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The fishing port of Tignish, Prince Edward Island, lies on the northwest tip of the Canadian province. The land is flat and fertile, open to the Northumberland Strait and Gulf of St. Lawrence. The Tignish and Judes Point Harbor is a long inlet behind whose breakwaters a fleet of snow crab, lobster, herring and tuna boats is berthed.

On Judes Point Road sits the Tignish Fisheries Co-op Association. The cooperative is Canada's oldest fishermen's cooperative, founded in 1924 by seven local fishermen. Today the 190-member cooperative owns and operates a 75,000-square-foot processing plant, with cold storage for 5 million pounds of processed seafood. A second building holds 850,000 pounds of live lobster. A retail shop sells some of the tuna, mackerel, lobster, and other species landed good only at the company store, which put them further in debt.

"We do A to Z for the fishermen," explained Francis Morrissey, the co-op's lively general manager. "Bait, fishing supplies, equipment. We have a store on site open 6 a.m. to 8 p.m., seven days a week. If you need parts in an emergency, you just call."

The Tignish Fisheries Co-op began at the beginning of the 20th century in response to the impoverishment of local fishermen. Few owned their own fishing boats or equipment at the time, instead fishing from boats owned by local fish buyers. To pay to rent their boat, the fishermen had to give half of their catch to the fish company. During the winter months, those buyers gave fishermen scrip good only at the company store, which put them further in debt.
It's an old saying that March "comes in like a lion and goes out like a lamb." It's more likely that March remains lion-like throughout, with all the variations — snow, sleet, freezing rain and wind — that Maine's climate is known for. Come April we might start bringing our heads out from beneath the blankets, but you never know!

This month in Landings we bring you stories from near and far. Continuing our series on lobster cooperatives we take a look at a place in Canada where cooperatives first started and are going strong today. Tignish lies at the northeast tip of Prince Edward Island. In 1924 local fishermen broke free of the traditional fishing arrangement in which they rented their boats from fish brokers in exchange for half of their annual catch. Forming an association, they began selling their catch off-island, then managed to buy a fish processing plant of their own. Today the Tignish Fisheries Co-operative Association is a thriving, multi-faceted business with 190 members. Local residents truly understand the benefit of a cooperative: within the small town there is also a cooperative senior center, health center and grocery store as well.

Back in Maine, Landings follows the ever-changing story of Maine Aqua Ventus, a two-turbine, 6-megawatt floating wind power project to be located three miles southwest of Monhegan Island. The state's Public Utilities Commission, which agreed in 2014 to a twenty-year price for electricity generated by the proposed development, decided in January to seek public comment on that agreement, noting that electricity prices had changed. Many fishermen in Maine's mid-coast region remain wary of the project's possible impact on the lobster and other fisheries. The public comment period closed on February 21.

We also hear from this month John Sackton, publisher of SeafoodNews.com, on the subject of offshore oil and gas drilling on the East Coast. In 2017, the Trump administration announced that it would reopen the country's Outer Continental Shelf submerged lands for leasing by corporations interested in exploring for oil and gas deposits. States such as California and Florida, which have borne the brunt of past coastal oil spills, responded in alarm, as did Maine's Governor Paul LePage, who in May 2017, called for a moratorium on such activities. While there have been no new permits issued since then, the fate of the moratorium remains uncertain.

On the topic of health and happiness, Dragica Kostoski writes on how to prevent serious injuries from the cold while fishing. An astonishing 530 lobstermen have provided their perspective on life jacket design to the project's staff. What do they say? Life jackets used while fishing should be "comfortable, flat/not bulky, with no straps or buckles to snag, easy to clean, bright in color, and for many, integrated into something already worn." Wearing a life jacket is one of the simplest ways to ensure safety while fishing.

As part of Landings' continuing series 'People of the Coast,' we profile the Breweries of Stonington. Donna and Marsden Brewer illustrate the traditional flexibility of a Maine fishing family. Each person has turned his or her hand to different trades in the challenge to make a good living. Donna started an upholstery business; Marsden, a lobsterman, has become involved in scallop aquaculture. Together the two run Red Barn Farm on the family homestead, where they produce artisanal goat cheese and other products.

Thank you!
The Maine Lobster Marketing Collaborative (MLMC) was established in 2013 by an act of the Maine Legislature. While the statute is wide-ranging, there is one line that has significant impact on the MLMC’s activities: “This section is repealed Oct. 1, 2018.” If the Legislature does not act, the Collaborative will cease operations on October 1.

Four years ago, the MLMC began to create a robust marketing effort that we could measure and that would ultimately create value for the industry. At the outset, there were many voices and opinions about what we should do and how we should do it. Some were convinced this was a silly experiment that ought to be stopped. When asked during the hearing in 2013 how the Legislature would know if the effort was worth it and ought to be continued, DMR Commissioner Keliher said, “The fishermen will let you know.”

At the end of last summer, the MLMC Board directed me to attend a meeting of every Lobster Zone Council to explain what we had done so the Zone Councils would have enough information to make a recommendation about the MLMC to the Lobster Advisory Council (LAC), which in turn would make a recommendation to the Legislature.

Many fishermen attended these Zone Council meetings throughout the coast. We presented how the MLMC started, the research we did to create a marketing strategy, and the tactics used to drive demand for and awareness of Maine lobster. We explained our measurements and our results.

After we completed speaking to every Zone Council, we made the same presentation to the LAC. Each Zone Council and then the LAC took a vote on what to recommend: should there be a MLMC going forward? Every Zone Council voted to support. In fact, after presenting to all the Zones, only two council members in total voted against continuing the MLMC. Only two “No” votes from the whole state. Next the LAC voted unanimously to support continuation of the MLMC.

While we are proud that we have reached nearly four billion people in the last two years, it is equally gratifying that the lobstermen in the state of Maine support our efforts and believe that we are adding value to the industry.

After the LAC vote, the Legislature’s Joint Standing Committee on Marine Resources invited the MLMC to present its program to them. After several hours of presentation and questions and answers, the committee scheduled a public hearing to consider a bill to extend the Collaborative. The Committee accepts all public comment at these hearings and asks people to speak "for the bill," "against the bill," or "neutral." When Committee chair Senator Joyce Maker opened the floor for public comment, about 20 people rose to be heard in favor of continuing the Collaborative. No one stood in opposition. The Maine Lobstermen’s Association, the Maine Lobstering Union, and the Maine Lobster Dealers Association all spoke in support of the marketing effort.

While there is widespread support for marketing, there is no shortage of discussion about how we do it. The MLMC Board has (four lobstersmen, three dealers, two state department commissioners, and two at-large members) wrestles with these issues all the time. During this reauthorization process, it appears that the industry is reengaged and willing to step up and offer to help. This is exactly what we hoped for when we started: a recognition that our marketing efforts add value—no matter how hard that value is to capture given the complexity of the supply chain—and that more industry voices will only make the effort more effective.

After the public hearing, the Committee scheduled a work session to discuss fine-tuning the final bill. At that session, the Committee voted nearly unanimously (there was one “No” vote) to extend the MLMC for three more years. They suggested some governance changes to make sure that the voices that have been recently engaged stay that way. From here, the bill will be redrafted to incorporate the changes the Committee voted on and then referred to the House and Senate for consideration. If both Houses of the Legislature vote in favor, the bill will be referred to the Governor for his signature.

It has been a long process. The lobster industry demands and deserves results and well-thought-out plans. This is good as well as challenging. Too few of us have the time to be educated on all the things that affect our lives. But it is encouraging that when we explained the MLMC’s activities to groups, every single group supported continuing the Collaborative. It is a simple truth: marketing drives consumer demand. And demand is the lifeblood of the Maine lobster industry.
Maine seafood, driven by lobster, was the state’s top export commodity in 2017. This makes the fifth straight year seafood has been Maine’s leading export commodity. In terms of dollar value, 2017 represented the second highest amount of seafood exported from Maine.

Maine seafood exports were $469.8 million for 2017. The vast majority of seafood exported was Maine lobster, with over $325.5 million in live lobster and $6.3 million in frozen lobster exported. U.S. lobster exports were $637.9 million in 2017. More than 80% of U.S. lobsters are landed in Maine, meaning a lot of Maine lobsters are being shipped abroad.

China Growth Continues
The biggest growth market for U.S. lobster continues to be China. U.S. lobster exports to that country reached their highest level to date, with over $128 million in live lobster exported in 2017. The figure is even more impressive when you consider that 2010 was the first year Maine’s lobster exports exceeded $1 million.

Last spring, Alibaba, China’s e-commerce giant, held its first-ever conference in the United States. Gateway ’17 took place in Detroit, Michigan. It was clear to me from attending that seafood, with its own breakout session, continues to be a major point of emphasis for Alibaba, reflecting China’s ever-growing demand for U.S. seafood and for Maine lobster. Seafood is one of Alibaba’s fastest growing product categories.

The economic power of Alibaba can’t be underestimated. Currently, it would rank as the 22nd largest economy in the world, right behind Argentina. The company has set a target of reaching $1 trillion in gross merchandise sales by 2020, which would raise it to around 16th on the list, just ahead of Indonesia.

World-Wide Demand
In addition to the growth in China and other countries in the Far East, Europe remains an important and mature market for U.S. seafood. European demand for Maine lobster continues to be strong, although the effect of the Canada-European Union Trade Agreement (CETA) won’t be known for some time. Canada, whose lobster industry has long been deeply intertwined with ours, will also continue to be a key trading partner. Countries such as Korea, Spain, Italy, and the United Kingdom remain strong markets while non-traditional countries with a growing middle-class, like Saudi Arabia, Cambodia, Albania, and Uruguay, are importing more U.S. lobsters.

Will it continue?
People are consuming more seafood than in previous decades, with average worldwide per capita consumption hitting 43 pounds a year according to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. Seafood consumption is expected to grow even more in coming years. And lobster seems more popular than ever. With a well-managed, sustainable fishery dating back to the 1600’s, Maine’s hard-working harvesters, dealers, and processors are well positioned to take full advantage of increasing worldwide demand for seafood.

Jeffrey Bennett is a Senior Trade Specialist at the Maine International Trade Center.
We have been deluged with press releases and news stories reacting to the executive order by President Trump opening up virtually all U.S. coastal waters to oil drilling. This is something that has been opposed for more than 50 years by both the fisheries and tourism industries, and is opposed by all coastal states except for Alaska, and those in the Gulf of Mexico where drilling is already taking place. We doubt this decision will stand.

First of all, the oil markets are not signaling any strong interest in offshore drilling, although they do want the political payoff from the administration of opening up public lands in protected areas within the continental U.S. Oil analysts say that current and projected prices simply don’t support expansion of offshore drilling into new expensive areas. The Shell project to do a test site in the Beaufort Sea off the North Slope of Alaska ended in humiliating failure, as they could not even get the rig into place. After spending $7 billion, Shell has withdrawn its interest.

Secondly, drilling has a long-term time horizon. It will take about 18 months for rules to be in place; then if there were leases, it would take ten years or so for exploration and development. During this time, the political equation in Washington is very likely to shift back to the consensus that has existed for 40 or 50 years, which is that fisheries and tourism are more important to the U.S. economy than the oil companies.

Third, the U.S. is now on track to produce a record amount of oil, surpassing the previous highest output in 1970. This is all due to improved technology for land-based recovery. Why oil companies would turn from their successful fracking model that is bringing old wells to life, to a far more risky offshore strategy makes no economic sense.

Finally, with the exception of Alaska, Texas, and Louisiana, virtually all other coastal states are vehemently opposed to offshore drilling. Florida lost billions of dollars in the Deep Water Horizon disaster, and no Florida politician can survive who does not protect that state from offshore drilling. Likewise, California experienced the Santa Barbara channel spill that turned the entire state against offshore drilling there, and it is highly unlikely that the state would allow the regulatory process to proceed to bring oil ashore. In Massachusetts, there is a long-running international moratorium on drilling on Georges Bank, and again, the local opposition to any oil company attempting to use a lease would be ferocious.

Given the lack of economic return, no oil company is going to take up this fight for any reason other than to gain political points with Trump. That is not a good position on which to base a long-term strategy.

The one state where this might make a difference is Alaska, where the state budget is dependent on oil, and has been hit more than anywhere else by the global oil glut and the turn to natural gas and solar. Alaska is desperate to gain more drilling, and Sen. Lisa Murkowski succeeded in getting a provision opening the Alaska National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) to oil drilling. But no matter how much the current state government may want more drilling, the economics dictate where such drilling might take place, and it certainly does not appear to be offshore.
is hard work! Once I was living and going to school in Portland I realized that fishing was exactly what I wanted to do,” Porter said.

He worked on draggers for several years in the early 1990s, fishing for mahogany clams, quahogs, urchins, and scallops, which kept him away from Cutler. Eventually Porter and several other dragger captains decided to start their own organization to make their concerns heard in Augusta. In 1994 they founded the Downeast Draggermen’s Association. As a young man from Cutler suddenly thrust into the State House, Porter found himself in a different world. Loud voices and bluster, it turned out, weren’t the proper tools of the trade. “I remember one time I was spouting off [to a committee]. One of the members took me aside afterward for a tongue lashing. I was out of bounds. I had to learn you go and voice your opinion respectfully,” he said. He credited many of the legislators in Augusta at the time with giving him a good education in how government works.

But in the late 1990s, the Draggermen’s Association dissolved. With a wife and young children, Porter wanted to spend more time at home, so he returned to lobstering. He soon became involved in the Maine Fishing Industry Development Center, a federally-funded nonprofit organization that promoted fishing industry diversification in response to new groundfishing regulations. Through the Center, Porter worked with Gail Johnson, John Norton, Maggie Raymond and other fishing industry professionals to provide grants for fishing ventures throughout the state.

It was through the Development Center work that Porter was introduced to the annual Maine Fishermen’s Forum. One seat on the Forum’s board of directors was reserved for a representative of the Maine Scallopers Association. Porter was asked to take that seat and eventually became the president of the Forum’s board of directors.

Porter continued in various fisheries, such as scalloping, but as the years passed found that more of his livelihood came from lobstering. David Cousens, who had served as the Forum Board chair for several years, with Dwight [Carver] and Bobby [Ingalls] and we’d talk about things,” Porter recalled. “I learned that everyone in lobstering has the same concerns, they are just all a little different.”

In March 2010, MLA organized the International Lobstermen’s Exchange, bringing lobstermen from Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and Tasmania to Maine to meet lobstermen and to talk about their respective fisheries. Porter helped organize an overnight stay in Cutler. Three years later, the New England Aquarium asked Porter to attend a conference in Australia that focused on how rock lobster fishers there avoid whale entanglement in their gear. Porter, then MLA vice-president, had participated in various research studies testing different ropes and gear modifications designed to reduce whale entanglements in the Gulf of Maine. After the conference, Porter went lobstering with Australian lobstermen, met with officials from southwest Australia’s fisheries management agency, and generally learned a lot about how things are done on the far side of the world. “The guys were so good to me there. It’s a lot like Maine in a way, because it’s a huge country with a small population,” Porter said. In April 2015, he returned to Australia to speak at the Rock Lobster Congress on Maine’s lobster fishery. His aim was to keep the flow of ideas between lobstermen, started in 2010, going.

Keeping one’s eyes on the big picture while promoting new ideas is an important part of the MLA, according to Porter. “There are a lot of local issues out there, but the [MLA] board tries not to get involved in them unless there are statewide implications,” he said. “We have some sharp young guys on the board now and they are definitely stepping up.”

Porter is proud of the MLA’s track record and being part of an organization that has led the Maine lobster industry for so many years. There have been other attempts to organize lobstermen over the years, but the MLA has remained the state’s largest fishermen’s organization and a steady presence. Porter feels that the MLA suffers from the fact that not all lobstermen are focusing on the big picture and the long-term interests of the lobster fishery. The MLA has always been proactive on important issues like federal whale rules, while other states have been blindsided by them. He doesn’t understand why many more Maine lobstermen aren’t MLA members. “You can disagree on little things, I get that. But you need to look at the big picture. There’s a real tough time coming ahead. And we are fighting for you.”

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Public Utilities Commission Reconsiders Maine Aqua Ventus Rate Agreement

By Melissa Waterman

The University of Maine’s proposed ocean wind energy project located off Monhegan Island, called Maine Aqua Ventus (MAV), took a blow in January when the Maine Public Utilities Commission (PUC) issued an order requesting comments on whether it should reconsider its agreement with MAV on payment for electricity generated by the project. After a one-week extension, the public comment period closed on February 21. Harry Lanphear, PUC administrative director, reported that more than 573 comments had been received.

In January 2014, the PUC approved a term sheet (an initial agreement between the energy provider and the state) for twenty years of electricity at $0.23 per kilowatt hour during the first year of production. That price would then increase by 2.25% during each of the next 19 years of the contract. As currently proposed, the 6-megawatt project, comprising two floating wind turbines approximately three miles southwest of Monhegan, could generate electricity for up to 7,000 homes. The $0.23 per kilowatt hour rate for electricity would cost ratepayers roughly $9 more during the project’s first year.

Maine Aqua Ventus and Central Maine Power submitted a formal contract based on the term sheet in December 2017, for PUC approval.

Continued on page 21
Our Leadership is Changing. Our Mission is not.

The Maine Lobstermen’s Association is known for the work we do. And we’ve been working for Maine lobstermen since 1954. Now is the time for YOU to join the MLA and continue the tradition!

Continuity.
Integrity.
Perseverance.

David Cousens 1991 - 2018
Les Dyer 1954-1966
Ossie Beal 1967-1974

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**MLA MEMBERSHIP FORM**

Mail with payments to: MLA, 2 Storer St, Ste 203, Kennebunk, ME 04043

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*family memberships are for spouses and children under 23 living at home

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Address:_____________________
City/State/Zip:______________
Phone:_________ Cell:_________ D.O.B:______
Email:_______________________
(Include to receive weekly e-news updates and lobster, bait, & fuel prices)
Boat Name:___________________
Lobster License #:__________ Zone & District:_________
*Family Members:_____________

Yes, I want to add my sternman for $50!
Name:_____________________ DOB:_________
E-mail:____________________ Phone:_______
Address:___________________
City/State/Zip:______________
Lobster License # (If applicable):____________

Payment info: Pay with: Visa MasterCard Check: #__________
Credit Card #:_________________________ Exp. date:_______ CV code:_______
Billing town/state/zip:______________

Yes! Put me on auto renewal! I agree that the MLA may charge my card to renew my membership.
Signature:_________________________
Maine Lobstermen’s Association

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

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS’ MEETING SCHEDULE
All meetings take place in Belfast, unless otherwise indicated.

Annual meeting, March 2, 9 a.m., Samoset Resort
April 11, noon, Nautilus Restaurant

The 2018 MLA Annual Meeting will mark a changing of the guard for the Association, after 27 years of service as President of the MLA, David Cousens is retiring. This transition is a good time to reflect on the MLA’s many accomplishments during David’s tenure and the MLA’s strength and stability as it seamlessly transitions to new leadership.

The MLA has been hard at work fighting to preserve a way of life for lobstermen, their families and their communities since 1954. No one person can build a 64-year legacy the magnitude of the MLA’s. David is only the fourth president since the MLA was founded, joining the ranks of Leslie Dyer, Osie Beal and Eddie Blackmore. Each guided the MLA through a variety of challenges, and each built on the success of the previous president. It is the constant strengthening of the MLA through the close interaction between the President and the Board on all decisions and policy direction that has given the organization its stability and power through the years. As they say, no man is an island; that has proved true year after year for the MLA as the President and Board worked in sync to face increasingly complex threats to Maine’s lobster fishery.

Nevertheless, David Cousens leaves behind an impressive legacy. David’s true passions lie in his strong conservation ethic, belief in the lobster industry and ability to work with people. It is his powerful belief in conservation that got him involved in the first place. Back in 1985, the MLA was battling before the Legislature to prevent an attempt by Maine’s lobster dealers to eliminate the maximum gauge size. In the State House, MLA President Ed Blackmore took note of a well-spoken 27-year-old lobsterman from South Thomaston who showed up on his own to testify against this bill. Ed immediately saw David’s special combination of passion and intellect and invited him to the MLA. In June 1986, David was elected to the MLA Board and Blackmore took him under his wing. A few years later, in 1991, David became MLA’s fourth president.

David was fortunate to work closely with Pat White during his first ten years as President. The two partnered to stop a series of minimum gauge increases put into motion by the New England Fisheries Management Council (NEFMC), to have Maine’s V-notch measure recognized by federal fishery managers, and to prevent landings of dragger-caught lobsters in Maine and other states. They deftly worked together to shift management of the lobster fishery from NEFMC to the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC), arguing that since the vast majority of lobster were caught in state waters, regulatory authority should lie with a state-directed body rather than the federal government. The transfer of authority led to creation of the Lobster Management Areas (LMAs) which, for the first time, gave all lobstermen a voice in how lobster fishing in their geographic area was managed. The creation of Area 1 meant that Maine’s core management measures — V-notch egg-bearing females, returning under- or over-sized lobsters to the sea — now encompassed not just Maine but also New Hampshire and most of Massachusetts out to 40 miles from shore. No longer could Shafmaster boats sit on Maine’s three-mile line and land Maine’s oversized and V-notched lobsters.

David worked closely with then-Senator Olympia Snowe to stop the landing of dragger-caught lobster. He was so passionate about the damage that trawl gear would cause lobster habitat and lobsters that he became a fierce adversary of Massachusetts out to 40 miles from shore. No longer could Shafmaster boats sit on Maine’s three-mile line and land Maine’s oversized and V-notched lobsters.

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David was a pioneer in bringing scientists and fishermen together to conduct collaborative research on lobsters. At a time when lobstermen rarely trusted scientists, David’s passion for knowledge and love of the fishery made it natural for him to break down these barriers. He was one of the first to observe lobsters from an underwater submarine with Dr. Bob Steneck from the University of Maine. He also played a critical role in getting the massive Penobscot Bay lobster research project underway in the mid-1990s as well as hosting the Department of Marine Resources’ (DMR) first sea samplers.

David wasn’t all about conserving lobster. He also recognized that lobstermen needed to buy into these measures for them to work and that enforcement needed to be effective for Maine’s conservation efforts to remain intact given the huge scale of the fishery. He advocated for funds to improve Marine Patrol’s surveillance equipment and keep the Bureau fully staffed. He also started in 1994 the MLA’s Annual Marine Patrol Officer of the Year Award to recognize the importance of outstanding enforcement work. In 2001, MLA established its Golden V-notch Award to recognize the efforts of a lobsterman who has gone above and beyond to improve the fishery.

David’s outgoing personality served him well in networking with lobstermen from near and far. He forged close friendships with lobstermen in Canada and around the region, working to educate them on the conservation benefits of Maine’s V-notch and maximum size measures. These relationships laid the groundwork for the establishment of the Maine Lobster Conservation Institute, launched connections with Irish lobstermen who also have V-notch measures, and led to the International Fishermen’s Exchange in 2010. Finding different methods to give lobstermen a voice and thus a seat at the table has always been important to David. He saw the establishment of the state’s lobster zone council system in the late 1990’s as another way to give Maine’s lobstermen a stronger say in how lobsters are managed.

David’s ability to represent the lobster industry with passion and his low tolerance for bureaucratic nonsense helped him create strong working relationships with Maine’s DMR Commissioners, Governors, state legislators and key members of Maine’s Congressional delegation over the years. There is no doubt that if you asked George Mitchell, Bill Cohen, Olympia Snowe, Susan Collins, Angus King, Chellie Pingree or any other of Maine’s prominent political figures over the last 30 years about the Maine lobster industry, the name “David Cousens” would come up.

It has been a privilege to work with David and the MLA Board over the past 18 years. I have a lot of love for the lobster than I ever thought possible. I’ve also learned a lot about people, about what motivates them, what inspires them, what gets under their skin. David has demonstrated what a good leader can do over time. He has put his heart and soul into the MLA and the lobster industry has thrived because of that. And though his legacy is amazing, he has most importantly taught me that life is about choices — and family and health always come first. David, I will miss you!
The MLA Board of Directors met on February 9 in Belfast. The Board welcomed Hattie Train, a student at University of Maine, who is partnering with the Nature Conservancy to organize a derelict fishing gear clean-up project. She plans to focus her initial efforts in the Casco Bay and Damariscotta areas. She is seeking lobstermen interested in volunteering to help identify areas with gear balls on bottom and to run boats to those areas. She has identified a group of volunteer divers who will mark the gear in advance. She will be seeking DMR permits to conduct this work. The MLA Board endorsed her project and will suggest lobstermen to work with her. She hopes to start the project late summer/early fall 2018.

Patrice McCarron provided a series of updates. The DMR held a public hearing on February 1 on proposed menhaden rules and accepted comments until February 14. The rules will determine how Maine manages its fishery under the allocated quota. Board member Dustin Delano attended the hearing and was concerned that there are no daily or weekly catch limits for catcher vessels during the state allocated fishery. The MLA will send a letter recommending limits of 120,000 lbs. per day and 160,000 lbs. per week. This will be the requirement under the episodic event portion of the fishery after the state quota is caught. When both quotas are landed, the small-scale, 6,000 lbs. per day fishery will begin.

MLA submitted its letter opposing the Maine Aqua Ventus project to the Maine Public Utilities Commission in response to their request for comments on its 2014 negotiated rate to purchase power generated by the project. The deadline for comments was February 14. The MAV project held a meeting in Boothbay to discuss options for running the cable from Monhegan to land in Boothbay; they have withdrawn a proposal to run the cable to Port Clyde. To bury the cable, they would need 22 miles of mud. There was a report that UMaine scientists had said that there are no lobsters in this area during the winter and spring. Area lobstermen disagree and worry that burying a cable would kill lobsters on the bottom. MLA will send its letter in opposition to MAV to the town of Boothbay and contact DMR lobster biologists about the potential impact to lobsters from a cable installation.

The BOEM meeting on offshore oil and gas exploration has been postponed until March 7. The MLA will participate in the open house and press conference and submit written comments in opposition. Comments are due in March and can be submitted at www.boem.gov/National-Program-Comment/.

The Gulf of Maine Research Institute (GMRI) published a study that quantified the benefit of Maine’s v-notching and maximum gauge size protections for the Maine lobster industry. The study determined that lobster abundance in the Gulf of Maine is twice as high as it would have been without these measures in place. The study also run a model based on different temperature scenarios predicting what the catch might be in 30 years. These scenarios predict a slow decline, rather than a sharp drop, over those years. Some people in the lobster industry were angry over an article in the Portland Press Herald that misconstrued this research. The MLA, DMR, and lobster dealers met with GMRI to discuss how to discuss the results of these sorts of studies with the media. Patrice wrote an op-ed piece for the Portland Press Herald noting that scientists finally understand what lobstermen have known for years -- v-notching and a maximum size are essential to sustaining the lobster resource.

The ASMFC voted on Addendum 26 to the lobster management plan, requiring 100% mandatory reporting in five years. The reporting elements are essentially the same with the addition of 10-minute squares, endline counts and gear configuration. ASMFC recommended 100% reporting for the federal fishery along with the development of a lobster-specific VTR (vessel trip report). DMR has stated that this can happen only with the development of electronic reporting technology and funding from the ASMFC.

LD 1791 An Act to Continue the Maine Lobster Marketing Collaborative

The Marine Resources Committee held a public hearing on February 5 and all testimony was in support of continuing the collaborative. There were various suggestions on how to improve the Collaborative such as create an executive committee, formalize a dealer advisory committee, create an additional dealer seat on the Board, create a new funding tier for small lobster dealers and revamp which businesses qualify for listing on the MLMC website.

On February 14, the Marine Resources Committee (MRC) voted to reauthorize the Collaborative for three years and create an executive committee. The MRC will send a letter to DMR asking them to investigate the establishment of a different fee structure for small dealers for future consideration. The MRC will also send a letter to MLMC asking them to review the website and remove companies who do not pay into the MLMC and those that market lobsters that are not legal to sell in Maine, to create the Dealer Advisory Committee and ensure they have timely feedback to the board, and to update the bylaws.

The MRC is scheduled to do a final language review on February 21 before sending the bill for approval by the full Legislature. Rep. Paula Sattion did not support the bill, saying that she would like to see voluntary, rather than mandatory, fees. If legislation is not passed, the Collaborative will sunset in October 2018. The Collaborative received strong support from the seven lobster zone councils and Lobster Advisory Council. The MLA supports this bill.

LD 1720 An Act To Amend the Law Regarding Temporary Medical Allowances for Lobster and Crab Fishing License Holders

The Marine Resources Committee held a public hearing on January 10 to consider extending the current temporary medical allowance from one to two years, and to consider creating a “temporary terminal illness medical allowance.” The Committee voted to support an amended bill to extend the temporary medical allowance to two years, but not create a new terminal medical allowance.

LD 1752 An Act to Amend the Laws Governing Pilotage Requirements for Passenger Ferry Service between Maine and Nova Scotia

The MLA opposed this bill to amend the pilotage requirements for vessels providing regularly scheduled passenger ferry service between Bar Harbor, Maine, and Yarmouth, Nova Scotia. The public hearing before the Transportation Committee was on January 18; the bill was tabled on February 8.

LD 922 An Act Directing the Commissioner of Marine Resources To Investigate the Conditions of Seapscot Pond Related to a Management Plan for Anadromous Fish Species

The MLA supports LD 922, which is a carry-over bill from last session, to open the fishway on the Seapscot River in Palermo from April 15 to June 1. On February 14, the Committee voted to approve opening passage in five years through an amended bill; however, there will be a divided report.

Bait

Maine menhaden rules – ASMFC voted in late 2017 to increase the total menhaden quota to 216,000 metric tons (mt) for the 2018 and 2019 fishing seasons. Maine’s share of the quota increased to .52% (up from .04%). Maine’s quota is set at 1,096,002 mt for 2018, 999,114 mt for 2019, and 994,552 mt for 2020. The state’s allocated quota is caught. Maine will have access to the episodic fishery quota. ASMFC also maintained the incidental small-scale fishery, which allows vessels to land 6,000 lbs. per day after the other two quotas have been landed.
NSMFC requires that purse seines must be smaller than 150’ x 8’.
No transfer of fish at sea will be allowed under the incidental catch and small-scale fishery.

The MLA submitted comments recommending that the state allocated fishery also limit vessel catchers to 120,000 lbs. per vessel and 160,000 lbs. per week in order for the state to deter larger out-of-state boats from focusing their effort on menhaden in Maine’s waters, and to establish a steady and predictable pace of menhaden landings to supply the lobster fishery.

Herring - NOAA Fisheries announced catch limits for Atlantic herring for the 2018 fishing season.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2018 Herring Annual Catch Limits</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Management Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area 1A</td>
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<td>Area 1B</td>
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<tr>
<td>Area 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Area 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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</tbody>
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*The total ACL cannot be increased by carry over, so the total does not equal the sum of the areas

ASMFC MEETING

Lobster Reporting - The American Lobster Management Board (Board) approved Addendum 26 to the lobster and Jonah crab management plans. The Addendum improves the spatial resolution of harvester data collection in each plan, expands the required harvester reporting data elements, establishes a timeline for increased harvester reporting, and prioritizes the development of electronic harvester reporting. In addition, Addendum 26 includes recommendations for improved reporting and biological sampling in federal waters.

Fishermen will have to report via 10-minute squares, which further divide the existing statistical areas. In addition, it establishes a one-year pilot program to explore the use of electronic tracking devices, which would address the special resolution and enforcement concerns. Additional data elements in harvester reports will be required, including number of traps per trawl and number of baits. Finally, the Addendum 26 establishes a deadline that states are required to implement 100% harvester reporting within five years, with the prioritization of electronic harvester reporting development during that time. In the interim, jurisdictions not at 100% harvester reporting should redistribute current efforts to focus on gathering data from active, as opposed to latent, permit holders.

A baseline of ten sampling trips per year in the American lobster/Jonah crab fishery will be required and states with more than 10% of coastwide landings of either lobster or Jonah crab are encouraged to conduct additional sampling trips. Addendum 26 provides three recommendations for actions in federal waters: 1) a harvester reporting requirement be established for federal lobster permits in order to collect information from the growing offshore fishery; 2) a fixed-gear VTR form be created to improve data collection in the lobster and Jonah crab fisheries; and 3) a biological sampling program be established in federal waters to address current data gaps in the assessment. These recommendations will be forwarded to NOAA Fisheries.

The Lobster Board established a Lobster Electronic Reporting Subcommittee, with representatives from the Lobster Board, state and federal agencies, the Atlantic Coast Cooperative Statistics Program, and ASMFC staff. The Subcommittee’s objectives are to: 1) evaluate the needs for an electronic harvester reporting form based on stipulations in the Lobster and Jonah Crab FMPs and individual state requirements; 2) evaluate various electronic reporting platforms and their ability to be housed within SAFIS, as well as state-specific databases; 3) recommend simple and logical solutions to improve the ease of electronic harvester reporting. This includes evaluating the best way to report spatial location and the states’ ability to use state-specific sub-areas in state waters; and 4) outline a timeline for development of electronic harvester reporting in the lobster and Jonah crab fisheries.

The Lobster Board also reviewed a report from the Southern New England Workgroup-approved Terms of Reference for the 2020 Benchmark Stock Assessment, and elected Dan McKiernan from Massachusetts as Vice-Chair. The Working Group concluded that, while it is valuable to have a set of overarching goals for the lobster fishery, it may be appropriate to further refine the goals specific to the two biological stocks. Since changes to the goals and objectives will require an Amendment, the Board agreed to take such action in relation to other on-going Board activities.

Ropeless fishing - The Commission tasked the Law Enforcement Committee to investigate the enforceability of ropeless fishing in the lobster fishery.

Atlantic Herring Section - The Atlantic Herring Section reviewed a Technical Committee report on the current spawning closure procedure. The Committee’s report found the current GSDP protocol, as established in Amendment 3, is a significant improvement over the previous length-based protocol because spawning closures are now within days, rather than weeks, of the spawning season. In addition, given the annual variability in spawning season length, the report found the four-week closure with the option for a two-week re-closure effectively covers this variability. The Section tasked the Committee with developing a system to scale up samples of herring which fall below the required 100 fish but are above 50 fish in order to more effectively collect biological information. Finally, the Section elected Pat Keihler from Maine as chair and David Pierce from Massachusetts as vice-chair.

WHALES

Lawsuits – Two lawsuits have been filed against National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) in U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia. The first was filed on January 18 by Center for Biological Diversity, Defenders of Wildlife and the Humane Society. The second was filed on February 7 by the Conservation Law Foundation (CLF) but also includes Earth Justice. Both lawsuits order NMFS to complete a Section 7 consultation in order to issue a new biological opinion within 60 days on whether the American lobster fishery jeopardizes right whales. The CLF suit takes a step further and orders NMFS to use its emergency authority to implement measures such as ‘area closures, vessel speed limits, gear marking requirements, vessel and gear monitoring systems, and the use of whale release rope and ropeless gear.’ There have been no updates since these complaints were filed. The MLA is working with our lawyer and consulting with DMR to discuss strategies moving forward.

Ropeless fishing meeting – MLA brought three representatives to the ropeless fishing meeting held in Woods Hole in early February. The premise behind ropeless fishing is that if you remove rope from the water column, you have reduced the risk of whale entanglement. The meeting featured a presentation of three different ropeless fishing technologies: rope stowed in a bag deployed to the bottom with the trap and released through an acoustic device; attaching a lift bag to a lobster trap that inflates and floats the trap when a signal is sent; and a system that attaches a large spool of rope to the trap that is then released through an acoustic device. Proponents presented a vision of a sophisticated communication system in which traps would have sensors and all boats would be equipped with software so that all vessels could see where the gear is. MLA representatives expressed strong concern that this technology is simply not feasible for the Maine lobster fishery, especially given the cost concern over cost, safety and enforcement issues. This group has established a website: www.ropeless.org.

Right Whale Stock Assessment – MLA staff attended the recent review of the most recent right whale stock assessment, currently in its draft form. The Scientific Review Group reviewed recent data and modelling work on right whales and affirmed that the right whale population has been in decline since 2010. There is strong concern over the ability of the species to survive if human-caused mortalities are not addressed.

Take Reduction Team Subgroups – NMFS has announced the formation of two TRT subgroups. The ropeless feasibility subgroup will investigate the feasibility of ropeless fishing. The whale release rope/gear marking subgroup will investigate the feasibility of using whale release rope (such as 1700 lb rope) and alternative approaches to gear marking. The subgroups will make recommendations to the TRT on potentials for implementation to reduce entanglement risk. The subgroups are expected to present findings in late 2018.

BEWARE OF VESSEL DOCUMENTATION SCAM

Every year vessel owners must renew documentation with the U.S. Coast Guard with the boat’s name, ownership, tonnage, home port and other basic criteria. It costs $26. Beware of scams put out by private companies that can cost significantly more. They are designed to look official to hook you in. There are several different scams. Letters from Maritime Documentation Center and U.S. Vessel Documentation are two that you should not use. These are not illegal but cost you much more than you need to pay to document your vessel. To renew, go to the USCG National Documentation Center website at www.uscg.mil/nvdc and click on “instructions and forms.” Remember, the cost is $26.
David Cousens’ Legacy

Thank you David Cousens for your leadership, passion and unfailing commitment to preserving the lobster fishery through your service as President of the MLA over the past 27 years. You have worked tirelessly to ensure the fishery remains strong and the voices of lobstermen have been heard. Your legacy speaks for itself!

Leading the fight to keep dragger-caught lobster from being landed in Maine, and setting limits on how much can be landed elsewhere.

Fighting to have Maine’s V-notch and maximum gauge measures accepted by scientists and implemented in other states.

Encouraging young lobstermen to take on leadership roles in the Maine lobster fishery.

Supporting the establishment of zone councils to give lobsterman more voice over their fishery.

Protesting against federal whale rules that would jeopardize Maine lobstermen’s ability to make a living.

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March 2018 |
LANDINGS | Page 11

Typographical errors are unintentional and subject to correction.
MAKE IT MAINE, MAKE IT NEW SHELL

THE MAIN Lobster MARKETING COLLABORATIVE GEARS UP FOR 2018

Focused on driving awareness and demand during peak season

This year we’ll continue our focus on our key audiences of chefs, media and consumers. We’ll kick off the season with a new video series highlighting the unique dynamic between chefs and lobstermen shot along coastal Maine. We’ll also showcase the different types of lobster through a product-focused how-to video series including tails, meat and processed lobster. The videos will also highlight the different usage occasions for Maine Lobster, and how it can be used as a versatile cooking ingredient.

The successful Maine After Midnight events will continue in 2018 but with a twist – our first-ever live broadcast, which allows the MLMC to scale beyond the footprint of our events, reaching a global audience. The broadcast will reconvene the chef and lobstermen pairs featured in our video series and will include a panel discussion and demonstrations of their favorite Maine Lobster recipes, and footage from the video series that will premiere earlier in the summer.

The MLMC will round out these robust programs with continuous media outreach, chef engagement and ongoing social content, ensuring that Mané Lobster is top of mind year-round.

www.lobsterfrommaine.com
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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 environmental study 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:
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Survey Coordinator
Katherine.Thompson@Maine.gov
Office: (207) 633-9565
Cell: (207) 350-6380

Kathleen Reardon
Senior Lobster Biologist
Kathleen.Reardon@Maine.gov
Office: (207) 633-8404
Cell: (207) 350-7440

A research collaboration between DMR and GOMLF

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Elsworth
Portland
Cape Elizabeth

Canadian Border – Addison

Addison – MDI
Capt William Faulkingham
F/V 51

MDI – Isle au Haut
Capt Brian Tripp
F/V Enginuity

N. Penobscot Bay

S. Penobscot Bay
Capt Peter Miller
F/V Sasha

Muscongus Bay
Capt Dustin Delano
F/V Knotty Lady

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

Casco Bay
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**Midcoast Marine Electronics**  
Rockland, ME -- 10% off list price on all marine electronic products excluding MRP products. 207-491-3993

**Navtronics, LLC**  
York, ME -- 5% off of purchases. 207-363-1150

### Financial & Investment

**Richard Stanley Custom Boats**  
Bailey Harbor, ME -- $1,000 off final price of hull with MLA membership. 207-244-3795

**SW Boatworks**  
Lamonie, ME -- $1000 discount for hull or tops on a 38’ CB or 44’ CB. 207-667-7427

**Slocum Chiropractic: a Maine Vitality Center**  
Brunswick, ME -- $25 initial visit and nervous system scan. Value $125. 207-725-4222

**Midcoast Marine Electronics**  
Rockland, ME -- 10% off list price on all marine electronic products excluding MRP products. 207-491-3993

**Navtronics, LLC**  
York, ME -- 5% off of purchases. 207-363-1150

**Back River Financial Group**  
Farmingdale, ME -- Free initial consultation and review of previous tax returns. 207-622-3772

**Atlantic Edge Lobster**  
Boothbay Harbor, ME -- Fuel discount for MLA members. 207-633-2300

### Fuel

**New England Propeller Inc**  
Plymouth, MA -- Discounts on marine propeller, shafting, and related items, sales & repairs. 603-746-8804

**Nautilus Marine Fabrication, Inc.**  
Trenton, ME -- 5% Discount on propeller reconditioning. 207-667-1119

**Applied Refrigeration Services**  
Windham, ME -- $250 off new installations. 207-893-0145

**Chase Leavitt Co.**  
Portland, Ellsworth -- 55 off service fee for liferaft repack OR $50 off new liferaft purchase w/ MLA card or current Maine CF card. www.chaseleavitt.com

**McMillan Offshore Survival Training**  
Belfast, ME -- 10% discount on USCG Drill Conductor training. 207-338-1603

**Sea Rose Trap Co**  
S. Portland -- 5% off list price on traps. Must show MLA card. 207-730-2063

### Gifts

**Maine Camp Outfitters**  
Sunset, ME -- 10% off all apparel and promotional product orders. 800-560-6090

### Hydraulics

**Coastal Hydraulics**  
Seabrook, NH -- 10% discount on all in stock items for MLA members. 603-474-1914

**News Company, LLC**  
South Portland, ME -- 10% off hydraulic components & Cable Craft cables. 207-767-2136

### Legal Services

**Nicholas H Walsh PA, Maritime Law**  
Portland, ME -- 20% off legal services. 207-772-2191

### Museums & Entertainment

**Cross Insurance Center**  
Portland, ME -- Member-only discounts for select shows. Call the MLA for more info

**Penobscot Marine Museum**  
Searsport, ME -- Free admission for MLA members.

**Maine Maritime Museum**  
Bath, ME -- Free admission to MLA members.

**Mount Desert Oceanarium**  
Bar Harbor, ME -- Free admission to commercial fishermen and their families.

### Lobster & Seafood

**Winter Harbor Fishermen’s Coop**  
Winter Harbor, ME -- 10% off picked lobster meat. 207-963-5857

**Get Maine Lobster.com**  
Not valid on specials or already discounted items. Get Maine Lobster.com meat. 207-963-5857

### Newspapers

**Commercial Fisheries News**  
Deer Isle, ME -- Discounted annual subscription rate for $18.75 with MLA membership noted on check. 800-989-5253

**National Fisherman**  
Portland, ME -- Special annual subscription rate for members. Contact the MLA for more info. 207-967-4555

### Propellers

**Accutech Marine Propeller, Inc**  
Dover, NH -- 10% off propeller repair & new shafts. New propeller discounts vary. 603-617-3626

### Refrigeration Services

**Applyed Refrigeration Services**  
Windham, ME -- $250 off new installations. 207-893-0145

### Safety Training & Equipment

**Chase Leavitt Co.**  
Portland, Ellsworth -- 55 off service fee for liferaft repack OR $50 off new liferaft purchase w/ MLA card or current Maine CF card. www.chaseleavitt.com

**McMillan Offshore Survival Training**  
Belfast, ME -- 10% discount on USCG Drill Conductor training. 207-338-1603

### Trap Builders, Stock & Supplies

**Friendship Trap Company**  
Friendship, ME -- 5% off list price on traps purchased at the Friendship store. Cannot be combined with other discounts. 207-354-2545

**Sea Rose Trap Co**  
S. Portland -- 5% off list price on traps. Must show MLA card. 207-730-2063

### Vessel Insurance

**Smithwick & Mariners Insurance**  
Falmouth, ME -- Dissent vessel insurance plus 5% discount with proof of CG approved Drill Conductor course w/in the last 5 years. Wooden boat, Builders coverage, No lay up period, discounted electronics deductible, and automatic coverage of researchers. 207-370-1883
By Bridget Thornton

While tax season is not the happiest time of the year, it is among the most important. We want you to have all the information you need to file your taxes and to file them correctly. While many people work with an experienced tax preparer or accountant, some use online software tools such as Turbo Tax or H&R Block.

Taxpayers have until April 17, 2018, to file their 2017 returns and pay any taxes due. Choosing e-file and direct deposit is the fastest and safest way to file an accurate income tax return and receive a refund, if you are eligible for one. Prior to sitting down and doing your taxes you should have all the documentation you need to file a complete tax return, including forms such as a W-2 from employers and a 1099 from your banks and any other payers. You should also have your 1095-A from the Health Insurance Marketplace showing that you had health insurance coverage for 2017. If you have employer-based health insurance you should receive a 1095-C from the insurance company.

Having an accurate 1095-A is especially important if you were receiving an Advanced Premium Tax Credit (APTC) to lower your monthly health insurance premium. The APTC must be reconciled on your tax return. The two figures that are compared on Form 8962, the Premium Tax Credit form, are:

- the amount of Premium Tax Credit you used in advance during the year (this was paid directly to your health insurance company to lower your monthly premium payment).
- the Premium Tax Credit you actually qualify for based on your final income for the year.

Any difference between the two figures will affect the amount of tax you owe. You should have received your 1095-A in the mail by this time or you can access the form on your healthcare.gov account. If you haven’t received it or if it’s incorrect, contact the Health Insurance Marketplace call center at 1-800-318-2596.

The information that is provided on Form 1095-A is used to complete Part II of Form 8962. On line 26, you’ll find out if you used more or less of the Premium Tax Credit than you qualify for based on your final 2017 income. This figure will affect the amount of tax you must pay or the size of your refund. Include the completed Form 8962 with your 2017 federal tax return.

Individuals and families with low or moderate incomes can get free help in filing their federal taxes. Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) and AARP Tax-Aide have more than 12,000 sites around the country to provide assistance. To find a site near you go to www.irs.gov/individuals/free-tax-return-preparation-for-you-by-volunteers.

The IRS.gov web site can be helpful. The site now has an interactive Tax Assistant to help provide answers to several tax law questions. Topics include:

- Do I need to file a tax return?
- Who can I claim as a dependent?
- How much is my standard deduction?
- What is my filing status?
- Am I eligible to claim an education credit?

You can also use the IRS.gov web site to check the status of your refund or you can download the IRS application called IRS2GO. Taxpayers can check the status of their refund 24 hours after the IRS receives their e-filed return.

You can also use the MLA internet site to check the status of your refund or you can download the MLA application called MLS2GO. Taxpayers can check the status of their refund 24 hours after the MLA receives their e-filed return.

The MLA health insurance Navigator can help you with general tax questions so don’t hesitate to call the MLA office at 987-4555 or email bridget@mainelobstermen.org.
In 1924 several Tignish fishermen had had enough. They secretly formed a legal association with the assistance of a local lawyer, Chester McCarthy, and began selling their catches off the island. The next year they wanted to buy a fish plant to process their own catch but banks in those days were hesitant to loan money to a bunch of fishermen. So McCarthy put up $3,500 of his own money in exchange for a percentage of the sales.

"The policy for members then was the same as it is now," Morrissey said. "One hundred percent loyalty. You sell all your catch to the co-op."

To join the Tignish Fisheries Co-op Association, a fisherman offers his or her name to the board of directors. If accepted, the person must pay $500 for membership, and $500 each year he or she remains a member. "You immediately get a $5,000 line of credit and $500 added to that credit line each year after that. The co-op will look after your crew’s pay and paperwork. You get your money back for your shares when you decide to leave," Morrissey explained. Each year in April members meet for the annual meeting where they receive a dividend based on the profit made by the company and the pounds each individual landed of different species.

There’s a lot of good fishing off Tignish, according to Morrissey. Mackerel, tuna in the fall, lobster during the eight-week spring season, snow crab in the spring, herring, flounder, oysters — the co-op processes a rich range of species. But the company no longer handles only its members’ catches. It buys lobsters from throughout the Maritime Provinces to either store or process. "This week [mid-February] we will ship 150,000 to 200,000 pounds of live lobsters to China for their New Year celebrations," Morrissey said. The animals are trucked to Halifax Stanfield International Airport or to airports in Toronto and Montreal. The company also processes herring, not only for lobster bait but also for the roe, which is popular in Japan. At its peak during the summer, Morrissey said, the company employs between 380 and 400 people.

The notion of individuals banding together for their common good was a familiar one to the earlier fishermen of the region. Their isolation and the difficulty of making a good living instilled a sense of community that remains strong today. "The cooperative movement is big in this area," Morrissey said. "There’s the co-op grocery store, senior center, health center. The community is built of the Irish, Scots and French. They got along because there was no choice."

The company has grown in the last several years, Morrissey continued, in part because of rising lobster landings and in part because of a growing membership. "The members are very loyal to the co-op. They don’t waver in hard times and there are always hard times," he said. "If someone thinks of leaving because they’re paying a nickel more somewhere else, then don’t bother being a member."

Francis Morrissey gave Maine Lobster Leadership participants a tour of the Co-op’s facilities during a visit in 2017. MLA photo.

Tignish lobstermen fish for just eight weeks in the spring before turning to other fisheries like herring and tuna. TFCA photo.
One of the hallmarks of Maine fishermen is their ability to put their hands to the many things needed to make a living in a hard landscape. That means having versatility both in terms of skills and in terms of thinking. Donna and Marsden Brewer of Stonington are just such people.

Marsden is a fourth-generation commercial lobsterman and scallop farmer who once was a seafood dealer. Donna was born into a shipping and sailing family from Castine. “My grandfather sailed five-masted schooners and taught navigation. My dad worked at sea on oil tankers and cargo ships,” she said.

For over a decade, the couple owned and operated Bandit and the Bitch Seafood, buying sea urchins, groundfish, clams, mussels, crab and lobsters before Marsden decided he wanted to go back to lobstering. Donna thought she’d try her hand at upholstery. When Marsden started lobstering again, Donna learned the upholstery trade from an upholsterer in Rockland with the help of the federal Fisheries Retraining program. “In 2001, I took out a micro-loan from the town [of Stonington] and started my business and I still love doing it,” she said.

Today Marsden continues as an active lobsterman and has ventured into scallop aquaculture, while Donna runs her upholstery business. Yet these two busy people also own and operate Red Barn Farm, a working goat farm, at the family homestead on Route 15 in Stonington.

“We have always had goats as pets, and we have always enjoyed eating goat cheese,” Donna explained. “It was Marsden’s idea to try to make our own, so in 2011 we gave it a try and really liked it. Our friends and family loved our cheese and wanted to buy it from us. One thing led to another, and here we are now.”

The Brewers learned all aspects of their goat farming skills the old-fashioned way: by trial and error. The couple set up a commercial kitchen in which to make their goat milk products. Their 18 goats are milked in the adjacent barn with a modern milking machine. “We milk by hand the first couple of squirts which go into a strip cup. After that the goat is hooked up to the milking machine. When all the milking is finished, the milk is taken to the commercial kitchen to be strained,” Donna said. The goat milk is then heated to 145 degrees and left to ferment for a set period of time. It is then formed into a variety of cheeses. The farm has a small shop where the goat cheese, goat milk beauty products made by the couple’s daughter-in-law, and Marsden’s lobsters are sold.

When asked how the two manage such busy lives successfully, Donna said, “We have learned the fine art of compromise. We each bring different strengths to all of the things that we do. Yes, we are super busy, but we both love our family and our way of life. It’s the true life of native Mainers.”

The Brewers say that being diversified is increasingly crucial in the face of changes in the commercial fishing industry. “In our lifetime it has been a wild ride,” Marsden said. “From open access in all the fisheries it changed to limited access, controlled access, and no access in many of the fisheries. The lobster fishery has been a bright spot, thanks in large part to the MLA. In our area, it will be interesting to see what effect the removal of the dams on the Penobscot River will have on the salmon and the lobsters in that river. It will also affect the removal of the dams on the Penobscot River in the future looks bright for most of us so long as we remember that adaptability is the keynote to success.”
As the Gulf of Maine warms, great white sharks may become more frequent visitors. The sharks prey on the increasing population of seals found in New England. Photo, courtesy of Mass. Department of Fisheries.

As sightings increase, so does fear among beachgoers. The question remains: just how many great whites are in Maine waters?

To answer that question, Dr. James Sulikowski of the University of New England (UNE) has partnered with NOAA and the Atlantic White Shark Conservancy to tag and track great white sharks to better understand them and their presence in Maine waters. Sulikowski and Dr. Greg Skomal, senior scientist at the Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries, have installed tracking receivers in southern Maine waters. Every time one of 120 acoustically-tagged sharks swims past a receiver, Sulikowski and Skomal are notified. The project is ongoing and will provide much-needed information on these elusive predators.

White sharks are close to the limit of their biological range along the Maine coast. The Western Atlantic population is known to migrate as far north as Newfoundland in the winter and as far south as the Gulf of Mexico in the summer. As the Gulf of Maine continues to warm, the extent of the shark’s range is expanding, potentially bringing more into our coastal areas. It’s still unclear how climate change might be affecting great whites. The species is endothermic, meaning they can alter their body temperature and thrive in cooler or warmer waters. These sharks may be less influenced by warming ocean temperatures due to climate change might be affecting great whites. The species is endothermic, meaning they can alter their body temperature and thrive in cooler or warmer waters. White sharks are found around the globe and are the largest predatory shark on the planet. They can grow up to 20 feet, and weigh up to 4,000 pounds. Great white sharks are protected in the United States and have been since 1991. Since then the population has been on the rise.

The UNE tagging project has provided useful information about the presence of great white sharks in the Gulf of Maine, but Sulikowski believes that more data are needed to establish how many sharks may be taking up residence in Maine waters and for how long. White sharks are in Maine waters.

Abigail Haynes is a marine biology major and English minor at the University of New England. She works for Dr. James Sulikowski conducting research on the age and growth of stingrays and sharks.

Abigail Haynes is a marine biology major and English minor at the University of New England. She works for Dr. James Sulikowski conducting research on the age and growth of stingrays and sharks.
TO YOUR HEALTH: Winter is passing but frostbite is still dangerous

By Jeff Kiser, MD and Ann Backus, MS

The New England marine environment can be unforgiving, and even more so in the cold winter months. As with most outdoor activities, preventing an injury is always better than treating an incident after it has occurred.

Cold-related injuries can range across a wide spectrum, from the reversible to the life-threatening. All of us have probably forgotten our gloves at some point and experienced cold hands (frostnip) and were glad to return to a warm environment. However, if left unchecked more serious cold-related injuries such as frostbite can occur. Frostbite is a serious condition; it results from ice crystals forming inside our tissues and may lead to the loss of toes and fingers.

• Signs and symptoms of frostbite are numbness, tingling, or an itching sensation can occur in fingers or toes.

• Frostnip can start this way too but the fingers and toes remain pliable. If frostnip goes into frostbite, the fingers and toes may become stiff and unusable.

• The skin can turn white and may be swollen. Sometimes blisters can form as well. Be cautious of hypothermia which may be occurring at the same time.

• Shivering is an early sign of hypothermia, which is a drop in the body’s internal temperature to below normal.

Certain medical conditions put some individuals at more risk than others for developing frostbite:

• Diabetes can affect how one responds to the cold. A diabetic may not notice how cold his or her feet or hands are until it’s too late.

• Peripheral vascular disease, usually caused by long-term smoking, can also make one more likely to suffer cold-related injuries.

• Raynaud’s disease: If your hands seem to respond unusually quickly to temperature changes just how cold his or her feet or hands are until it’s too late.

• Raynaud’s can sometimes be associated with other medical conditions.

Both smoking tobacco and drinking alcohol can predispose one to cold-related injuries.

Hands and feet are most susceptible to cold-related injuries as they are the farthest away from the core of the body. But don’t forget about the nose and earlobes as well. Here are several tips to protect hands and feet:

What not to do:

• Do not make a layer too constricting. If a layer is too tight, circulation of blood can be cut off and the insulating layer will not trap heat properly.

• Do not grab cold metal with bare hands; this can cause immediate frostbite.

• Elevate the feet or hands to minimize swelling.

• Leave any blisters alone.

• Stay hydrated! Sometimes, especially in the cold, we forget to keep up with drinking water.

• If you think you may have frostbite, here is a list of what to do:

  • Make sure to use a hand moisturizer throughout the day or at the end of the day to keep hands in good shape and avoid cracking and dryness.

  • "Keep warm, keep moving, and keep dry" is a good motto to remember.

  • If you are working hard and sweating, make sure that you change these base layers as frequently as possible to remove the damp layer.

  • Stay hydrated! Sometimes, especially in the cold, we forget to keep up with drinking water.

  • Make sure to use a hand moisturizer throughout the day or at the end of the day to keep hands in good shape and avoid cracking and dryness.

  • If you think you may have frostbite, here is a list of what to do:

    • Seek medical attention. Frostbite can be very serious and should be attended to by a medical professional.

    • Remove any wet clothing and replace with dry clothing. Cover yourself with blankets if possible to raise your core temperature. Get out of the wind if possible.

    • Leave any blisters alone.

    • Elevate the feet or hands to minimize swelling.

What not to do:

• Do not grab cold metal with bare hands; this can cause immediate frostbite.

• Do not rub injured feet or hands because this can cause further injury.

• Do not smoke. Smoking will further decrease blood flow to an injured hand or foot.

• If there is a chance that re-freezing will occur, do not try to warm an injured body part. Seek medical attention first.

Since the 2014 approval, however, membership of the three-person Commission has changed. R. Bruce Williamson and Randall Davis were appointed to the PUC by Governor LePage in 2015 and 2017, respectively. Mark Vannoy, who voted against the Maine Aqua Ventus term sheet in 2014, has since become PUC chairman.

In requesting comments from the public on whether to reconsider the term sheet, the PUC stated that electricity prices have dropped since 2014 and that the agreement could be worth as much as five times the market price. In addition, by permitting the existing agreement and its yearly rate increases to stand, ratepayers would be subsidizing the project unduly, Tony Buxton, MAV legal counsel, said that while the MAV project will need some form of financial support from electricity customers, the cost would be limited to about 7.5 cents a month or less. The rest of the cost would be covered by private and public investors, including the U.S. Department of Energy.

The PUC sought comments on whether any developments since the 2014 term sheet warrant reconsideration of the project, including a decline in energy prices; technological advances in offshore wind technology; Maine’s renewable energy goals; the economic benefits of the project; and various project-specific circumstances that may have changed since the original approval.

When the PUC will come to a decision on the rate agreement with MAV is unclear. “There is no formal deadline in this matter. It is premature to address potential next steps until the Commission has had time to consider all of the comments,” Lanphere said in an email message.

Superior Blocks, for the LONG HAUL

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VIRTUALLY UNBREAKABLE
Made in-house from 3/8 S/S Plate, with our S/S Sheave (Alum or Ultra High-Molly upon request).

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Ann Backus is an instructor in Occupational Safety and Director of Outreach at the Harvard School of Public Health.
ACOUSTIC DATA MAY PROTECT WHALES FROM ENTANGLEMENT

Sound-based ocean monitoring methods could protect North Atlantic right whales from ship strikes and entanglements, according to Sean Todd, College of the Atlantic. Todd, a collaborator on a 10-year North Atlantic Right Whale study that drew on hundreds of acoustic-based, underwater monitoring devices, says the evidence shows that right whales are rapidly changing their migration habits and spending more time in unexpected areas along the East Coast and in Canadian waters. The study is the first completed that is large enough to show right whale movements over the entire eastern seaboard of the United States and Canada. Data were collected from 2004 through 2014, using 324 recording devices placed up and down the East Coast. These devices perform what is called passive acoustic monitoring, which uses audio recording to detect whale vocalizations. Those data can then be used to show right whale movements.

MULTI-YEAR LOBSTER STOCK ASSESSMENT UNDERWAY

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission is beginning preparations for the next American lobster benchmark assessment, which is expected to be completed around March 2020. The benchmark assessment of the region's lobster populations — which will include data on lobster landings, lobster growth and prevalent diseases among the population — could go a long way toward determining exactly what is happening to the region's American lobster stocks. The ASMFC will hold a lobster data workshop in May at the University of Rhode Island Graduate School of Oceanography in Narragansett. The workshop, set for May 14 to 17, will be open to the public.

MAINE EXPORTS TO ASIA GROW IN 2017

Two-thirds of the live lobster sold overseas by the U.S. last year ended up on plates in Asia, up 36% from the year before. The growth in the $231.9 million Asian market is welcomed by the Maine lobster industry, which accounts for 83% of the U.S. haul. The increase helps offset Maine losses in Europe, which with the U.S. exporting $128.7 million worth of live lobster there last year. That’s $44.3 million, or 53%, more than in 2016.

AMENDMENTS PROPOSED TO CANADIAN FISHERIES ACT

The Canadian Department of Fisheries and Oceans has been battling fisheries’ controlling agreements, which it says are an effort by companies and fishermen to get around those policies. The newly announced proposals would enshrine “the social, economic and cultural factors” of fishing and promote independent license holders.

CANADA MOVING FORWARD WITH WHALE REGULATIONS

The Canadian Department of Fisheries announced that it will implement new fisheries measures in 2018 to protect endangered right whales. Measures in the Gulf of St. Lawrence snow crab fishery include limiting floating line at the surface, requiring sinking groundlines, allowing a maximum of two fathoms of rope between surface buoys, requiring rope marking and mandatory reporting of the last location of lost gear. In February, Canada further announced mandatory reporting of fishery interactions with whales. The agency is also considering limiting the number of crab pots and dynamic area management closures if whales are present. The deaths of a dozen endangered right whales in the Gulf of St. Lawrence last year is the driving force behind the efforts which are targeted particularly at the snow crab fishery, whose gear has been implicated in some of the deaths.

MAINE SHIPBUILDERS AWARDED FERRY CONTRACT

East Boothbay shipbuilders Washburn & Doughty has been selected to build a new $8.8 million ferry for the Maine State Ferry Service. The company was one of five bidders — and the only Maine shipbuilder — who submitted a proposal to the Department of Transportation. The new 154-foot passenger-vehicle ferry is designed to be able to serve the island communities of Vinalhaven, North Haven, Islesboro, Swans Island, and Frenchboro (not Matinicus). It will have three main deck lanes, suitable for 23 cars or a mix of cars and trucks, as well as 250 passengers. In 1992-1993, Washburn & Doughty built three ferries that are still in operation for the Maine State Ferry Service. Washburn & Doughty specializes in the construction of steel and aluminum commercial vessels. Founded by Bruce Doughty, Bruce Washburn and Carl Pianka, the yard began building fishing boats in 1977.

LOBSTER GETS ITS OWN EMOJI

The Unicode Consortium will roll out 157 new ideograms this summer, including bagel, cupcake, moon cake, mango, salt shaker, leafy green and lobster images. The image of the lobster, although warmly welcomed by Senator Angus King who petitioned for its inclusion, had a problem: four pairs of legs, rather than the five of a real, live lobster. Fortunately, the lobster image was later corrected.
March 1-3
Maine Fishermen’s Forum, Samoset Resort, Rockport.

March 2
MLA annual meeting, 9 a.m., Samoset Resort, Rockport. FMI: 967-4555.

March 7
BOEM Open House on oil and gas leasing in the Gulf of Maine, 3-7 p.m., Augusta Civic Center, Augusta. FMI: www.boem.gov/National-Program-Participate.

March 8
"Making Waves: Challenging the Status Quo in Maine’s Scallop Fishery" talk, 7-8 p.m., Gulf of Maine Research Institute, Portland. FMI: 228-1635.

March 9
Public Comments due for BOEM oil and gas leasing program. Submit comments online www.regulations.gov/docket?D=BOEM-2017-0074

March 11-13

March 12
Free MLA trip to Seafood Expo North America, pickups in Bangor, Augusta, Portland, Kennebunk. FMI: 967-4555.

March 13-16

March 14
Shellfish Advisory Council meeting, 10 a.m.-1 p.m., Ellsworth City Hall.

March 21-22

March 23-25

April 11
MLA Directors Meeting, Nautilus Restaurant, noon, Belfast. FMI 967-4555

April 17-19
New England Fishery Management Council meeting, Mystic, CT.

April 20
Maine Sea Grant Research Symposium, 1-5 p.m., University of Maine in Orono.

April 30-May 4

April 30-May 3
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission spring meeting, Arlington, VA

UPDATE ON THE LIFE JACKET SUITABILITY PROJECT

By Julie Sorensen, Rebecca Weil, Jessica Echard and the life jacket team

This has been a very busy and exciting year for the Northeast Center for Occupational Health and Safety life jacket/PFD project with commercial lobstermen in Maine and Massachusetts. An overview of the project so far:

- 181 lobstermen from Maine and Massachusetts agreed to trial life jackets while working, and to provide feedback on comfort and workability.
- Life jackets in the study were a diverse range of styles and types, from buoyancy aids to offshore life jackets. Lobstermen chose nine different models to be tested.
- Participation in the study has been extraordinary, with a recruitment rate of 90.5% and a study completion rate of 88.4%.
- An additional 262 lobstermen participated in a telephone survey, and 205 (77.5%) indicated that yes, they would like new types of life jackets.
- 530 lobstermen have shared their challenges and solutions to wearing life jackets since the project began.
- Manufacturers have received design feedback and have indicated they are already changing designs and creating new design plans to respond to the needs identified.

Lobstermen have indicated that a life jacket should be: comfortable, flat/not bulky, with no straps or buckles to snag, easy to clean, easy to use, bright in color, and for many, integrated into something already worn.

We anticipated that one or two life jacket designs would be considerably more popular and address most of the barriers to regular use. Instead, we found that personal choice featured strongly in the results. While the ratings of all nine life jackets were generally favorable, what is clearly most important is finding what you can, and will, wear comfortably while working. The best life jacket is a life jacket that you will wear consistently.

Over this coming year, we will be sharing information with lobstermen about life jackets and survival systems and increasing access to a range of life jackets at special events and dockside.

We hope this project will ultimately increase your ability to find something that you are comfortable wearing while working, and thus increase your chances of survival at sea.
The Department of Commerce released its *Fisheries of the United States 2016* (FUS) report late last year. Maine lobster was the top species in the nation based on value that year, but did not make the top ten species for the volume of product landed. Stonington, a town with only 1,150 people, ranked 11th with $68 million in landings; Vinalhaven ranked 23rd at $42 million, and Beals ranked 45 at $23 million.

<table>
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<th>Rank</th>
<th>Town</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Population</th>
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<td>Stonington</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Vinalhaven</td>
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<td>$23 million</td>
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Maine’s small ports did well compared to others across the nation, with four communities ranked among the top 50 U.S. ports based on value of species landed.

### Top US Seafood by Value 2016

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Species</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Lobster</td>
<td>$722,615,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Crab</td>
<td>$704,288,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Scallops</td>
<td>$488,051,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Shrimp</td>
<td>$483,430,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Pollock</td>
<td>$423,575,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Salmon</td>
<td>$420,233,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Flounder</td>
<td>$268,399,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Clams</td>
<td>$234,856,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Oysters</td>
<td>$217,170,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Cod</td>
<td>$177,540,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Top US Seafood Landings 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Species</th>
<th>Pounds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Pollock</td>
<td>3,360,760,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Menhaden</td>
<td>1,727,502,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Cod</td>
<td>711,791,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Flounder</td>
<td>590,613,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Hakes</td>
<td>576,086,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Salmon</td>
<td>561,036,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Crabs</td>
<td>317,348,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Shrimp</td>
<td>270,787,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Sea Herring</td>
<td>191,350,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Rockfishes</td>
<td>165,039,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The FUS report tracks total U.S. lobster landings and exports. In 2016, Canada continued to be the top destination for U.S. lobster, purchasing 45% (70.7 million lbs.), followed by Asia at 14% (22.9 million lbs.) and Europe at 12% (19.7 million lbs.). China accounted for most of the lobster shipped to Asia, purchasing 17 million pounds while South Korea purchased 2.7 million pounds. Though figures are not provided for the U.S. market, total landings minus exports provide a proxy of the U.S. market, estimated at 23% of landings (36.2 million lbs.)

The FUS report also tracks plants and employment by state. In 2016, Maine had 37 processing plants employing 837 people and 180 wholesale plants employing 1,339 people.