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5-1-2023

Landings, vol. 31, no. 5

Maine Lobstermen's Community Alliance

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Maine Lobstermen's Community Alliance; Waterman, Melissa; Kelley, Kevin; Nickel, Amber-Jean; Kart, Jeff; and McCarron, Patrice, "Landings, vol. 31, no. 5" (2023). *Landings: News & Views from Maine's Lobstering Community*. 121.

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LANDINGS

News & Views from Maine's Lobstering Community

May 2023 | Vol. 31, No. 5

SAFETY TRAINING CRITICAL WHEN THINGS GO WRONG AT SEA

By Melissa Waterman

Any morning a fisherman goes out to fish, he or she expects to come home again at the end of the day. But there are so many things that can go wrong on the ocean — things that you know about and a whole bunch of things you might not expect. Safety training can't cover everything that could happen, but it sure can improve the chances of survival in most situations.

It's not only fishermen who need to know what to do in an emergency. Anyone on a vessel — crew, family, friends — should understand basic steps to take when things go south.

Fishing Partnership Support Services, a Massachusetts-based nonprofit organization, has been offering free safety training workshops to fishermen since 2005. In recent years the organization expanded its range throughout New England and into the mid-Atlantic states. It now offers safety training and drill conductor training plus CPR/First Aid and fishing vessel stability classes. The safety training class is a prerequisite for the drill conductor class. The captain and crew of a fishing vessel operating in federal waters are required to practice emergency pro-

cedures for abandoning ship, firefighting, man overboard, and flooding every month. These drills must be led by someone certified as a drill conductor.

This month, Fishing Partnership will hold free safety training classes in Jonesport and Boothbay Harbor.

"I took the class a few times and was impressed by it," said Al Cattone, a Gloucester fisherman who also leads safety training classes for Fishing Partnership. "I was amazed by how much I didn't know." Cattone has been a groundfisherman for forty years and, like many fishermen, before taking the training felt confident that he knew what to do in a bad situation. "I'd been on the water my whole life. But I didn't know the details of safety. With training you know what to do," he said. "If you think you know everything you quickly see that you don't."

Fishing Partnership's safety training concentrates on fundamental safety and survival skills. Through hands-on lessons, fishermen learn about EPIRBs, signal flares, MAYDAY calls, man

Continued on page 4



Fishing Partnership safety training shows many fishermen how much they do not know about safety at sea. Fishing Partnership photo.

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SAVE THE DATE: SUMMER EVENTS SUPPORT MAINE'S LOBSTER INDUSTRY

By Kevin Kelley, MLA Director of Advancement

There is never a lack of things to do in Maine during the summer, and this season is shaping up to be quite a busy one for those who want to support Maine's lobster industry. The number of Mainers who have reached out to offer to host or organize a fundraising event is overwhelming. It's clear that the pride in the industry and the respect for the men and women who make their living lobstering runs deep.

From events in Stonington and Milbridge to Machias and the Rockland Lobster Festival, there will be plenty of ways to show your support for Maine's lobster industry and our lobstering heritage this summer.

The weekend of May 6-7 will kick off the summer's start with the first annual Lobster Festival in Auburn. On Saturday, May 6, music, fun, food trucks, and a lobster bake will fill Festival Plaza from 1-7 p.m., with a portion of the proceeds to benefit the Maine Lobstermen's Association.

The next day, Sunday, May 7, local bands including Holy Smoke, John Hughes Radio, Mike Maurice, and Onehundredthorns will join comedians Connor McGrath and Adam Gropman at the Elks Lodge on Congress Street in Portland from 2 - 6 p.m. for "Band Together: A concert to protect Maine's lobstering heritage," to benefit the Maine Lobstermen's Community Alliance. Tickets and more information available at <https://mlcalliance.org/events>.

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COASTAL OUTLOOK *Thoughts from MLCA President Amber-Jean Nickel*

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Landings is published monthly. It is provided for *free* to all Maine lobstermen thanks to the support of the **South Bristol Fishermen's Co-op, Stonington Lobster Co-op, and the Beals-Jonesport Co-op.**

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MLCA is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization, established in 2010, which achieves its charitable mission through programs in education, research and charity.

Time's a'wasting, that's the feeling along the coast this month.

Whether it's hotel and restaurant owners getting ready for the arrival of summer visitors or lobstermen making sure their traps and boats are set to fish, everyone is busy in anticipation of a profitable summer. Those in the hospitality business know that part of the appeal of the Maine coast is, in fact, the lobster fishery – the harbors, the boats, the tiny lobster shacks serving lobster right off the boat. For many tourists, seeing the fishery operate and enjoying its harvest are the high points of their visits.

Yet fishing is dangerous work. According to the National Institutes of Health, commercial fishing continues to be one of the nation's deadliest occupations. So many things can go wrong so quickly. That's why Fishing Partnership Support Services has been providing free safety training workshops for fishermen since 2005. The Massachusetts non-profit organization will be holding two workshops in Maine this month, in addition to Coast Guard-mandated drill conduction certifications. Through hands-on lessons, fishermen learn about EPIRBs, signal flares, MAYDAY calls, man overboard recovery, firefighting, flooding and damage control, dewatering pumps, immersion suits, PFDs, and life rafts. The trainings are valuable for fishermen and for anyone else who spends time on a boat. "I'd been on the water my whole life. But I didn't know the details of safety. With training you know what to do. If you think you know everything you quickly see that you don't," said one fisherman.

This summer more young people from the Portland area will get the opportunity to learn about lobstering and the fishery through Luke's Lobster's Lift All Boats program. In 2022 the company began the program in an effort to increase involvement of minorities in the fishery. In 2022 participants fished under the guidance of local Portland fishermen and met with representatives from Luke's Lobster to learn about the lobster industry. Last year four young people took part in the program; this year 12, chosen from 58 applicants, will be lobstering in the Portland area.

Both the Maine Lobstermen's Association and Maine Lobstermen's Community Alliance are working hard to keep the lobster fishery strong and open to the next generation. Numerous events this summer will raise funds to support these organizations which are collaborating to fight against draconian right whale regulations devised by the federal government that could put lobstermen out of business. On May 6, the first annual Lobster Festival will

happen in Auburn with food, music and a giant lobster bake. On May 7, the benefit "Band Together: A concert to protect Maine's lobstering heritage" takes place from 2-6 p.m. at the Elks Lodge on Congress Street in Portland. In June another benefit, featuring music, lobster and a raffle organized by the at the South Bristol Fisherman's Co-Op, will take place in South Bristol on June 17. The highlight of the summer will be "Music, Masts, and Lobster Traps: A Celebration of Maine's Lobstering Heritage," an all-day festival on August 27 at the Maine Maritime Museum which will include an afternoon concert with the Mallett Brothers

Band. And it's all in support of the Maine lobster fishery and the men and women who make it great!

The Maine coast is full of history, as anyone who has explored its small towns knows. Part of that history can be found in the Peary-MacMillan Arctic Museum at Bowdoin College in Brunswick. Tucked away in the dusty rooms of Hubbard Hall for the past 56 years are artifacts from decades of Arctic journeys by Maine's Robert Peary and Donald MacMillan, famed explorers of the early 1900s. Now those artifacts, which include

a stuffed polar bear, walrus, musk ox, and two caribou, are moving to a new home on campus, the John and Lile Gibbons Center for Arctic Studies. The new center is climate and temperature controlled, both of which are vital to the long-term preservation of many artifacts and has additional space to display the Museum's expanding collection of Arctic materials.


Finally, we've all heard that phrase, "When life gives you lemons, make lemonade." Two innovators have taken the message to heart when it comes to the plague of green crabs along New England coasts. Tamworth Distillery in New Hampshire decided to use the nuisance crustaceans in its new product, Crab Trapper Whiskey. Perhaps an acquired taste? Maine chef Ali Waks Adam thought green crabs might translate into a distinctive fish sauce. Fish sauce is a key ingredient in many Asian dishes and is used by cooks throughout the world. So why not a Maine-made fish sauce? With support from Maine Sea Grant and Manomet, a Massachusetts non-profit organization, Waks Adam and her colleagues have concocted samples to test with chefs throughout New England.

We hope you enjoy this issue of *Landings*!



May brings a faster pace along the Maine coast as lobstermen and other small businesses get ready for summer. MLA photo.

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INSHORE TRAWL SURVEY BEGINS THIS MONTH

The annual spring trawl survey will begin in New Hampshire waters on May 1, working its way east to finish up about June 2nd near Cutler/Lubec. We will fish the first 5 good days each week, using the weekend to make up for bad weather or equipment problems. This should enable us to maintain a predictable schedule as we move up the coast. The vessel is a white fiberglass Northeast 54', the *F/V Robert Michael* of Portland, captained by Rob Tetrault.

The survey is designed to provide information that has not been available to NOAA Fisheries Service for stock assessments. Obtaining this information is critical to making rational management decisions.

As in the past, we ask that on the scheduled day of the tow, an area 1/8th mile on either side of the tow line be clear of fixed gear. We make every effort to avoid contact with gear by making at least one and often two passes on the tow line before we set our gear. However, if buoys are running under, we cannot see them and mistakenly conclude that the area is clear. Clearing the area of gear avoids gear contact.

Each Class I, II, and III lobster license holder will receive a notice of the start of the survey. This notice will contain a link to this site where the daily schedule and charts are located to view scheduled tow locations and coordinates. If weather does not permit us to work, we expect that lobstermen will not be fishing that day. Therefore, it is our hope that everyone, the trawl survey and lobstermen, will slide the schedule one day forward. Marine Patrol will be on hand as well to assist with tow operations, including moving traps. In a past year there was some disagreement that resulted in activity that placed people and boats in danger. All fishermen should understand that actions that place people and property in unsafe or dangerous circumstances may be violating the law and could be subject to both criminal and civil penalties.

We do our best to advertise and adhere to the published schedule to avoid prolonged periods of inconvenience to fixed gear fishermen. Because weather and mechanical difficulties occasionally throw us off schedule, we have established several ways to assist you in obtaining accurate information. The best source of information is directly from the boat crew. You may hail them on either channel 16 or 13, and then switch to your preferred local working channel. The crew cell phone is 207-557-5276. Cell phone service can be spotty at times, but messages can be left for the crew to return your call.

TWO COASTAL PROGRAM GRANT PROGRAMS OPEN TO APPLICANTS

The Department of Marine Resources' Maine Coastal Program (MCP) and the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry's Municipal Planning Assistance Program (MPAP) are each seeking applications for coastal planning grants totaling \$315,000. The two grants are the Shore and Harbor Planning Grant and the Coastal Community Grant. Applications are due by Friday, June 2, at 5 p.m.

These grants are being released to coincide with the next round of the Community Action Grants from the Governor's Office of Policy, Innovation, and the Future's Community Resilience Partnership. The Community Action Grants will be released in spring 2023. Eligible applicants include counties, municipalities, unorganized territories, tribal governments, and Regional Planning Organizations in Maine's Coastal Zone.

Shore and Harbor Planning Grants provide resources for shoreline access planning, waterfront and harbor planning, identification and resolution of waterfront use conflicts, and planning, feasibility, and design efforts for resilient waterfront infrastructure. The Maine Coastal Program anticipates making multiple awards ranging from \$5,000 - \$50,000.

Coastal Community Grants support projects in Maine's Coastal Zone that focus on the following priority coastal issues, as identified by Maine Coastal Program and the Maine Climate Council's *Maine Won't Wait: A Four-Year Plan for Climate Action*:

- Building Community Resiliency to Adapt to a Changing Climate
- Planning for Green Infrastructure
- Preparing for Flooding, Sea Level Rise, Coastal Storms and Storm Surge, and Shoreline Erosion
- Land Use Activity Impacts on Water Quality

The Municipal Planning Assistance Program anticipates making multiple awards ranging from \$20,000 to \$50,000.

More information on the two grant programs may be found at <https://www.maine.gov/dmr/programs/maine-coastal-program/grants-and-rfps/shore-and-harbor-planning-grants> and <https://www.maine.gov/dacf/municipalplanning/index.shtml>.

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Safety training continued from page 1

overboard recovery, firefighting, flooding and damage control, dewatering pumps, immersion suits, PFDs, and life rafts.

“You are taking on water and the Coast Guard gives you a pump. With the class you learn to set it up and do it right so that if you have flooding, it’s not the first time [for you] when it happens,” Cattone said. “I actually had flooding [before taking the training]. They dropped me a pump and I had a hard time getting it working.”

Chebeague Island lobsterman Jeff Putnam signed up for the safety training with his two sons, ages 15 and 14, and a fishing friend and his son. His sons fish with him, on other boats, and on their own, so he was anxious that they take the class. “It was such a great hands-on experience for the many things that could go wrong. It is great to be prepared,” Putnam said.

One element that stood out for him was the custom-made trailer brought to each training. The trailer is designed to replicate the hull of a lobster boat. Using a water hook-up, the safety trainer simulates leaks in different parts of the hull. “It’s cool. They run different scenarios and show you different ways to deal with flooding,” Putnam said.

Then there was the survival suit training. It’s not easy getting into a survival suit even at the best of times. Knowing the order of steps to take and practicing helps build a routine to fall back on when and if you need one. “The training was at the Coast Guard base in South Portland. You learn how to get the suit on. Then they fire a gun, and you get it on as fast as you can and jump into the water,” Putnam said.

“My boys learned so much, lots of things I couldn’t have taught them. You learn how important it is to stay calm, assess the situation, and figure out if you can handle it with what you have on hand. I wanted them to do it when they were young and then take it a couple times more before they get their commercial licenses,” he said.

“You are never too old to learn something new,” Cattone said. “You have to go through the class to see what you are missing, especially for younger guys starting out. Even if you pick up one new skill, it could be the one that saves you that day.”

To register for upcoming classes in Jonesport on May 22 and 23 or in Boothbay Harbor on May 25 and 26, email mcarpenter@fishingpartnership.org or call 978-282-4847.



The hands-on safety training gives participants confidence that they can cope with common emergency situations, such as flooding or fire on board a vessel. Fishing Partnership photo.

Summer events continued from page 1

On Saturday, June 17, the South Bristol Fisherman’s Co-Op is hosting an event to celebrate the importance of Maine’s lobster industry. The board and staff of the Co-op are organizing the event, which will feature drink, food, a concert celebration, and a raffle of dozens of items donated by local businesses and craft-people. Anyone who might be willing to contribute, donate items, or support the event in any way should contact Laura Hughes at 207-644-8224.

Perhaps the biggest summer event (so far!) will be a daylong festival at the Maine Maritime Museum on Sunday, August 27. “Music, Masts, and Lobster Traps: A Celebration of Maine’s Lobstering Heritage” will culminate in a late afternoon concert featuring Maine’s Mallett Brothers Band.

Tickets are now on sale, so get yours today before it’s too late... this one is sure

to sell out! Tickets and more information available at <https://mlcalliance.org/events/music-masts-lobster-traps>.

Keep up to date on all these events as they develop by following MLA and MLCA on social media.

Finally, a huge thank you to Susan Duncan and her team of amazing volunteers who organized our most recent “All Hands on Deck” potluck fundraiser in Phippsburg on March 25. While we don’t have an official count, we can safely tell you that close to 100 people filled Phippsburg Sportsman’s Club on a chilly, late March afternoon for an afternoon of community warmth and some delicious food!

We are greatly appreciative of the support demonstrated by so many local businesses who donated items for the silent auction and extensive raffle. Donations are still coming in, but at last count this event raised nearly \$13,000 for our efforts to preserve Maine’s lobstering industry. Thank you to everyone who played a part in ensuring that this event was such a success.



Phippsburg volunteers Susan Duncan, center, and, from left to right, Kelly James, Jesse Roche, Monique Coombs, Jean Scott, and Rep. Allison Hepler.

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FIRST LAND-BASED EEL AQUACULTURE FACILITY OPENS IN WALDOBORO

By Jeff Kart, Forbes, reprinted with permission

American Unagi raises eels in Maine as the only land-based eel aquaculture company in the United States. They source eels from local harvesters in Maine and grow them in a recirculating aquaculture system on the Waldoboro coast. It's done without hormones or antibiotics ... or eels shipped across the world as tiny, clear, toothpick-sized juveniles and brought back as adults.

The company wrapped up construction on a \$10 million, 27,000-square-foot facility in January to expand production of American eel to more than 500,000 pounds a year (or about 2 million eels). American Unagi sells filets and smoked products to wholesalers, restaurants and retailers throughout the U.S.

"We took the approach that we should be doing the value-add here and connecting the jobs, the economic benefits, that everything should just be here in the U.S.," says CEO and founder Sara Rademaker. That amounts to 10 full-time and up to eight part-time jobs at American Unagi, which works with up to 50 harvesters.

"They catch them at rivers," Rademaker explains. "Eels live their adult lives in freshwater. They're the opposite of salmon. They're born in the ocean and come into freshwater to grow up."

At American Unagi, it takes anywhere from eight months to two years to raise the wild eels before they're ready for market. "We have as many as three different years of eels, so we can harvest every single week," Rademaker says. The eels are fed a diet of eel chow, the same kind developed in Europe over the last 40 years, she says.



American Unagi founder Sara Rademaker. Photo courtesy of MainePublic.

The U.S. imports about 11 million pounds of eel a year, most of which goes to the sushi industry. So why is American Unagi the only company raising American eels in America? Rademaker says it's a combination of things.

The sushi industry in the U.S. is relatively young, with people only getting to know eel over the last 25 years. The technology of growing eels in aquaculture has steadily improved over the last several decades with systems developed in Europe. The demand for locally produced, traceable seafood also has grown, Rademaker says.

Maine is one of only two managed U.S. fisheries for American eels along with South Carolina. But a 2023 U.K. study using DNA found that 44% of eel purchased in North America was European eel, even though Europe banned exports in 2010. European baby eels are poached in Europe and smuggled to Asia, where they're grown in hundreds of fish farms and sent back to Japan, Europe and North America.

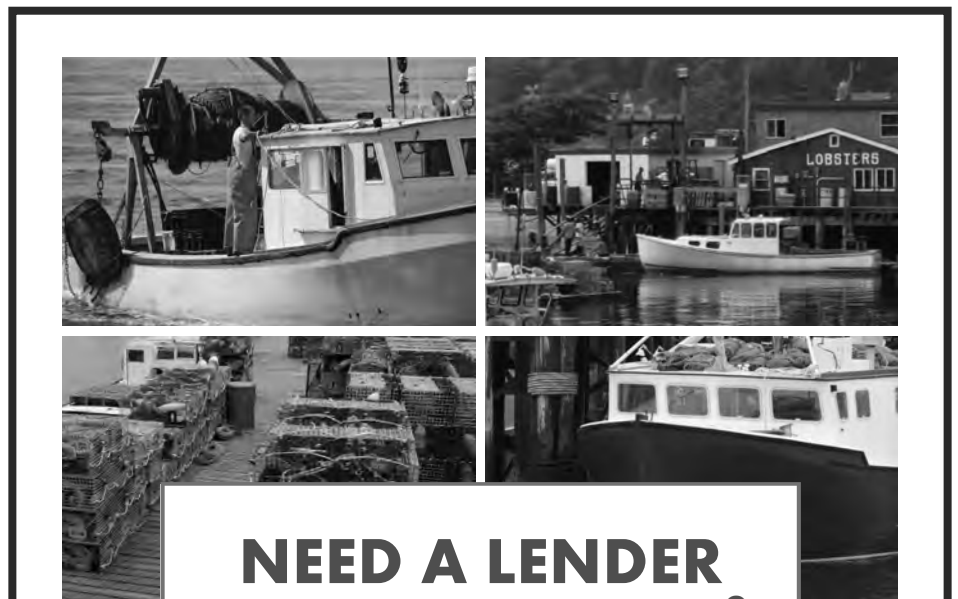


Maine-grown eels will soon be featured in restaurants across the country. Photo courtesy of Bangor Daily News.

The study found that 56% of the eel sampled were American eel, the same kind grown by American Unagi in Maine. Most American eel caught in the U.S. are shipped live to China, where they're raised in aquaculture ponds and sent back here later.

Rademaker says growing eels in Maine is more sustainable on all sorts of levels: from the use of fuel to transport eels overseas to awareness about the crazy journey the fish make from overseas farms to U.S. consumers.... She says the Maine-raised product speaks for itself as a quality, well-managed fish.

"In some ways, OK, we might not be able to make a super cheap eel, but we make a better one and that's really unique in the world and that really stands out," Rademaker says. "... We're having people come to our door asking for our eel because it's something they can trust on their menus and it's a really cool fish."



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MAINE LOBSTERMEN'S ASSOCIATION UPDATE

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

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STEAMING AHEAD BY MLA POLICY DIRECTOR, PATRICE MCCARRON

The lobster industry is grappling with a new era more perilous than anything it has ever experienced. The challenges facing our industry are extremely complex and the stakes are equally high. Whales and offshore wind development are issues that are here to stay. Both threaten the very survival of the lobster industry. And survival will not come without some difficult changes.

It is both scary and frustrating for lobstermen as they wonder whether or not they have a future in this fishery. Truth be told, there are just a handful of people in the industry who even understand the statutory and regulatory landscape that dictates what can and cannot be done. Fortunately for the lobster industry, the MLA is among the few who can navigate the complicated web of laws and regulations that control much of our future. Equally important, we understand the Maine lobster fishery and all that it means to our families, communities, and our state.

As lobstermen adapt to a future of unknowns, the MLA also has had to adapt as these issues exploded onto the scene. The MLA's board and small staff persevered in executing a plan to stand up to the federal government and to non-governmental organizations seemingly determined to erase the fishery.

None of this has come easily. For decades, the MLA has squeaked by on membership dues from a core group of lobstermen who have always believed a strong MLA enables a strong lobster industry. However, the complexity of advocating for the lobster industry on whale rules and offshore wind has required the MLA to hire lawyers, experts and consultants to bolster MLA's voice in pushing back hard on the multi-pronged efforts to make lobstering a thing of the past. We have remained nimble and we have raised the money necessary to get this work done. We are extremely proud of the team now in place and the caliber of work we are able to do for the lobster industry.

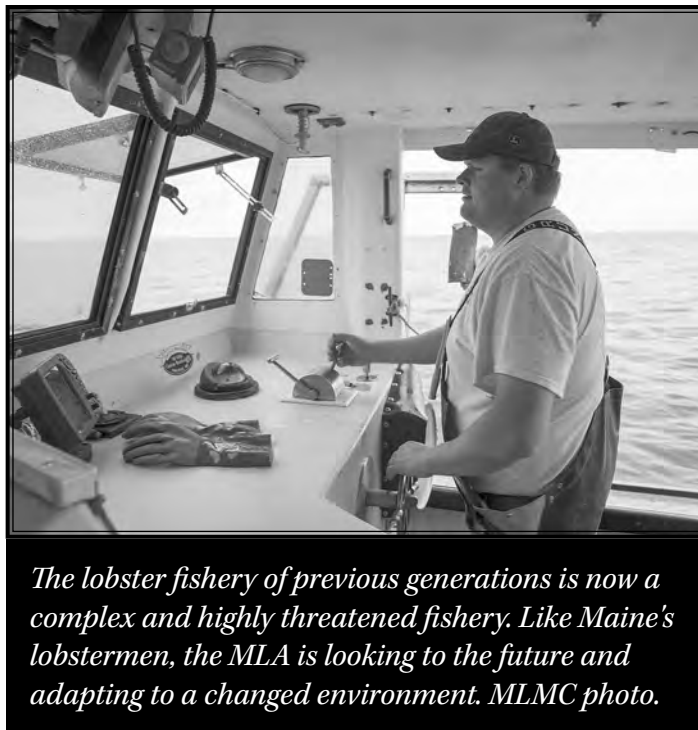
But it's like running a marathon. You must have the physical resources to keep pounding the pavement, mile after mile. You also must have the mental stamina to keep at it,

even when the goal seems so far away. The MLA is now in the middle of a marathon and we are looking very closely at our resources in order to use what we have in the most efficient way possible. Because we have to win this race.

The MLA's primary focus is to advocate for its members. To do this, the MLA must be properly staffed and funded. Those serving as MLA Directors must be committed to helping the MLA effectively carry out its mission. One step toward making sure the MLA continues to do this well was to hire our first Chief Operating Officer, Amber-Jean Nickel, in March. She is working closely with the board and staff to keep the organization strong and laser beam focused.

As Policy Director, my time is now dedicated to working with the board to advocate for our members on pressing policy issues — currently whale rules and offshore wind continue to be the highest priorities.

Members should expect to see more changes from the MLA as the organization continues to grow and evolve. The MLA is now in its 69th year. We have a lot of history under our belt but our mission remains crystal-clear: since 1954 the MLA has advocated for a sustainable lobster resource and the fishermen and communities that depend on it. That is certainly not as straightforward to achieve as it once was, but it is arguably more important than ever.



The lobster fishery of previous generations is now a complex and highly threatened fishery. Like Maine's lobstermen, the MLA is looking to the future and adapting to a changed environment. MLMC photo.

I am very proud to be the MLA's Policy Director. I have been running this marathon for many years now and have been re-invigorated by the outpouring of support for the MLA from all quarters of the state. This industry — the people, the work you do, the community — are all so special and truly worth fighting for. In just a few short years the MLA has accomplished more than we ever could have imagined in our quest to save the fishery, and we remain incredibly grateful for the tremendous support we've received from all of you.

As always, stay safe on the water.

Patrice

MLA DIRECTORS MEETING SUMMARY

The MLA Board of Directors met on April 5 at Darby's restaurant in Belfast. They welcomed attorney Chris Smith, who is guiding MLA through an organizational review. MLA's work has expanded significantly as it challenges NMFS's 10-year whale plan and the looming development of offshore wind in the Gulf of Maine. This has put tremendous strain on the MLA board, staff and financial resources.

As a 501(c)6 trade organization, the MLA is focused on the needs of its voting members. Membership dues and contributions from industry members are considered a business expense of the donor, but donations from the public are not charitable and thus not tax deductible. The MLA board discussed the MLA's organizational structure and the challenges it presents with fundraising. The MLA board is committed to ensuring the MLA is positioned to take on the current and any future challenges. The MLA will collaborate with the Maine Lobstermen's Community Alliance to

expand resources available to fight to preserve Maine's lobstering heritage.

The MLA board once again discussed an offshore wind procurement bill expected to be considered by the Legislature. The bill seeks to procure 1,000 MW of offshore wind by 2030 (~55 turbines) and 2,800 MW by 2035 (~155 turbines). The crux of the proposal is that if BOEM leases Maine offshore waters for wind farms, resulting jobs should go to Maine union workers, citizens should benefit from the power generated, and turbines should be sited outside of LMA 1. BOEM could permit wind farms to be sited in the Gulf and power cabled to Massachusetts, New Hampshire or elsewhere. The MLA reiterated its strong opposition to offshore wind and concern over what it would mean for Maine and for our fisheries and ocean and affirmed its vote in opposition to this legislation.

On the legislative front, there was a change to the Lobster Legal Defense bill (LD 710) presented at the public hearing — to use Maine Lobster Marketing Collaborative funds rather than state General Fund dollars. The MLA executive



MAINE LOBSTERMEN'S ASSOCIATION UPDATE

committee supported revising the MLA's original comments in support of the bill to neither for nor against, noting that the MLA continues to support funding from the state's General Fund and opposes redirecting funds from MLMC's budget.

Kristan Porter informed the board that the EPA rule exempting Maine vessels from Tier 4 engine requirements sunsets at the end of this year. The board tasked Patrice to explore the possibility of extending the current exemption. There were no updates on the court cases. The MLA is waiting for the Appeals Court to issue its decision. The MLA Board of Directors will meet on May 3 at 5 p.m. at Darby's in Belfast.

SAVE MAINE LOBSTERMEN UPDATE

There is no rest for the weary when it comes to the whale issue. The MLA continues to play offense in three separate lawsuits while addressing regulatory and scientific issues.

On the legal front, we are in a holding pattern. The MLA Appeal has been fully briefed and arguments have been made to the panel of judges in the D.C. Appeals Court. All we can do is wait for the D.C. Appeals Court to issue its decision. Since this case has been expedited, we hope to hear from the court this spring.

With the passage of the six-year pause on any new whale rules, there is no immediate action required in the environmental groups' case, which remains with Judge Boasberg. The parties are required to file a Joint Status Report to the Court by July 10, 2023.

In mid-March, the MLA, along with a group of other lobster businesses and trade organizations, filed a lawsuit against the Monterey Bay Aquarium for making false and defamatory statements about Maine lobster fishing practices. Monterey Bay Aquarium's response to the complaint must be filed by May 22 and the initial round of briefings will conclude in late August.

On the regulatory front, in October the MLA again requested that NMFS re-categorize the Maine state waters' lobster fishery as a Category II fishery under MMPA. The request was made in response to NMFS's 2023 draft List of Fisheries. In late March, NMFS once again denied MLA's request. The MLA is very dissatisfied with NMFS's response and is considering possible next steps. The MLA also submitted extensive comments on NMFS's draft 2022 right whale stock assessment report in late April.

None of this work would be possible if it weren't for the support we have received from people and communities all over the state (even around the country!) — people like *you*. Thank you for understanding that this is not about choosing the lobster industry over protecting the whale -- it is about fighting for a solution that will ensure a future for both the whale and our state's precious lobstering heritage.

MAINE LOBSTER ZONE COUNCILS MEET

Department of Marine Resources (DMR) Commissioner Keliher attended each of the seven zone council meetings in April. The zone councils discussed the proposal by ASMFC to increase the minimum gauge to increase lobster reproduction as a safety buffer to maintain strong lobster landings. DMR staff updated council members on the historic Congressional action in December of 2022 which put a six-year pause on new whale rules and provided research funds to better understand the causes of harm to right whales. DMR also provided updates on the status of federal funding, which will result in direct payments to lobstermen to offset costs of compliance with the whale rules, and on several bills under consideration by the Legislature. The Lobster Advisory Council will meet in early May to discuss these issues.

NMFS MARCH 2023 UPDATES TO TRT

Rulemaking and Implementation Updates

Weak rope was recently approved for use in the Northeast lobster and Jonah crab fishery in LMA 3. A webinar was held in March at the request of the Atlantic Offshore Lobster Association for permit holders to provide a refresher of the weak rope requirements in LMA 3 and a demonstration of gear configuration options. To view the recording, use the GoTo Webinar link and fill out the registration form (please note: the recording did not capture the demonstration; we are working on providing a video demonstration).

Updates on Known Right Whale Entanglements:

#3812 (*Nimbus*), 15-year-old male first seen entangled off Georgia on January 20. After the entanglement response on January 20, only a short segment of rope remained in the whale's mouth. A New England Aquarium aerial survey team saw *Nimbus* south of Martha's Vineyard on March 10 and he appears to have shed the remainder of the line trailing from his mouth and is now fully gear

free. At this time, the full extent to which this entanglement impacted *Nimbus*' health remains unclear.

#4545, 8-year-old female first seen entangled in Southern New England on February 9. #4545 was resighted by the Center for Coastal Studies in Cape Cod Bay on March 29. The configuration of entangling gear now involves at least three embedded body wraps and the animal's condition has declined. A response team was able to remove a portion of trailing, large-diameter line and attach a telemetry buoy to the individual.

Right Whale Calving Updates

As of March 30, the calf count is still 12 (11 mother/calf pairs plus the dead perinate). There have been no new calves since the January 2023 report was sent out. Additional details can be found on the North Atlantic Right Whale Calving Season 2023 webpage. This will be the final update for the 2023 calving season unless any new calves are sighted. At least four of the mother/calf pairs have been sighted in Cape Cod Bay - Pediddle (#1012), Medusa (#1208), Porcia (#3293), and Pilgrim (#4340).

Large Whale Stranding Updates

Since December 1, 2022, there have been 30 reported mortalities of large whales, from Maine to Florida. Of these, there were three sperm whales (2 NY, 1 FL), 21 humpback whales (3 NY, 9 NJ, 1 MD, 5 VA, 3 NC), 2 right whales (1 VA, 1 NC), 1 sei whale (NC), and 3 minke whales (2 MA, 1 NY). Stranding network partners conducted full necropsies on 16 animals and collected Level A data on six more. Five of the humpback whales were reported floating offshore and were not seen again after initial reporting. Of the animals that were necropsied, vessel strike was likely the cause of death in at least 10 cases.

SCRUTINY OF OFFSHORE WIND DEVELOPMENT GROWS

As Maine's fishing community braces for BOEM to move forward with Gulf of Maine offshore wind leasing, scrutiny over the impacts of wind projects is growing.

BOEM plans to designate Offshore Wind Energy Areas in the Gulf of Maine by next winter and to issue leases to energy companies to develop these areas by the winter of 2025. To date, BOEM has received notice from five energy companies of their interest to develop wind farms in the Gulf. All of the companies indicate they would develop beyond 20 miles from shore and two companies propose sites outside LMA 1. The Maine Legislature is expected to consider an offshore wind procurement bill to develop 55 wind turbines (1,000 MW) by 2030 and 155 turbines (2,800 MW) by 2035.

New Jersey announced it is dedicating nearly \$2 million to study the environmental impacts of offshore wind amid concerns over a spike in whale and dolphin strandings. The funds will be used to monitor whales and harbor seals near wind energy projects off Atlantic City. The Department of Defense released maps identifying vast areas of the mid-Atlantic coast for offshore wind development as "highly problematic" for the Department.

Maine's Offshore Wind Research Consortium has convened to discuss research priorities to inform the impacts of offshore wind development in the Gulf of Maine. The group is discussing priorities in four areas: 1) Reduce co-use conflicts, 2) Impact on wildlife, 3) Socio-economic impacts and community benefit, and 4) Technology development.

On April 26 BOEM published a request for information on possible commercial wind energy development in the Gulf of Maine. Comments due June 12.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

The Maine 131st Legislative session continues in session. The following bills have been proposed for consideration by the Legislature this session.

LD 710 An Act to Fund the Lobster Legal Defense Fund, sponsored by Rep. Faulkingham of Winter Harbor. This bill originally proposed to provide a one-time \$1 million general fund appropriation to reimburse lobster fishing associations and labor unions for legal costs involving the federal whale regulations. The sponsor amended the bill to change the funding mechanism to direct 20% of Maine Lobster Marketing Collaborative funds to the LDF until 2030 and no General Fund support. The Marine Resources Committee held a public hearing was held on March 23 and work session on April 13 and voted to carry over this bill until the next session.

LD 811 An Act to Create a Restricted Senior Lobster and Crab Fishing License, sponsored by Rep. Perkins of Dover-Foxcroft. This bill proposes a new restricted senior lobster and crab fishing license for individuals 70 years or older which is exempt from current entry requirements. Under this proposal, those age 70 and older who previously held a Class I, Class II or Class III license for at least 5 consecutive years would be eligible for a license that is limited to 100 lobster

Continued on page 8



MAINE LOBSTERMEN'S ASSOCIATION UPDATE

MLA update continued from page 7

and older who previously held a Class I, Class II or Class III license for at least 5 consecutive years would be eligible for a license that is limited to 100 lobster traps. The Marine Resources Committee held a public hearing on March 23 and work session on April 6 and voted ought not to pass.

LD 563 An Act to Assert State Sovereignty over Ocean Waters up to 12 Nautical Miles off the State's Coast, sponsored by Sen. Brakey of Androscoggin. This bill proposes that, notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the State of Maine owns and may exercise jurisdiction over and control all waters, and all submerged lands lying under those waters, within the rise and fall of the tide seaward 12 nautical miles. The Marine Resources Committee held a public hearing on April 6 and work session on April 13 and voted ought not to pass.

LD 574 An Act to Amend the Laws Governing Working Waterfront Covenants, sponsored by Rep. Rielly of Westbrook. This amended bill allows certain non-profit organizations whose purposes or powers include retaining or protecting coastal community values, culture or heritage, coastal habitat or real property that provides coastal water access to hold working waterfront covenants. The Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry Committee held a public hearing March 13 and work session on April 13 and voted Ought to Pass as Amended.

LD 742 An Act to Divest State Pensions from Companies Boycotting Maine Lobster, sponsored by Sen. Brakey of Androscoggin. This bill proposes to require the Maine Public Employees Retirement System to divest any stocks, securities or other obligations of any corporation or company that trades in lobsters and that has publicly stated it will not trade in lobsters caught in Maine waters or caught by any Maine commercial lobster license holder. The Labor and Housing Committee held a public hearing on March. Work sessions were held April 4 and 10 and voted ought not to pass.

LD 1444 An Act to Amend the Laws Governing Eligibility Restrictions for Commercial Menhaden Fishing Licenses, sponsored by Rep Faulkingham of Winter Harbor. This bill proposes to relax entry requirements to the menhaden fishery by adding "2022" as a qualifying year to get a license. This would allow an additional 40 entrants to the fishery. The Marine Resources Committee held a public hearing on April 20 and work session on April 27.

LD 1552 An Act to Create the Lobster Innovation Fund, sponsored by Sen. Vitelli of Sagadahoc. This bill proposes to establish the Lobster Innovation Fund to provide stipends to Maine commercial lobstermen who participate in the testing of new lobster fishing technologies through a one-time appropriation in each year of the biennium to the fund (2023/2024 and 2024/2025). The Marine Resources Committee held a public hearing on April 27.

LD 1618 An Act to Create the Lobster Industry Working Group, sponsored by Rep. Golek Harpswell. This bill proposes to require the Department of Marine Resources to convene a working group to develop a longterm plan to support the lobster industry. The working group shall review and develop recommendations relating to the lobster industry, including, but not limited to, state and federal regulation, infrastructure needs, waterfront access, climate change concerns and marketing of the industry. By December 6, 2023, the department shall submit an interim report and recommendations, and a final report and recommendations by November 6, 2024, the department shall submit a final report and recommendations, including any suggested legislation, to the Joint Standing Committee on Marine Resources.

LD 370 An Act to Protect Marine Resources in Maine, sponsored by Sen. Reny of Lincoln. This is a concept draft that proposes to protect marine resources in the State.

LD 16 An Act to Make Technical Changes to Maine's Marine Resources Laws (DMR Bill), sponsored by Rep. Hepler of Woolwich. The bill proposes to amend several definitions, clarify apprentice requirements for tribes, clarifies halibut licensing requirements, and updates the administrative suspension process for certain circumstances.

LD 258 Includes Department of Marine Resources Biennial Budget. Referred to Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs. DMR's budget includes several initiatives comprised of a net increase of \$5,170,676 in General Fund, which includes \$3,600,600 in one-time funding, net increase of \$240,349 in Federal, and a net increase of \$416,824 in Other Special Revenue. This budget addresses some of the agency's highest priority needs. The requests include \$3.6 million to replace the agency's 70 year old Cessna plane with a Kodak 100; \$200k for ongoing maintenance of the Boothbay lab; an increase of \$100k to maintain DMR's boat fleet; and \$125k to cover increased Marine Patrol fuel costs. The Appropriations Committee has held numerous public hearings on the budget package.

LD 191 An Act to Amend the Laws Regarding Certain Business Equipment Tax Benefits, sponsored by Sen. Stewart of Aroostook. This bill proposes to exclude from eligibility for the business equipment tax exemption and the business equipment tax reimbursement a person that, based on 3rd-party certifications, bans, boycotts or otherwise restricts or prevents the sale or distribution of any product that is legally produced, harvested or grown in the State. The Taxation Committee held a public hearing on February 14.

Lobster Bills Not Yet Printed (as of 4/22/2023)

LR 1544 An Act to Allow Lobster Fishing in Federal Waters Under the Federal Endangered Species Act, sponsored by Rep. Adams of Lebanon.

LR 1793 An Act to Assist Lobster Fishing Apprentices to Obtain a License Within 5 Years, sponsored by Rep. Collamore of Waldoboro.

Offshore Wind Bills Not Yet Printed (as of 4/22/2023)

LR 741 An Act Regarding the Procurement of Energy from Offshore Wind Resources, sponsored by Sen. Lawrence of York.

LR 1895 An Act to Prohibit Offshore Wind Energy Development, sponsored by Rep. Strout of Harrington.

LR 1481 An Act to Require Federal Offshore Wind Development to Benefit Maine Communities, sponsored by Rep. Gere of Kennebunkport.

LR 1407 An Act to Require Legislative Approval of the Location and Construction of an Offshore Wind Port in Searsport, sponsored by Rep. Williams of Bar Harbor.

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

Accutech Marine	Interstate Lobster Co.	Novatec Braids LTD
Propellor	Island Fishing Gear & Auto Parts	Oliver Investments, LLC
Agri-Access	Island Fishermen's Wives	Pack Edge
Atlantic Edge Lobster	John's Bay Boat Co.	Port Clyde Fishermen's Cooperative
Bar Harbor Bank & Trust	Kittery Point Yacht Yard	Port Lobster Co.
Beals-Jonesport Coop Inc.	Lobster Trap Co.	RE Thomas Marine Hardware
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Bowdoin College	M & B Fish Co.	Riverdale Mills
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CEI	Maine Center for Coastal Fisheries	Seacoast Lobster Bands
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Chase Leavitt	Maine Lobstermen's Community Alliance	Shearwater Marine Surveying
Coastal Documentation II	Maine Ocean Lobster	South Bristol Fishermen's Cooperative
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Conary Cove Lobster Co.	Marine Hydraulic Engineering Co. Inc.	Tenants Harbor Fishermen's Cooperative
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Finestkind Scenic Cruises	Milton Cat	William Coffin & Sons
First National Bank	Nautilus Marine Fabrication	Winter Harbor Fishermen's Cooperative
F. W. Thurston Co. Inc.	New England Marine & Industrial Inc.	Woods Hole Group
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Gulf of Maine Lobster Foundation	Northeast Marine Survey	
Guy Cotten, Inc.		
Harbor Bait		
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Sign up for weekly scheduling updates online at <https://lists.legislature.maine.gov/sympa/info/mar-ip> or by emailing Linda LaCroix at MAR@legislature.gov or calling 207-287-1337.

Watch the committee meetings via the live stream available through the Legislature's Calendar at <https://legislature.maine.gov/Calendar>. Search for the specific date.

NEW BUILDING GIVES NEW LIFE TO BOWDOIN'S ARCTIC MUSEUM

By Melissa Waterman

The Peary-MacMillan Arctic Museum, housed in Hubbard Hall at Bowdoin College in Brunswick, was an eerie place. As you entered the Gothic, 120-year-old building, a full-size growling polar bear greeted you, soon followed by a rotund walrus and very large musk ox. Dozens of cases and displays showcased a broad array of artifacts from Arctic explorations by Maine's Admiral Robert Peary and explorer Donald MacMillan, both graduates of the college. The building evoked a time long past despite the museum's status as one of the country's premier Arctic museums.

But no more. In June, Bowdoin's new John and Lile Gibbons Center for Arctic Studies is opening. Its modern design also draws upon modern construction materials — mass timber. Mass timber is a mix of glue-laminated timber columns and beams and cross-laminated timber panels which can be configured in distinctive shapes. It is lighter than steel or concrete and has a lighter carbon footprint than other construction methods.



MacMillan's vessel, Bowdoin, locked in ice for the winter.

Bowdoin College opened the Arctic Museum in 1967. Donald MacMillan contributed film, photographs and Inuit items to the earlier collection of artifacts from Admiral Peary's Arctic journeys. MacMillan sailed to the Arctic thirty times during his long life. His skill as a mariner, in an area largely unexplored and definitely uncharted, was without parallel at the time. From all accounts, he brimmed with curiosity. He traveled over 300,000 miles throughout the Arctic, making charts, conducting scientific research, studying the native people of Labrador and Greenland, and compiled a dictionary of the Inuktitut language. MacMillan raised the funds for construction of the Arctic exploration vessel Bowdoin in 1921, which he captained for many years [the vessel is now owned and operated by the Maine Maritime Academy].

In the 1980s the college established the Arctic Studies Center with support from the Russell and Janet Doubleday Endowment. In subsequent years the Peary-MacMillan Arctic Museum's holdings expanded to include Alaskan and Canadian contemporary Inuit art while its programs broadened to address both historic and contemporary Arctic issues.

After being closed for several years, the museum and its collections moved into the new building this spring. To transport the life-sized stuffed animals was a complex task, requiring a window to be removed from Hubbard Hall and a professional rigging crew to hoist the specimens out of the building. After more than fifty years on display, the animals were then put in a freezer for several weeks to kill any hitchhiking insects, such as wool moths, which might be nibbling on their skins or fur.

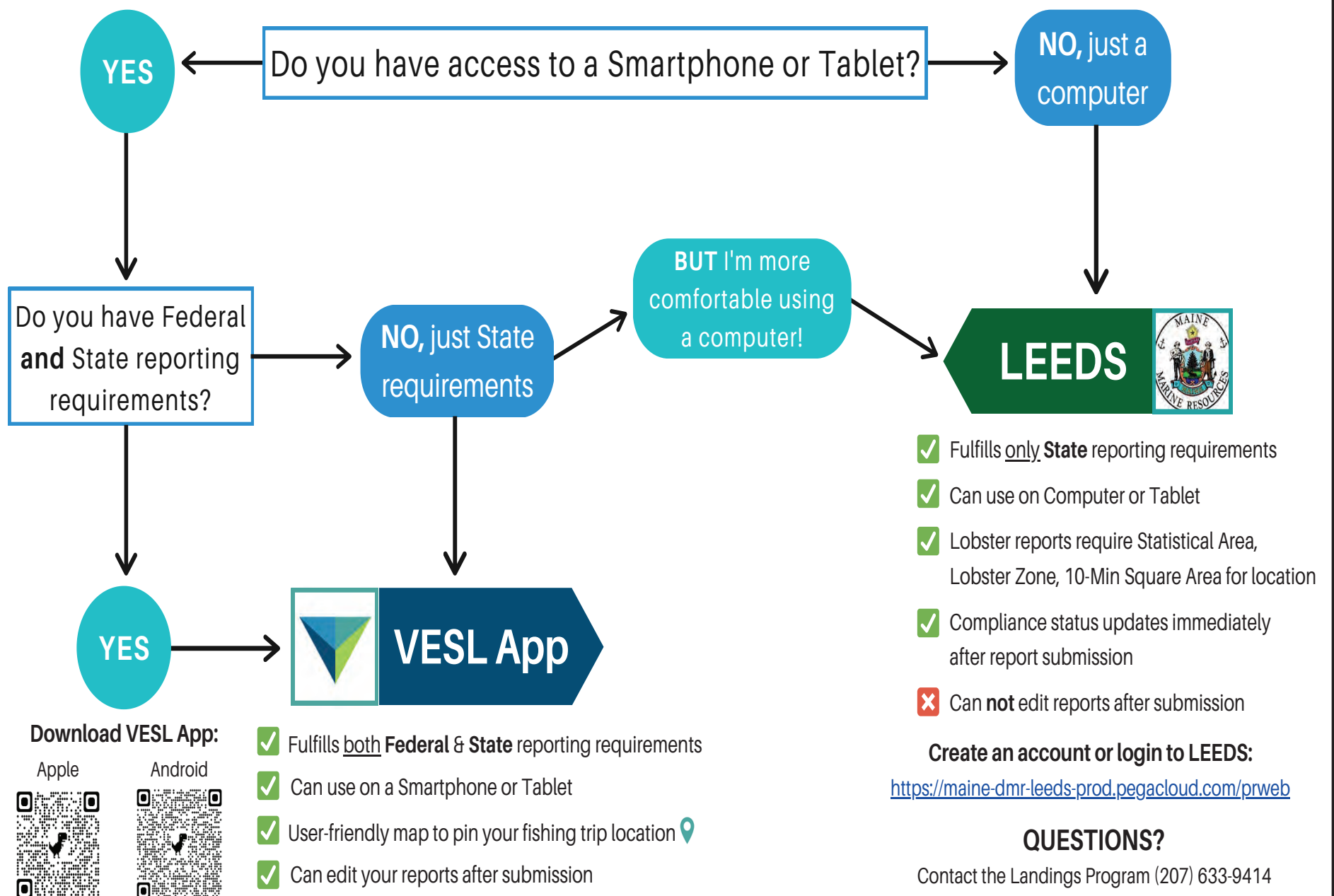
In addition to new space to house the museum, the 16,426-square-foot building includes archeology research and teaching labs, a classroom, an exhibit production workshop, and museum staff offices. For the staff, however, two things make the new building a definite plus: a huge elevator and its climate-controlled environment. Consistent humidity and temperature, which Hubbard Hall lacked, is crucial to maintaining delicate objects. In the new building the museum can mount displays, keep objects in storage or use them in classrooms without worry.

The Gibbons Center for Arctic Studies opens with three inaugural exhibits in June. The second floor will feature an ongoing, semipermanent exhibition called "At Home in the North." The third floor gallery will house "Collections and Recollections" and "Inuit Qiñigaani: Contemporary Inuit Photography," a photograph show of the Arctic taken by five Inuit photographers from Alaska, Canada, and Greenland.



Polar bear moving into his new quarters. Photos courtesy of Peary-MacMillan Arctic Museum.

WHICH ELECTRONIC REPORTING OPTION IS BEST FOR ME?





Thank you to our 2023 Donors.

The crisis is far from over. Help us keep fighting for you and your family!

Thank you to those whose donations to #SaveMaineLobstermen Campaign total \$100,000 or more

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Machias Savings Bank
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Greg Gamage & Arnie Gamage
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Willie Havener
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Help Us Keep Fighting for Our Heritage.



Donate \$1000 or more and receive this excellent sweatshirt.

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- \$365 "a dollar a day"
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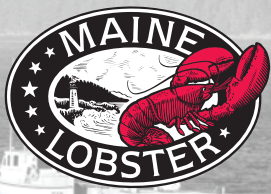
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

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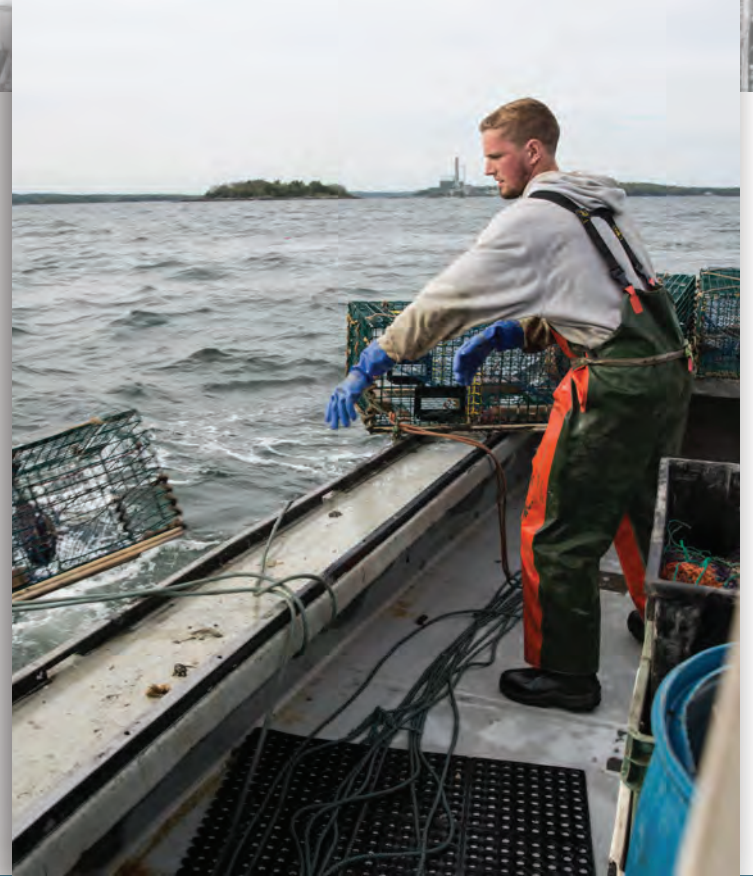
MAINE LOBSTER THE SWEETEST ON EARTH

MARKETING UPDATES

Every year, the MLMC conducts a nationwide survey to gauge consumer sentiment about Maine Lobster and how current issues are (or aren't) impacting perception and purchase intent. This year's key findings include the following:

- A vast majority of consumers have positive views of lobstermen and the fishery
- Only 30% of consumers are aware of the North Atlantic right whale issue, and interestingly, those more familiar with the issue are more inclined to support the fishery
- Solutions-oriented messaging highlighting the fishery's whale protection efforts resonates most strongly with consumers

The MLMC will continue telling stories of the fishery, putting the faces of the industry at the forefront, and emphasizing its positive impact on Maine communities.



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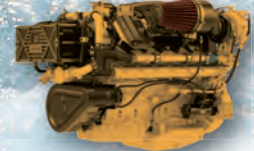
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TO YOUR HEALTH: *Stay vigilant about carbon monoxide*

By Melissa Waterman

It's colorless and practically odorless. It quickly causes headaches, dizziness, and confusion. Ultimately, it will take your life. Carbon monoxide is no joke.

Carla Guenther is chief scientist at the Maine Center for Coastal Fisheries in Stonington. Her husband is a local lobsterman. Guenther knows the threat of carbon monoxide poisoning is real for fishermen and can have devastating consequences.

"I know a [Downeast] lobsterman and his crew who last summer were having severe headaches and coughs for several weeks. They suspected carbon monoxide from an exhaust leak," she said. Nothing was found after having the exhaust system checked out at a local shipyard, but the captain and crew's symptoms persisted.

"Finally, the lobsterman had the local fire chief come on board with his carbon monoxide meter. They took the boat out and took several measurements," she continued. "Even underway at the outside helm the carbon monoxide measured higher than toxic levels."

With this information, the lobsterman took his boat back to the shipyard; this time the yard found the leak.

Carbon monoxide comes from the incomplete oxidation of carbon during combustion. It is emitted from internal combustion engines

disease. At higher concentrations, it leads to impaired vision and coordination; headaches; dizziness; confusion; nausea. At very high concentrations, it will quickly kill.

Lobster boats emit exhaust either through a pipe above the house or through "wet" exhaust, where the exhaust is released through the hull. The first system means that carbon monoxide is rising from the engine through the house, near the helm. Carbon dioxide, however, is heavier than air; it sinks. Thus any leaks in the system will cause carbon monoxide to build up exactly where the captain and crew work or rest.

A "wet" exhaust system, on the other hand, vents the exhaust toward the stern of the vessel. In either case, however, leaking carbon monoxide can build up if the day is calm and still or if the boat idles for a long time.



Carbon monoxide can build up in the wheelhouse or other areas where fishermen work. Downeast Boat Forum photo.

Carbon Monoxide concentrations and effects

1-70 ppm: minimal symptoms for healthy individuals, chest pain for others

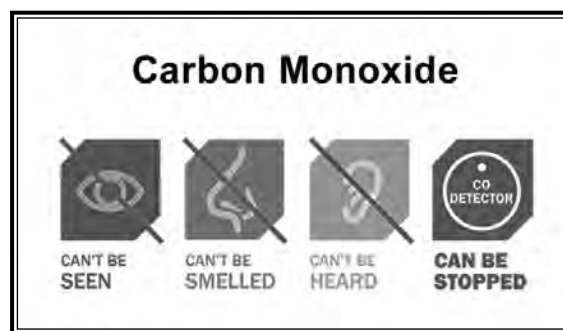
70-150 ppm: headache, fatigue and nausea

150-200 ppm: disorientation, unconsciousness, and death

Source: EPA, CDC

— cars, lawn mowers, diesel engines. When breathed in, carbon monoxide creates a chemical in the blood that inhibits intake of oxygen. How badly you get sick from carbon monoxide depends on how much is in the air and how long you breathe it.

At low concentrations, the gas will cause fatigue in healthy people and chest pain in people with heart



For those concerned about possible carbon monoxide build up while fishing can purchase a portable carbon monoxide meter to have aboard. The meters are inexpensive, between \$40 to \$120 at locations such as Home Depot or your local hardware store.

"In early January my husband bought himself a carbon monoxide meter that he takes on the boat to monitor what his exposure is," Guenther said. "At times it's been shockingly high and above toxic levels."

HEALTH INSURANCE STILL AVAILABLE IF YOU LOSE MAINECARE

DHHS press release

The Maine Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) announced today the launch of a Special Enrollment Period (SEP) through CoverME.gov, Maine's Health Insurance Marketplace, to help Maine people transitioning from MaineCare coverage after the COVID-19 pandemic explore affordable health insurance options and avoid gaps in coverage.

The Special Enrollment Period began on April 15, 2023, and will continue through July 31, 2024, allowing Maine individuals found no longer eligible for MaineCare to apply for plans through CoverME.gov outside of the annual Open Enrollment Period.

"This Special Enrollment Period will help those transitioning from MaineCare find a plan that works for them and maintain critical health coverage," said DHHS Commissioner Jeanne Lambrew. "We encourage anyone concerned about losing MaineCare coverage to visit CoverME.gov to explore their options and stay covered."

Individuals found ineligible for MaineCare during their renewal process because of income or other reasons will have their information transferred automatically to CoverME.gov.

People losing MaineCare coverage should visit CoverME.gov to create or log into an account, submit or review their application, and select "Recently lost MaineCare" from the list of Special Enrollment Periods. When they complete the application, CoverME.gov will determine if they are eligible for financial assistance to lower their CoverME.gov premium or out-of-pocket costs.

People who are currently enrolled in MaineCare should make sure their contact information is up to date by visiting MyMaineConnection.gov or calling 1-855-797-4357.

When it's time for renewal, they should look out for an envelope with a blue block, which will have renewal information and instructions inside. If it's blue, it's time to renew! Members who signed up for e-notices should keep an eye on their email for a message when it is time for their renewal.



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NEW PRODUCTS FEATURE SCOURGE OF THE COAST, GREEN CRABS

By Melissa Waterman

Creativity comes in many forms. Some of us fiddle with paint and paper, others make music or whittle duck decoys. And some of us truly think outside of the box. The distillers at Tamworth Distilling in Tamworth, New Hampshire, certainly do. They decided to take a nuisance crustacean, the invasive green crab, and make a fine whiskey with it.



Green crab-flavored whiskey might be an acquired taste. Tamworth Distillery photo.

Will Robinson, the product developer at Tamworth Distilling, learned from University of New Hampshire researchers just how pernicious green crabs had become in that state. The small crabs are ferocious predators. Warmer winters and a lack of scouring ice have allowed the tiny terrors to decimate soft shell clam beds throughout New England. Some towns hand pick or use netting to keep the crabs from devouring juvenile clams each

year but even so, the scourge continues unabated.

So Tamworth Distillery, already known for such unusual liquors as Graverobber Unholy Rye and Bird of Courage Roasted Turkey Whiskey, created Crab Trapper Whiskey.

According to Robinson, approximately one pound of green crabs goes into every bottle of Crab Trapper. First the crabs are cleaned and steamed. Then they are made into a crab stock. The stock is distilled using a vacuum still, which allows for precise temperature control. The distillate is mixed with a specific blend of spices and then combined with a four-year-old bourbon base.

The taste of Crab Trapper Whiskey? According to the company's web site, "The crab is present lightly on the nose, accompanied by coriander and bay to smooth out any high notes. The body carries hints of the maple and vanilla oak notes lent from the full-bodied base. The spirit finishes with heavier notes of clove, cinnamon, and allspice, leaving a light, pleasant spice on the palate."

If whiskey is not your thing, you might prefer a new fish sauce. Maine chef Ali Waks Adam thinks that her green crab-based fish sauce might help keep the Maine population in check. Five years ago, when she was working with Marissa McMahan, from the non-profit Manomet, and University of Maine food scientists on ideas for using green crabs as food items, she remembered the unique flavor of fish sauce.

Fish sauce is used widely in Thai and other Asian cuisines. It is a pungent, salty liquid brimming with the elusive umami flavor loved by chefs. Good fish sauces are made from a mixture of fish and salt that has been allowed to ferment for up to two years.

Waks Adam was curious if the green crabs could possibly make a good, Maine-made fish sauce. With a \$83,000 grant from Maine Sea Grant, she and her colleagues have mixed hundreds of pounds of frozen green crabs with salt, packed the mixtures into fermenting crocks, and stored them at various temperatures. They've sent small amounts of their resulting green crab sauces to 20 chefs and fish sauce aficionados throughout the Northeast.

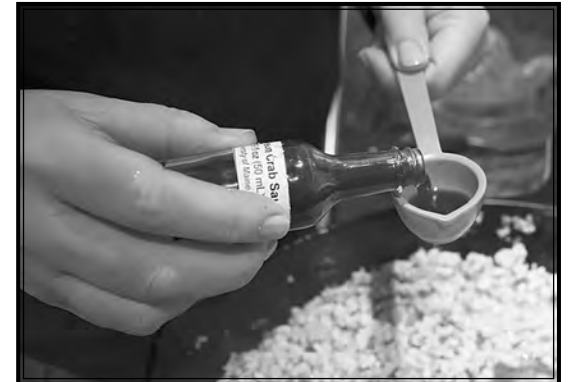


Photo courtesy of the Portland Press Herald.

Responses to the sauce have been positive, from "very fishy" to a "crab/ocean-forward flavor experience" according to a recent article in the *Portland Press Herald*. Stay tuned for other green crab-based products on a grocery shelf in the near future!



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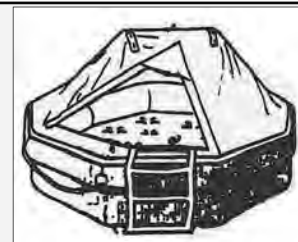
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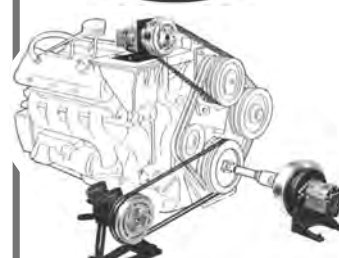
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MAINE SEAFOOD FANS HEAD TO BOSTON

The Maine Lobstermen's Association once again returned to Seafood Expo North America, formerly known as the Boston Seafood Show, in March with a busload of seafood enthusiasts. The day-long trip on March 13, co-sponsored by Hannaford and Machias Savings Bank, included tickets to the show and an afternoon reception hosted by the Maine Lobster Marketing Collaborative.

The trip helped participants to better understand the world markets that Maine lobster competes within and to recognize the stature the state's lobster holds within those markets. Plus there was time to enjoy plenty of fine seafood at the end of the day!



A crew of cheerful lobstermen, MLA staff, and industry people arrive at the Boston Convention and Exposition Center in March.



UMaine graduate students Tolu Oyikeke, left, and Krissa Davis, right, enjoying the trip.



Left to right: Aaron Whitman, Krissa Davis and Josh Stoll enjoying seafood treats at the reception after the show.



Left to right: Chantal Jennings, MLA COO Amber-Jean Nickel and MLA staff person Mindy Coath at the seafood reception.



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BRINGING NEW FACES INTO THE LOBSTER FISHERY

From Seafood Source, reprinted with permission

Luke's Lobster restaurant chain has taken the initiative to increase Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) youth involvement in the Maine lobster industry through its growing Lift All Boats mentorship program, which gives students a chance to take part in the industry.

Luke's Lobster began the Lift All Boats Project in summer 2022 with four high school students in Portland, Maine from diverse backgrounds. The students worked on the water with local fishermen in Portland and representatives from Luke's Lobster to learn about the lobstering processes and network to seek potential future employment opportunities.

"Almost every lobsterman in Maine is a white person, and we investigated why and realized that in large part it's because the sustainability regulations that keep licensing closed are set up in a way that only the very close connections, usually the children or family members of existing lobstermen, can become lobstermen in the future. The only sure way in is a student program that really relies on having close connections in the industry," said Luke's Lobster CEO and Chief Innovation Officer Ben Conniff.



Last year's participant Joshua Lamour. Island Institute photo.

The first step to getting the program off the ground had the leadership team at Luke's Lobster purchase a boat and consult with local lobstermen in the greater Portland area to gauge interest and sponsorship from locally licensed lobstermen. After receiving a strong amount of positive feedback, they turned to outlets such as Portland Public Schools and local Boys and Girls clubs to seek student interest.

Conniff said the program began with four students, and for summer 2023 the company received 58 applicants and increased the program to 12 slots.

Students will receive a daily stipend and their own tracking gear and will start the day around eight in the morning out on Portland, Maine's Casco Bay.

Luke's Lobster staff organizes rides for the students, and lunch at their Portland, Maine restaurant each day. The program also regularly hosts guest speakers that present to the students during lunchtime to expand their knowledge of the industry.

"We stay in touch with the students once we're off the water and they're back in school and see if they are planning to come back next year and see if we can support them in the meantime. We also like to talk about their long-term goals," Conniff said.

"The students themselves are really the ones to be celebrated here. They're breaking down barriers and pushing themselves out of their comfort zone and learning new things. This is a lot for 15-year-olds who have not had a job before, and now they're out on the water and I'm super impressed by their dedication."



Learning to lobster takes time and commitment. Luke's Lobster photo.

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BOEM SEEKS PUBLIC INPUT ON GULF OF MAINE OFFSHORE WIND ENERGY AREAS

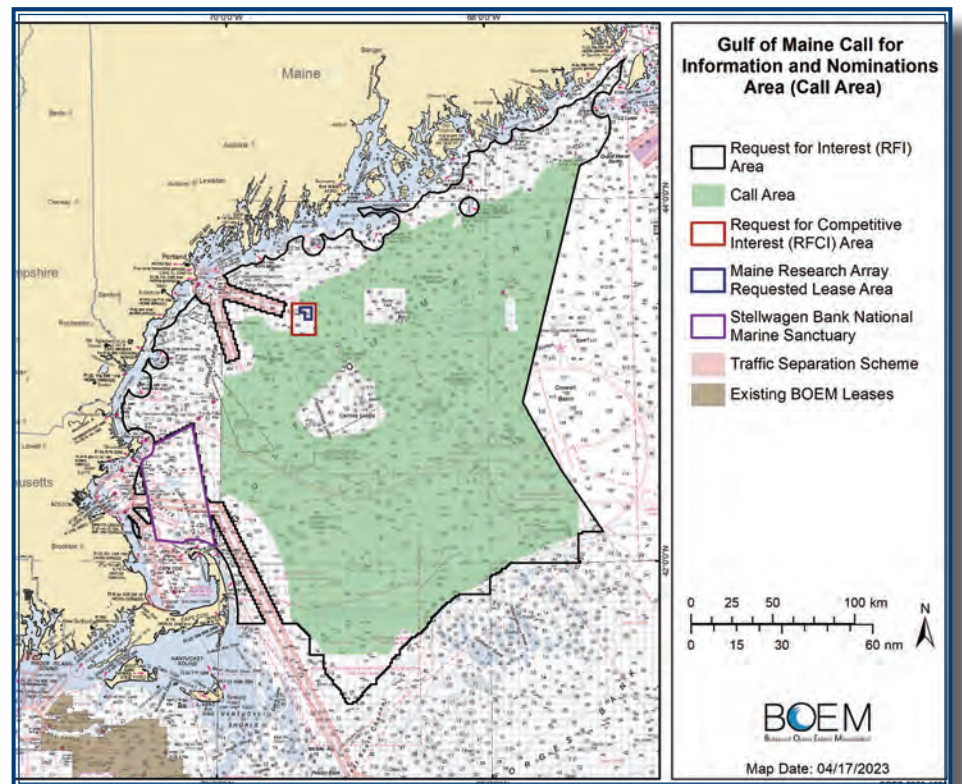
BOEM Press Release

The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) in late April published its Gulf of Maine Call for Information and Nominations (Call). This Call invites public comment on, and assesses interest in, possible commercial wind energy development in areas offshore Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Maine. The Call is an early step in the leasing process and the first required by BOEM regulations.

“BOEM is committed to transparent, inclusive and data-driven processes, and public input is essential to helping us determine areas that may be suitable for offshore wind development in the Gulf of Maine,” said BOEM Director Elizabeth Klein. “We are still early in the planning and leasing process, and we look forward to the multiple future opportunities for engagement.”

BOEM published the Call for Information and Nominations in the Federal Register on April 26. Publication starts a a 45-day public comment period. BOEM will accept nominations and comments through 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on June 12, 2023.

After the public comment period closes, BOEM will review and analyze commercial nominations and public comments as well as information from government and Tribal consultations and the Gulf of Maine Intergovernmental Renewable Energy Task Force.



The Gulf of Maine Intergovernmental Renewable Energy Task force will be meeting to discuss BOEM's planning activities on May 10 and 11 in Bangor. Comments are due on June 12.

Comments on the "Call for Information and Nominations" are due on June 12.

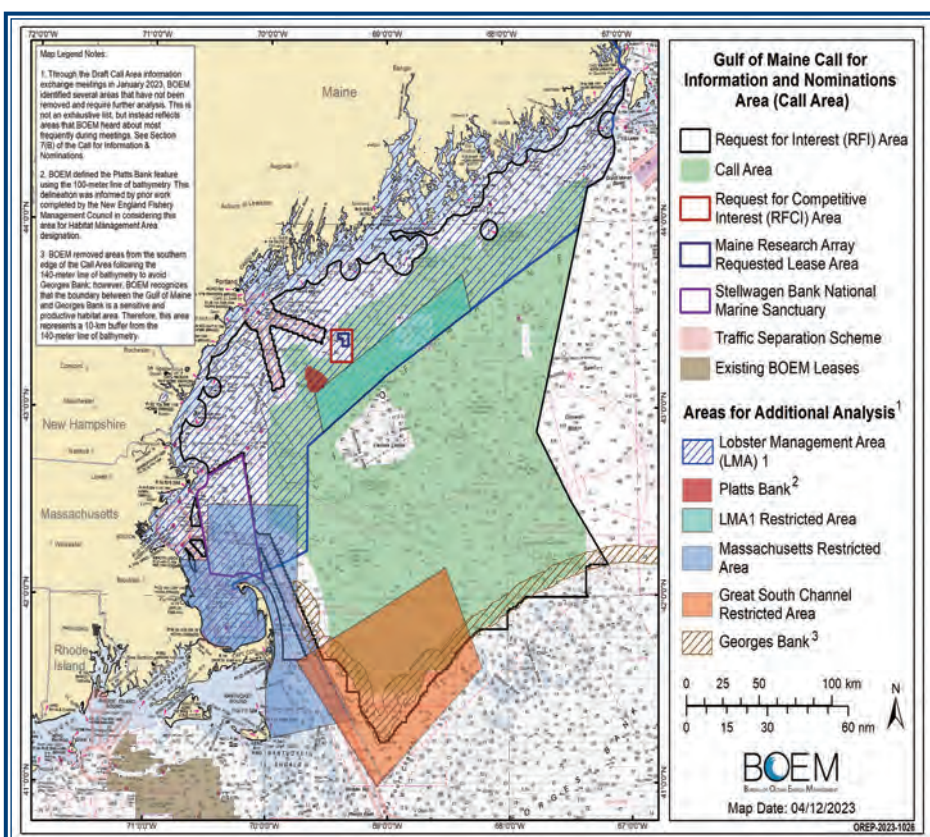
In August 2022, the Department of the Interior announced a “Request for Interest” (RFI) to gauge whether commercial interest existed in obtaining wind energy leases within an area in the Gulf of Maine comprising about 13.7 million acres. BOEM hosted a series of information exchanges on the draft Call Area from January-February 2023 to get feedback from Tribes, states, existing ocean users, and the general public.

The final Call Area, as detailed in the Federal Register, reduces the RFI area by nearly 30% to 9.8 million acres. In the final Call Area, BOEM removed approximately 160,000 acres from future consideration to avoid Georges Bank.

BOEM has identified four areas that BOEM specifically seeks public input on during this next phase of review, including: Lobster Management Area I, Platts Bank, Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan Restricted Areas, and Georges Bank (the area immediately adjacent along the southern boundary of the Call Area). This is not an exhaustive list; however, it represents the areas that were most commented on in the most recent public engagement.

BOEM aims to address and better understand any concerns from the public and encourages input and feedback to help inform its decision-making. It will

host its third Gulf of Maine Intergovernmental Renewable Energy Task Force meeting May 10 and 11 in Bangor, Maine. The purpose of the meeting is to update Task Force members and the public on BOEM’s commercial and research offshore wind energy planning activities and to discuss next steps for the Gulf of Maine. Additional information can be found at www.boem.gov/Gulf-of-Maine.



The chart above shows the final Call area in green and areas for additional analysis, such as Platts Bank and LMA1.

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-John Petersdorf, CEO of Bean Maine Lobster Inc.



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In the NEWS

NEW PROGRAM TO REMOVE DERELICT FISHING GEAR

NOAA announced an \$8 million award to William & Mary's Virginia Institute of Marine Science to house a new national program to remove derelict fishing gear. The "TRAP" program (Trap Removal, Assessment & Prevention) will launch a national competition to fund derelict fishing traps removal projects which synthesize the collected data to inform prevention and mitigation policies at the state and federal levels. The annual competition will award six-15 sub-grants per year, with total funding on the order of \$1.5 million annually. The TRAP program will initially focus on the gear used to catch crabs (blue, Dungeness and stone) and lobsters (American and spiny).



NOAA photo.

MAINE'S COMMERCIAL SEAFOOD HARVEST DROPS 120 MILLION POUNDS IN TEN YEARS

2022 was the first time since 1975 that Maine's reported annual seafood harvest has fallen short of 200 million pounds (197 million in total). In fact, the cumulative volume of Maine's commercial fisheries dropped by more than 120 million pounds between 2012 and 2022, according to Department of Marine Resources (DMR) data. Even with the decline in overall volume, however, the overall value of Maine's statewide seafood landings has increased by \$43 million in the past decade.

While some fisheries, such as northern shrimp and sea urchins, have nearly disappeared, others continue but at diminished levels. Softshell clams had their lowest-ever documented total harvest by volume in 2022. Herring landings have plummeted due to quota restrictions. The quota set for herring by the New England Fishery Management Council has dropped sharply over the past decade, causing Maine herring landings to plummet nearly 96%, from more than 92 million pounds in 2012 to less than 4 million last year.

ELVER POACHING SHUTS DOWN MARITIME PROVINCES' FISHERY

The Canadian Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) shut down elver fishery in the Nova Scotia and New Brunswick on April 15 amid growing concerns of illegal poaching and violence. The fishery was closed for 45 days due to conservation and safety concerns. DFO said it stepped up monitoring of the fishery in recent weeks, including patrolling rivers, inspecting holding facilities and conducting surveillance and inspections at airports and border crossings. The monitoring led to multiple seizures and arrests and showed that unreported fishing accounted for a significant proportion of elver landings, it said. "Conflicts have escalated to violence and threats, risking the safety of harvesters and constituting a threat to the proper management and control of the fishery," the federal department said in a statement. "Closing the elver fishery is a required response to address these combined risks."

NEW HEAD AT THE ISLAND INSTITUTE

Kimberly Hamilton was appointed to serve as the Island Institute's new president in April. Hamilton served as interim chief programs officer since September 2022. Prior to that position, she oversaw the Institute's Climate, Economic Resilience and Leadership programs and served as a member of the senior leadership team. Before coming to the Island Institute, Hamilton was president of FocusMaine, where she led efforts to accelerate job creation in the agriculture, aquaculture, and biopharmaceutical sectors. She has also served as the chief impact officer at Feeding America and director of strategy planning and management at the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Hamilton lives on Chebeague Island. She received her Ph.D. in demography from Brown University and her master's from John Hopkins University.

NEW JERSEY WIND PROJECT LIKELY TO ADVERSELY AFFECT RIGHT WHALES, SAYS NOAA

The planned Ocean Wind 1 energy project [off New Jersey] "is likely to adversely affect, but is not likely to jeopardize" threatened and endangered sea life when the 1,100-megawatt turbine array is built off New Jersey, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service issued its final biological opinion under the federal Endangered Species Act, as part of the Bureau of Offshore Energy Management's review of plans by wind developer Ørsted for up to 98 turbines on its lease about 15 miles off Atlantic City, N.J. The biological opinion states that highly endangered North Atlantic right whales could have their behavior disrupted, but not be injured by activities related to the wind project.

CALIFORNIA CRAB SEASON SHORTENED BY PRESENCE OF WHALES

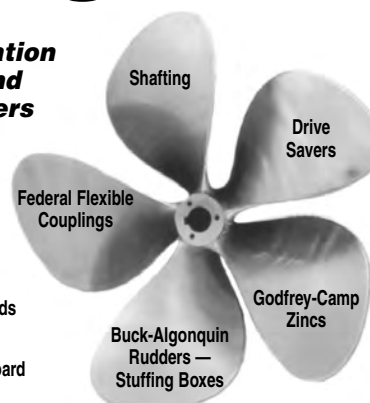
The California Department of Fish and Wildlife ended this year's Dungeness crab season earlier than expected, on April 15 at noon. The early end, combined with a delayed start on December 31, means that the 2023 season was much shorter than usual. In addition, fishermen in certain zones off California were required to reduce their total traps by 50% this season. The early end is due to Humpback whales, which are migrating to coastal waters to forage for food.

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Events Calendar

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

May 1-4

ASMFC spring meeting, Arlington, VA. FMI: www.asmf.org.

May 2

Aquaculture Public Hearing, Pemaquid Mussel Farms, 4 p.m., Mount Desert Island High School Library, Bar Harbor.

May 3

MLA Board of Directors meeting, 5 p.m., Darby's restaurant, Belfast.

May 6

Auburn Lobster Festival, Freedom Plaza, Auburn. Music, food, craft brews. Portion of proceeds to benefit SaveMaineLobstermen. FMI: <https://www.auburnlobsterfestival.com>.

May 7

"Band Together: A concert to protect Maine's lobstering heritage," Elks Lodge #188, 1945 Congress Street, Portland. 2-6pm. Lobster rolls and auction, featuring music by Holy Smoke, and other local bands. Tickets and FMI: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/band-together-concert-to-save-maine-lobstermen-tickets-576594197767>.

May 22

Free Fishing Partnership Safety Training, 7:30 a.m.-4 p.m., Jonesport Coast Guard station. To register: email mcarpenter@fishingpartnership.org or call 978-282-4847.

May 23

Free Fishing Partnership Drill Conductor Certification, 8 a.m.-3 p.m., Jonesport Coast Guard station. To register: email mcarpenter@fishingpartnership.org or call 978-282-4847.

Aquaculture Public Hearing, Bailey Coffin, 1 p.m., Freeport Town Hall. FMI: <https://www.maine.gov/dmr/meetings>.

May 25

Free Fishing Partnership Safety Training, 7:30 a.m.-4 p.m., Boothbay Harbor Coast Guard station. To register: email mcarpenter@fishingpartnership.org or call 978-282-4847.

May 26

Free Fishing Partnership Drill Conductor Certification, 8 a.m.-3 p.m., Boothbay Harbor Coast Guard station. To register: email mcarpenter@fishingpartnership.org or call 978-282-4847.

June 7

MLA Board of Directors meeting, 5 p.m., Darby's restaurant, Belfast.

June 12

Deadline for comment on BOEM Gulf of Maine Call for Information and Nominations. To submit comments, go to Federal eRulemaking Portal <http://www.regulations.gov>. In the search box, enter BOEM-2023-0025 and then click "search."

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June 16

10th Annual Claw Down lobster bite competition at The Shipyard in Boothbay Harbor.

June 17

Save Maine Lobstermen Fundraiser sponsored by the South Bristol Fisherman's Co-Op.

2023 MAINE LOBSTER BOAT RACING



SCHEDULE

17 JUNE Boothbay Harbor Ashlee Lowery (207) 808-9230	1 JULY Moosabec Reach, Beals Island/Jonesport Roy Fagonde (207) 610-4607	30 JULY Harpsswell Amanda Peacock (207) 756-3104 Kristina York (207) 449-7571	19 AUGUST Long Island Lisa Kimball (207) 332-3968 Amy Tierney (207) 317-1576	14 OCTOBER Annual Meeting/Awards Banquet Robinson's Wharf, Southport Jon Johansen (207)-223-8846
18 JUNE Rockland Nick O'Hara (207) 542-4348 Mike Mayo (207) 542-1879	9 JULY Stonington Jeff Eaton (207) 598-0488	12 AUGUST Winter Harbor Chris Byers (207) 963-7139	20 AUGUST Portland Katie Werner (207) 807-1832	All Races: Sign-up 8 to 9 AM Races Start 10 AM Exception: Long Island: Sign up 10 to 11 AM, Start 12 PM.
25 JUNE Bass Harbor Colyn Rich (207) 479-7288	23 JULY Friendship Robin Reed (207) 975-9821	13 AUGUST Merritt Bracket, Pemaquid Brent Fogg (207) 350-7712 Sheila McLain (207) 677-2100		Listen on VHF Channel 10



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