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Landings, vol. 30, no. 4

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Repository Citation

Maine Lobstermen's Community Alliance; Waterman, Melissa; McCarron, Patrice; and Keliher, Pat, "Landings, vol. 30, no. 4" (2022). *Landings: News & Views from Maine's Lobstering Community*. 108. <https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/landings/108>

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LANDINGS

News & Views from Maine's Lobstering Community

April 2022 | Vol. 30, No. 4

THE LOBSTER FISHERY AND MAINE ARE INEXTRICABLY LINKED

By Melissa Waterman

How important is the lobster fishery to the Maine coast? What will be the economic impact of a reduction in the harvest due to regulations or a changing Gulf of Maine? How is lobstering integrated into the state's identity? We complete our series focusing on the economic and cultural significance of the fishery.

\$1,000,000,000. One billion dollars. That is the amount of money generated each year by the Maine lobster fishery supply chain, according to a 2018 study by Colby College economics professor Michael Donihue. The figure comes from the many ancillary businesses and services associated with the state fishery, everything from wages paid to employees to equipment and services required by seafood processors and wharf owners. "Maine's iconic lobster industry is arguably the most visible, and perhaps the most economically important asset for the State," the study stated.

Staggering as that figure may seem, it just begins to touch upon the real value of the fishery to the state as a whole. Lobster is not simply a much-desired seafood. In reality, lobster infuses myriad sectors of Maine's economy, from real estate and hospitality businesses to trucking firms and Mom-and-Pop restaurants. And yet it is more than a simple economic driver of the state's economy. If the lobster fishery vanished from Maine, an inexpressible element of the state's identity would disappear as well.

"There is no doubt that the lobster industry in Maine is among the most — if not the most — important in the state in terms of economic impact and cultural identity," according to the Colby study.

Continued on page 10



Not only an economic powerhouse, the Maine lobster fishery is something more: an indelible part of Maine's identity and a draw for visitors from around the world.
Little Cranberry Lobster photo.



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MIDWATER HERRING TRAWLERS WIN COURT CASE

By Kirk Moore, first published in National Fisherman.
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A federal court ruling could reopen some Northeast waters to mid-water herring trawlers, after a 2019 rule change that shut them out of a broad swath of the nearshore Atlantic from Long Island to the Canadian border.

U.S. District Court Judge Leo Sorokin in Boston ruled March 4 in favor of a lawsuit brought by the Sustainable Fisheries Coalition, a trade group representing companies that fish for herring and mackerel. In November 2019 NMFS approved a measure from the New England Fishery Management Council to create an exclusion zone for mid-water trawling 12 miles offshore — with a bump out to 20 miles east of Cape Cod.

It was a culmination of two decades of debate over the impact of mid-water trawling, and complaints from other fishermen that it caused "localized depletion" of forage fish, disrupting ecosystems and their seasonal access to groundfish, tuna and other species.

"The council recommended the midwater trawl restricted area to mitigate potential negative socioeconomic impacts on other user groups resulting from short duration, high-volume herring removals by midwater trawl vessels," NMFS Northeast regional administrator Michael Pentony wrote in 2019 in a decision letter approving the New England council's proposal.

But in his opinion Judge Sorokin wrote that the "localized depletion" concept has not been adequately defined by the agency. That led him to decide the exclusion zone decision violated National

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COASTAL OUTLOOK *Thoughts from MLCA President Patrice McCarron*

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Landings is published monthly.

It is provided for *free* to all Maine lobstermen thanks to the support of newspaper sponsors. This month's edition is sponsored by Cranberry Isles Fishermen's Cooperative, Stonington Lobster Cooperative, and Swans Island Fishermen's Cooperative.

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April is a busy month. The hints of coming warmth prompt a surge of activity along the waterfront. Boats emerge from yards with new engines and bright bottom paint. Traps have been overhauled and gear is ready to go. Of course, there's always the possibility of a late season snowstorm or an easterly gale but even those don't dampen anticipation for the start of another fishing season.

That anticipation is tempered this year by the set of new rules imposed by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) in its flawed effort to protect the North Atlantic right whale population. *Landings* once again features a four-page guide for Maine lobstermen to navigate the bewildering new measures that lobstermen must follow by May 1.

Landings continues its series on the importance of the lobster fishery to the state with a broad look at the fishery's status as an economic driver and also as a symbol of Maine. In 2021 the value of the fishery was approximately \$725 million. Because each lobsterman is an independent small business, those dollars reverberate throughout the state in the form of local purchases, property taxes, and myriad other economic transactions. But the fishery has another aspect, one which has a broader appeal far from Maine's borders. Erase the fishery and an intangible part of Maine's character would be erased as well.

In his guest column this month, Jeff Bennett from the Maine International Trade Center points out just how valuable Maine's lobster fishery has become. Lobster leads among Maine's seafood exports, comprising 80% of the state's \$635 million in seafood exports. Even more significantly, seafood exports top all Maine's exports, far surpassing the \$366 million export value of aircraft, spacecraft, and parts thereof, the state's second highest value commodity in 2021.

Dana Connors, president of the Maine State Chamber of Commerce, also refers to the lobster industry's importance in his column this month. Noting "there is no denying the lobster industry's importance to our state's communities, heritage, and economy," Connors emphasizes the need for state and federal officials to recognize the lobster industry's standing as well, particularly when it comes to offshore wind energy development and right whale regulations. "The Maine State Chamber ... stands ready to step up to support the Maine Lobstermen's Association work when and where we can to help protect and preserve Maine's lobster industry," Connors concludes.

Which vessels catch herring, a prized bait for lobstermen, may change in future months as a result of a recent court ruling. A rule promulgated by the New England Fishery Management Council and adopted by the National Marine

Fisheries Service in 2019 prohibited mid-water trawlers from fishing for herring in nearshore areas from Long Island to the Canadian border. The restricted area runs out to 12 miles along most of the coast; it extends 20 miles to sea off Cape Cod. In its lawsuit, the Sustainable Fisheries Coalition argued the New England council's science advisors could not identify adverse impacts from mid-water trawling. Boston District Court Judge Leo Sorokin agreed.

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) is considering two changes to its lobster management plan this spring. Draft Addendum 29 would require electronic tracking for federally-permitted vessels in the lobster and Jonah crab fisheries. According to ASMFC, collecting high resolution spatial and temporal data would improve stock assessment and help identify areas where lobster fishing effort might present a risk to endangered North Atlantic right

whales. Draft Addendum 27 focuses on standardizing measures across all the federal Lobster Management Areas (LMAs) to improve the health of the lobster stock. The aim is to increase the resiliency of the lobster fishery by protecting the spawning stock in the face of a changing marine environment and additional regulations related the right whales.

Commissioner Keliher notes in his update on ASMFC's impending management actions, "the protections that the industry has always supported have served the resource well. But as we look to the future, we want to ensure that the lobster stock remains strong, even as environmental conditions may change. It's why we've been calling this the "resiliency" Addendum - to ensure that the stock is protected in ways that will allow future generations carry on this legacy."



May 1 is the date by which Maine lobstermen must make their gear compliant with the new whale regulations. MLA photo.

In our continuing series on lobstermen and health, Monique Coombs from the Maine Coastal Fishermen's Association writes about a new program that the MCFA and partners are introducing to lobstermen. FishAbility is working with Antonia Small, a yoga instructor in Port Clyde, to share exercises, movements, and yoga stretches that fishermen can do to treat and prevent injury. "The yoga movements and exercises can be easily practiced on the boat, in the trap shop, or even using random gear in a dooryard," Coombs writes.

As spring moves into summer, the annual lobster boat races start up again, beginning in early June. Maine Lobster Boat Racing president Jon Johansen gives us a preview of the summer races, which promise to be full of fast boats and fun.

We hope you enjoy this issue and look forward to your suggestions for future issues.

Patrice

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GUEST COLUMN: *Collision course? ASMFC draft Addendum 27 and the TRT*

By Pat Keliher

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) is moving forward with a new Addendum intended to support the resiliency of the Gulf of Maine/ Georges Bank (GOM/GBK) lobster stock.

As discussed in past industry meetings, the one thing we all agree on is that at some point in the future stock abundance levels will change. The question has always been, how should we react to a declining stock?

In 2017, when this talk about resiliency began, we were thinking about what to do in the future. Then ASMFC had to turn its attention to whales, so Addendum conversations were put on hold for a few years. However, following the 2020 stock assessment, which continued to show signs of reduced settlement in the GOM/GBK stock, the ASMFC Lobster Management Board reinitiated work on the Addendum with the understanding that now there is also evidence of declines in the ventless trap and trawl surveys, which further underscored the need to take action to protect this valuable resource.

Addendum XXVII (the “resiliency Addendum”) to the lobster fishery management plan is intended to protect the GOM/GBK lobster stock from future declines. The Addendum proposes several options to standardize management measures within and across Lobster Conservation Management Areas (LCMAs), including a trigger that, if reached, would automatically implement management actions such as changes to gauge and vent sizes to improve protection of the GOM/GBK spawning stock.

The Board voted to send the draft Addendum out for public comment, and I was successful in delaying these meetings to allow time for industry conversations ahead of any ASMFC public hearings. DMR is currently conducting Zone Council meetings to discuss the recent science underlying this Addendum.

I’m sure many of you are scratching your head, asking “why now?” when you’re facing unprecedented pressure from right whale regulations. It is an excellent question and one I will keep raising with the Lobster Management Board.

Lobstermen have always supported protection measures that have served the resource well. But as we look to the future, we want to ensure that the lobster stock remains strong, even as environmental conditions may change. It’s why we’ve been calling this the “resiliency” Addendum — to ensure that the stock is protected in ways that will allow future generations carry on this legacy.

Not that long ago, your forefathers within the fishery made sacrifices for the future; that is really what you’re being asked to consider now. Sure, it’s true your forefathers weren’t facing unprecedented pressures from the federal government and the environmental organizations, but in the end this Addendum is similarly about the future health of the lobster stock that can’t be ignored.

What we learned just recently is that work on this Addendum is now overlapping with the work that NOAA is planning for the Take Reduction Team (TRT) at their upcoming May meeting. At that meeting the TRT will begin deliberations to bring the lobster fishery up to a 90% risk reduction goal. What this means is not entirely clear – it could be a major shift in the 10-year timeline that is spelled out in the 2021 Biological Opinion. It has us asking more questions about the viability of such a timeline when they have yet to evaluate the effectiveness of the current rule.

There will be much more to come on this as we learn what NOAA’s plans are, but it is certain that the Addendum will continue to move ahead while these questions are being answered.

I’ve made it clear that the Management Board should closely monitor the effects of the federal whale regulations on fishing effort and the lobster stock and, if necessary, make appropriate adjustments to the fishery management plan. This gets back to the “why now?” question. There is a lot in play right now and the “why now?” question might be better asked as “what’s next?”

We know expanded federal whale rules could include effort reductions. If whale rules benefit the lobster stock and help with resiliency then this MUST be taken into account by the Lobster Board. I know that I can’t ignore the signs of a declining stock, but I also know I can’t ignore that other factors are at play. The Lobster Board must have an understanding of the entire playing field.

Obviously, there is a lot for us to talk about and think through together. It’s been a long couple of years, and I look forward in the coming months to finally getting a chance to have these conversations in person.



Patrick Keliher is the Commissioner of the Department of Marine Resources. DMR photo.

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MAINE LOBSTER TOP SEAFOOD EXPORT FOR 8TH YEAR

*By Jeff Bennett, Senior Trade Specialist and Canada Desk Director,
Maine International Trade Center*

Maine seafood topped the state's exports in 2021. After two challenging years, seafood's \$653 million export value was a 68% increase over the previous year. For the eighth straight year seafood was the state's leading export commodity. Not only did seafood exports rebound, but they also set an all-time record for export value. The previous high value mark was in 2016, when seafood exports reached \$565 million.

For perspective, Maine exported \$366 million in aircraft, spacecraft, and parts thereof, which was the second highest value commodity in 2021. Third on the list was electronic machinery, valued at \$307 million.

Seafood exports were heavily driven by lobster products, with most lobster exports being live lobsters. Lobster products accounted for nearly 80% (\$517 million) of Maine's \$653 million in seafood exports.

Maine's top international markets were Canada, China, Italy, Hong Kong, Spain, and South Korea. Lobsters were exported to 30 countries including Israel, Vietnam, Bahrain, and Costa Rica, highlighting the global demand for Maine lobster.

Demand for Maine lobster in Europe, historically a strong market, remained high in 2021. A slow return to some form of normalcy following two years of economic impacts from the pandemic coupled with the European Union's (E.U.) elimination of the duty on live and frozen U.S. lobster drove increased exports to Italy, Spain, France and most other E.U. countries.

Maine lobster exports to China and other Asian countries, while improving from the levels after the tariff retaliations of 2018, were short of 2020 export numbers. Several factors contributed to this, most notably China not living up to its commitments to purchase U.S. seafood under the 2020 trade agreement between the two sides.

The U.S. China Economic and Trade Agreement, also known as the "Phase One Deal," was signed in early 2020 and bound China to an additional \$200 billion of purchases of certain U.S. commodities, including seafood, above 2017 baseline numbers.

The Middle East market, relatively small in comparison to the E.U. and Asia, continues to see rising demand for Maine lobster. Qatar, Israel, Bahrain, and the United Arab Emirates were the principal export markets for Maine lobsters in 2021.

As the world slowly continues to recover from the pandemic's economic impacts, demand for Maine lobster should remain high in 2022.

And a very hopeful sign was the return of the Seafood Expo North America trade event in March. After three years away, buyers, suppliers, and the seafood industry were back together to reconnect and conduct business face-to-face.



Maine's seafood companies had the chance to meet customers face-to-face again at the Seafood Northeast Expo in Boston in March, the first time in two years the event has been held. MITC photo.

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GUEST COLUMN: *Lobstering is the cornerstone of Maine's economy*

By Dana Connors

In recent months, the Maine State Chamber of Commerce was pleased to connect with the Maine Lobstermen's Association (MLA). Lobstering is one of Maine's most recognized industries. Its roots and heritage run deep in Maine families and communities. The direct economic impact of Maine's lobster industry is significant. Considering the ripple effect of each dollar earned by lobstermen, it is exponentially greater. In the rest of the country, lobster as a brand has played a major role in putting Maine on the map. There is no question lobster is one of Maine's biggest and most defining tourism attractions, and there is no denying the lobster industry's importance to our state's communities, heritage, and economy. The industry's survival is critical.

It was especially important to the Maine State Chamber to make the connection with MLA at this challenging juncture as the industry faces two major threats to its future and, in fact, its very existence: offshore wind development and federal regulations that seek to protect North Atlantic right whales.

I greatly appreciate our recent conversations with MLA staff and the clearer understanding they have provided regarding these threats. I also appreciate the opportunity they have offered in terms of weighing what Maine can and must do to protect and preserve this industry that is so important to our state.

Regarding offshore wind energy development, while the Maine State Chamber supports Maine's renewable energy and climate action goals, learning about the deep implications such development has for the lobster fishery has been eye-opening. The MLA's voice must be a part of the offshore wind conversation. So must be the entire fishing industry's perspectives, questions, and concerns as Maine advances its strategic roadmap for offshore wind. I am hopeful that our state can find a solution that allows for offshore wind development but does not do so at the expense of the fishing and lobstering industries — sectors our state cannot afford to hold back, harm, or lose.

Recent federal regulations that seek to protect North Atlantic right whales are another example where inclusive conversations must take place ahead of policy decisions and strategies. These federal regulations are absolutely the wrong

answer to protect whales. They defy common sense in that they would not save whales but would hurt the lobster industry. Logic, science, and the facts are unquestionably on the side of the lobster industry on this issue, as are Maine's state and federal government leaders. Furthermore, it is well-recognized that lobstermen have an embedded tradition of going out of their way to make their portion of the ocean safer for whales as part of their dedication to the health of Maine's fisheries.

The bottom line is that when all stakeholders are at the table, and we listen to one another and are heard and understood, better decisions are made that can accomplish the important goals we are setting out to

achieve. We must prioritize these conversations and deepen our understandings in every stage as policies are proposed, developed, and advanced.

Doing so benefits all policy making, and in the lobster industry's case today, can preserve an important, iconic, and heritage economic sector in our state and the thousands of small businesses, families, communities, and workers it supports.

The seriousness of the challenges facing Maine lobstermen cannot be overstated. Not enough is being said about the industry's ripple effect, or about the cornerstone lobstering is to Maine's economy. The

value of the lobster industry to Maine is immeasurable.

The Maine State Chamber appreciates the open dialogue and the open door initiated by the Maine Lobstermen's Association and their unwavering commitment to their members. We know we can find solutions to any challenge by listening, following the facts, engaging with one another, and working together. The Maine State Chamber is committed to continuing this important conversation and stands ready to step up to support the Maine Lobstermen's Association work when and where we can to help protect and preserve Maine's lobster industry. Too much is at stake for us not to work together on these issues and others that are certain to come.



Dana Connors is the president of the Maine State Chamber of Commerce.

These federal regulations are absolutely the wrong answer to protect whales. They defy common sense in that they would not save whales but would hurt the lobster industry.



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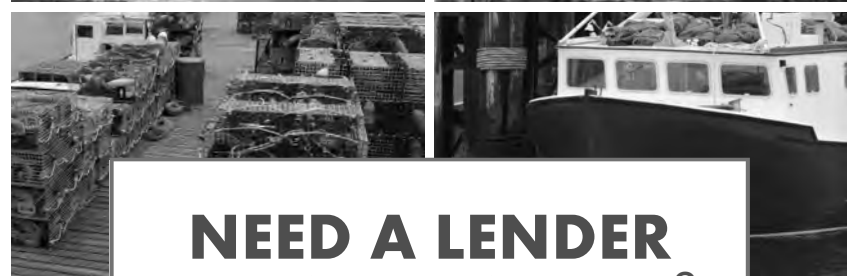
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GET READY FOR THE 2022 LOBSTER BOAT RACES!

By Jon Johansen

The days are finally getting longer and the temperature is rising, albeit not very significantly yet. With spring comes the anticipation of summer and for many on the coast of Maine that means getting ready for the lobster boat racing season. Rumors have been circulating around the coast all winter about the 2022 season, which looks like it could be another great one with several new boats and several others with new engines. This means the status quo could be shaken up a bit, which would be great.

At the annual meeting and banquet last fall there were no changes made to either the classes or rules for this season. Normally we would have had a get-together at the Maine Fisherman's Forum in early March, but that was cancelled in late fall when the pandemic numbers were rising. Even though no serious business is conducted at the Forum, we usually find out a little more about what has been transpiring over the winter.

All 11 venues (Boothbay, Rockland, Bass Harbor, Moosabec, Stonington, Friendship, Harpswell, Winter Harbor, Pemaquid, Long Island and Portland) are on the schedule right now. The only issue is when Mother Nature decides to send us some inclement weather, such as high winds and or fog.

The only rumbling I have heard from the race venues came from Harpswell, which was thinking about moving the races from Pott's Harbor to the old U. S. Navy tank farm. We raced there several years ago, but when the races were taken over by a new committee, they brought it back to Pott's Harbor. If there is a change, they will make sure the public is well informed.

So how might the status quo change this year? Numerous texts were going back and forth regarding who would be the top boat in the Gasoline Classes. The Engerts say they will have *Thunderbolt* [South Shore 30; 621 Chevrolet] ready; the boat has not raced since Portland in 2018. Shawn Alley and *Little Girl* [28' Calvin Beal Jr.; 466 Ford, Blower] has been the dominant boat for several years; he opted for a new engine with more power hoping to ensure that he stays the top boat.

One can bet they both could be well over 50 mph, but can they get over 60 and challenge Cameron Crawford's *Wild Wild West* [West 28; 1,050-hp Isotta], the top diesel boat? That will be the big question.

Three other gas boats could be a threat if they repower and find a lot more power than they had last year. Mark Davis with *Downeast Nightmare* [Mussel Ridge 28; 1,000-hp Chevrolet] did well last year and won Gasoline Class E, just beating out *Little Girl* in the points total. However, when they faced off against each other *Little Girl* had the edge in speed. Mark Freeman with *Foolish Pleasure* [30' Custom Riley Beal; 650-hp 455 Stroker] did well last year too, getting close to 50 mph. *Foolish Pleasure*, when owned by Galen Alley of Beals Island, set the speed record at 72 mph so we know if you put the power to her, she can go. Jeremy Saxton in *Voop* [Duffy 30; 502 Chevrolet] was also capable of easily going over 60 mph when her original owner raced her in the late 1980s. The rumor is that she has been repowered. All this could make for some interesting racing for the top spot in the gasoline classes.

Colyn Rich's *Wide Open* [26' Robert Rich; 350 Chevrolet], which competed in Class B, suffered a major engine issue two years ago and has not been out since. Last fall his main lobster boat developed an issue, which meant several weeks in Rich's Boat Yard at Tremont having repairs made, so she may be sitting out another year.

Doug Dodge had his new boat, a wooden 28-footer with hard chines, close to being ready last year, but complications kept her in the shop. However, Dodge said recently that she just needs her final coat of paint and she will be ready.

Lindsay Durkee's *Black Diamond* [Holland 32, 454 Chevrolet] has been the dominant boat in Gasoline Class C for several years. One can bet she will be back this year to continue the streak.

So, who is going to best Cameron Crawford's *Wild Wild West*? That has been the question for several years, but this year someone may turn out to be very competitive with her. Jeremy Beal's Maria's *Nightmare II* [Wayne Beal 32; 800-hp Nanni] will be repowered with a 1,300-hp Isotta. Glenn Crawford bought ten 1,300-hp Isottas and sold them all, hoping that someone would be competitive with *Wild Wild West* and give them a race.

There is another new boat coming that could get over the 60-mph mark. Alfred Osgood of Vinalhaven is getting a new Wayne Beal 36 with chines and over 1,000-hp engine. He could certainly be a threat to challenge for the top spot.

Audrey May [Holland 32; 425-hp Cummins], owned by Randy Durkee, went to every race last year and won Class E. He will probably be challenged Dan Sawyer's *High Voltage* [AJ-28; 400-hp Yanmar], which won the Class the previous year but only raced a couple of times last year.

We know that there will be a couple of new boats out this year in two other diesel classes. Winfred Alley, who has dominated Diesel Class F for several years with *Aiden Mariner* [Calvin Beal 34; 425-hp Cummins], and Dana Bea, whose *Right Stuff* [Libby 34; 500 hp Cummins] was the dominant boat in Class G, have both built new boats this winter.

One of the fan favorites is Heather Thompson's *Gold Digger* [Wayne Beal 36; 675-hp Scania], which has been the top boat in Class J. However, the rumor is that someone is coming out to challenge her for the Class title.

Diesel Class K has been fun to watch with three Northern Bay 38s with about the same power battling it out, Andrew Taylor's *Blue Eyed Girl* [Morgan Bay 38, 900-hp Scania]; David Myrick's *Janice Elaine* [Northern Bay 38; 815-hp FPT]; and Jeff Eaton's *La Bella Vita* [Northern Bay 38; 815-hp FPT].

Blue Eyed Girl was the boat to beat and topped out at over 50 mph, and neither of the other two boats were able to best her last year.

Another very competitive class has been M(B) between Matt Shepard's *Alexsa Rose* [Morgan Bay 43; 750-hp John Deere]; Eric Beal's *Kimberly Ann* [Calvin Beal 42; 750-hp FPT]; and Jason Chipman's *Miss Madelyn* [Osmond 42; 700-hp Scania].

These three boats are all about the same speed and it is anyone's guess who will be the winner this year.

Last year we had 645 entrants for the year, which was up from 379 the previous year when we only held six races due to the pandemic. In 2019, our best year, we had 823 entrants for the races. Last year we had rain and wind at several races; that easily accounted for the difference. So, if the weather is good the turnout will be too.

The real issue this year may all come down to economics. With the price of everything steadily climbing and an unknown price for lobsters, racers may be more cautious about how many events they attend.

Despite all these factors, the competitions will certainly draw huge crowds, as they always do. Most of the answers will come with the first two races of the year, in Boothbay and Rockland, so do not miss them!



The schedule looks full for this season's lobster boat races, when lobstermen and boats battle for bragging rights again. Photos courtesy of Maine Lobster Boat Racing Association.



2022 Lobster Boat Race Schedule



JUNE

- 18 Boothbay Harbor Boat Races
- 19 Rockland Boat Races
- 26 Bass Harbor Boat Races

JULY

- 2 Moosabec Reach Boat Races
- 10 Stonington Boat Races
- 17 Friendship Boat Races
- 24 Harpswell Boat Races

AUGUST

- 13 Winter Harbor Boat Races
- 14 Merritt Brackett Boat Races (Pemaquid)
- 20 Long Island Boat Races
- 21 Portland Boat Races

OCTOBER

- 15 Annual Meeting & Awards Banquet



MAINE LOBSTERMEN'S ASSOCIATION UPDATE

Maine Lobstermen's Association

...

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

President: Kristan Porter
Cutler, 460-0560
1st VP: Dustin Delano
Friendship, 542-7241
2nd VP: John Williams
Stonington, 367-2731
Treasurer: Jim Dow
Bass Harbor, 460-2565
Secretary: Chris Welch
Kennebunk, 205-2093

Directors

Bob Baines, Spruce Head, 596-9121
Joshua Beal, Milbridge, 479-9624
Sonny Beal, Beals Island, 356-1684
Laurin Brooks, Kennebunk, 468-2165
Herman Coombs, Orr's Island, 807-8596
Gerry Cushman, Port Clyde, 372-6429
Jamien Hallowell, S. Bristol, 380-7976
Robert Ingalls, Bucks Harbor, 271-7199
Mark Jones, Boothbay, 315-5977
Jason Joyce, Swan's Island, 526-4109
Jack Merrill, Islesford, 244-7884
Tad Miller, Matinicus, 372-6941
Troy Plummer, Boothbay, 350-7280
Craig Stewart, Long Island, 653-6914
John Tripp, Spruce Head, 691-9744
Thomas Werner, Cape Elizabeth, 807-1048

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STEAMING AHEAD

The May 1 deadline to implement the new whale rules is rapidly approaching, and there is much confusion and frustration as lobstermen try to figure out how to make their gear legal.

Despite being with MLA for more than 20 years, I continue to be amazed at the diversity of our fleet. With each phone call from a lobsterman seeking clarification on what needs to be done for specific gear, it becomes abundantly apparent that what works for one will likely not work for another. It seems every lobsterman has a different size boat and hauler, fish with different size ropes, rig traps differently and fish on different bottom. I give you all credit for putting so much effort into trying to figure out how to make these new rules work for your fishing operation.

The new rules also bring significant changes to how you are regulated depending on where you set gear. It used to be that if you fished gear in exempt waters, you only had to comply with the state regulations for whale safe gear (choosing either a break away link or sinking rope for your buoy or groundline). There was no sinking groundline mandate, no gear marking requirement and no trawling up requirement. Not any more. Under the new rules, gear set in exempt waters must now comply with gear marking and must have one weak insert halfway down the line.

Also under the new rules, things have changed for those fishing gear in the sliver and federal waters. The MLA provided a four-page Whale Rules Outreach Guide in the March issue of Landings and an updated copy in the center section of this paper. I really hope it helps you figure out what you are required to do by May 1.

Of all of the new whale rules, the greatest frustration has come from figuring out how to comply with the 1700-pound weak insert requirements. There has been confusion about what qualifies as a weak insert, how to attach weak inserts to your buoy line and where to purchase them. NMFS has retained full authority to prescribe what can be used for a 1700-pound weak insert and maintains an updated list on its website.

So far, there are a few manufactured weak ropes that can be used as well as plastic in-line weak inserts. The 1700-pound twisted purple "candy cane" rope became available in March. If you choose to use a three-foot section of this weak rope, NMFS recommends that you use a recommended splice to tie it into your line. That way the connection is stronger than 1700-pounds and the weak point will be that section of line.

NMFS has also approved three different plastic in-line weak links manufactured by Seaside, Plantes and Brooks Trap Mill. These companies have been working hard to bring in raw materials to manufacture the links and get them into stores, but due to shortages and manufacturing limitations, supply has not come close to keeping pace with demand. To make matters worse, Plantes had to recall the weak inserts that it had sold throughout Maine due to defects.

Lobstermen are rightfully frustrated by all of this. The Governor, the Maine delegation, Small Business Administration, and the MLA have all asked that the implementation date be pushed back to July 1. But NMFS has not budged on this despite that fact that the agency has provided limited options to comply with weak links, most of which are not readily available for purchase. And NMFS has refused to allow an obvious and easy solution – the use of knots to create a weak point in the line. Ironically, NMFS funded Maine DMR to conduct research on the use of specific knots to meet the weak rope requirement yet has refused to approve those which DMR determined consistently meet the requirements of a 1700-pound weak insert. To DMR's credit, in Maine's exempt waters the department is allowing a length of 5/16" rope with an overhand knot, or a 3-foot section of 5/16" rope inserted in the buoy line with either a fisherman's knot or sheet bend to meet the weak insert requirement.

To address some of the most recent "frequently asked questions" coming through the MLA office: the 600-pound breakaway link at the buoy is now optional and pocket wa-

ters are considered state waters under the whale rules.

As you painstakingly work through your gear to bring it into compliance with the new whale rules, please know that MLA is leading the fight to ensure future rounds of risk reductions under the guise of whale protections do not become the final chapter for the Maine lobster fishery. As exasperating as this round of new whale measures is, this is just the tip of the iceberg for what our industry is facing. This is the FIRST 60% risk reduction as we head down the road to a 98% risk reduction by 2030.

NMFS just informed us that our next round of risk reductions (scheduled for 2025) will move forward on an accelerated schedule and require steeper risk reductions. Instead of reducing risk by another 60% in the next round, we will be required to reduce our risk by an additional 75% to get us to a 90% risk reduction from our 2021 baseline risk. Under the current management framework, referred to as the 10-year whale plan, NMFS cannot permit the federal lobster fishery unless these risk reductions are met.

I firmly believe that if Maine lobstermen are forced to implement the full 98% risk reduction by 2030, we will not have a fishery.

That is why the MLA has sued NMFS in Washington D.C. District Court. MLA's case marks the first time the federal courts are hearing the lobster industry's side of the story. The MLA is helping the court understand how vital lobstering is to the state of Maine and our communities. Lobstering is irreplaceable and represents a precious way of life.

We are letting the courts know that Maine lobstermen have an excellent track record in protecting right whales and reducing entanglement risk. And we are making sure the court understands that recent science shows that right whales are moving further away from where we fish, and importantly, the majority of recent whale deaths can be attributed to vessel strikes and entanglement in Canada, or from U.S. vessel strikes.

I am not going to pretend that MLA has a magic wand we can wave to make this all go away. Going head-to-head with NMFS and environmental groups on the Endangered Species Act and Marine Mammal Protection Act is a heavy lift. . But I am confident that NMFS has not done its job properly and Maine lobstermen are being held accountable for right whale deaths and injuries that are not linked to our fishery.

Even as we fight this draconian mandate, Maine lobstermen must understand that you do have a role to play in helping right whales recover. With so few whales detected in the portion of the Gulf of Maine where we fish, and no documented entanglements in Maine gear in recent history, Maine lobstermen are tasked with helping to reduce harm to right whales from rope that cannot be traced to a country or fishery. I firmly believe that this is not accomplished by closing areas that do not have confirmed whale presence or by removing all rope from the water. This is best accomplished by making the rope and gear that we fish as safe as possible in the rare even that it is encountered by a right whale.

Never has the Maine lobster industry had so much at stake. Never has the MLA worked harder. One thing that has become crystal clear is that when you have a loaded gun pointed to your head, you quickly realize what is most important and laser focus your efforts there.

That is what the MLA is doing. I promise that the MLA will continue to be honest with you about the challenges we face. I promise we will not be sidetracked by those who seek to bully or discredit us. The MLA will continue to stand proud, represent you with professionalism and fight for what we believe in —the Maine lobster fishery.

Our heritage and our way of life are worth fighting for!

As always, stay safe on the water.

Patrice



MAINE LOBSTERMEN'S ASSOCIATION UPDATE

MLA DIRECTORS MEETING SUMMARY

The MLA Board met on March 2. DMR's Senior Lobster Biologist Kathleen Reardon presented information on the science behind the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's (ASMFC) Draft Addendum 27, which seeks to increase the resiliency of the Gulf of Maine/Georges Bank (GOM/GBK) lobster spawning stock biomass (SSB). ASMFC is proposing several potential management changes including increases to minimum and decreases to maximum gauge sizes and standardizing V-notch measures across lobster management areas.

MLA Board members stated that the lobster stock appears healthy and questioned the need for ASMFC to make changes to the lobster management plan, particularly as the industry faces significant challenges to meet the risk reduction goals of the 10-year Whale Plan.

Reardon explained that ASMFC has spent considerable time reviewing the data, and there is concern over the future status of the lobster stock. She reviewed the recent results of DMR's lobster monitoring programs; several indicators now show a downward trend in the lobster stock. Addendum 27 seeks to implement measures to maintain a high lobster biomass to support a continued healthy lobster fishery.

MLA Board members raised concerns about the equity of several proposed measures which place a higher burden on Area 1 lobstermen. They were also concerned about the impacts of the proposed measures on lobster catch and markets. Reardon explained that due to the scale of the Area 1 fishery, compared to Area 3 and Outer Cape, small changes in this area significantly benefit the lobster stock. Increasing the minimum size for lobster in Area 1 would delay a harvest, however, data on past gauge increases show that the average size of the catch increases in future years, thus increasing the value of the fishery. Decreasing the maximum catch size in Area 3 would allow larger female lobsters to carry more eggs resulting in a larger population overall.

Reardon will update lobstermen on the status of lobster science and the changes proposed in Addendum 27 through a series of zone councils meetings in March and April.

The MLA remains concerned over the ability of lobstermen to meet NMFS's May 1 deadline to implement new whale rules. NMFS has now approved a purple candy cane 1700-pound weak rope and three weak inserts (Seaside, Plantes, and Brooks Trap Mill), yet supplies remain extremely low. MLA requested that the implementation be delayed to July and worked with the Small Business Association's Office of Advocacy, which wrote a letter in support of the delay. To date, NMFS has indicated that a delay is not possible, and has yet to issue a determination on whether approved knots can be used as a weak point. DMR will allow the use of certain knots in 7/16" line in Maine's exempt waters.

Given the confusion over the new May 1 whale rule requirements, MLA published an four-page outreach guide in the March issue of *Landings*. The new whale rule includes new minimum traps per trawl requirements (outside exemption line), 1700-pound weak inserts, expanded gear marking in federal waters, and the LMA 1 seasonal closure from October to January. All of the existing whale rules remain in place, with the exception that the 600-pound breakaway at the buoy is now optional. DMR must adopt the new whale rules into state regulations. A public hearing was held March 15 and written comments were due March 28.

February was an extremely busy month for the MLA because of the whale lawsuits. In late February, the MLA filed its latest briefs in the *CBD vs Ross*, which threatens to shut down the lobster fishery, and in the *MLA vs NMFS* case, which asserts that NMFS failed to use the best scientific information available and failed to account for the positive impact of conservation measures already adopted by the Maine lobster fishery. Opponents are expected to file their responses to the MLA's briefs in April with further action as 2022 progresses.

SAVE MAINE LOBSTERMEN CAMPAIGN UPDATE

In late February, MLA filed its latest briefs in its lawsuit against NMFS and the U.S. Secretary of Commerce challenging the entire ten-year plan.

The MLA is arguing that the ten-year plan is unlawful because NMFS acted arbitrarily by, among other reasons, failing to rely on the best scientific information and inexplicably failing to account for the positive impact of conservation measures already adopted by the Maine lobster fishery. Particularly powerful is the declaration submitted by Dustin Delano, lifelong commercial lobsterman and vice president of the MLA. Delano illustrates exactly what's at stake here writing, "Lobstering is an amazing way of life that keeps our young people right here in Maine and contributes to our local and state economies. Lobstering is not just a job." In addition, MLA executive director Patrice McCarron filed a declaration summarizing the importance of the industry to Maine's economy.

These latest filings, along with a separate brief MLA filed in the *CBD vs NMFS* lawsuit that threatens to shut down the fishery, are just the next steps in what

is sure to be a very long, expensive, legal battle. Well-funded opponents will file their responses to MLA's briefs in April with further action as the year goes along. In the meantime, the MLA's legal bills need to be paid —we are not willing to surrender our livelihoods and our communities simply because we can't afford to pay the legal bills.

The fact that we're even able to be in this fight is because of your strong support for MLA's "Save Maine Lobstermen" Legal Defense Fund. Never in our 68-year history have the issues been this complex, nor have the stakes ever been so high. We are fighting for the very existence of Maine's lobstering heritage – and we remain grateful that you are in this fight with us.

Schedule for Whale-Lobster Industry Court Cases				
Action	<i>CBD v Ross</i>	<i>MLA v NMFS</i>	<i>MLU v Commerce</i>	<i>Appeal MLU case</i>
Complaint filed	Sept 2021 (amended)	Sept 2021	Sept 2021	Nov 2021
Administrative Record due	Jan 14	Jan 14	Feb 4	--
Request for Supplement to Administrative Record		Feb 22	Mar 21	
Plaintiff and intervenor Summary Judgement Brief	Dec 20, 2021	Feb 22	to be rescheduled once appeal is decided	Jan 18
Defendant and Intervenor Response Briefs	Feb 14	Apr 13		Feb 16
Plaintiff and intervenor reply	Mar 14	May 13		Feb 25
Defendant and intervenor reply	Apr 11	June 10		oral arguments
Joint appendix	Apr 25	June 24		--

\$17 MILLION IN FEDERAL RELIEF FOR LOBSTERMEN TO IMPLEMENT WHALE RULES

In mid-March, Maine's Congressional delegation announced that \$17,065,000 was included in the Fiscal Year 2022 federal Appropriations bill to support the Maine lobster industry. The funding package passed the House and the Senate and was directed to the President's desk to be signed into law.

This funding includes \$14 million to help the lobster industry to comply with the new whale regulations required under the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan. Another \$765,000 has been allocated to help the lobster industry plan for the future with a focus on engaging with stakeholders on how to preserve the industry as it copes with the mandates of NMFS's 10-year whale plan.

Sea Grant will receive \$2 million to support lobster and right whale-related research, monitoring, and conservation efforts, and \$300,000 is dedicated for studies to improve understanding of right whale migration patterns using a continuous plankton recorder survey to better track the movement of the right whales' primary food source. The bill also requires NOAA to complete an assessment and cumulative estimate of the economic losses sustained by the lobster industry stemming from the final rule.

PLANTE'S BUOY STICKS RECALLS 1700-POUND WEAK LINKS

On March 14, Plantes Buoy Sticks issued a recall of its 1700-pound weak link that was approved for use by NOAA Fisheries. The company did not specify the reason for the recall but asked suppliers to stop selling the product and for customers to return those that were purchased. More information on approved weak inserts and links can be found here: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/new-england-mid-atlantic/marine-mammal-protection/approved-weak-inserts-and-line-atlantic-large>.

DMR TO ADOPT FEDERAL WHALE RULES INTO STATE REGULATIONS

The DMR initiated rulemaking to comply with Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan federal regulations, including new minimum traps per trawl, gear marking, and 1700-pound weak inserts. To meet the federal implementation deadline, these changes would become effective May 1, 2022. Chapter 75 detailed all new federal whale regulations for the Maine lobster fishery.



MAINE LOBSTERMEN'S ASSOCIATION UPDATE

For Maine's exempt waters only, DMR provided additional options meet the 1700-pound weak insert requirement through the use of 7/16" rope with specified knots. For the purpose of the whale rules, pocket waters continue to be treated as state waters. Chapter 25 increases the zone B maximum trawl from three to five to remain compliant with new whale rules.

CANADA'S 2022 WHALE PROTECTION MEASURES

On March 10, Canada announced its 2022 measures to protect right whales from fishing gear entanglements and vessel collisions. Canada will once again implement seasonal and dynamic fishing area closures in the Gulf of Saint Lawrence, Bay of Fundy, and critical habitat areas where and when right whales are visually and acoustically detected. Fishery management measures will come into effect upon the opening of the snow crab fishery in Crab Fishing Area 12 (as early as April 1). The federal government will also work with Canadian fisheries to implement whale safe gear by 2023.

Transport Canada's vessel traffic management measures will include a speed restriction for all vessels over 13 meters throughout the Gulf of Saint Lawrence to better respond to right whale presence. Vessel traffic management measures will be in effect from April 20 to November 15, 2022. Depending on the severity of a violation, vessel owners could face fines of up to a maximum of \$250,000.

Once again in 2022 up to six aircraft will be used to support fishing and vessel traffic management measures, and right whale research. Six Slocum underwater gliders and at least eight Viking Buoys will provide acoustic information on the location of the whales in near real-time. Visual surveillance for the vessel traffic management measures is conducted all season by trained personnel on board aircraft and, for part of the season, by trained personnel on the ground, operating a Remotely Piloted Aircraft System (or drone).

2022 GULF OF ST LAWRENCE SNOW CRAB QUOTA INCREASE

Canadian officials announced that the snow crab stock in the southern Gulf of St. Lawrence is healthy and "showing signs of continued health" thanks to sustainable fishery management practices. The total allowable catch (TAC) for the snow crab fishery in the southern Gulf of St. Lawrence for 2022 will be increased to 32,519 tons, a 34% increase from 2021 (24,262 tons).

MORE RIGHT WHALE CALVES!

Right whales are having a successfully calving season. As March 18, 15 calves have been identified. After a historic low in 2018 when zero calves were born, right whale calving rates have been improving, with seven identified in 2019, 10 in 2020 and 20 in 2021. According to NMFS, 20 newborns in a calving season is considered a relatively productive year, though they estimate higher rates are needed for the population to recover. The right whale calving season runs through march. More information on the 2022 right whale calving season can be found here: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/endangered-species-conservation/north-atlantic-right-whale-calving-season-2022>.

FINAL VOTE ON VESSEL TRACKING FOR FEDERAL LOBSTER FLEET

The ASMFC Lobster Board will meet on March 31 to take final action on new electronic vessel tracking requirements through Addendum 29 to the Lobster Management Plan. The Lobster Board met in late February to consider public comments and voted to delay action to answer questions that had been raised about how the program would work in practice. The Board requested that staff work with the Plan Development Team, state managers, NOAA Fisheries, and ACCSP to provide additional details to the Board on standard operating procedures.

ASMFC ADDENDUM 27 TO PROTECT LOBSTER STOCK

The ASMFC's Draft Addendum 27 proposes measures to increase the resiliency of the Gulf of Maine and Georges Bank (GOM/GBK) lobster by protecting spawning stock biomass (SSB). There were two measures that ASMFC was considering including 1) measures to increase spawning stock biomass by modifying gauge size and 2) increase consistency of measures within and across Lobster Conservation Management Areas. Management measures under consideration include changes to minimum and maximum gauge sizes triggered by reduction in stock biomass or through scheduled changes. Options to create consistency across management measures include V-notches, gauges, and how traps are allocated in certain areas. Public hearings for Draft Addendum 27 are expected to occur in June 2022 with final action considered in August at the earliest. DMR will updating Maine's lobster zone councils during March and April on the science driving this proposed management change.

LOBSTER ZONE COUNCILS REVIEW DATA ON STATUS OF LOBSTER STOCK

DMR is holding in-person Lobster Zone Council meetings in late March and early April with an option to attend virtually. Zones E, G and C met in late March. Zones F met on April 1 and Zone B on April 11, Zone D on April 12, and Zone A on April 14. DMR will present updates from the 2021 lobster monitoring surveys and how these results support ASMFC's Draft Addendum 27. The lobster councils will also discuss zone-specific business. The DMR anticipates that additional meetings will be held to further discuss Draft Addendum 27, likely in early May.

130TH LEGISLATURE UPDATE (AS OF MARCH 21)

The second session of the 130th Legislature is nearing its end on April 30. The Marine Resources Committee has completed its work on bills related to the lobster industry, including strong support for two bills that seek to aid the lobster industry with the whale rules. *LD 1898* proposes to provide \$30 million in relief, funded from the state surplus, for Maine lobstermen to comply with new whale rules and *LD 1916* proposes to create a legal defense fund for the Maine lobster industry. However, both bills must be approved by the Appropriations Committee and ultimately by the House and Senate in order to be enacted.

The following bills were passed by the Legislature: *LD 1742 An Act To Ensure Compliance with the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for American Lobster* allows DMR to adopt rules to remain compliant with ASMFC's lobster management plan; and *LD 1759 An Act To Extend the Legal Hours for Harvesting Lobster in the Month of September (Emergency)* which changes the start time for lobstering to 4 a.m. in September.

LD 1908 An Act To Limit Eligibility for Commercial Menhaden Fishing Licenses received a majority vote in support from the Marine Resources Committee, however, it has not yet been voted on by the House or Senate. The amended bill would limit eligibility for menhaden fishing licenses. Beginning in 2023 menhaden licenses would be limited to individuals who to have held a license in any two of the past three years (2019-2021) and had landings of 25,000 lbs in any or those years, or in 2022.

OFFSHORE WIND DEVELOPMENT

The Maine Offshore Wind Roadmap Advisory Committee met on March 30 to continue reviewing draft recommendations from its four working groups. The Governor's Energy Office is creating a Roadmap "to develop an offshore wind industry that works for Maine's people, Maine's economy, and Maine's heritage." The recommendations can be viewed online at <https://www.maineoffshorewind.org/working-group-recommendations/>. There is a link to the recommendations from each group: Energy Markets and Strategies; Environment and Wildlife; Supply Chain, Workforce Development, Ports and Marine Transportation; and Fisheries.

The Energy Markets Working Group focused on initiating a floating offshore wind requirement and procurement process as well as policy designs to achieve cost-effective offshore wind deployment.

The Supply Chain, Workforce, Ports, and Marine Transportation Working Group recommends a clear state policy for offshore wind in Maine, better career exploration opportunities for K-12 and CTE students, and stronger port development assessment plans. The Fisheries Working Group's recommendations stress the need for proper baseline studies and monitoring and to ensure that offshore wind developers are held accountable for any consequences of developing the research array. The Environment and Wildlife Working Group recommend devoting resources to mapping existing data to identify the areas of greatest conflict between offshore wind development and wildlife that are currently in the Gulf of Maine.



MLA president Kristin Porter, left, and vice-president Dustin Delano, right, explain the need to raise \$10 million to fight the whale rules. MLA photo.

Lobster and Maine continued from page 1

Statistics tell the tale. According to the Maine Office of Tourism Visitor Tracking Reports, between May and August 2021, approximately 10,105,000 people visited the state. A survey of visitors showed that for 64 percent of them, food and culinary experiences were their top activities. Among that number, 42 percent said that they were here to eat lobster.

Between September and November 2021, that percentage was even higher. Seventy-eight percent of those visiting said food and culinary experiences were their top activities; of those, 52 percent said eating lobster was their primary aim.

For some, however, eating lobster, while important, pales in comparison to their pleasure in seeing lobster boats and lobstermen at work, at seeing a world in which each lobsterman is his or her own boss. Maine Office of Tourism data show that for many visitors, it is Maine's fishing communities that draw them to the coast, in part because activities in the small harbors are so unlike where the visitors call home and in part because it reflects a way of life uncommon in today's computer- and service-driven world.

University of Maine anthropologist Jim Acheson captured that allure long ago in his book *The Lobster Gangs of Maine*. "Fishermen tend to present themselves to tourists as men who earn their living from a relentless and icy sea with nothing but their skill, courage, and tenacity...the lobster fisherman embodies many of our most cherished virtues. He is, along with the farmer and the rancher, the quintessential American."

Atlantic Edge Lobster Company in Boothbay Harbor is an example of the lobster fishery's dual economic and cultural appeal.

Eddie Tibbetts and his wife Kathy ran the lobster wharf and business for 19 years before selling it to Nick and Kristin Page and Nick's brother Andy in 2021. Tibbetts had started out as a youngster working at Wotton's Wharf across the harbor, learning the ropes of the lobster business. He and Kathy had created a successful company buying and selling wholesale and retail lobsters. Nick and Andy's father Phil, a Boothbay lobsterman, sold to Tibbetts for 30 years.

When Eddie began to think of retiring, the two brothers started talking with him. It was important to Tibbetts that the business remain owned by a local person, someone who would continue what he had started. In January 2021, during a global pandemic, Atlantic Edge Lobster changed hands.

"We are open seven days a week, year-round," said Kristin Page. "We do wholesale and retail, plus shipping." The company sells live and cooked lobsters and a



Atlantic Edge Lobster and other family-owned businesses along the coast are economic drivers as well as magnets for Maine's million of coastal visitors. Boothbay Harbor Chamber of Commerce photo.

selection of picked lobster meat, shipped to customers throughout the country. "I'd say about 75% of our business is wholesale. In the summer we use all our product. In the fall and winter we sell to businesses in the Portland area," Page continued.

In the summer tourists stream into Boothbay Harbor. Many arrive at Atlantic Edge Lobster to gaze at the lobster boats, take pictures, and enjoy a steamed lobster, which Atlantic Edge employees prepare every afternoon at 4 p.m. "People really want to learn about lobstering. Yes, they ask silly questions but it's fun to show people the business," Page said.

And that business is certainly a family enterprise. Kristin runs the office, Nick and Andy and their father fish, and their mother and cousins help out as needed. "It's definitely a generational thing," Kristin laughed. "Everyone helps."

Continued on page 25

MAINE LOBSTER
THE SWEETEST ON EARTH

MARKETING UPDATES

Seafood Expo North America returned to Boston in March for the first time since 2019. While the show was somewhat smaller than normal, it still presented a good opportunity for MLMC to meet with dealers, buyers and other industry members at our booth.

The MLMC distributed copies of the Maine Lobster Buyer's Guide and the Maine Lobster Innovation Guide to interested buyers and participated in an educational seminar day for international buyers and in-country representatives put on by Food Export.

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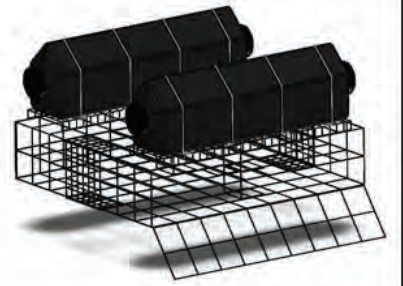
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2021 Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan Requirements

Maine Guide to Regulations for Lobster and Jonah Crab Trap/Pot Fisheries

This guide contains the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan regulations for lobster and Jonah crab trap/pot fisheries. If your principal port is in Maine, the following regulations apply to you, effective May 1, 2022.

	New Whale Rules (effective May 1, 2022)			Whale Rules Still in Place	
	Trawling Up	Weak Points	Gear Marking	Universal Gear Requirements	Sinking Groundlines and Other Measures
State waters Exempt	No changes	1 weak insert ½ way down the buoy line <u>Exempt waters only</u> May use 5/16" rope with knots per DMR regulations in addition to NMFS approved weak inserts	3 purple marks 36" purple mark w/in 2F buoy	No buoy line floating at the surface No wet storage of gear. Gear must be hauled at least every 30 days	Choose one: 1) sinking rope for buoy line or 2) sinking rope for groundline or 3) 600 pound breakaway at buoy Groundlines must be comprised of all sinking rope 600 pound breakaway below buoy is now OPTIONAL
State waters Sliver	See chart by zone Island exemption remains in place		12" purple mark at middle and bottom <u>Exempt waters <100 feet only</u> 2 marks required at top and bottom only		
Federal 3 to 6 miles	See chart by zone	<u>Zones A west, B, C & D</u>	4 purple & 4 green marks	Maintaining knot-free buoy lines is encouraged	Pocket waters are considered state waters for all whale regulations
Federal 6 to 12 miles	See chart by zone	2 weak inserts (1/4 and ½ way down buoy line) <u>Zones A east, F & G</u> 1 weak insert 1/3 down the buoy line	36" purple mark w/in 2F buoy 12" purple mark at top, middle and bottom 12" green mark within 6" of each purple mark		
Federal 12+ miles	25's/2 EL	1 weak insert 1/3 down the buoy line			

STATE OF MAINE

- Pocket waters are treated as state waters for all whale regulations
- Maine regulations, Chapter 75, detail all whale regulations for the Maine lobster fishery



GENERAL TRAP/POT REQUIREMENTS

- No buoy line floating at the surface.
- No wet storage of gear (all gear must be hauled out of the water at least once every 30 days).
- Maintain buoy lines as knot free as possible.

MAINE'S EXEMPT WATERS REQUIREMENTS

You must choose one of the following:

- Incorporate 600 pound breakaway link below the buoy, or
- All buoy lines must be made of sinking line, or
- All groundlines must be made of sinking line.



To see these regulations and updates on NMFS website, please scan the QR code with your phone's camera.

QUESTIONS?

For questions about Maine state regulations, contact Lobster.DMR@maine.gov.

For questions about federal regulations, contact:
 Marisa Trego, Take Reduction Team Coordinator: (978) 282-8484, marisa.trego@noaa.gov
 John Higgins, Northeast Fisheries Liaison: (207) 610-3282, john.higgins@noaa.gov
 Rob Martin, Northeast Gear Specialist: (617) 710-6322, robert.martin@noaa.gov
WWW.FISHERIES.NOAA.GOV/ALWTRP

This guide is a summary of the 2021 Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan's commercial Northeast lobster and Jonah trap/pot fishing regulations. Additional regulations apply, and can be found in the Northeast Trap/Pot Outreach Guide available on our website www.fisheries.noaa.gov/ALWTRP. Because regulations change, it is your responsibility as a fisherman to become familiar with the latest regulatory updates and to comply with the current official regulations. For Maine regulations, consult [www.maine.gov/dmr/laws-regulations/regulations/documents/dmrchapter75_04212020%20\(002\).pdf](http://www.maine.gov/dmr/laws-regulations/regulations/documents/dmrchapter75_04212020%20(002).pdf).

LOBSTER/JONAH CRAB GEAR MARKING FOR MAINE EFFECTIVE MAY 1, 2022

BUOY LINE MARKING

STATE WATERS (including Maine's exempt waters)

You must have at least 3 **PURPLE** marks.

- One of the marks must be a 3-foot long **SOLID PURPLE** mark within 2 fathoms of the buoy.
- The other two **PURPLE** marks must each be 12 inches long and placed in the top 50% and bottom 50% of the line.

Maine exempt waters exception: Vertical lines less than 100 ft in length may be marked with only two (2) purple marks: one 3-foot mark at the top of the buoy line and one 12 inch mark at the bottom of the buoy line."

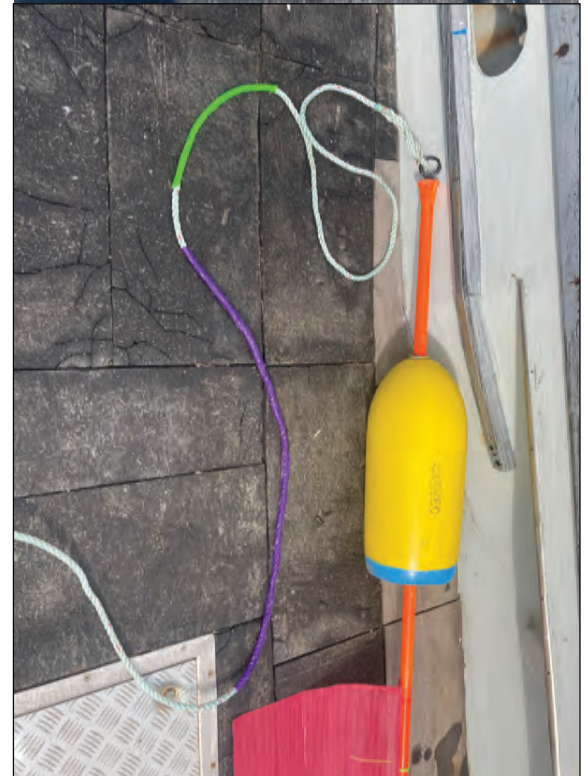
FEDERAL WATERS (Effective May 1, 2022)

You must have at least 4 sets (**PURPLE** and **GREEN**) of marks.

- One set must be a 3-foot long **SOLID PURPLE** mark in the top 2 fathoms of the buoy line along with one 12-inch **SOLID GREEN** mark within 6 inches of the **SOLID PURPLE** mark.
- The other three sets must one 12-inch **PURPLE** mark and one 12-inch **GREEN** mark within 6 inches of each other. The sets of **PURPLE** and **GREEN** marks must be spaced in the top, middle, and bottom of the buoy line.

The **solid 3-foot marks** may be applied with dye, paint, tape, heat-shrink tubing, insertion of a colored rope or braided sleeve. The **12-inch marks** below the surface system may be added using dye, paint, tape, heat-shrink tubing, zip ties; spliced in insertion of a colored rope or braided sleeve or other material, or a thin line may be woven into or through the line. Additional marking methods may be approved in writing by the Greater Atlantic Regional Administrator.

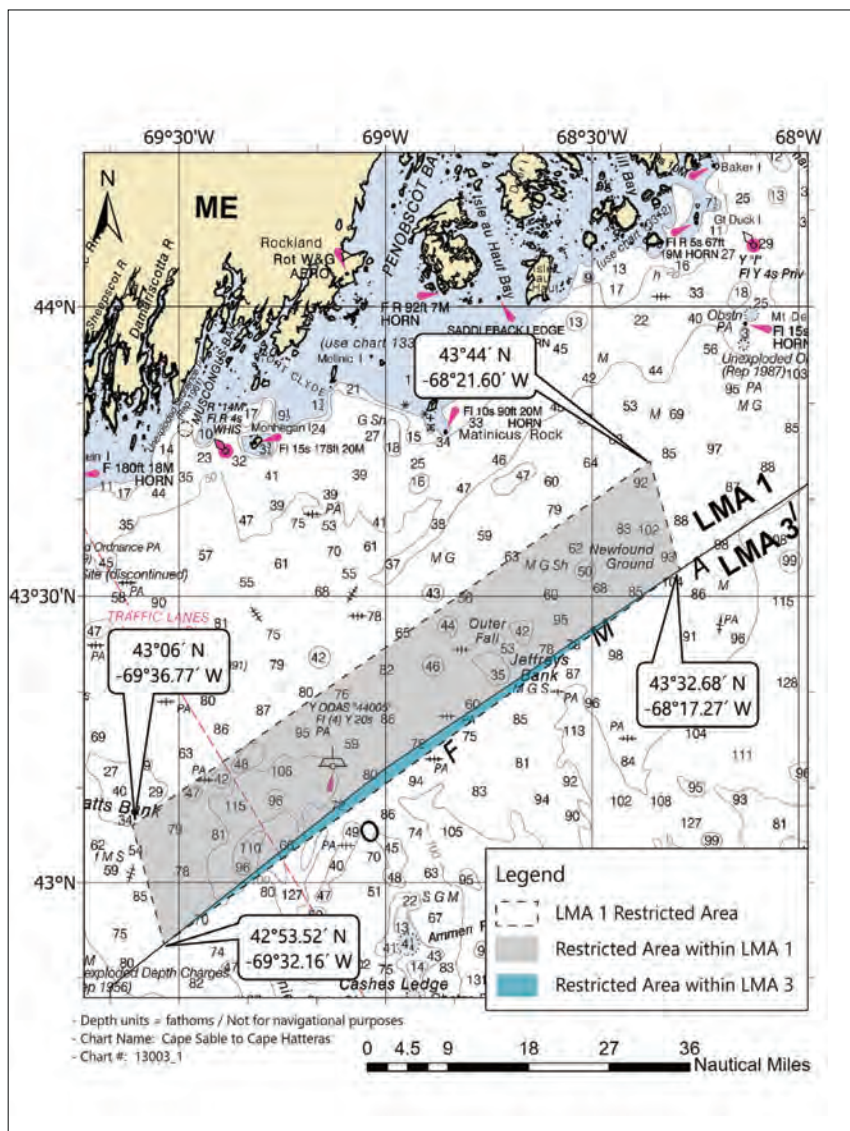
EXAMPLES OF FEDERAL BUOY LINE MARKING REQUIREMENTS



LOBSTER AND JONAH CRAB TRAP/POT CLOSURE AREAS FOR MAINE

LMA1 RESTRICTED AREA, OFFSHORE MAINE LMA1 ZONES C/D/E:

967-square-mile area closed to buoy lines October 1-January 31 annually.



Longitude	Latitude
-69° 36.77' W	43° 06.00' N
-68° 21.60' W	43° 44.00' N
-68° 17.27' W	43° 32.68' N
-69° 32.16' W	42° 53.52' N
-69° 36.77' W	43° 06.00' N

CHANGES TO CLOSURE AREAS

All whale closures restrict trap/pot fishing that uses persistent (traditional) buoy lines, except for federal waters in the Outer Cape Lobster Management Area, which remains closed consistent with the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) American lobster Interstate Fishery Management Plan. Gear that does not use persistent buoy lines, such as "ropeless" gear that retrieves trap/pot trawls when the vessel is on-site, is allowed in these areas for research purposes with appropriate state and federal permits.

EXEMPTED FISHING PERMITS

Exempted Fishing Permits (EFPs) are issued in support of fisheries-related research. Federally permitted lobstermen are required to obtain an EFP to participate in research on fishing without vertical lines. Fishing without the use of vertical lines also requires a special permit from Maine DMR. If you are interested in testing ropeless gear or have another idea for research related to reducing the use of persistent buoy lines, please contact your NOAA Fisheries regional office (978-281-9315 or nmfs.gar.researchpermit@noaa.gov) and Maine DMR (Lobster.DMR@maine.gov).

LOBSTER/JONAH CRAB 1700-POUND (WEAK) INSERTS AND LINE REQUIREMENTS EFFECTIVE MAY 1, 2022

1700-POUND WEAK INSERT REQUIREMENTS BY LOCATION

- **ME Exempt State Waters:** 1 weak insert 50% down the line or top 50% of buoy line weak rope.
- **ME Exempt Line–3 nm:** 1 weak insert 50% down the line OR top 50% of buoy line weak rope
- **ME Zone A West, B, C, D, E; Federal Waters 3–12 nm:** 2 weak inserts at 25% and 50% down the line OR top 50% of buoy line weak rope
- **ME Zone A East, F, and G; Federal Waters 3–12 nm:** 1 weak insert 33% down the line OR top 33% of buoy line line weak rope
- **Beyond 12 nm:** 1 weak insert 33% down the line OR top 33% of buoy line line weak rope

1700-POUND WEAK INSERTIONS OR LINE

For all state and all federal waters regulated under ALWTRP:

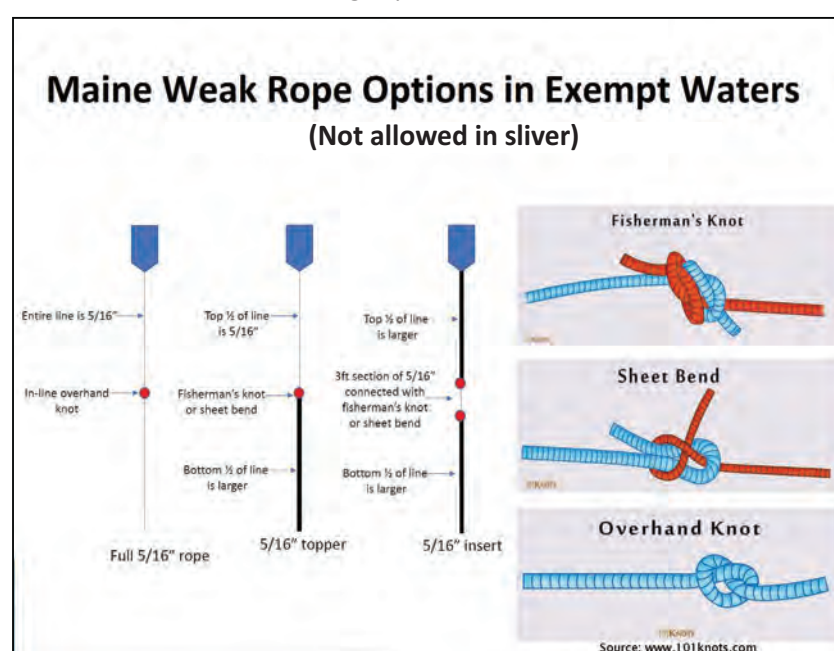
- Weak inserts and line must be chosen from the list of NMFS-approved gear. To see the most updated list of approved weak line and inserts, visit the [fisheries.noaa.gov/ALWTRP](https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/ALWTRP) web page.
- Weak inserts must be designed in such a way that the bitter end of the buoy line is clean and free of any knots when the weak insert breaks. They must be attached with a splice or tuck, and must be a contrasting color.
- Weak rope can also be used on any buoy line down to the lowest point where a weak insert is required. Use of 100 percent weak rope is also allowed in place of inserts.

MAINE'S EXEMPT WATERS ONLY

DMR has included three additional weak insert options for gear fished in exempt waters (these are cannot be fished in the sliver):

1. VL comprised of 5/16" line with overhand knot in center,
2. top half VL comprised 5/16" line attached to bottom with sheet bend or fisherman's knot, or
3. 3-foot long section of 5/16" line attached on either side with sheet bend or fisherman's knot.

*these are considered strong rope with a weak connection



NMFS-APPROVED WEAK INSERTS AND ROPES

INSERTIONS WITH WEAK ROPE



These must be connected with splice or tuck; knots are not allowed
These are considered weak ropes with a strong connection

APPROVED MANUFACTURED WEAK ROPE

Rocky Mount

Red (3/8" diameter, 1,438 lbs)
Candy Cane (3/8" diameter, 1,568 & 1,752 lbs)
Purple [on right] (3/8" diameter, 1752 lbs)

Neocorp

3/8" diameter polyester (1021) (1,530 lbs)

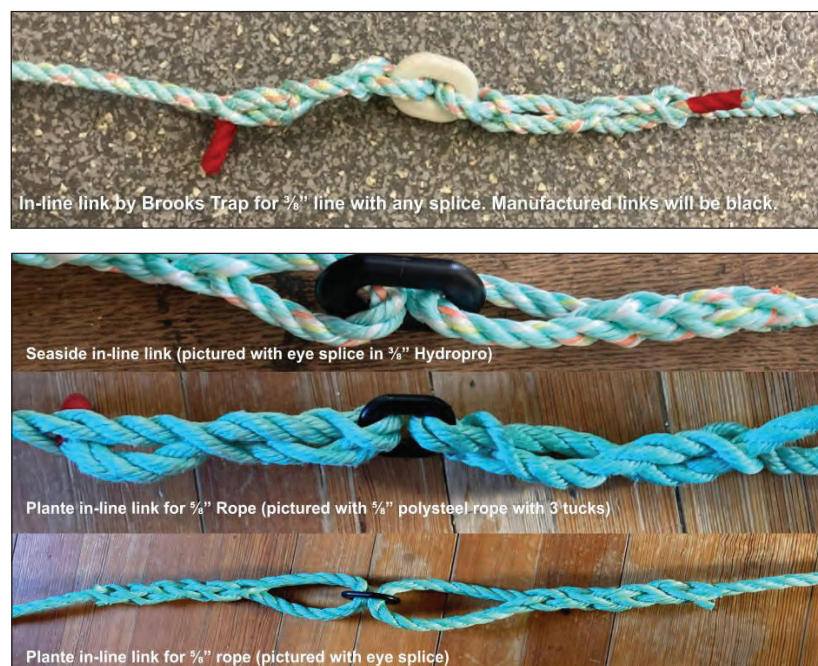
Seaway

5/16" diameter #10 braid (1,229 lbs)



NOTE: All weak inserts must be at least 3 feet in length and contrasting color. Twisted rope must be attached with a splice or tuck; braided rope may be attached with a knot.

WEAK LINKS



These must be connected with splice or tuck; knots are not allowed

Check [WWW.FISHERIES.NOAA.GOV/ALWTRP](https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/ALWTRP) for more approved weak inserts and rigging methods.

OTHER INSERTIONS (can be used with any rope)



This red sleeve is manufactured by Novabraid.

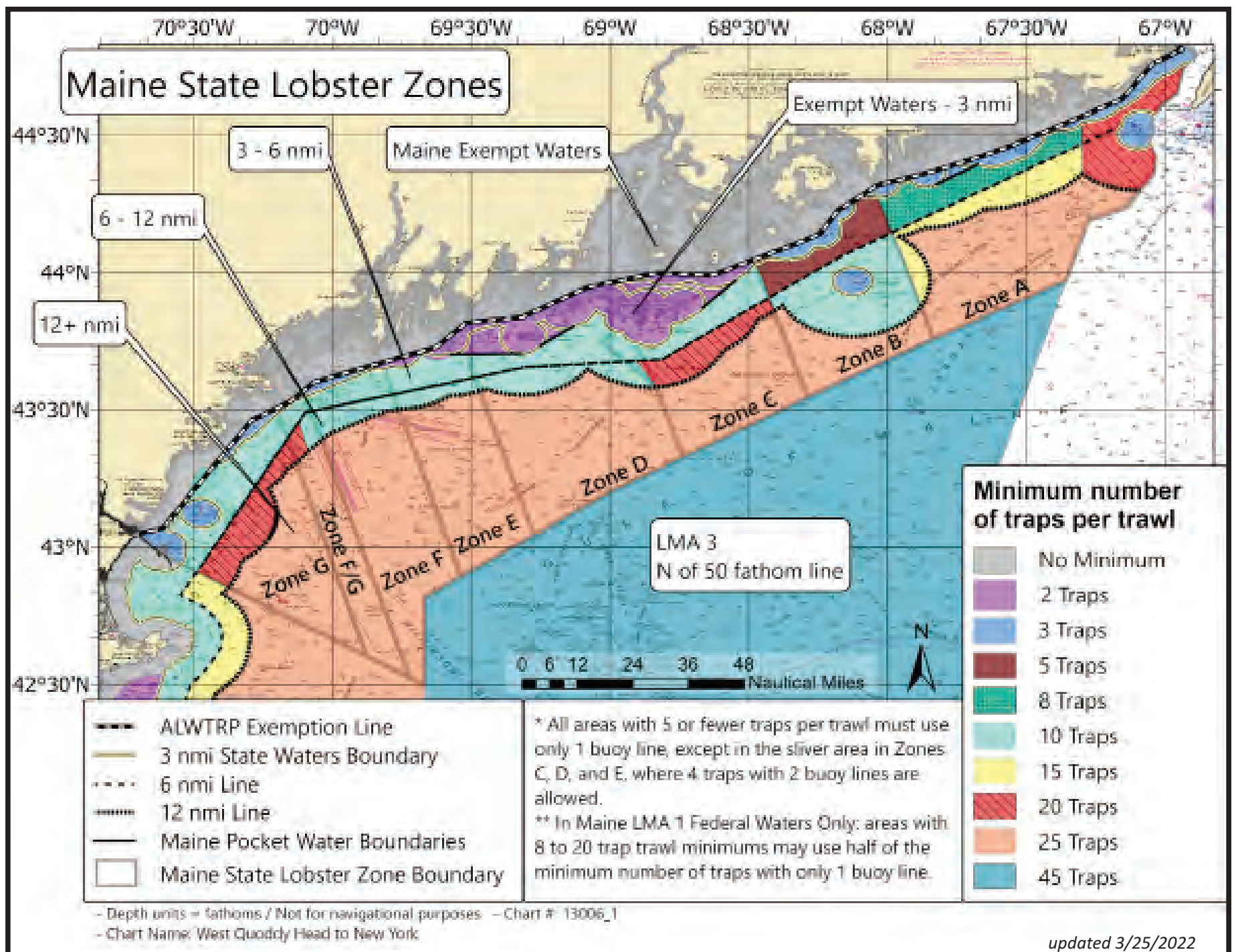
MINIMUM TRAPS PER TRAWL IN MAINE ZONES EFFECTIVE MAY 1, 2022

*The following trap per trawl limits apply to Maine Zones in Lobster Management Area 1.
There are no minimum trap per trawl requirements for Maine Exempt Waters.*

ZONE	EXEMPT	EXEMPT WATERS TO 3 NM	3 TO 6* NM	6* TO 12 NM	BEYOND 12 NM
Zone A East	no change singles allowed	3 for 1 line	10 for 1 line 20 for 2 lines	10 for 1 line 20 for 2 lines	25 for 2 lines
Zone A West	no change singles allowed	3 for 1 line	4 for 1 line 8 for 2 lines	8 for 1 line 15 for 2 lines	25 for 2 lines
Zone B	no change singles allowed	3 for 1 line	5 for 1 line	5 for 1 line 10 for 2 lines	25 for 2 lines
Zone C	no change singles allowed	2 for 1 line 4 for 2 lines	5 for 1 line 10 for 2 lines	10 for 1 line 20 for 2 lines	25 for 2 lines
Zone D	no change singles allowed	2 for 1 line 4 for 2 lines	5 for 1 line 10 for 2 lines	5 for 1 line 10 for 2 lines	25 for 2 lines
Zone E	no change singles allowed	2 for 1 line 4 for 2 lines	5 for 1 line 10 for 2 lines	5 for 1 line 10 for 2 lines	25 for 2 lines
Zone F	no change singles allowed	3 for 1 line	5 for 1 line 10 for 2 lines	5 for 1 line 10 for 2 lines	25 for 2 lines
Zone G	no change singles allowed	3 for 1 line	5 for 1 line 10 for 2 lines	10 for 1 line 20 for 2 lines	25 for 2 lines

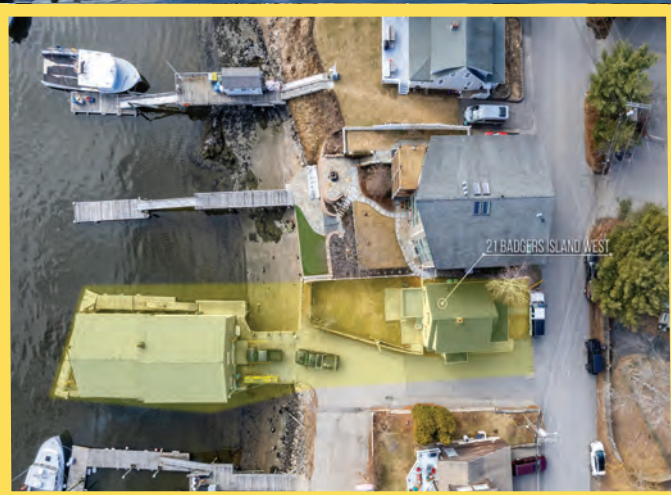
Maine's pocket waters are considered state waters under the ALWTRP

*Note that the 6 nm line refers to an approximation, described in 50 CFR 229.32 (a)(2)(ii).



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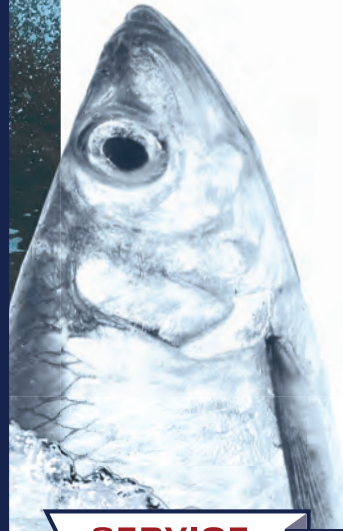


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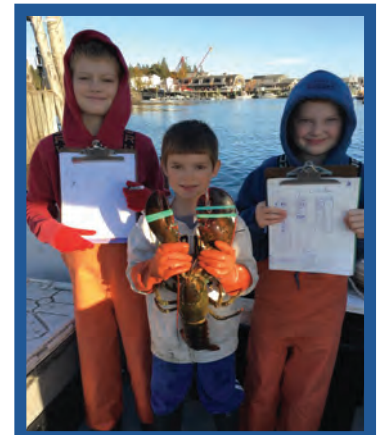
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MLA President



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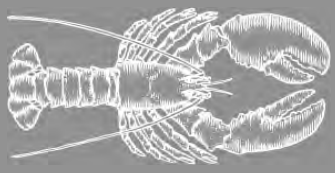
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TO YOUR HEALTH: *Simple exercises help prevent, mitigate repetitive strain*

By Monique Coombs, Maine Coast Fishermen's Association

Commercial fishing has been identified as one of the most dangerous civilian occupations in the United States by the Centers for Disease Control. Fishermen themselves are considered "industrial athletes."

An industrial athlete is someone who makes a living using mental and physical talents to perform jobs that require skill, strength, flexibility, coordination, and endurance—just like any athlete. While the occupation of fishing requires both mental and physical skills, many fishermen may not think of themselves as athletes. "Industrial athlete" is an important term because it conveys that it is incredibly important for fishermen to consider their physical health so that they can perform better, prevent injury, and stay safe on the water.

Just as athletes can be prone to injury, the risk and physical demands of fishing also frequently lead to injury. Repetitive motion and working in the elements on unstable and slippery decks increases the likelihood of injuries. These injuries can be acute, like baitfish poisoning, or they can be a painful and chronic condition like back and shoulder pain from repeatedly hauling traps. Working through pain and injury can have adverse effects, leading to chronic pain and ultimately reducing productivity over time.



A gentle stretch, such as this done by 78-year-old Max Oliver, can help before and after hauling, MCFA photo.

Enter Maine AgrAbility, a program with the mission to serve farmers, loggers, and fishermen in Maine who have had an illness, accident, or injury and want to keep working. The fishing industry-specific program, FishAbility, provides free on-site assessments by Occupational Therapists (OTs) for fishermen to help determine if they would benefit from adaptive equipment or adaptive techniques to help reduce pain and injury. OTs are health care providers who understand human anatomy and physiology and disease processes. They know how the body works and are experts at analyzing work tasks and modifying or customizing those tasks to suit the specific needs of an individual.

The FishAbility Program is working with Antonia Small, a yoga instructor

and owner of Oryx Worx in Port Clyde, and the Maine Coast Fishermen's Association's Fishermen Wellness Program on a project to share exercises, movements, and yoga stretches with fishermen. Together the team is producing monthly stretches and exercises which fishermen can practice to support their physical health and sharing the exercises and accompanying information on each of their websites and social media outlets.

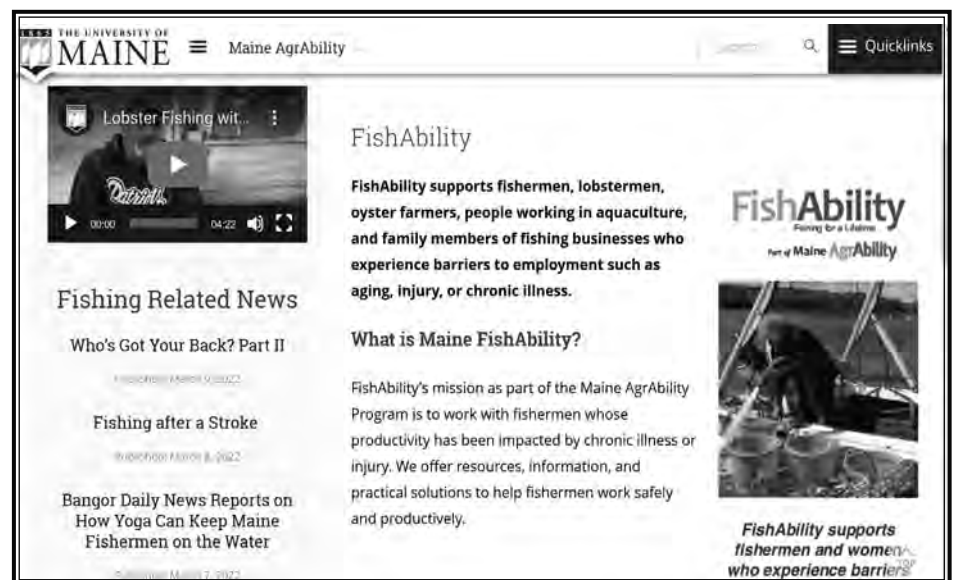
"Supporting fishermen (sea farmers and harvesters) through yoga is meant to bring awareness to over-worked muscles, movements, and mental strategies. Creating a practice, however small, develops agency in a pre-hab versus re-hab approach to life-long productivity," said Small.

The yoga movements and exercises can be easily practiced on the boat, in the trap shop, or even using random gear in a dooryard. Along with the exercise itself is an explanation about the movement that the stretch is offsetting. For example, the Downward Dog (fish) exercise is used as a counter to the strain that can be felt on the lower back when hunched over mending and building traps.

Fishermen who work in high-risk environments are mindful by necessity. The goal of the FishAbility posts on yoga exercises emphasize effective physical conditioning and recovery strategies.



Monique Coombs is MCFA director of community programs. MCFA photo.



To learn more and see the latest yoga stretches, exercises, and movements, visit:

www.extension.umaine.edu/agrability/fishing-resources/
www.mainecoastfishermen.org/fishermenwellness
www.oryxworx.com

SAFETY SURVEY BY THE MAINE COMMERCIAL FISHING SAFETY COUNCIL

The Maine Commercial Fishing Safety Council (The Council), in collaboration with the Department of Marine Resources, invites you to participate in a safety survey of Maine fishermen and aquaculturists.

The purpose of the survey is to gather information about personal injuries as well as any "near-misses" you have experienced while involved in commercial harvesting activities. We also are interested in incidents that resulted in damage to your boat(s) and/or gear. The survey is set-up so that you may remain anonymous, or you may provide contact information that would enable us to have follow-up conversations with you.

The Council will use the information from this survey to develop educational outreach to the fishing and aquaculture community and to provide training opportunities that address safety concerns that you have or foresee in the future.

The Council was established by the Maine legislature to improve the safety of fishermen in Maine. We are charged with providing outreach and training.

This survey should take five to 10 minutes to complete. Thank you for helping to make our industry safe. Please respond to the survey by April 30, 2022.

The link to the survey can be found at <https://www.maine.gov/dmr/news-details.html?id=7058199>.

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Herring continued from page 1

Standard 4 of the Magnuson-Steven Fishery Management and Conservation Act.

NMFS “failed to identify a rational connection between the facts found and the choice to implement the exclusion zone. A primary purpose of the rule is to ‘minimize local depletion and its associated user group conflict when midwater trawl vessels harvesting herring overlap with other user groups,’” the judge wrote. Yet NMFS “could not identify any scientific evidence of localized depletion, let alone establish a link between MWT vessels and localized depletion.”

Quoting the law, Sorokin wrote that National Standard 4 states that “conservation and management measures shall not discriminate between residents of different States. If it becomes necessary to allocate or assign fishing privileges among various United States fishermen, such allocation shall be (A) fair and equitable to all such fishermen; (B) reasonably calculated to promote conservation; and (C) carried out in such manner that no particular individual, corporation, or other entity acquires an excessive share of such privileges.



Unloading herring in Massachusetts. Newburyport Daily News photo.

“Assuming without deciding that the Defendant (NMFS) could reasonably recognize the exclusion zone as an allocation for the first time in the final rule, the Court finds that the Defendant did not comply with National Standard 4 and, specifically, its obligation to

explain how the rule is “reasonably calculated to promote conservation,” the judge wrote.

Before the 2019 decision, estimates by the New England council and industry sources foresaw a 30 percent reduction in the mid-water fishery’s revenue. In a March 11 statement mid-water boat operators said Sorokin’s ruling could help them.

“In recent years, we’ve relied on this area for most of our catch,” said Gary O’Neill, who owns the mid-water trawlers Endeavour and Challenger and the Cape Seafoods processing plant in Gloucester, Mass. “This was an existential threat to our livelihood. This decision is a huge relief.”

In its lawsuit the Sustainable Fisheries Coalition argued the New England council’s science advisors could not identify adverse impacts from mid-water trawling but that opponents’ persistence and political influence persuaded the council and NMFS.

“The law is the only protection a small fishing sector has against a well-represented majority,” said Shaun Gehan, an attorney for the mid-water fishermen. “We are pleased the judge recognized this measure lacked a meaningful conservation benefit, not to mention fairness and equity, as the law demands.”

“The main problem with the process was that it was couched as addressing so-called ‘localized depletion,’ which scientists were unable to identify,” said Wayne Reichle, president of Lund’s Fisheries, operators of the mid-water trawler Enterprise and a processing plant at Cape May, N.J. “This is an issue of user conflicts and should be addressed as such.”



The court’s decision may be a boon for New England herring trawlers. Above, herring vessel Sunlight, Photo courtesy of O’Hara Bait.

LOBSTER SETTLEMENT NUMBERS REMAIN LOW

By Melissa Waterman

Lobster settlement continues to be lower than in past years, according to the American Lobster Settlement Index. “For the Gulf of Maine, numbers are pretty much on par with last year, meaning they are still rather low,” University of Maine scientist Rick Wahle said. Wahle began studying lobster settlement patterns in 1989; the American Lobster Settlement Index now has more than three decades of data on the population throughout New England and areas of Canada.

The data show a slight increase in young-of-the-year lobsters in the southern Gulf of St. Lawrence. The lobster population is shifting to the northeast as Gulf of Maine waters warm, with population density growing off places like Newfoundland, Wahle said.

The lobster settlement trends are happening at a time when the Maine lobster fishery has landed more than 100 million pounds of lobsters in ten of the last 11 years. The lobster fishery was worth more than \$700 million last year according to Department of Marine Resources data.

Wahle’s studies have shown a steady decline in young lobsters at New England sample sites over the last several years.

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*For an interactive source of pending lease applications, please see DMR's new "Table of Lease Applications Under Review" where you can find maps and documentation with just one click. Go to: www.maine.gov/dmr/aquaculture/leases/pending.html
Click INTERACTIVE DATA TABLE at the top of the list.*

Experimental Lease Applications

Name of Applicant/Company	Site	Town	Size	Product	Duration	Status
Summit Point LLC	300ft N of Lower Basket Ledge	Chebeague	4 acres	Marine Algae	3 yrs	App rec'd (2/17/22); comments due (3/19/22)
Summit Point LLC	1000ft N of Lower Basket Ledge	Chebeague	4 acres	Marine Algae	3 yrs	App rec'd (2/17/22); comments due (3/19/22)
Muscongus Bay Aquaculture	NW of Glidden Ledge, Damariscotta River	Edgecomb	3.93 acres	Shellfish	3 yrs	Amendment rec'd; comments due (1/7/22)
Thomas Martin	E of Brothers Islands, Casco Bay	Falmouth	0.15 acres	Shellfish	3 yrs	30 day public comment period (3/11/22)
Stuart Ryan	SW side of Williams Island, Casco Bay	Freeport	2.4 acres	Shellfish/algae	3 yrs	App rec'd (2/11/22); 30 day comment
Christopher Green	Near White Island, Middle Bay	Harpwell	4 acres	Shellfish	3 yrs	App rec'd 2/18/22; comments due (3/20/22)
Whisky Stones, LLC	E of Dogs Head, Harpswell Sound	Harpwell	0.481 acres	Shellfish	3 yrs	App rec'd, comments due 3/3/21
Nautical Farms, LLC	N of Roque Island, Shorey Cove	Jonesport	4 acres	Marine Algae	3 yrs	App rec'd (2/3/22); 30 day public comment
Doyle, Victor	E of Barlett Isl, Blue Hill Bay	Mount Desert	1 acre	Shellfish	3 yrs	Public hearing postponed to later date
Peter Smith	Upper Dodge Cove, Damariscotta River	Newcastle	3.96 acres	Shellfish	3 yrs	App rec'd (1/7/22); 30 day public comment
Bracy L, and Lombardo, P	N of Coombs Cove, Pemaquid River	Pemaquid	1.6 acres	Shellfish	3 yrs	App rec'd 7/19, comments due 8/21/21
Restorative Aquaculture LLC	WSW of Mackworth Island, Casco Bay	Portland	3.38 acres	Shellfish/algae	3 yrs	30 day public comment period (3/26/22)
Johnson, Ezra et al.	NE part of Burt Coat Harbor	Swans Island	1.6 acres	Shellfish	3 yrs	App rec'd 5/24/21; comments due 6/26/21
Timothy Bennett & AS	N of Haystack Island, Medomak River	Waldoboro	2.52 acres	Shellfish	3 yrs	App rec'd (3/3/22); comments due (4/2/22)
Hunt, Stewart	Upper Basket Island Ledge, Casco Bay	Yarmouth	3.9 acres	Shellfish/algae	3 yrs	App rec'd 5/24/21; comments due 6/26/21

Standard Lease Applications

Name of Applicant/Company	Site	Town	Size	Product	Duration	Status
Pemaquid Mussel Farms LLC	Mt Desert narrows, E of Googins Ledge	Bar Harbor	32 acres	Shellfish	20 yrs	Application rec'd 5/7/21, site review TBD
Acadia Aqua Farms, LLC	SW of Googins Ledge, Frenchman Bay	Bay Harbor	48 acres	Shellfish	20 yrs	Hearing scheduled 3/28/22, 5pm, remote
Frank S. Peasley	N of Bear Head, Bagaduce River	Brooksville	5.38 acres	Shellfish	20 yrs	Hearing scheduled 3/15/22, 4pm, Brooksville
Ferda Farms LLC	E of Lower Coombs, New Meadows Rvr	Brunswick	2.33 acres	Shellfish	20 yrs	Application rec'd 2/28/22; site visit TBD
Johnson, Timothy	SE of Barnes Pt, Middle Bay	Brunswick	17 acres	Shellfish	20 yrs	Application rec'd 3/15/21, site review TBD
Nice Oyster Company, LLC	E of Woodward Pt, New Meadows River	Brunswick	4.49 acres	Shellfish	10 yrs	Application rec'd 4/21/21; site review TBD
Great Ledge Cove Seafood LLC	NE L'il Chebeague Isl, Wstrn Chandlers	Chebeague Isl	6.85 Acres	Marine Algae	20 yrs	Application rec'd 11/24/21, site visit TBD
Summit Point LLC	NE Clapboard Isl, Casco By; Falmouth	Cumberland	100 acres	Marine Algae	20 yrs	Site review complete (3/18/21)
Wild Ocean Aquaculture, LLC	E of Sturdivant Island, Casco Bay	Cumberland	5.36 acres	Shellfish	10 yrs	30 day public comment period (4/16/22)
Dodge Cove Marine Farm	SE of Dodge Pt	Damariscotta	12.26 acres	Shellfish	20 yrs	App rec'd 7/15/21; site review TBD
Abigail Barrows	Pickering Cove; West of Freese Island	Deer Isle	4.24 acres	Shellfish/algae	20 yrs	Scoping session 3/10/22, 5pm, Deer Isle
Long Cove Sea Farm, LLC	Long Cove	Deer Isle	2.45 acres	Shellfish	20 yrs	30 day public comment period (03/26/22)
Spinney Creek Shellfish	Spinney Creek	Elliot	2.75 acres	Shellfish	20 yrs	14 day public comment period (3/13/22)
Coffin, Bailey	W of Sow & Pigs Isl, Casco Bay	Freeport	6.84 acres	Shellfish	20 yrs	App rec'd 6/16/21 - site review TBD
Cooke Aquaculture USA, Inc	Off Black Island	Frenchboro	15 acres	Shellfish	20 yrs	Public hearing 11/8/21, 4 pm, SW Harbor
Gaffney, Michael & Mark	N of Phoebe Isl, Robinshood Cove	Georgetown	7 acres	Shellfish	20 Yrs	Application rec'd 11/24/21, site visit TBD
Schoodic Seafarm LLC	Off Long Mill Cove, Gouldsboro Bay	Gouldsboro	2.2 acres	Shellfish	20 yrs	Hearing scheduled 4/5/22, 4:00PM, Gouldsboro
Taunton Bay Oyster Co., Inc.	SE of Cedar Point, Taunton Bay	Hancock	13.91 acres	Shellfish	10 yrs	14 day public comment period (3/13/22)
Butterfield, Keith	Casco Bay, SW of Lower Goose Island	Harpwell	25 acres	Shellfish	20 yrs	Scoping session at Harpswell (1/14/22)
Love Point Oysters, LLC	Middle Bay, SE of Upper Goose Island	Harpwell	3.20 acres	Shellfish/algae	20 yrs	Application rec'd (2/15/22), site review TBD
Restorative Aquaculture LLC	Middle Bay, E of Scragg Island	Harpwell	9.89 acres	Shellfish	20 yrs	App. rec'd 10/20/21; site review TBD
Islesboro Marine Enterprises, Inc	NE of Flat Island, Penobscot Bay	Islesboro	6 acres	Shellfish	20 yrs	Application rec'd 4/1/21, site review TBD
George Faux, Inc.	S Great Salt Bay, Uppr Damariscotta Rvr	Newcastle	1.8 acres	Shellfish	20 yrs	Application rec'd (2/15/22), site review TBD
Maine Oyster Inc.	E/S of Lehman Isl. Upper Sheepscot Rvr	Newcastle	10 acres	Shellfish	20 yrs	Application rec'd 6/17/21, site review TBD
Adam and Michelle Campbell	Pulpit Harbor Mill Stream	North Haven	2.53 acres	Shellfish	20 yrs	App rec'd (1/13/22), 30-day comment period
Hermit Island Oyster Co, LLC	Hermit Isl, Small Pt, New Meadows Rivr	Phippsburg	2.56 acres	Shellfish	20 yrs	Application rec'd 5/26/21; site review TBD
Saltwind Seafarm LLC	W of Nonesuch Point, SE of train trestle	Scarborough	2.31 acres	Shellfish	20 yrs	Scoping session at Scarborough (3/11/22)
Maine Fresh Sea Farms LLC	Clark Cove, Damariscotta River	So. Bristol	3.6 acres	Marine Algae	10 yrs	Application rec'd 5/4/21, site review TBD
Dewey's Shellfish, LLC	NW of Peters Island, Damariscotta River	South Bristol	0.58 acre	Shellfish	20 yrs	Application rec'd 8/16/21, site review TBD
Heron Island Oyster Company	Fitch Cove, Glidden Ledge	South Bristol	1 acre	Shellfish	20 yrs	Application rec'd 10/4/21; site review TBD
Morning Star Fisheries, LLC	Sheepscot River, W of Boston Island	Southport	4.5 acres	Marine Algae	20 yrs	Application rec'd 11/24/21, site visit TBD
Brewer, Robert	E of Penobscot Bay SW of Andrews Isl	Stonington	3.26 acres	Shellfish	20 yrs	App rec'd 10/20/21; site review TBD
Harvey, Brian	W of Haynes Pt, Goose Cove	Trenton	6 acres	Shellfish	20 yrs	Public hearing 4/12/22, 5pm, Trenton
Baines, Robert & Cole	W Penob. Bay, W of Hewitt Isl,	Unorg. Terr.	7.33 acres	Marine Algae	20 yrs	App rec'd 1/6/22; site visit TBD
Henninger, Thomas	E of Mouth of Broad Cove, Casco Bay	Yarmouth	5.9 acres	Shellfish	20 yrs	Hearing scheduled 3/8/22, 5pm, Yarmouth
Nickerson, Travis	E of Blaney Pt	Yarmouth	2.80 acres	Shellfish	20 yrs	Application rec'd 10/4/21; site review TBD

Understand the process! You can make a difference!



Experimental Lease: up to 3 years, 4 acres and is non-renewable
Standard Lease: term is up to 20 years, size is up to 100 acres and is renewable

Lobster and Maine continued from page 10

The generational aspect of Maine's lobster businesses is echoed throughout the coast. Whether it's family-run Thurston's Lobster Pound in Bernard — "Our young guys (and our not so young anymore guys) are the hard working, heart and soul of Maine's commercial fishing industry. It's an industry rich in history, and sense of community. We're proud to be a part of that, and happy to be able to share a little bit of it with you" — or larger Ready Seafood in Saco — "Ready Seafood is a family-run business founded by two hard working Maine brothers with a passion for lobster fishing. We are committed to offering the finest fresh, frozen, and live lobster — always sustainably harvested and processed" — the Maine lobster industry uses the dual appeal of tradition and environmental purity to entice people to the state and to its lobster.

"Lobstering is the core and essence of the cultural heritage that draws people here," said Sam



"Lobstering is not just a job, it is an amazing way of life." M. Philbrook photo.

Belknap, senior community development officer at the Island Institute, commented. "People find a connection to it."

Beset by new restrictive regulations and troubled by a changing marine environment, Maine's lobstermen rightly wonder if the fishery and the many businesses it supports can survive for the next generation. If not, the character of the Maine coast will be forever altered.

"Lobstering is not just a job, it is an amazing way of life," said Dustin Delano, a fourth-generation lobsterman from Friendship. "It keeps our young people right here in Maine and contributes to our local and state economies. I am really proud to be part of a lobstering heritage that has supported this state for centuries."

YOUNG FISHERMEN'S DEVELOPMENT ACT RECEIVES FUNDING

Press release

The federal Fiscal Year 2022 \$1.5 trillion Appropriations Omnibus Package included crucial language encouraging the National Sea Grant Program under NOAA to prioritize the Young Fishermen's Development Program, authorized by the Young Fishermen's Development Act, which was enacted on January 5, 2021.

"The U.S. commercial fishing industry is a vital component of our food system. Fishermen on every U.S. coast from Maine to Alaska strive to provide sustainable, healthy food to our communities and the nation," said Ben Martens, executive director of the Maine Coast Fishermen's Association. "We must invest in the next generation of harvesters who are facing unprecedented challenges as they try to build viable small businesses in coastal communities. Thank you to the entire Maine delegation, including appropriators Rep. Pingree and Sen. Collins, for ensuring the Young Fishermen's Development Act remains a priority and for being such strong supporters of Maine's working waterfront communities."

"Commercial fishing has a rich history and vital place in our economy," said Stephanie Sykes, Program and Outreach Coordinator for the Cape Cod Commercial Fishermen's Alliance. "To continue this legacy, we must support the next generation through considerable barriers including complex regulations, high cost of entry, and fluctuating markets."

The Young Fishermen's Development Program is a workforce development grant program to educate, train, and mentor young and beginning commercial fishermen.

The underlying law authorizes \$2 million in funding for the program every year for the next six years. Eligible applicants for the grant program include state Sea Grant programs, state, local, and tribal organizations, community-based NGOs, fishermen's cooperatives or associations, colleges, and universities.

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In the NEWS

LOBSTERMEN OPPOSE SALMON FARM IN GOULDSBORO

One hundred lobstermen signed a petition against American Aquafarms salmon project which was presented to Gouldsboro selectmen in March. Petition signatures were collected by Friends of Schoodic Peninsula and represented fishermen in each of the peninsula's five harbors: Winter Harbor, South Gouldsboro, Bunker's Harbor, Prospect Harbor and Corea. American Aquafarms proposes to lease two sites between Bar Harbor and Schoodic Peninsula to install 15 "closed pens" plus an operations barge at each site, with the goal of eventually producing 30,000 metric tons, or 66 million pounds, of salmon annually.

CANADIAN LOBSTER EXPORTS SOAR

The value of Canadian lobster exports topped \$3.2 billion last year — the highest ever and more than \$700 million higher than pre-pandemic levels, according to new trade data. In 2019 the value was \$2.5 billion. Soaring sales of Canadian frozen and processed lobster in the United States during 2021 accounted for most of the increase. Frozen and processed lobster sales to the United States rose by \$240 million and \$300 million, respectively, from 2019.

GULF OF ST. LAWRENCE SNOW CRAB QUOTA EXPANDED

Canada's Department of Fisheries and Oceans has set the 2022 quota for snow crab in the southern Gulf of St. Lawrence. The department stated that the snow crab stock in the area is healthy and "showing signs of continued health." DFO set the total allowable catch (TAC) for the snow crab fishery at 32,519 tons. The TAC for 2021 was 24,262 tons. The southern Gulf of St. Lawrence has become the preferred feeding area for endangered North Atlantic right whales, 17 of which died in the area in 2018.



Photo courtesy of the CBC.

ELECTRIC LOBSTER BOATS

A new report released by the Maine Climate Table looks at the feasibility of electrifying Maine's lobster fleet. The authors note that the Maine's lobster fleet is powered by relatively carbon-intensive diesel engines. Fuel can account for as much as 60% of total fishing costs. Even though seafood is a low-emissions alternative to land-based protein, the fishing industry is a contributor to global CO₂ emissions.

The report reviews pure EV, hybrid systems, hydrogen fuel cell systems and biofuels as potential options for the lobster fleet and recognizes that any new system must meet the full duty cycle and energy demand of the lobster boat. "In the near term, we recommend testing a hybrid system, either as a retrofit or possibly with a more efficient hull design for even greater emissions reductions. Pure EV is not yet ready to meet the energy demands of most commercial lobster boats in Maine." The report is online at <https://maineclimatetable.org/electrifying-the-lobster-fleet/>.

MLA EDUCATES HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY ON LOBSTER FISHERY STATUS

The threats facing Maine's lobster industry also threaten to negatively impact Maine's hospitality and tourism industries. That was the message the Maine Lobstermen's Association (MLA) delivered during a session at HospitalityMaine's Expo 2022 on March 23 in Portland.

MLA executive director Patrice McCarron was invited to speak to representatives of Maine's hospitality industry during this annual conference to help illustrate how the federal government's ten-year whale plan will devastate not only lobster fishermen but also hotels, restaurants, and the many other businesses in Maine that rely on a strong lobster industry in a state where the crustacean is an icon and tourist draw.

"Lobster is our bread and butter," Hannah Leeman told a *Portland Press Herald* reporter who attended the event. Leeman represents Robinson's Wharf in Southport, a wholesale lobster wharf and restaurant.

Stephanie Hawke of Boothbay Harbor told the reporter, "It's going to devastate Maine businesses' bottom line. When there's 10,000 people that work on boats, that is a lot of workers that you would be losing, plus what you would sell plus the side of things that come with it, so you take that and the restaurants and the lobster shacks and the bait drivers, it's billions of dollars. It could flatten Maine."

"Lobster is central to Maine's hospitality industry and our annual Expo is the perfect forum to discuss such issues," Kathleen Pierce, director of member experience for HospitalityMaine, is quoted telling the *Press Herald*.










MLA executive director Patrice McCarron addresses HospitalityMaine Expo audience. MLA photo.

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Events Calendar

More details on all of these events can be found online at www.mainelobstermen.org

April 1
Lobster Zone F Council Meeting, Yarmouth Town Hall Community Room, 5:00 p.m., Yarmouth.

April 5
Public Hearing, Standard Lease Application, Schoodic Sea Farms, LLC, 4:00 p.m., Gouldsboro Recreation Center.

April 11
Lobster Zone B Council Meeting, Mount Desert Island High School Library, Bar Harbor.

April 12
Lobster Zone D Council Meeting, time TBD, Rockland Ferry Terminal.

Maine Offshore Wind Fisheries Working Group, 4:30 p.m., Online. FMI: <https://www.maine.gov/energy/initiatives/offshorewind/meetings>.

Public Hearing, Standard Lease Application, Brian Harvey, 5:00 pm, Trenton Town Office and Remote Participation via Teams.

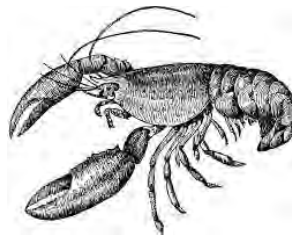
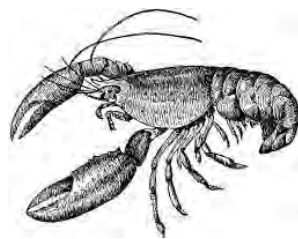
April 12-14
New England Fishery Management Council meeting, Mystic, Conn. FMI <https://www.nefmc.org/calendar/april-2022-council-meeting>.

April 14
Lobster Zone A Council Meeting, Time TBD, Washington Academy Library, Machias.

Aquaculture Public Scoping Session - Norumbega Oyster Inc., 6:00 pm
Newcastle Fire House.

May 2-5
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission meeting, Arlington, VA.

June 4
68th annual meeting of the Maine Lobstermen's Association, afternoon, University of Maine Hutchinson Center, Belfast.



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DMR OFFERING LOBSTERMEN WEAK POINTS TO TRY OUT

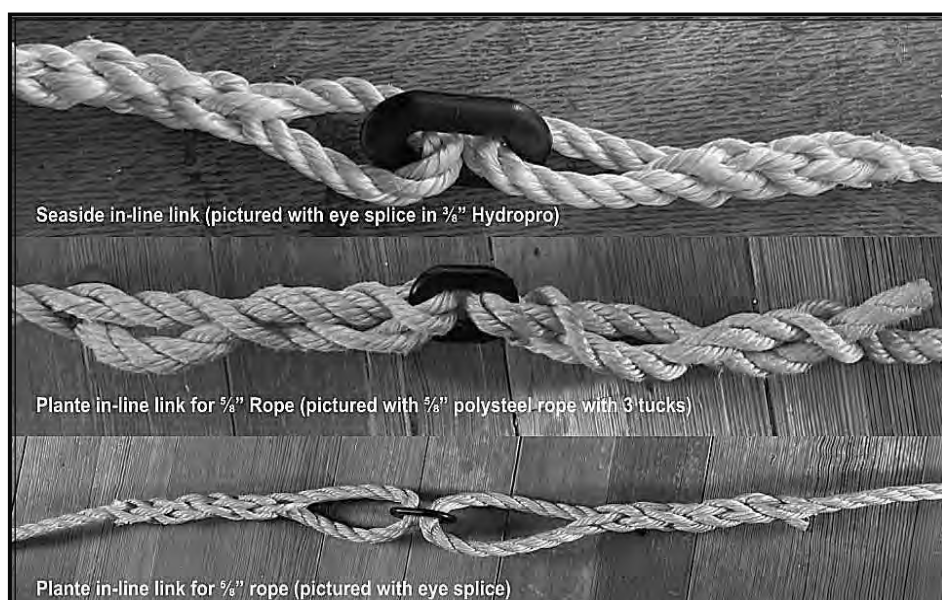
DMR press release

The Department of Marine Resources (DMR) has purchased a variety of NMFS-approved 1700 pound breaking strength weak inserts to pass on to lobster fishermen who are working to comply with upcoming federal whale protection regulations. Weak inserts are required as of May 1 through state and federal whale protection regulations. DMR would like to offer the opportunity to fishermen to receive weak points for use and testing purposes.

To place a request for weak inserts, please complete a survey by April 15, which can be found at <https://www.maine.gov/dmr/news-details.html?id=7066607>. We will be asking those who participate to provide feedback on the options that they choose.

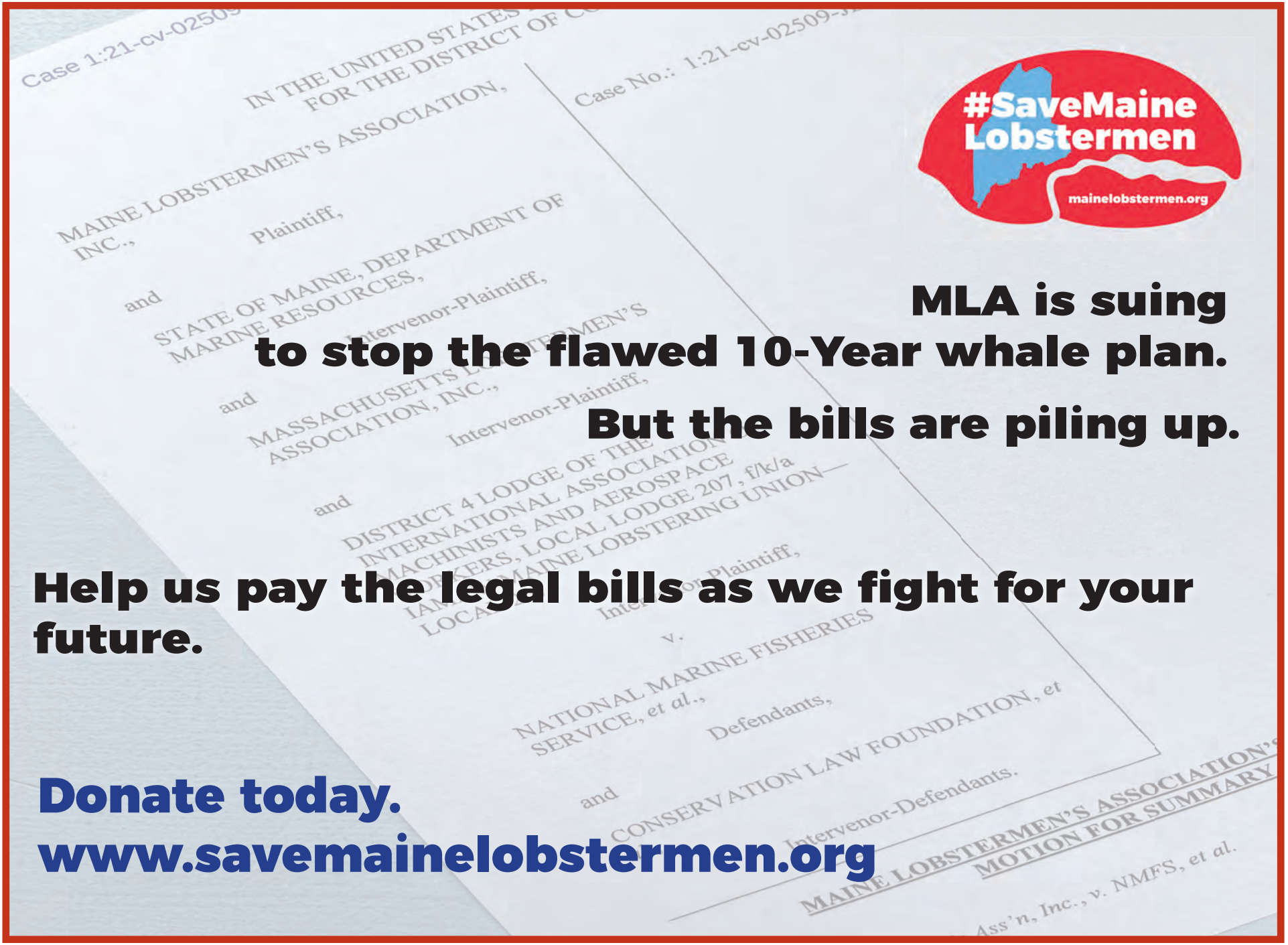
There will not be enough weak links available to outfit all of your vertical lines.

This program will be a way to supplement fishermen, as well as allow fishermen to test a variety of options before choosing one for all of their gear. After you complete the survey, we will contact you to make arrangements to deliver the items that you selected.



Many thanks to these fine businesses, the MLA's Keeper members!

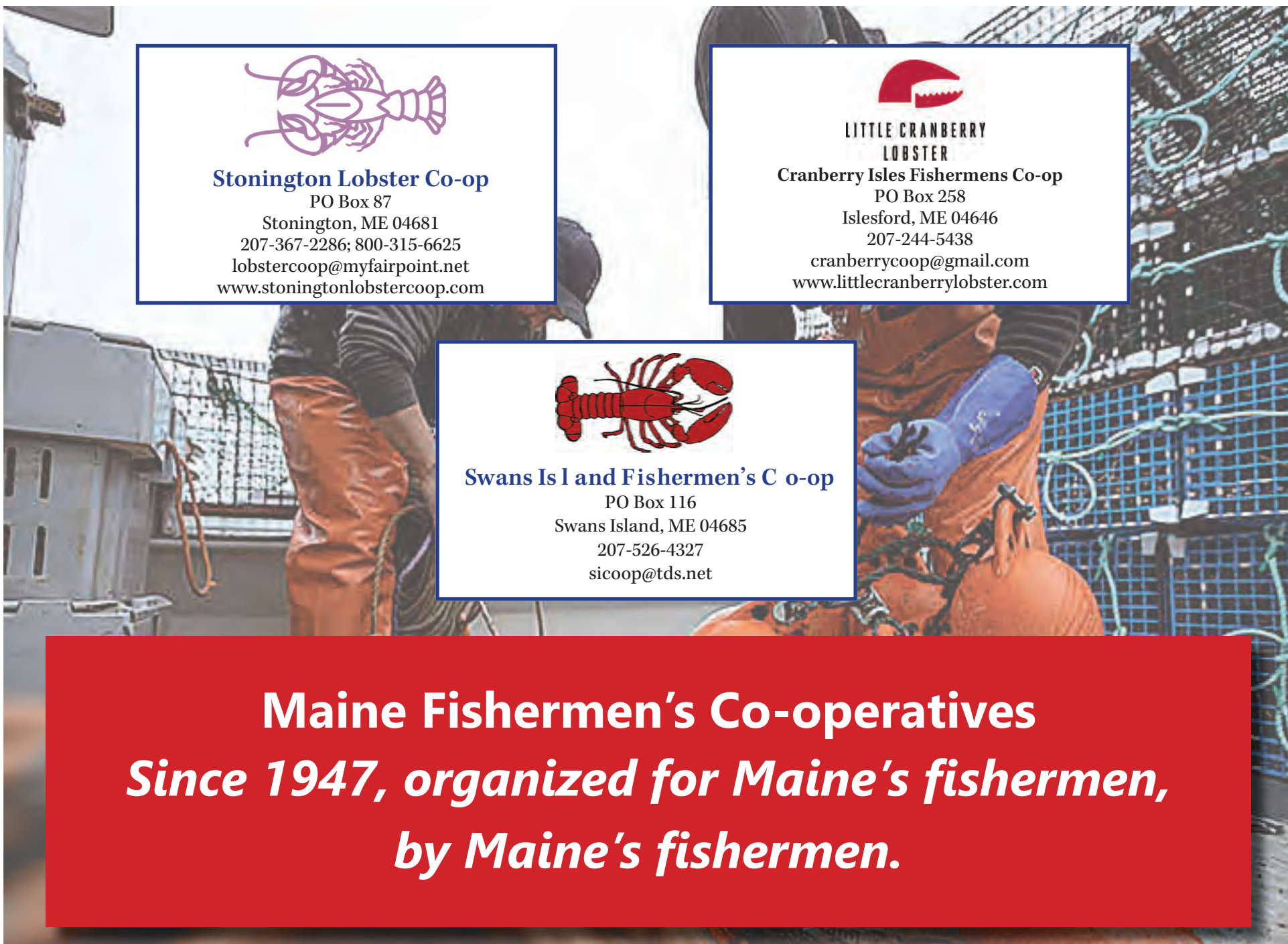
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| Coastal Documentation II | Maine Financial Group | Seacoast Tours of Freeport LLC |
| Conary Cove Lobster Co. | Maine Lobstermen's Community Alliance | Superior Marine Products |
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MLA is suing to stop the flawed 10-Year whale plan. But the bills are piling up.


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