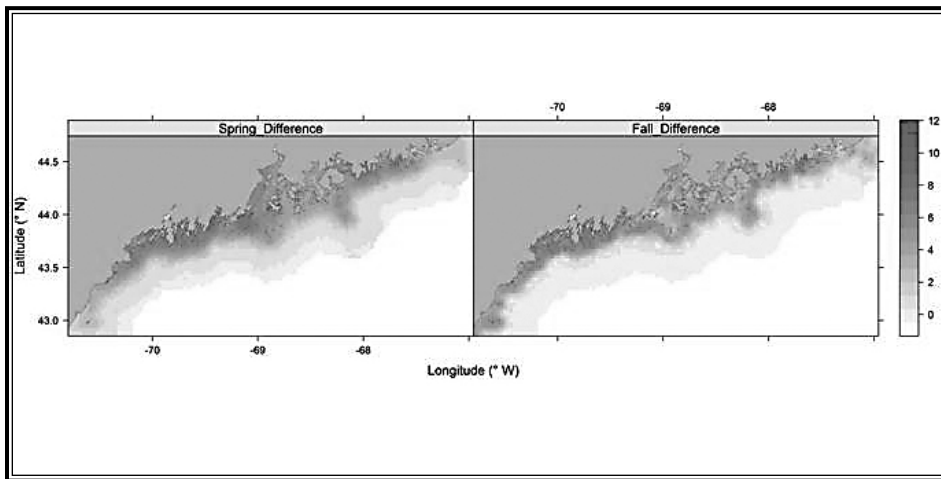
*...this type of research can provide a critical step toward an adaptive and sustainable management of the lobster fishery in Maine.*

The model predicts lobster abundance will increase in the warm climate scenario throughout the coastal Maine waters. Predicted increases were pronounced inshore in spring.

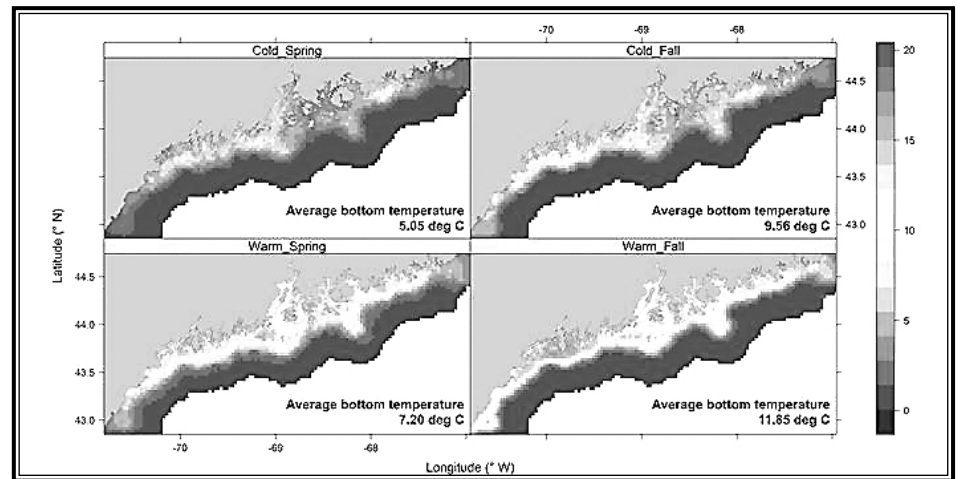
As the rate of climate change is predicted to accelerate in the future, monitoring and management of lobsters need to be more agile by incorporating changes in environmental parameters. One way to improve our ability to predict lobsters' responses to climatic variability is to make an educated guess using a statistical model about how lobster abundance changes under several different temperature scenarios.

While there are many questions that can be asked in the context of fisheries management in a changing climate, this type of research can provide a critical step toward an adaptive and sustainable management of the lobster fishery in Maine.

*Kisei Tanaka is a doctoral candidate and NSF IGERT fellow at University of Maine.*



Difference in lobster abundance between warm and cold climate scenarios. The different shades indicate the number of lobsters in 792 sq. m.



Map comparison between the predicted lobster abundance under cold (1st row) and warm (2nd row) climate scenarios. The different shades indicates number of lobsters in 792 sq. m.

## NEW TECHNIQUE DEVELOPED TO DETERMINE LOBSTER AGE

by Melissa Wood

first published in Phys.org. Reprinted with permission

Research professor Rick Wahle and graduate student Carl Huntsberger are testing a technique at the University of Maine Darling Marine Center to determine the age of lobsters.

Unlike fish, mollusks and trees, Wahle says lobsters and other crustaceans molt—or cast off their skeletons thereby discarding external signs of growth.

That means a lobster's age is estimated on size, but it's a rough determination because ocean conditions affect the crustacean's growth rate.

Not knowing a lobster's age is problematic for scientists and fishery managers seeking to measure the health of the fishery and the sustainability of the stock.

Recent research by Raouf Kilada of the University of New Brunswick revealed that lobsters and other crustaceans have internal structures that exhibit growth patterns similar to tree rings.

Kilada found tree-ring-like microscopic bands, less than 1 millimeter thick, within a lobster or crab's gastric mill—which is a part of the stomach that grinds food.


Kilada recently visited the DMC to share his technique with Wahle and Huntsberger. Kilada provided hands-on instruction that he's perfected during many hours of trial and error.

"At this point, we are able to dissect lobsters that have been held in captivity for three years after staining the gastric mill with a fluorescent dye, which marks when we began our observations," says Huntsberger, who is processing samples in the Wahle Lab.

The growth bands are located in the ossicles, which are tiny plate-like structures in the stomach that facilitate grinding of food.

To process a sample, ossicles are embedded in epoxy and cut into 150-micron sections. The number of bands can be counted with the use of a microscope. For reference, the thickness of a human hair is about 75 microns.

Huntsberger says preliminary data indicate the bands do show annual growth patterns.



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## MAINE MARINE TRADES ASSOCIATION OFFERS MODERN APPRENTICESHIP OPPORTUNITIES

*By Melissa Waterman*

Once upon a time, a person learned his or her trade through apprenticeship to an older, skilled practitioner. Learning the profession through hands-on work led, over time, to becoming a recognized craftsman in that field. Today such apprenticeships have grown less common. The Maine Marine Trades Association (MMTA), however, is working to ensure that individuals interested in learning professions related to boat building and maintenance, fields that have become increasingly high-tech, can do so.

The Maine Marine Trade Association was incorporated as a not-for-profit trade association in 1966 as a volunteer-run organization. Currently, its 200 member



*Hodgdon Yachts in East Boothbay is just one example of Maine's expanding boat building and maintenance companies. Photo courtesy of Hodgdon Yachts.*

firms are served by a small professional staff that includes a full-time executive director and office administrator. The Association provides programs and services focusing on workplace safety, environmental compliance and technical training.

The MMTA offers customized apprenticeship opportunities with Maine marine businesses. The Maine Marine Trades Apprenticeship Program apprenticeships are established under a set of standards which include an on-the-job training outline, related classroom instruction curriculum and operating procedures. The program was created in partnership with the Maine Department of Labor's Director of Apprenticeship Standards and is part of the state's Apprenticeship Program.

Apprentices can earn college credits for the academic portions of their apprenticeship while they work. When they have successfully completed the program can receive nationally-recognized credentials in that field.

The Maine Marine Trades Apprenticeship Program focuses six occupations:

- Wood Boat Builder
- Marine Joiner
- Marine Electrician
- Marine Engine Service Technician
- Marine Certified Composites Technician
- Marine Tradesperson

For more information about the Maine Marine Trades Apprenticeship Program, visit the MMTA web site at [www.mainemarinetrades.com/default.asp](http://www.mainemarinetrades.com/default.asp) or call 773-8725.

*Boat building is a significant and growing business sector in Maine with annual industry sales topping \$650 million.*

*Approximately 450 companies and 5,000 jobs are tied to Maine boat building.*

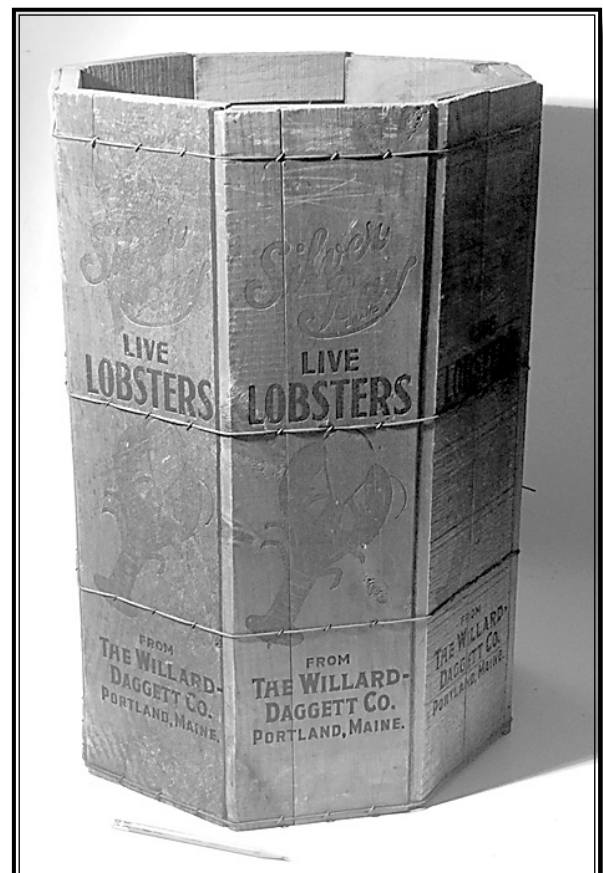
*The most recent study, done in 2007 by the Maine Department of Labor, showed that annual wages at boatbuilders with 20 or fewer employees averaged \$29,928; boatbuilders with more than 50 employees paid an average of \$41,025.*



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*An octagonal pine lobster shipping crate, Silver Bay brand, Willard-Daggett Co., Portland; 1930-1940 period.*

The world of lobstering has changed greatly in the last century. Where once wood and hemp rope predominated, now plastic and polystyrene are king. Museums such as the Penobscot Marine Museum in Searsport and the Maine Maritime Museum in Bath have conserved many of the artifacts of lobster fishing in bygone days. Here we feature one, courtesy of the Maine Maritime Museum.

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Northeast Harbor Library, Mellon Room

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## WEB SITE GIVES CONSUMERS A NEW WAY TO COMPARE HEALTH CARE COSTS

By Alisha Keezer

There is a new online resource to compare the costs and quality of health care procedures in Maine. Launched last fall, CompareMaine.org provides consumers with price information on hundreds of medical procedures and tests, including bloodwork, doctor visits, hip replacements, and much more. The site is supported by a federal grant and the efforts of the Maine Health Data Organization.

CompareMaine shows the average cost of common health care procedures at different facilities in Maine. These are the costs that the medical provider will charge your insurance company. The cost estimates on CompareMaine are median payments (meaning that half of the facilities surveyed charge more and half charge less) and are meant to serve as a reference point for comparison.

Factors in your health insurance plan, such as your co-pay or deductible amounts, will make a difference in the actual out-of-pocket costs a consumer will have. The dollar amounts on CompareMaine are the amount your insurance is charged. For instance, an MRI scan of your brain would cost on aver-

age \$1,656 in Maine. But at Mid-Coast Hospital the average cost billed to your insurance is \$2,691 versus \$1,235 at Maine Mobile MRI Associates. To find out your actual payment, please contact your insurance company.

For most people, it's second nature to shop around and compare costs of big ticket items, like washing machines and televisions. Now Maine residents can do the same comparison shopping when it comes to their health care procedures. Maine is among only four states in the country that provide a means for consumers to get price clarity on medical costs.



Alisha Keezer is the MLA's health insurance Navigator.

The CompareMaine web site is a product of the Maine Health Data Organization (MHDO). MHDO is a state agency that collects healthcare data from health insurance companies and hospitals. CompareMaine shows information on over 230 healthcare procedures from more than 270 facilities organized into 155 facility groups.

### Here's what you can find on the CompareMaine site:

**Costs:** The amount the facility or provider on average charges an insurer for a medical procedure. This amount can vary by thousands of dollars.

**Complications:** Each facility is rated on its ability to prevent serious complications.

**Infections:** Each facility is rated on how well it keeps its patients safe from infections.

**Insurers:** The site lets you search by insurance company to see whether a procedure is covered and what's the typical charge by procedure.

**Patient Satisfaction:** Each facility is rated by patients on overall quality of care.

**Procedures:** Hundreds of specific procedures are listed currently; more are being added as the database is updated.

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Please register by **March 10th** to reserve your seat.

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# ANOTHER BROWNTAIL MOTH OUTBREAK EXPECTED THIS SPRING

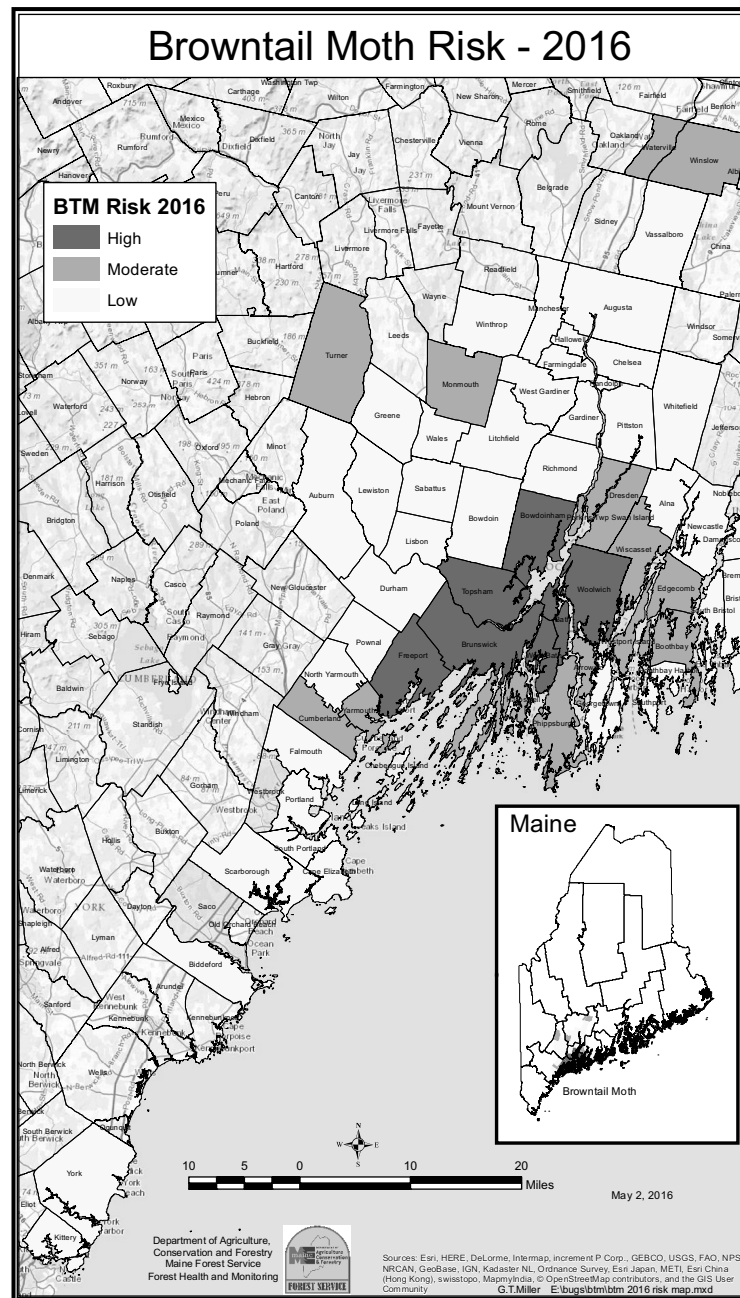
By Melissa Waterman

Even though it's a tiny thing, you don't want to mess with a browntail moth caterpillar. Its skin and cocoon bristle with tiny hairs that can produce a rash like poison ivy and can also cause serious respiratory reactions in some people when inhaled. The Maine Forest Service is predicting another dramatic outbreak of browntail moth caterpillars in late spring this year, even larger than the record-setting outbreak of 2016.

Browntail moth larvae overwinter in webs created primarily in apple or oak trees. In the spring, as soon as leaf buds open, the hundreds of moth larvae in each web become active and begin to feed on new leaves. In late June, the larvae spin rough cocoons in which to pupate. An invasive species, browntail moth populations have moved steadily up the coast over the years and recently progressed inland.

The Maine Board of Pesticide Control (BPC) regulates the pesticides that can be applied to browntail moth and other pests, such as mosquitoes, that affect public health. In 1997, the Maine Legislature passed a law that allows municipalities to take action (i.e. spray pesticides) to control browntail moths if the infestation is declared a public health nuisance by the state's Bureau of Health director.

Those pesticides, however, are effective against not only the targeted species but also other non-targeted creatures. During an outbreak in the mid-2000s, Maine lobstermen became alarmed by the use of pesticides to combat browntail moth. The Maine Lobstermen's Association lobbied for stricter controls of these pesticides and the BPC set up an Environmental Risk Advisory

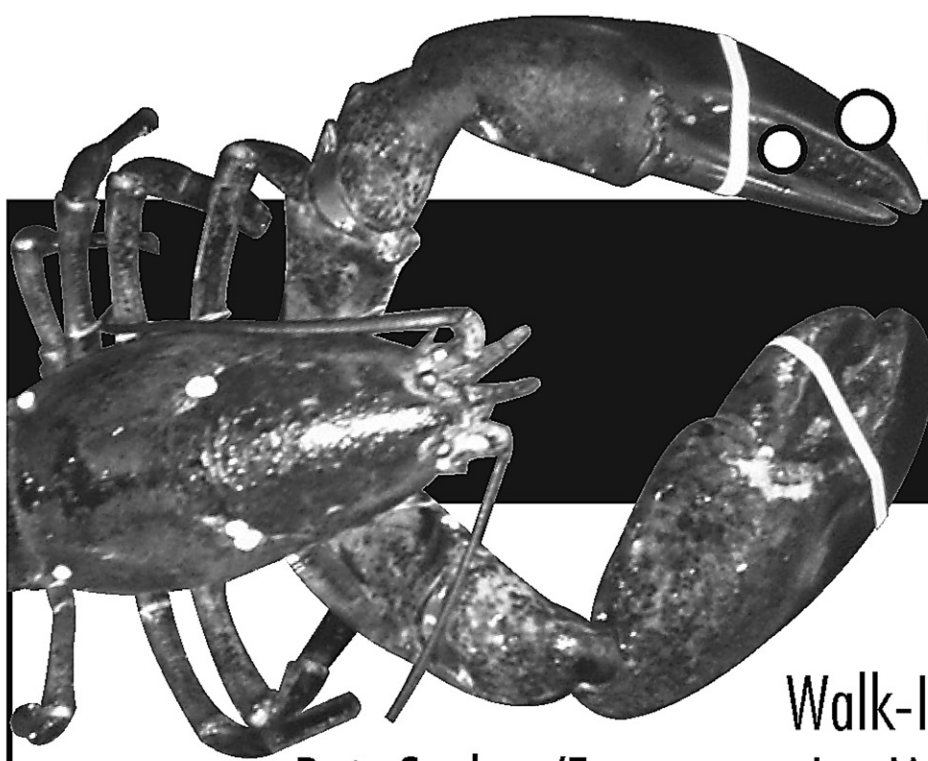


Committee (ERAC) to study the effect of those pesticides on marine species. The Maine Legislature took action in 2007 and the BPC passed regulations in 2008 to restrict browntail moth spraying near coastal waters. Pesticides used to control browntail moth populations within 250 feet of the mean high tide mark adjacent to coastal waters were restricted in type and in manner of application.

To be effective, those pesticides need to be applied when the creatures are still feeding on new leaves, which is typically before the end of May, according to the Maine Forest Service. If pesticides are applied after the end of May when the animals are spinning their cocoons, they will kill the caterpillars but do nothing to diminish the volume of toxic hairs from those cocoons.

Last year's outbreak of browntail moth, the worst in ten years, was concentrated along the coast. According to the Maine Forest Service, "Over 63,000 acres of forest in Sagadahoc County and surrounding towns were defoliated by the tiny, early instar larvae of browntail moth in August and September. These larvae are less than 1/4" in length but are so numerous this year that in some cases they defoliated the same trees twice in a single season." The towns of Brunswick, Freeport, Bath, Topsham and Bowdoinham were especially hard hit. But the moths also spread far inland. In 2016 the caterpillars were found from Millinocket and Skowhegan south to Eliot.

The blossoming populations caused the BPC to review the four chemicals it had approved for use in 2008. "Because the browntail moth  
*Continued on page 25*



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## ADMINISTRATIVE SUSPENSIONS RELATED TO LOBSTER OFFENSES, JAN. 1, 2016-FEB. 15, 2017

FirstName	LastName	Suspension type	Work Status	Offense date	Suspension start date	Suspension lift date	Offense Description	License Category to Suspend
ROBERT	JOHNSON	Admin	Suspension-Issued	11/19/15	7/21/16	6/1/17	LOBSTER MEASUREMENT-DESCRIBE # OF SHORT OR OVERSIZED	Lobster Harvester
REINIER	NIEUWKERK	Admin	Suspension-Issued	8/1/16	1/25/17	1/25/18	STOPPING FOR INSPECTION; PENALTY	Lobster Harvester
BERT	HALL	Admin	Suspension-Issued	9/12/16	11/14/16	11/14/17	LOBSTER MEASUREMENT-DESCRIBE # OF SHORT OR OVERSIZED	Lobster Harvester
PHILIP	POLAND	Admin	Suspension-Issued	7/8/16	10/3/16	7/8/22	ARTIFICIAL REMOVAL OF EGGS; PROHIBITION	Lobster Harvester
DUSTON	REED	Admin	Suspension-Issued	5/26/16	12/7/16	12/7/17	LOBSTER TRAP TAG SYSTEM	Lobster Harvester
DEXTER	BRAY	Admin	Suspension-Issued	5/19/16	9/9/16	5/19/22	ARTIFICIAL REMOVAL OF EGGS; PROHIBITION	Lobster Harvester
CARL	GRAY	Admin	Suspension-Issued	10/5/15	10/27/16	8/26/18	MOLESTING LOBSTER GEAR	Lobster Harvester
WAYNE	SAWYER	Admin	Suspension-Issued	9/17/15	1/13/16	1/12/19	MOLESTING LOBSTER GEAR	Lobster Harvester
CHRISTOPHER	CURTIS	Admin	Suspension-Issued	2/7/16	3/17/16	3/17/17	PROTECTED RESOURCES	Lobster Harvester
SAMUEL	TARBOX	Admin	Suspension-Issued	11/2/16	1/30/17	1/30/19	LOBSTER TRAP REMOVAL	Lobster Harvester

## LOBSTER VIOLATIONS, OCT. 1, 2016 TO FEB. 15, 2017

Work Status	Name	Offense Date	Comments	Offense Location	Offense Description	Fine
Resolved-Guilty-NoSuspension	OLIVER, JONATHAN	10/3/16	SELLING/POSSESSION OF 3 SHORT LOBSTERS	STONINGTON	LOBSTER MEASUREMENT (NON-MANDATORY)-OVERSIZED/SHORT	\$ 800.00
Pending-Adjudication	WHITE, JAKE	10/4/16	LOBSTER FISHING WITHOUT A CLASS 1 LICENSE	TREMONT	NO LOBSTER AND CRAB CLASS I LICENSE	
Resolved-Guilty-NoSuspension	BEAL, MICHAEL	10/8/16	Exceeding Class I lobster and crab fishing limitations	Cushing	NO LOBSTER AND CRAB CLASS I LICENSE	\$ 610.00
Resolved-Guilty-NoSuspension	HUTCHINSON, BLAINE	10/13/16	FISHING LOBSTERS DURING THE CLOSED PERIOD	STONINGTON	LOBSTER FISHING DURING CLOSED PERIODS	\$ 250.00
Pending-Adjudication	MARASS, NELSON	10/17/16	Possession of nine short lobsters	West Bath	LOBSTER MEASUREMENT (NON-MANDATORY)-OVERSIZED/SHORT	
Pending-Suspension	EAGER, CHRISTOPHER	10/17/16	Fishing 60 untagged lobster traps	Wells	LOBSTER TRAP TAG SYSTEM	
Pending-Adjudication	REED, CHRISTOPHER	10/20/16	POSSESSION OF 5 FEMALE V-NOTCH LOBSTERS	LUBEC	V-NOTCHED LOBSTERS; OR MUTILATED LIBSTERS	
Pending-Adjudication	REED, CHRISTOPHER	10/20/16	POSSESSION OF 5 V-NOTCHED FEMALE LOBSTERS	LUBEC	V-NOTCHED LOBSTERS; OR MUTILATED LIBSTERS	
Resolved-Guilty-NoSuspension	SIMMONS, ADAM	10/20/16	Hauling traps during a closed period	Burnt Island	LOBSTER FISHING DURING CLOSED PERIODS	\$ 250.00
Resolved-Guilty-NoSuspension	WALLACE, JONATHAN	10/20/16	POSSESSION OF 2 FEMALE V-NOTCHED LOBSTERS	LUBEC	V-NOTCHED LOBSTERS; OR MUTILATED LIBSTERS	\$ 700.00
Resolved-Guilty-NoSuspension	RHYS, JOSIAH	10/30/16	HAULING GEAR DURING A CLOSED PERIOD	SWANS ISLAND	LOBSTER FISHING DURING CLOSED PERIODS	\$ 250.00
Pending-Adjudication	NEWCOMB, RANDY	10/31/16	HAULING LOBSTER GEAR BEFORE LEGAL HAULING HOURS	LUBEC	LOBSTER FISHING DURING CLOSED PERIODS	
Pending-Adjudication	GRIFFIN, BRENT	10/31/16	HAULING LOBSTER GEAR BEFORE LEGAL HOURS	LUBEC	LOBSTER FISHING DURING CLOSED PERIODS	
Resolved-Guilty-NoSuspension	LUNT, TRAVIS	10/31/16	CLOSED PERIOD LOBSTER FISHING	FRENCHBORO	LOBSTER FISHING DURING CLOSED PERIODS	\$ 250.00
Pending-Adjudication	TARBOX, BRIAN	11/2/16	Hauling lobster traps not registered to vessel	Metinic Island	LOBSTER TRAP TAG SYSTEM	
Pending-Adjudication	TARBOX, BRIAN	11/2/16	Exceeding Zone D vessel trap limit	Metinic Island	TRAP LIMIT	
Resolved-Guilty-NoSuspension	BEAL, RICKEY	11/7/16	POSSESSION OF 5 SHORT LOBSTERS	JONESPORT	LOBSTER MEASUREMENT (NON-MANDATORY)-OVERSIZED/SHORT	\$ 1000.00
Pending-Adjudication	PINKHAM, ROBERT	11/11/16	Possession of 18 short lobsters	Georgetown	LOBSTER MEASUREMENT (NON-MANDATORY)-OVERSIZED/SHORT	
Pending-Suspension	PINKHAM, ROBERT	11/16/16	Possession of 23 short lobsters	Georgetown	LOBSTER MEASUREMENT-DESCRIBE # OF SHORT OR OVERSIZED	
Pending-Adjudication	DEMOLET, RILEY	11/17/16	POSSESSION OF ONE FEMALE MUTILATED V-NOTCH LOBSTER	LUBEC	V-NOTCHED LOBSTERS; OR MUTILATED LIBSTERS	
Pending-Adjudication	EATON, MITCHELL	11/22/16	Possession of 32 untagged lobster traps	North Haven	LOBSTER TRAP TAG SYSTEM	
Pending-Adjudication	KIEDAISCH, DUNCAN	11/25/16	Possession of 34 short lobsters	Kittery	LOBSTER MEASUREMENT (NON-MANDATORY)-OVERSIZED/SHORT	
Pending-Adjudication	ANDERSON, DOUGLAS	11/26/16	Possession of six short lobsters	Port Clyde	LOBSTER MEASUREMENT (NON-MANDATORY)-OVERSIZED/SHORT	
Pending-Adjudication	PINKHAM, ALTON	11/29/16	FISHING 13 UNTAGGED LOBSTER TRAPS	FRENCHBORO	LOBSTER TRAP TAG SYSTEM	
Pending-Adjudication	NICKERSON, ARNOLD	12/22/16	Possession of one oversized lobster	Cape Porpoise	LOBSTER MEASUREMENT (NON-MANDATORY)-OVERSIZED/SHORT	
Pending-Adjudication	SOCKABASIN, EDWARD	12/26/16	POSSESSION ON ONE OVERSIZED LOBSTER	EASTPORT	LOBSTER MEASUREMENT (NON-MANDATORY)-OVERSIZED/SHORT	
Pending-Adjudication	WARD, GREG	1/2/17	Possession of one oversized lobster	Kittery	LOBSTER MEASUREMENT (NON-MANDATORY)-OVERSIZED/SHORT	
Pending-Adjudication	DOUTY BROS INC	1/18/17	Violation of Import/Export program	Portland	LOBSTER IMPORT/EXPORT PERMIT	
Pending-Adjudication	DOUTY BROS INC	1/18/17	Violation of Import/Export program	Portland	LOBSTER IMPORT/EXPORT PERMIT	
Pending-Adjudication	HARDY, ROBERT	1/20/17	POSSESSION OF 11 SHORT LOBSTERS	STONINGTON	LOBSTER MEASUREMENT-DESCRIBE # OF SHORT OR OVERSIZED	
Pending-Adjudication	NEVELLS, MARK	1/21/17	WET STORAGE OF LOBSTER GEAR OVER 30 DAYS - 6174 CHP. 25.02	STONINGTON	LOBSTER AND CRAB	

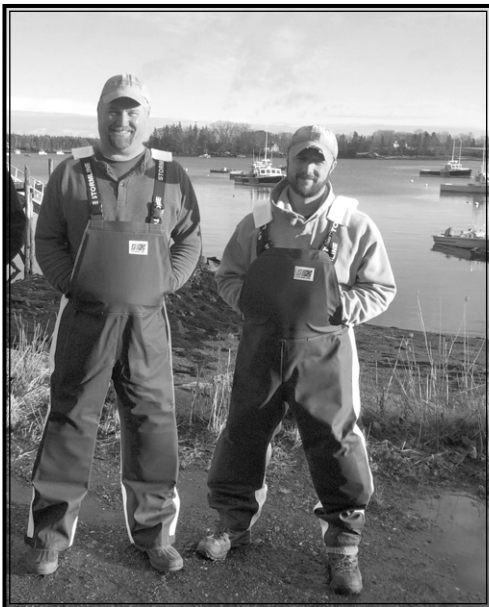
## WHAT WOULD YOU WEAR WHILE FISHING? PFD PROJECT WANTS TO FIND OUT

By Rebecca Weil, Bassett Healthcare Network

Did you know that falls overboard are the leading cause of death in the Northeast lobster fishery? According to the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) Center for Maritime Safety and Health Studies, these deaths could largely be prevented with the use of personal flotation devices (PFDs).

Lobstermen in Maine and Massachusetts are taking part in a project to redesign PFDs. Designed just for Northeast commercial lobstermen, the project involves trying different models of PFDs and giving feedback about how comfortable and workable the models are. The lobstermen receive an honorarium for participating, and they also get to keep the PFD when the project is complete. But perhaps the most important incentive for participation is they will help keep other lobstermen alive.

Fishermen consistently report that they do not regularly wear PFDs because they are not comfortable and can be difficult and dangerous to work in. Given that falling overboard often ends in death, there is a strong need to redesign PFDs to meet the needs of the lobstermen. Thus the Northeast Center for Occupational Health and Safety (NEC), Fishing Partnership Support Services (FPSS), and Northeast lobstermen are collaborating to figure out specifically what works for lobstermen when it comes to PFDs and then redesign them to meet the needs of this fishing sector.



Two lobstermen from Friendship harbor who are participating in the PFD project. R. Weill photo.

The goal is to create innovative solutions to keep lobstermen alive if they fall overboard. Falls overboard will happen, but they do not have to be fatal.

In January, 80 lobstermen started wearing one of the eight PFD models chosen after surveying lobstermen through the Maine and Massachusetts Lobstermen's Associations. More lobstermen will be invited to join the project in the summer, and others can participate in phone surveys. In order to gather a range of perspectives, participants will be randomly selected.

Thank you to all the lobstermen who are helping with this endeavor! We are also extremely grateful to the following manufacturers who have donated or provided discounted rates on PFDs for this project: Hyde Sportswear, Kent, Mullion, Mustang Survival, Quatic Apparel, Spinlock, and Stormline. Thank you for all of your support!

*Browntail moth continued from page 19*

population has exploded, we decided it was time to look at the list and see if other products should be added and whether these four are still working well," explained Henry Jennings, director of the BPC. The new ERAC formed by the Bureau studied two new sets of monitoring data concerning browntail moth control and reviewed existing literature on the topic. It generated a chart that showed the risks of various chemicals to the marine environment. Based on that review, one previously permitted chemical, permethrin, was removed and several new chemicals were added.

"The Board of Pesticides Control takes the use of pesticides in our state very seriously. We feel confident that the pesticide review has been thorough and that restrictions are in place to protect lobsters," said Patrice McCarron, executive director of the Maine Lobstermen's Association. "They have been great about seeking our input and keeping us informed of their efforts."

For more information about browntail moth and pesticide control regulations visit the Maine Forest Service web site [http://maine.gov/dacf/mfs/forest\\_health/invasive\\_threats/browntail\\_moth\\_info.htm](http://maine.gov/dacf/mfs/forest_health/invasive_threats/browntail_moth_info.htm) and the Board of Pesticides Control web site <http://www.maine.gov/dacf/php/pesticides>.



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## In the NEWS

### LOBSTER EXPORTS TO CHINA STILL RISING

Live lobster exports to China are on pace to triple in value in 2016, despite the incursion of some new lobster suppliers in to the growing Asian market. Through November, 2016, the value of live lobster shipments from Maine to China climbed to \$27.5 million, nearly tripling from the \$10.2 million reported in November 2015. The growing appetite for lobster has attracted Australia, which is heavily marketing its smaller rock lobsters to Asian markets too. Although competition for the Chinese market is heating up, American lobster exporters are benefiting from a tariff reduction on imported lobster and other seafood that went into effect this month. The lobster tariff in China fell from 15 percent to 10 percent.

### NOVA SCOTIAN COMPANIES START QUALITY PROJECT WITH ALIBABA

Several Nova Scotian seafood companies will help pilot a provincial project that could see more Nova Scotia lobster exported to China as part of a new lobster quality initiative between Nova Scotia and Tmall-Alibaba, an online retail company in China. The goal is to help provide premium quality Nova Scotia lobster to growing online markets in China. Taking part are Nautical Seafoods Ltd., Gidney Fisheries Ltd., and Fisherman's Market Intl. Ltd. Through the agreement the suppliers have committed to sending 300,000 quality-certified live lobsters as the beginning of a long-term quality program.

### LOBSTER BLOOD, A MEDICAL WONDER?

Researchers in Maine have determined that uncooked lobster hemolymph — a fluid equivalent to blood— has a number of antiviral, medicinal purposes and may even be effective against the viruses that cause shingles and warts. The researchers have developed a lobster blood-based healing cream called LobsterRx for treating dry skin, chapped lips, cold sores, minor cuts and burns.

Though not yet available on the retail market, the cream has been patented by Lobster Limited LLC and can be marketed without approval from the federal Food and Drug Administration.

### WINTER WHALE CALVING NUMBERS DISAPPOINTING

The birth of only three North Atlantic right whales this winter has dismayed researchers. In addition to the three mothers and their calves, only one other right whale was spotted off the Georgia and Florida coasts in December and January. At least 40 to 60 whales typically would be expected each year. Having as few as three births hasn't happened for at least 15 years, when one calf was born in 2000, preceded by four in 1999 and five in 1998. While the right whales, whose population now numbers 524, have returned in greater and greater numbers to Cape Cod Bay to feed, the whales have moved out of other traditional feeding areas. Nearly 30 right whales were identified by aerial surveyors in February in Cape Cod Bay.

### UNIVERSITY OF MAINE LEARNS NEW PROCESS TO FIND LOBSTER AGE

Research professor Rick Wahle and graduate student Carl Huntsberger are testing a technique at the University of Maine Darling Marine Center to determine the age of lobsters. Unlike fish, mollusks and trees, lobsters and other crustaceans molt—or cast off their skeletons thereby discarding external signs of growth. That means a lobster's age is estimated based on size, but it's a rough determination because ocean conditions affect the crustacean's growth rate.

Recent research by Raouf Kilada of the University of New Brunswick revealed that lobsters and other crustaceans have internal structures that exhibit growth patterns similar to tree rings. Kilada found tree-ring-like microscopic bands, less than 1 millimeter thick, within a lobster or crab's gastric mill— which is a part of the stomach that grinds food. Huntsberger says preliminary data indicate the bands do show annual growth patterns.



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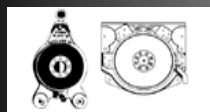
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# Events Calendar

Don't forget to check out our expanded calendar at [www.mainelobstermen.org](http://www.mainelobstermen.org). You can find more information, links, and photos. And let us know if you have upcoming events.

## March 2-4

42nd Annual Maine Fishermen's Forum, Samoset Resort, Rockport.

## March 3

Maine Lobstermen's Association 63rd annual meeting, 9 a.m., Samoset Resort, Rockport.

NEFMC Groundfish Amendment 23 Scoping Hearing, 9 a.m., Samoset Resort, Rockport. FMI: 978-465-0492 ext. 124, or email [rfrede@nefmc.org](mailto:rfrede@nefmc.org).

## March 4

Happy Healthy Lobster Tour, 1 p.m., Samoset Resort.

## March 5

Happy Health Lobster Tour, 2 p.m., Casco Bay Lines, Portland.

## March 6

Happy Health Lobster Tour, 9 a.m., St. George Town Hall.

Happy Health Lobster Tour, 4pm, Deer Isle Stonington HS cafeteria, Deer Isle

## March 7

Happy Healthy Lobster Tour, 9 a.m., Swans Island Co-op.

Happy Health Lobster Tour, 4 p.m., Northeast Harbor Library.

## March 8

Happy Health Lobster Tour, 9 a.m., Gouldsboro Community House.

## March 15

NEFMC deep sea coral management workshop on fishing activity in Jordan Basin and the Lindenkohl Knoll area of Georges Basin, NOT inshore areas around Outer Schoodic Ridge and Mount Desert Rock, 9 a.m.-5 p.m., Sheraton Harborside, Portsmouth, NH. Pre-registration is encouraged. FMI: 978-465-0492, ext. 120, or email [mbachman@nefmc.org](mailto:mbachman@nefmc.org).

## March 19-21

Seafood Expo North America, Boston, MA.

## March 20

MLA Bus to Boston Seafood Show. FMI: [www.mainelobstermen.org](http://www.mainelobstermen.org).

## March 21

NEFMC Groundfish Amendment 23 Scoping Hearing, 2 p.m., Portsmouth Library, Portsmouth, NH. FMI: 978-465-0492 ext. 124, or email [rfrede@nefmc.org](mailto:rfrede@nefmc.org).

## March 23

Sea Urchin Zone Council meeting, 3 p.m., Jeff's Catering, Brewer.

## March 24-25

Canadian/U.S. Lobstermen's Town Meeting, Algonquin Hotel, St. Andrews, New Brunswick. Pre-registration by March 17 encouraged. FMI: 581-1443.

## UPCOMING

### April 3

Hearing on draft amendment to ASMFC herring plan, 6-8 p.m., Lincoln County Communications Center, Wiscasset. FMI: 624-6553.

### April 4

MLA Board meeting, noon, Darby's restaurant, Belfast. FMI: 967-4555. Note: this is a change from the usual first Wed of the month.

### April 8

"The Net Result: Our Evolving Fisheries" history conference, 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m., Penobscot Marine Museum, Searsport.

### April 19-25

International Scallop Workshop, Holiday Inn by the Bay, Portland. FMI: <http://pectinid-workshop.com/about.html>.

### April 27

4th Annual Gulf of Maine Seafood Celebration, 5:30-7:30 p.m., GMRI, Portland. FMI: email [rkatyl@gmri.org](mailto:rkatyl@gmri.org).

## 2017 Happy Healthy Lobster Tour with Jean Lavallée

Learn what makes a lobster unique and fragile. Improve the quality of your catch every day!

March 4 at 1 p.m., Samoset Resort

March 5, at 2 p.m., Casco Bay Lines

March 6, at 9 a.m., St George Town Hall

March 6, at 4 p.m., Deer Isle Stonington HS

March 7, at 9 a.m., Swans Island Co-op

March 7, at 4 p.m., Northeast Harbor Library

March 8, at 9 a.m., Gouldsboro Community House

FMI call Andi at 967-4555.

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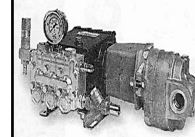
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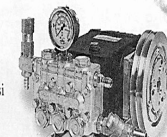
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## BACKGROUND ON LOBSTER TRAP TAGS

Each lobsterman in Maine must purchase an identifying tag for his or her lobster trap in order to legally fish it. Beginning this year, they also must buy a second set of trap tags to use to fish any traps fished outside of his home zone. So trap tags are an important topic among lobstermen. Landings queried the Department of Marine Resources communications director Jeff Nicholas about how the DMR selects the company to supply trap tags for the Maine lobster industry.

### What company makes the tags and where are they located?

TydenBrooks Security Products Group of Atlanta, Georgia.

Have any Maine companies bid on the contract to make trap tags? There has not been a Maine company awarded the trap tag contract since the tag system was instituted in 1996. One company, TOP-ME Tags from Brunswick, bid on the current contract.

### What specifications did the company have to meet to become the trap tag supplier?

The department put out a request for companies to respond to. The request required that the tags be made of high-density polyethylene that will survive in salt water; the tags must be easy to attach, even while wearing gloves, aboard a rocking boat and must lock securely so as to not be easily removed; the tags must have a secure locking mechanism so that the tags cannot be removed without being cut or broken; the tags should not interfere in any way with the

operation of the trap or any other device that the tags are used for outside of the trap; the dimensions of each tag must be a minimum length of 6 to 7 inches and a width of 3/8 to 1/2 inch; each tag must also be imprinted with specific identifications, including the harvester's license number and fishing zone; and a specific number of each type of tag, including replacement tags, non-commercial tags, and demonstration tags, must be produced.

### How does the requirement for all lobstermen to have second tags affect the company and the cost?

There will be no change in the cost for second zone tags once the new rule goes into effect on June 1, 2017. Primary trap tags are 50 cents each and second zone tags are 10 cents each.

### Have there been any issues with this company's performance?

There have been no more complaints associated with the tags produced by this company than those associated with other vendors in previous years.

### How do the tags get to the lobstermen?

They're shipped directly from TydenBrooks to the license holder so we don't have any in-house.

According to DMR, 1,119 student license holders purchased 79,197 lobster trap tags. 4,862 commercial license holders purchased 2,849,124 tags in 2016. These figures include initial and unregistered tags, not replacement tags or second zone tags.

## MAKING BUOYS FOR BIRDS A SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS

By Shelley Wigglesworth

It took Peter and Nikki Sullivan, a retired couple from Bowdoinham almost a year to come up with a buoy birdhouse design that they were proud enough to share and market. That was five years ago and since then, The Lobster Buoy Birdhouse Company has steadily captured the attention and hearts of bird lovers in Maine and beyond.

With sales of their product increasing approximately 20% each year, the couple crafted 2,500 buoy birdhouses last year alone. Here is how they got started. “We



Photos courtesy of Lobster Buoy Birdhouse Company.

decided we wanted to make a little extra money together during our retirement and one day we saw a buoy birdhouse at a salvage store and thought we could probably make something like that,” Peter explained. “Our intent all along was to keep it as simple as possible and not spend a lot of money.”

And keep it simple they did. The building process, Peter said, is straightforward and solid. “We use northern Maine cedar for all of our products because it is renowned for its decay resistance. The butts of logs are great for our products and the lumber company we use does not have a lot of uses for them so we get them at a decent price,” he said. The tools of the trade to create the product are basic as well: a band saw, a bench sander to shape, and a drill to make the holes. The



couple then hand paints each buoy (in one of eight colors) and adds recycled fishing rope for hanging. The recycled rope comes from pieces of used lobster rope which they find when beachcombing after winter storms, though some of it is purchased used from lobster co-ops, adding to the charm and authenticity of the products while being eco-friendly at the same time.

“Our birdhouses are both visually pleasing and functional. They appeal to Mainers and tourists as the lobster buoy is associated with the state of Maine. Backyard birders love them for their proven nesting results, and birdhouse collectors appreciate them for the handmade factor. Any box-nesting bird will use our buoy birdhouse to nest. In Maine we see bluebirds, chickadees, nuthatches. Folks from all over the country send us photos of birds from their regions nesting in the buoy birdhouses,” Nikki said.

A drainage hole and slide-out dovetailed base for easy cleaning make the birdhouses even more appealing. “The flat sides on the houses allow for pole as well as post-mounting along with the traditional hanging using the rope handle,” Peter added. And the buoys can be personalized. “We can hand-imprint up to three lines using traditional metal stamps. Many of our orders have personalization with the recipient’s family name,” Nikki said.

In addition to their ever-popular buoy bird houses, which retail for \$44, the Sullivans also make lobster buoy suet bird feeders (\$26), lobster buoy planters (\$34), and lobster buoy decorative ornaments.



### POWER AT WORK

Miss Amity, built by H&H Marine, powered by Scania 13-liter engine, Milbridge, ME

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