



# LANDINGS

News & Views from Maine's Lobstering Community

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## DECLINE IN V-NOTCHING MAY PUT LOBSTER FISHERY AT RISK

By Melissa Waterman

Protecting female lobsters from harvest is a practice almost as old as the state of Maine. Cutting a small V-notch in the flipper to the right of the center flipper of an egg-bearing female lobster protects it from being landed in the commercial catch, allowing it to produce eggs multiple times during her life. Since less than 1% of the eggs will survive long enough to become a mature lobster, having lots and lots of eggs in the water helps ensure that there will be harvestable lobsters in future years.

The practice dates back over 100 years. In 1872, the Maine Legislature passed its first law protecting egg-bearing female lobsters. In 1874, the state established a minimum legal size for harvested lobsters. And in 1917, the Legislature put in place the first marking program for female egg-bearing lobsters, requiring that a hole be punched in the tails of those females purchased by the state to bolster natural egg production. In 1948 the Legislature passed a law that declared any female lobster with a V-notch in her tail flipper could not be taken or sold, regardless of whether she was still carrying eggs. The new law had widespread support from lobstermen. The practice of notching eggers was done voluntarily by lobstermen until 2002 when it became mandatory as part of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) Lobster Management Plan.

In recent years V-notching rates among Maine lobstermen have taken a tumble. In 2008, approximately 80% of all legal-sized egged lobsters examined through the Department of Marine Resources (DMR) Sea Sampling program bore V-notches. That figure declined to around 60% in 2015, and has ranged between 60 to 66% each year since then, according to DMR figures. The overall decline in



V-notching female egg-bearing lobsters is a longstanding practice in the Maine lobster fishery. Photo R. Bukaty AP.

V-notching from its high point concerns DMR scientists and lobstermen as well. "V-notching is our future," said Matinicus lobsterman Jarod Bray. "More eggs in the ocean means more lobsters in the future. We are all going to reap rewards from doing it."

Continued on page 3

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## MAINE LOBSTERMEN'S ASSOCIATION CELEBRATES 70 YEARS OF ADVOCACY

By Robin Alden

For more than 70 years, the Maine Lobstermen's Association (MLA) has shaped the fishery that lobstermen make their living from today. Not only is the association strong at 70 but also the fishery is one of the healthiest community fisheries in the world. This success is worth celebrating.

Seventy years of showing up. Speaking up. Standing up for what the MLA felt was best for the whole industry and for lobstering communities.

"Lobstering exists for big boats, small boats, tiny boats, elderly, kids. We are using traditional gear; we have a viable business model and a diverse fleet that can support our rural communities. That is everything," said Patrice McCarron, MLA's policy director.

Without the MLA, lobstering in Maine today would be quite different. Here is a quick look at just some of the association's accomplishments.

**No oil refinery in Eastport:** Led by Jonesport lobsterman Ossie Beal (President 1967-1974), the MLA successfully opposed the Pittston Oil Refinery proposal in 1973, convincing the powerful Maine Senator Edmund Muskie with the fishermen's knowledge of tidal currents and passion for preserving the fishing opportunities in eastern Maine.

**Crewmen are self-employed:** Without the MLA, lobstermen would be withholding income tax for sternmen, paying the 7.5% employer's

Continued on page 4

### Inside

Page 2  
COASTAL OUTLOOK  
Thoughts from the MLCA president

Pages 6-9  
MLA UPDATE

Pages 16-17  
#SAVE MAINE  
LOBSTERMEN DONORS

Page 18-19  
DMR AQUACULTURE  
LEASES

Page 20  
TO YOUR HEALTH:  
Insomnia

Page 21  
SEAFOOD ROAD MAP  
COMING THIS MONTH

Page 22  
IN THE NEWS

Page 24  
PHOTOS FROM THE PAST



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

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

We've turned the calendar over to a brand new year. This year is the 70th anniversary of the Maine Lobstermen's Association, founded in 1954 through the leadership of Leslie Dyer of Vinalhaven and small group of dedicated lobstermen. We look forward to celebrating the people and achievement of the MLA throughout the upcoming year.

To kick off this anniversary year, Robin Alden, former *Commercial Fisheries News* publisher and DMR Commissioner of Marine Resources, recounts the MLA's history through its many successes over the years, from preventing construction of an oil refinery in Downeast Maine to countering National Marine Fisheries Service's unfounded restrictions on the fishery in the name of right whale protection.

This month we look at the recent decline among lobstermen in V-notching. V-notching means making a small notch in the center right flipper of a female lobster that is bearing eggs. As we note in this month's article, marking egged lobsters has been a long-standing practice of Maine lobstermen, devised to ensure that the lobsters are not immediately harvested when they reach legal size. That allows more eggs to enter into the system, ensuring more lobsters in the future. Fewer lobstermen are taking the time to V-notch females, leading to worries among scientists of future impacts to the stock.

Moving Maine's wild harvested and farm-raised species to national and international markets is a complex task. Many of Maine's seafood companies share similar hurdles in making their businesses successful. SEAMaine has spent the past three years analyzing the seafood sector to understand better the opportunities and challenges these businesses face. This month it will release its long-awaited Seafood Road Map, a comprehensive look at where the state's seafood industry is today and where it could be in the future.

The *#SaveMaineLobstermen* campaign continues its efforts to support the Maine Lobstermen's Association's legal and educational efforts to protect the lobster fishery. A remarkable \$1,044.84 was sent to the campaign recently from a spare change jar set out by Northeast Harbor lobsterman Chris Moore at Main Street Variety in Northeast Harbor.

Over the months store owner Ben Lunt emptied the jar, converted the change into dollars and kept track of the money. Many thanks to Chris for his efforts. Coming up in February is the second "Chowder's On" auction and dinner to be held in Kittery to raise funds for *#SaveMaineLobstermen*. The first event in 2023 drew a large crowd for an evening of food and fun, all for a good cause.

Getting enough sleep is an important part of keeping yourself healthy. Not being able to fall asleep — insomnia — can lead to fatigue, difficulty focusing, mood problems, errors in judgment, and accidents. Fishermen often keep odd hours, grab catnaps when they can and may find themselves unable to unwind at the end of a long day, leading to insomnia. Tackling this problem means practicing good sleep hygiene, as this month's To Your Health article explores.

Finally, 70 years is a long time. Since the MLA's founding, so much in the fishing world has changed, from the use of coated wire mesh for lobster traps to the presence of cell phones and computers on boats. Sometimes it makes sense to pause for a moment and reflect on the passage of time. In this issue of *Landings*, we offer readers a selection of photographs taken from the collections of the Penobscot Marine Museum in Searsport.

Times certainly do change, as well as the tools used, but Maine lobstering remains largely as it was long ago — a fishery composed of vessels of various sizes, operated by individuals from ports large and small, baiting and hauling traps to support themselves and their families and communities.

We hope you enjoy this issue of *Landings* and look forward to your comments on future issues.



*Everything feels winter's grip in January. M. Sargent photo.*

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V-notching continued from page 1

“If egged lobsters are not V-notched, then as soon as they drop their [first batch of] eggs they will be harvested because the fishery is very efficient,” said Kathleen Reardon, DMR lobster fishery scientist. “With a V-notch, they will be able to reproduce again. V-notching creates a buffer.”

Maine lobstermen fought long and hard to make sure that V-notching was part of the overall fishery management plan not only for Maine lobstermen but throughout New England. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) biologists thought that the New England lobster populations were overfished. At that time the fishery was managed by the New England Fishery Management Council (NEFMC). The NMFS biologists did not believe that V-notching mattered, arguing that it was statistically unlikely that it positively affected lobster stocks.

The NEFMC proposed raising the minimum legal measure to 3.5 inches and abolishing the maximum measure and landing prohibition on V-notch lobsters. Maine lobstermen were outraged. The Maine Lobstermen’s Association partnered with University of Maine scientists to organize lobstermen to collect data which ultimately showed that V-notching had a strongly beneficial impact on lobster stocks. In the end, a compromise was reached with the NEFMC, and the series of gauge increases was avoided due to the efforts of the MLA: the legal minimum size was increased from 3-1/16 inches to 3-1/4 inches and Maine maintained its prohibition on landing V-notched and oversized lobsters.

And then something happened. The lobster population in the Gulf of Maine boomed. The waters of the Gulf began to warm up in the 1990s and 2000s, making more areas suitable as habitat for juvenile lobsters. While warmer waters ultimately had a negative effect on the southern New England lobster stock, the Gulf of Maine turned into a sweet spot for lobsters. Maine landings surged upward, from 53.5 million pounds in 2000 to an all-time record of 132.6 million pounds in 2016.

It wasn’t until after 2008, when Maine lobster landings truly skyrocketed, that the rate of V-notching began to fall. Lobstermen were hauling record numbers of lobsters in their traps. Handling such a high volume of lobster made it challenging to notch all the females.

Scientists worry that some lobstermen no longer see the value of V-notching for the long-term health of the lobster stock. “There’s a number of potential reasons for the decline [in V-notching]. Attitudes may be changing. Fishermen may be doing their own stock assessment and the attitude is that there’s enough V-notches on the bottom,” Reardon said.

That sentiment is still heard today, despite a downturn in landings and the recent declaration by the ASMFC of a 39% decline in juvenile lobsters between

2020 and 2022. Many lobstermen believe that the decline does not reflect the abundance of eggers and juveniles they see in their traps. “Sure, V-notching is a good idea. But there are so many egged lobsters inshore and offshore, just so many small ones. I don’t think we have to V-notch,” said a Vinalhaven lobsterman who wished to remain anonymous. “I catch more with eggs on them than without now.” Due to the boom in the Gulf’s lobster population during the past decades, the absolute number of V-notched lobsters on the bottom may be the same or higher than in the past despite the decline in the percentage of notched females.

By failing to V-notch, lobstermen are taking one conservation measure that may safeguard lobster stocks in a changing marine environment out of their toolbox.

The Gulf of Maine hasn’t stopped warming, in fact 2021 and 2022 were the hottest years ever recorded in the Gulf, according to the Gulf of Maine Research Institute. The water temperatures are rising most rapidly during the summer and fall months. The long-term impacts of such sharp changes in the marine environment worry many researchers.

V-notching egged females helps keep the brood stock strong as the Gulf of Maine warms and that in turn keeps a steady supply of eggs in the ecosystem. It has been a conservation component of the ASMFC lobster fishery management plan for nearly three decades and widely recognized by scientists as one element supporting the Gulf’s strong lobster populations.

The ASMFC has just started an update to its 2020 American Lobster Benchmark Stock Assessment. “The brood stock has been strong, but it’s anticipated that in the next assessment the brood stock will come down because lobsters at all life stages have come down since the last assessment [which used 2018 data],” Reardon said.

The abundance of reproductive females right now does not mean that such abundance will continue into future years. “I’m seeing so many eggers but not so many notched,” Bray said. “I’m not saying you have to do 100% every day but it’s our future. If you see 25 eggers that are not notched, just do it before you toss them over the rail. Even if you do just 10% more, it will be much better.”

The impact of the gradual decline in V-notching is unclear. “I don’t know the effect. V-notching creates a buffer so that if something happens to the ecosystem, there’s a cushion,” Reardon said. “I am meeting some young fishermen now who are less proactive or just neutral about V-notching an egger. They ask ‘Why would we do that?’ They don’t understand how hard a generation of lobstermen worked to get this recognized. It was a huge achievement.”

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MLA continued from page 1

share of Social Security tax plus federal unemployment insurance. In the early 1970s, a coastwide Internal Revenue Service (IRS) audit called the Sternman Project targeted lobstermen, resulting in large fines and boat seizures. Stonington lobsterman Ed Blackmore (President 1974-1991) led the MLA in a 12-year fight which eventually ended up in Congress. Three federal and state laws later, the independent status of sternmen is now recognized.

**V-notch and oversize measure:** Without the MLA, neither would be recognized in federal waters outside three miles, or by other states. After the Magnuson Act put the 200-mile limit into effect in 1977, Blackmore and association members coastwide fought for 20 years to get recognition for V-notch and the oversize measure as conservation practices. They bucked the adamant opposition of state and federal scientists, National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) managers, and lobstermen from other states. The MLA worked this issue first in the New England Fishery Management Council (NEFMC) and later in the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC). "I always believed that if they said we were part of the problem, then we were going to be part of the solution," Ed Blackmore said at the time.



**MLA directors at 1982 meeting, left to right, Ed Blackmore, Daniel Escalera, Thomas Bartlett, Bob McDonough, John Makowsky, John Macduff. From the National Fisherman collection at the Penobscot Marine Museum.**

**Lobster science as we know it today:** In the 1990s, York lobsterman Pat White (Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer 1992-2010) and South Thomaston lobsterman David Cousens (President 1991-2018) made an unprecedented decision to have the MLA start working with scientists. This cooperation turned around lobster management science, shifting federal stock assessments from a numerical approach to a more biological approach. The MLA's work with University of Maine scientists and others led state and federal managers to embrace V-notching and the oversize measure, and to use a new stock assessment approach. The Maine Department of Marine Resources (DMR) current research program now works with lobstermen to monitor all life stages of lobster, including using the ventless trap survey and the Lobster Settlement Index.

**Owner-operator:** As Cutler lobsterman Kristan Porter (President 2018-present) said, "Owner-operator is the key to making sure each lobsterman has a stake in it, and making sure that the fishery is not taken over by big business." All licensed lobstermen in Maine are individual owners and operators of their fishing business, a fact mandated by law in 1995 as the state moved to trap limits and apprenticeship-based entry. It has provided the backbone for Maine's resilient, independent coastal fishery ever since and prevented what would likely have been corporate, consolidated lobstering when lobster abundance skyrocketed.

**Apprenticeship-based entry and in-out ratios:** Until 1995, there was no limited entry in lobstering. Changing that was difficult for the state. The MLA supported capping participation and allowing entry through apprenticeship as a way to keep fishing communities vibrant and avoid consolidation. The MLA later was instrumental in shaping the law that gives lobster zone councils the right to set exit-entry ratios.

Continued on next page

## Voice Of The People

### Lobstermen's Group Opposes Dragging

Editor of the Press Herald:

The Maine Lobstermen's Association, which I represent as president, takes the stand against dragging lobsters both in-shore and offshore. This action of the association is not directed against any particular individual, least of all Mr. Benson who claims to be a member of our association.

We do take exception to certain statements made by Mr. Benson. He claims that mature lobsters do not migrate. He claims they stay within a mile radius during their entire life span as a mature lobster. Only recently the wharf of the Regal Lobster Company in Camden caved in and many lobsters were liberated. Within a very few days some of these lobsters were caught three miles away. I personally have marked lobsters and liberated them, to catch the same lobster later over three miles away. If a lobster will travel three miles in a short period who can say they will not travel 300 miles during their lifetime.

Granted that mature lobsters do not travel great distances, Mr. Benson does not mention the fact that seed lobsters released from the egg bearing female rise to the surface and float for periods of 30 to 55 days, depending on the temperature of the water, before they sink to the bottom. During the floating stage these lobster fry certainly do not remain in one area. We believe it entirely possible that these small lobsters come into the Gulf of Maine and along the coast of New England, thereby contributing to our coastal production of lobsters. A few years ago, a scallop dragger was lost somewhere between Georges Bank and Nantucket Lightship. Several weeks later the body of a crew member was picked up near Seal Island in Penobscot Bay. This proves that floating matter can come in to the coast from offshore.

We have seen the almost complete depletion of our inshore ground fishing as the result of dragging operations. Who can say that dragging lobsters will not have the same effect on our lobster industry? The Maine Lobstermen's Association is working for the future as well as the present welfare of our Maine lobstermen, and we are concerned about these dragging operations. A recent article in the National Fisherman states that offshore lobster draggers landed 500,000 pounds of lobsters in New Bedford last year and the average size was 5½ pounds. The Massachusetts Lobstermen's Associations are in full agreement with our

Maine lobstermen in opposing this type of fishing.

The Maine Lobstermen's Association believes, and I know the Department of Sea and Shore Fisheries will agree with us, that we are producing the best lobster to be found anywhere in the world. We cannot agree with Mr. Benson that it is necessary to go 300 miles off shore from Portland Lightship in order to get a good Maine Lobster. If as Mr. Benson claims, our lobsters are inferior to the lobsters he brings in from off shore, it certainly is not the fault of the lobstermen of Maine.

For one who claims to be "glorifying the Maine lobster to the skies, and publicizing it right and left," to state in the press that "actually it is the lowest grade product offered in the market from any of the major lobster areas of the entire world," does not make sense to our association and is contrary to our policy.

We agree with Mr. Benson that foreign competition is a serious problem to our lobster industry, and we hope to build up our organization so that by working with other similar organizations we may eventually get some help from Washington along that line. That is one of the major projects of this association, and at this time we have the full support of our Maine congressional delegation. In order to obtain results we must work with the entire fishing industry of our country.

The Maine Lobstermen's Association believes in American free enterprise, and does not interfere with any members, particular way of fishing. However, we feel that a lobsterman's license carries with it a certain responsibility to do everything in his power to protect our industry, and also to respect the rights of his fellow lobstermen.

Mr. Alan Grossman, our attorney, has discussed the matter of dragging lobsters with lobstermen from Eastport to Kittery, also with the Department of Sea and Shore Fisheries. The lobstermen are nearly 100 per cent opposed to dragging lobsters, fearing its ultimate effects on the future of our industry.

Mr. Grossman declines with thanks the cordial invitation of Mr. Benson to take the trip on one of his draggers. Not being able to see bottom in 40 to 150 fathoms, and not caring to make the descent in that depth of water, he feels he would learn very little of what takes place on bottom.

As president of the Maine Lobstermen's Association, I extend a cordial invitation to Mr. Benson to attend our annual meeting in Rockland next October, to discuss the matter in an open and friendly manner, instead of through the press.

Leslie Dyer

Rockland

*Letter to the Portland Press Herald editor against draggers catching lobsters, by MLA president Leslie Dyer, July 12, 1955.*

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**Trap limits and zones:** Trap numbers were escalating in the 1990s, up well over 2,000 for some fishermen. The MLA was part of comprehensive negotiations in the Maine legislature to pass a trap limit paired with controls on entry. This included creating seven lobster management zones and giving lobstermen the power to lower trap limits below the state cap in each zone, which Zone E has done.

**No lobsters on draggers:** Although it became a Maine law in 1967, once federal management of lobster started after the 200-mile limit law in 1976, it took more than 25 years to restrict this in federal waters. The MLA was instrumental in working with Senator Snowe to set federal limits to the number of lobsters allowed by draggers as bycatch.

**Whales:** For the entire time Patrice McCarron (Associate Director 2000-2001, Executive Director 2001-2023, Policy Director 2023-current) has been part of the MLA, the association's top priority has been to preserve the fishery while achieving whale protection.

The MLA has been a part of the federal multi-party Take Reduction Team process since its inception in 1997 but that did not prevent the association from assembling a top-quality team of lawyers and scientists to challenge the science and methods that NMFS used in its Biological Opinion in court. In June 2023, MLA won an astonishing victory in its appeal case that set a precedent requiring the federal government to base its decisions on scenarios that are based in reality and can no longer assume the worst about how fishermen will impact a species.

**Offshore Wind:** The MLA opposes offshore wind development and is seeking to exclude any leases from Lobster Management Area 1. Fueled by money, political power, and the imperatives of climate change, offshore wind development presents the MLA with a major challenge that will last decades.

MLA staff and board members are participating in the advisory process for both the state's planned research array off southern Maine and the federal leasing process for the Gulf of Maine. MLA represents fishermen on the Maine Climate Council. The association is a member of the Responsible Offshore Development Alliance (RODA), a fishing industry alliance opposed to offshore wind development. The MLA has already scored one major win, when in November 2023 the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management excluded more than 90% of Lobster Management Area 1 from their lease call area.

"We are actually fighting two fronts: to make sure that the lobster fishery is good and there is an economic future for lobstermen, in addition to tackling

## LOBSTERMEN MEETING FRIDAY IN ROCKLAND TO ESTABLISH BASIS FOR COASTWISE ORGANIZATION

Steps in the formation of an organization of the lobster fishermen of the Maine coast are under way according to a statement from Rockland attorney A. Alan Grossman. Mr. Grossman, who has frequently represented fishermen's interests at legislative hearings, stated that a group of men representing the Beals Island, Cutler and Jonesport area were in his office on Friday to confer on plans for the organization of such a group.

As a result of this conference it has been announced that a meeting of interested lobstermen will be held on Friday, Oct. 1, at the Thorndike Hotel in Rockland. The meeting has been scheduled for 2 o'clock in the afternoon.

Previous to the Friday meeting,

Sea and Shore Fisheries Commissioner will confer with Mr. Grossman and will also plan to be present at the meeting. The conference between Mr. Grossman and Commissioner Tupper is slated to take place on Wednesday.

It has been a growing feeling along the coast that lobster fishermen needed some type of organization to give them a stronger voice in their contacts with dealers and buyers. The most recent drop in lobster prices coming on top of the serious damage from two hurricanes has evidently brought the matter to the point of action. Although the first move toward an organization has been made by the representatives of the Washington County Ports, men from all sections of the Maine coast are expected at the Friday meeting.

*Announcement of the organizational meeting for the Maine Lobstermen's Association in the Rockland Courier-Gazette, Sept. 28, 1954.*

issues like whales and wind," said Kristan Porter, President 2018-present. "The MLA matters," said McCarron. "It means that for young lobstermen you can stay in Maine, do something you love, and raise a family."



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### 2024 SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

The Maine Fishermen's Forum Board of Directors offers a scholarship fund to benefit children or grandchildren or a legal dependent of someone actively involved in harvesting wild caught or farmed Maine seafood or a Maine based resource law enforcement officer regardless of financial need or academic achievement.

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Location of College \_\_\_\_\_ Your Major \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*COLLEGE Standing as of Sept 2022 (circle one) Freshman Sophomore Junior Senior

#### MAINE SEAFOOD INDUSTRY FAMILY MEMBER INFORMATION

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship \_\_\_\_\_  
Street/Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Vessel Name or Commercial License Number \_\_\_\_\_

Describe participation in the Maine seafood industry \_\_\_\_\_

Email your completed application to Kathleen Gilbert: forum@mainefishermensforum.org  
or mail to P.O. Box 1198, Rockport, ME 04856



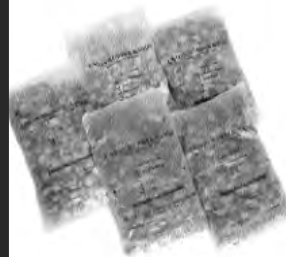
New England Marine & Industrial  
www.newenglandmarine.com

## Lobster Bands

We carry:

Sheddar  
Standard

Cold Water Sheddar  
Jumbo



### Riverdale/Aquamesh Trap Wire

- Inventory of trap wire in store
- Variety of sizes and colors available
- Some trap kits in stock
- Order any size trap kits you may need



**Rain Gear:**  
Guy Cotton  
Grundens  
Helly Hansen  
NEMI Rain Gear



**BUOYS:**  
Sea Alex  
Polyform US  
Polyform Norway  
Sea Master



**Boots:**  
Guy Cotton  
Xtratuff  
Muck Boots  
Servus  
Grundens



200 Spaulding Tpke  
Portsmouth, NH  
603-436-2836

294 Ocean St  
Brant Rock, MA  
781-834-9301

86 Cemetary Rd  
Stonington, ME  
207-367-2692



## 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  
Vice-President: Craig Stewart  
Long Island, 653-6914  
Treasurer: Jarod Bray  
Matinicus, 542-8961  
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  
Dustin Delano, Friendship, 542-7241  
Jim Dow, Bass Harbor, 460-2565  
Jamien Hallowell, S. Bristol, 380-7976  
Robert Ingalls, Bucks Harbor, 271-7199  
Jason Joyce, Swan's Island, 526-4109  
John McCarthy, Vinalhaven, 863-9984  
Jack Merrill, Islesford, 244-7884  
Troy Plummer, Boothbay, 350-7280  
John Tripp, Spruce Head, 691-9744  
Thomas Werner, Cape Elizabeth, 807-1048  
John Williams, Stonington, 367-2731

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**Maine Lobstermen's Association**  
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www.mainelobstermen.org



## STEAMING AHEAD BY KRISTAN PORTER, MLA PRESIDENT

One of the advantages that comes with being president of the MLA board is that I get to meet a lot of different people across many sectors of the fishing industry. This has given me the opportunity to learn how fishermen from different areas along our coast fish and how each is a little bit different. Often, I have to travel for meetings outside of Maine and get to meet folks from other fisheries and learn from them and their experiences.

Back in 2019 I had an opportunity to attend the Pacific Marine Expo (PME) in Seattle, Washington, which is a huge trade show and industry event. It's similar to the Maine Fisherman's Forum but much larger. It didn't take long for me to realize after meeting a few West Coast fishermen that we all face very similar issues no matter what side of the country we are from. There are the usual things that always come up when you get talking, like the rising cost of doing business, the low dock prices, and loss of working waterfront. But two other things were disturbingly similar — threats from environmental organizations and from offshore wind development.

I learned so much and met so many interesting people on that first trip that I have gone back twice on my own dime as a sort of mini-vacation. This past November I went to the Expo again, along with Long Island lobsterman and MLA vice president Craig Stewart. We met so many fishermen — purse seiners, gillnetters, trollers, trawlers, and pot fisherman — and industry leaders while we were there.

The issues on the West Coast are still the same except for one thing — their fisheries are under attack from environmental groups. Like the MLA, the west coast fishing industry is fighting back and winning against the environmental groups and the federal government who are trying to push them out of business to save whales and build industrial wind farms.

They've been following MLA's work to save the lobster fishery from the government's over-regulation, which is supposed to protect whales, and its push to build offshore wind farms. We had so many people congratulating us on our huge court win against NMFS this summer and on our gains in pushing offshore wind leases outside Lobster Management Area 1. Every conversation ended with us talking about our common fight to save our fisheries and the need for fishing groups on both coasts to work together to share information and to influence federal actions.

#### MLA DIRECTORS MEETING

The MLA Board met on December 6 in Belfast. COO Amber-Jean Nickel informed the board of recent changes in staff. Antonina Pelletier and Rebecca Nuzzi completed employment with the MLA in early December. Sunshine Mechtenberg joined the MLA team as membership director in December; however, the policy position will not be rehired in the near-term. Amber-Jean informed the board that the membership strategy is under development with guidance from the board's membership committee. The board will hold a strategic planning meeting in January to develop and refine MLA's work in the upcoming years.

Patrice McCarron provided several updates on policy. The MLA submitted comments to BOEM on the Draft Wind

One thing is certain: the Maine Lobstermen's Association's win in the D.C. Appeals Court is a very big deal and it has been noticed nationally. MLA's win in court set a precedent in how the federal government must interpret the Endangered Species Act. NMFS can no longer assume the worst about how fishermen will impact a species, it must look at scenarios that are based in reality using real data.

The MLA has inspired other fisheries to not give up and keep fighting. The Alaskan trollers, a very sustainable hook and line salmon fishery, were under threat of being shut down because environmental groups sued NMFS and won, claiming the fishermen are catching a food source of an

endangered Orca whale species. The trollers association fought back and won a "stay," so they can fish while they pursue a legal challenge.

When you live in Maine, you don't really think about how our fishery is seen by the rest of the country. Sure, everyone thinks "lobster" when they hear the word "Maine," but on a day-to-day basis, who has the time to think about what our fishery or the MLA means outside of the state?

I'll tell you.

Because the MLA stood up to NMFS when the agency said we had to reduce risk to endangered right whales by a ridiculous 98%, because we went on the offensive instead of always playing defense, because MLA members and businesses and towns and banks and individuals supported our legal challenge, we won this round. And we won big! Now the Maine lobster fishery stands as an inspiration to other fisheries for what can be accomplished when you stand up for what you believe in.

I can't tell you how proud I am to be a Maine lobsterman and to serve in the leadership of an organization that took on the federal government — against all odds — and won.

As we start a new year, think about what the MLA has done, and know that it would not have been possible without the outpouring of support from you. You have given new life to the lobster fishery and have given inspiration and hope to the West Coast fishermen, their families, and communities. Not bad for a bunch of lobstermen!



**National Fisherman Highliner Curt Brown of Ready Seafood receives his award at the Expo accompanied by his two children. PME photo.**

Energy Area (WEA) highlighting MLA's opposition to offshore wind in the Gulf of Maine and the importance of excluding consideration for offshore wind leasing from all of Lobster Management Area 1, including secondary Areas A and B. Responsible Offshore Development Alliance (RODA) will be holding industry meetings in December to prioritize data needs and identify fishing industries' most pressing concerns with Gulf of Maine offshore wind development.

In November, there were right whale sightings in and around the LMA 1 closure area. These included 32 acoustic detections over 11 days and six sightings over four days. At the November Lobster Advisory Council (LAC) meeting, Department of Marine Resources (DMR) announced that it had deployed acoustic devices at 26 sites in the Gulf. DMR





## MAINE LOBSTERMEN'S ASSOCIATION UPDATE

has received \$5 million from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to develop an innovative gear library (\$3 million) and to develop geo location technology and conduct outreach with the industry (\$2 million). The LAC formed a subcommittee to explore the impacts of increasing the minimum gauge on the lobster market.

The second session of the 130th Legislature will begin in January. The bill to fund the Lobster Legal Defense Fund will be reconsidered. DMR will propose a bill to expand administrative license suspension to those who commit violent crimes against others. The Lobster Institute U.S.-Canada Town Meeting will be held January 18-19 in Moncton. Funds are available to cover the costs of lodging for lobstermen. The meeting agenda includes impacts of the minimum gauge change, offshore wind development, climate change, and innovative gear development.

### WIND UPDATES

RODA held in-person workshops on December 11 in Ellsworth and December 12 in Brunswick to discuss the interactions among offshore wind development, fisheries, and the environment in the Gulf of Maine. The workshops were held as part of an integrated ecosystem assessment project to get input from the fishing industry to determine the best data to use to monitor the concerns of the fishing industry and to understand the potential future impacts of offshore wind on fishing and the environment. Specifically, RODA sought fishermen's advice on how offshore wind development will affect fishing activities and best measure the impact of offshore wind on the fishing industry, and to receive input on what data and knowledge is available to measure the impacts of offshore wind.

### WHALE UPDATES

**2024 Right Whale Calving Season** – The first right whale calf was spotted on November 28. The right whale calving season runs mid-November through mid-April. Researchers closely monitor the southeastern Atlantic coast for right whale mother/calf pairs. As of December 18, three live 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, 20 in 2021, 15 in 2022, and 12 in 2023.

According to NMFS, female right whales become sexually mature at about age 10. They give birth to a single calf after a year-long pregnancy. Three years is considered a normal or healthy interval between right whale births. More information on the 2024 right whale calving season can be found here: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/endangered-species-conservation/north-atlantic-right-whale-calving-season-2024>.

**Right Whales are Finding Better Food in Canada** – A new peer-reviewed study published in the Journal of Plankton Research shows that copepods which North Atlantic right whales are feeding on in the southern Gulf of St. Lawrence are larger and more lipid-rich, thus more nutritious, than the copepods in the Gulf of Maine and off Nova Scotia. Regional differences in the lipid levels in prey can play a significant role in the suitability of right whale foraging habitat. The higher quality food in late summer in the Gulf of St. Lawrence may also be a factor in the consistent presence of more right whales in that area in recent years.

**NOAA Extends Deadline for MMPA Seafood Import Ban** – NOAA Fisheries has once again delayed implementation of rules intended to bring seafood imports into compliance with U.S. marine mammal protection standards. The current exemption has been extended for another two years. In 2016, NOAA issued a final rule requiring U.S. trade partners to obtain a “comparability finding” showing that their commercial fisheries meet U.S. conservation standards for marine mammals. Those that do not have a comparability finding would be banned from exporting seafood products to the U.S. NOAA Fisheries has received 134 applications representing 2,500 foreign fisheries; it makes its determinations on a fishery-by-fishery basis. The agency claims the delay is necessary to effectively complete the evaluation process.

**Maine DMR Receives Two Pots of Money for Right Whale Research** – DMR received a total of more than \$22 million in federal funds to conduct research to inform future right whale conservation rules.

**Gear Research Funds** – In late November, DMR announced it received more than \$5 million from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) to support research into alternatives to traditional lobster trap and buoy fishing gear. Alternative gear may be required by NMFS in future whale regulations to protect North Atlantic right whales

Of the \$5 million, nearly \$2 million will support evaluation of acoustic geolocation systems that locate gear on the bottom without the benefit of surface buoys. Fishermen participating in testing of geolocation technology in 2024

will record data on the time spent locating gear, effective range of detection, and the relative effectiveness of the technology.

DMR received more than \$3 million to establish the Maine Innovative Gear Library (MIGL) to increase access to different alternative gear types, and to create an outreach program that engages fishermen in the research. Lobstermen will be able to borrow alternative gear, and then test technologies that retrieve the traps from the bottom. The gear will be integrated into their existing operations. Regional “hubs” will be established to distribute gear, provide education and training on gear use, and to gather feedback on the operability of different gear types.

“Alternative gear, also known as ‘on demand’ gear is a long way from being viable for fishermen or for whales,” said DMR Commissioner Patrick Keliher. “It is my goal to make sure we know what gear works, and more importantly what doesn’t work, so when future draft federal regulations come forward, we can draw on the real-world experience of fishermen when determining what the next steps should be.”

DMR will work with Maine Sea Grant to facilitate state-wide coordination of the program. Regional partners will include the Island Institute, Maine Center for Coastal Fisheries, Maine Coast Fishermen's Association, the Sunrise County Economic Council, and the Gulf of Maine Lobster Foundation.

**Right Whale Research Funds** – In early December, DMR announced that it received more than \$17 million from NOAA Fisheries to improve data on endangered right whales. This funding was included in the funding package passed by Congress in December 2022, which established a \$26 million fund for states with lobster fisheries to conduct right whale research. Congress also included a six year pause in any new whale regulations to allow time to collect new data before new right whale rules are developed for implementation. The lack of data on right whale presence and fishing effort in the Gulf of Maine resulted in high uncertainty in existing computer models that the federal government uses to determine the risk of serious injury and mortality to right whales from lobster gear. This funding will allow DMR to expand right whale research and improve the assessment of risk posed by fixed gear fisheries in advance of future federal rulemakings.

DMR has already deployed passive acoustic monitors at 26 sites throughout the Gulf to improve data on the presence and absence of right whales off the Maine coast. These sites are in addition to eight monitors deployed since 2020 in collaboration with Northeast Fisheries Science Center and the University of Maine.

DMR's eight monitors have collected acoustic data from 2020 through June 2022. The overall detection rate across the sites is 0.3%. This represents 13 right whale detections over 4,364 recording days across the eight listening sites. Three sites had zero detections, three sites had one detection, one site had four detections, and one site had six detections).

Beginning in 2024, DMR will conduct aerial and boat-based surveys of right whale in the Gulf. DMR will also conduct zooplankton surveys to measure the presence and abundance of *Calanus finmarchicus*, the primary food source for right whales.

New data collected on right whales, coupled with data collected from Maine's recently enacted reporting and tracker requirements for state and federally permitted lobster harvesters, will greatly improve the federal government's ability to focus whale conservation efforts on the areas of greatest risk. The model used by NMFS, known as the Decision Support Tool (DST), incorporates data on whale density and lobster fishing gear location and configuration to assign risk of serious injury and mortality to right whales. The model allows federal regulators to assess how that risk changes under different management scenarios.

“DMR's approach is to not use assumptions, but rather the best available data so NOAA understands that the Maine lobster fishery is not the threat they make it out to be. This will allow them to develop more targeted management measures, which will reduce the burden on this industry,” said Commissioner Keliher.

DMR anticipates that these funds will continue to be available into the future and plans to use future funds to build on its research program and to develop a new approach to risk modeling that incorporates data on changes in lobster and NARW populations and habitat use. DMR will also investigate the use of dynamic management, an approach in which temporary closures are only established in specific areas if whales are detected.

### NATIONAL FISH AND WILDLIFE FOUNDATION AWARDS \$18 MILLION TO DEVELOP ROPELESS FISHING

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) awarded 18 grants, totaling nearly \$18.3 million, to advance technologies that remove the need to rely upon vertical buoy and gear marking lines in the water, reducing the risk of gear entanglement for right whales. The grants also seek to ensure close coordination

*Continued on page 8*



# MAINE LOBSTERMEN'S ASSOCIATION UPDATE

MLA Update continued from page 7

and partnership with fishermen to develop and refine technology that will be affordable, integrate seamlessly into fishery operations, and enable safe and efficient use.

The grants are intended to develop fishing gear that will offer a variety of tools reflecting the diverse needs of New England fisheries. This work will also accelerate and complement existing work by NOAA, its partners and others addressing threats to right whale. Grantees include states, private companies, and non-profit organizations. Of the 18 grants awarded, 14 will include research in Maine. DMR is the largest recipient of grant money, totaling \$5 million. The smallest award was \$170,000.

## BAIT UPDATE

Herring Specifications 2023-2025 (in metric tons)			
	2023	2024	2025
Annual Catch Level (ACL)	12,429	19,189	23,961
Area 1A Sub-ACL	3,592	5,546	6,925
Area 1B Sub-ACL	534	825	1,030
Area 2 Sub-ACL	3,455	5,335	6,661
Area 3 Sub-ACL	4,847	7,848	9,345
Border Transfer = 0; Fixed Gear Set-Aside = 30mt; Research Set-Aside = 0%			

The Atlantic Herring fishery for Management Area 1A and Area 3 exceeded quota for 2023. Area 3 closed in May landing 107% of the quota. Area 1A closed in November landing 105% of the quota. Area 1B and Area 2 did land the full quota allocation, however, this only amounted to 656 mt of herring. Herring quotas will increase by 6,760 mt (to 19,189 mt) in 2024 and an additional 4,772 mt (to 23,961 mt) in 2025.

Maine landed its full state allocation of menhaden totaling 20,500,000 lbs. at the end of August. The Episodic Events Fishery Set Aside (EESA) program opened, giving the fleet access to an additional 4,285,786 lbs. (1% of the quota).

Under Maine's EESA fishery, vessels are limited to 6,000 lbs., or 17 barrels per vessel, harvested on Mondays and Fridays. To date, Maine has not landed its full allocation under the EESA fishery.

## LOBSTER VESSEL TRACKERS MUST BE CERTIFIED WITH DMR

As a reminder, ASMFC Addendum 29 requires all federal lobster permit holders to install an approved tracker device on their vessel by December 15. Addendum 29 was adopted in March 2022 to support more accurate stock assessments and address challenges associated with risk reduction requirements for whales, emerging ocean uses, and enforcement. For more information, visit <https://www.maine.gov/dmr/fisheries/commercial/fisheries-by-species/lobsters/trackers>.

## WORKING WATERFRONT PROTECTION LEGISLATION INTRODUCED IN CONGRESS

On December 6, Representative Pingree reintroduced the bipartisan *Keep America's Waterfronts Working Act* to preserve America's working waterfronts by creating a grant program and preservation loan fund. The bill would also establish a Working Waterfronts Task Force.

These resources would support coastal communities grappling with the climate crisis and preserve the character of coastal communities by protecting jobs, commercial activities, and public access to America's coasts. The legislation passed the House in the 116th Congress in 2019.

Senator Collins introduced *The Working Waterfront Preservation Act* on November 13 to help preserve access to working waterfronts for fishermen and maritime workers in coastal communities. The Working Waterfront Preservation Act would establish a \$20 million grant program to permanently protect waterfront areas for commercial uses.

## NEW MLA MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR

The Maine Lobstermen's Association said a sad good-bye on December 1 to Andi Pelletier, the MLA's membership director since 2015. Andi was the cheerful voice of the MLA, adept at handling everything from MLA hat and sweat-shirt mailings to fundraising events and annual membership campaigns. She was the face of the MLA to many, seen regularly at the annual Maine Lobster Boat Races each summer where she talked with everyone and signed up new MLA members. Andi sought out large and small businesses in the state to become vital MLA business members and was always a bright spot at the MLA booth during the Maine Fishermen's Forum. "Andi was invaluable to the MLA in so many ways. She was always ready to do whatever needed to be done," said MLA policy director Patrice McCarron. We wish her the best in her new endeavors.

Sunshine Mechtenberg is the MLA's new membership director. Sunshine was CEO of Shard, a national company based in Brunswick, where she conducted daily operations, management, and product development. Prior to that she worked in marketing and retail sales, and as company president of a wholesale manufacturing company in Dover-Foxcroft begun years before by her mother. In 2018, Sunshine stepped down from her CEO position to contemplate a different career path. "I wanted to break from that very stressful life I was living," she said. She self-published two books, *Feel Good & Shine On® A Lifestyle* and *Feel Good & Adventure On® Live an Epic Life*. Looking for a job that connected her to the Maine coast, she answered an ad for a sternman. Soon she was stuffing bait bags, baiting traps, and cleaning the decks aboard the *F/V Caroline Elizabeth*, out of Harpswell. She completed her apprentice hours in October 2022, and is now on the Zone F waitlist. She also became a partner in Finsulate USA, a Netherlands-based company that invented a non-toxic product that replaces bottom paint on boats, promoting the product at international and national trade shows.



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

- |                                    |                                       |  |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| Accutech Marine Propellor          | Island Fishing Gear & Auto Parts      | Novatec Braids LTD                     |
| Agri-Access                        | Island Fishermen's Wives              | Oliver Investments, LLC                |
| Atlantic Edge Lobster              | John's Bay Boat Co.                   | Pack Edge                              |
| Bar Harbor Bank                    | Lobster Trap Co.                      | Port Clyde Fishermen's Cooperative     |
| Beals-Jonesport Coop Inc.          | Lonnie's Hydraulic Inc.               | Port Lobster Co.                       |
| Beals Lobster Pier                 | M & B Fish Co.                        | RE Thomas Marine Hardware              |
| Bowdoin College                    | Machias Savings Bank                  | RG Tax Accounting and Resolution       |
| Dining Services                    | Maine Center for Coastal Fisheries    | Riverdale Mills                        |
| CEI                                | Maine Coast Fishermen's Association   | Rope Razor                             |
| Chapman & Chapman                  | Maine Financial Group                 | Seacoast Lobster Bands                 |
| Chase Leavitt                      | Maine Lobstermen's Community Alliance | Seacoast Tours of Freeport             |
| Coastal Equipment Corp.            | Maine Ocean Lobster                   | Shearwater Marine Surveying            |
| CSL Plasma                         | Maine Sea Grant                       | South Bristol Fishermen's Cooperative  |
| Downeast Dayboat                   | Marine Hydraulic Engineering Co. Inc. | Superior Marine Products               |
| Farrin's Boatshop                  | McMillan Offshore Survival Training   | Tenants Harbor Fishermen's Cooperative |
| Finestkind Scenic Cruises          | Midcoast Marine Supply                | The Clam Shack                         |
| First National Bank                | Midcoast Solar LLC                    | Vallation Outerwear                    |
| F. W. Thurston Co. Inc.            | Milton Cat                            | Varney Insurance Inc.                  |
| Georgetown Fishermen's Cooperative | Nautilus Marine Fabrication           | Venture Bait                           |
| Gulf of Maine Lobster Foundation   | New England Marine & Industrial Inc.  | Vinalhaven Fishermen's Cooperative     |
| Guy Cotten, Inc.                   | New England Propeller                 | William Coffin & Sons                  |
| The Hanover Insurance Group        | Northeast Marine Survey               | Winter Harbor Fishermen's Cooperative  |
| Harbor Bait                        |                                       |  |
| Infab Refractories Inc.            |                                       |  |
| Inland Seafood                     |                                       |  |
| Interstate Lobster Co.             |                                       |  |





## MAINE LOBSTERMEN'S ASSOCIATION UPDATE

### MEET THE MLA BOARD MEMBERS

By Melissa Waterman

Dustin Delano, 33, discovered the Maine Lobstermen's Association when he attended the Maine Lobster Leadership Institute a little over 10 years ago. The Leadership Institute gave younger lobstermen broad knowledge of the science, management, and economics of the fishery as well as opportunities to attend state and regional management meetings. The winter-long program ended with a trip to Prince Edward Island to learn more about how Canadian lobstermen fished.

"I enjoyed the program. It was a chance to be with people the same age and get all the information at once. I asked so many questions at the time and wondered to myself 'why didn't I know this?'" Delano recalled. "I learned a lot about different fishing styles and different economic situations. It really piqued my interest in the fishery and advocacy."

Delano grew up in the small mid-coast town of Friendship. He and his childhood friends all started lobstering at about the same time. Delano went to college after high school, studying business and marketing as well as for the ministry before lobstering drew him back to town. He joined the MLA and then, eight years ago, became a member of the board of directors.

"I enjoyed hearing the updates from everyone [other board members] every month on how the fishing was going for them," Delano said. "I learned that as a board member, we become the people other people seek to find out what is going on. I could be out on the water, hear guys talking and maybe sometimes it wasn't quite accurate. I could let them know what's really going on."

During the past eight years, the MLA board has dealt with numerous complex issues, from proposed right whale protection regulations and wind energy developments to fluctuating herring and menhaden quotas. Each board member comes from a different part of the coast, bearing a different mindset and perspectives on each issue.

"The board members do a good job disagreeing on issues. If it doesn't go one guy's way, everyone is OK at the end. For example, I am very much anti-regulation. I'm very skeptical. But I might sit next to someone who has an entirely different view," Delano said. "Sometimes we haven't always been able to agree to disagree because we are more passionate about the issues, which are getting more complex. But I respect everyone on the board."

Delano became vice-president of the MLA in 2018. He also became a board member of the Maine Lobster Marketing Collaborative. This year he accepted the position of Chief Operating Officer for the newly formed New England Fishermen's Stewardship Alliance (NEFSA). With each new step came opportunities to learn.

"I've always taken the time to think the issue out and not react until I do," Delano said. "I do a fair amount of research and then ask questions. It's always important to me to bring the perspective of what I hear from fishermen, particularly younger fishermen."

Delano will step down from the MLA board in March. Now living in Saco, he sold his lobster boat this past summer, although he plans to fish with his father occasionally, and will concentrate on his work with NEFSA. The region-wide organization focuses on all New England fisheries, requiring Delano to address regulatory and policy issues that reach beyond those facing Maine lobstermen.

"I enjoyed serving on the board. I have a lot of respect for the MLA," he said. "It's much needed to keep the industry thriving. It gives me reassurance to know that the MLA has got the right whale issue by the horns."



Dustin Delano. Photo courtesy of EatingWell.com.

Board member John Williams, 69, of Stonington, joined the MLA in 1973 fresh out of high school. His father Bob got him signed up, which made sense since John had been fishing with his father since he was six years old.

"My grandfather on my mother's side was a fisherman. He went clamming and tub trawling. My grandfather on my father's side cut ice, cut wood, and ran a boat yard in his later years. My father fished, then went to Pratt & Whitney. He lasted a few weeks and hated it," Williams laughed.

Williams found his own way on the water, turning to different fisheries at different times of the year. "In the 1980s and 90s, I went groundfishing and scalloping in the winter. We did longlining and dragging as well. That was 80, 90 miles offshore in small boats," he recalled. Some years he would go gill netting in the summer and switch to lobstering in the winter. The work was hard and in those years the money was unreliable.

But it was what Williams wanted to do. "I've never asked anyone for a job," he said. "I got up in the morning and went to work and hoped to make something before the end of the day. There was more freedom then. It was a lifetime of work, but I've enjoyed every bit of it."

Williams brought the same tenacity and patience to the MLA board. He and his wife Judy, who does all the driving, haven't missed a meeting in the 12 years he's been a board member.

"I can't understand why more lobstermen aren't members of the MLA," Williams said. "You ask them, and they have no reason for not joining. Just getting the newspaper (*Landings*) is worth the price of membership."

The strength of the MLA comes from its members; that strength has been particularly tested during the years Williams has been a board member. Federal regulations designed to protect endangered North Atlantic right whales grew more and more stringent. In 2020, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) took it to a whole new level when it announced that the lobster fishery would have to reduce its threat to the whales by 98% in 10 years. While the MLA's resulting legal suit against NMFS ultimately forced NMFS to rescind its regulations and over-reaching risk reduction target for six years, NMFS still must come up with right whale conservation measures by 2028.

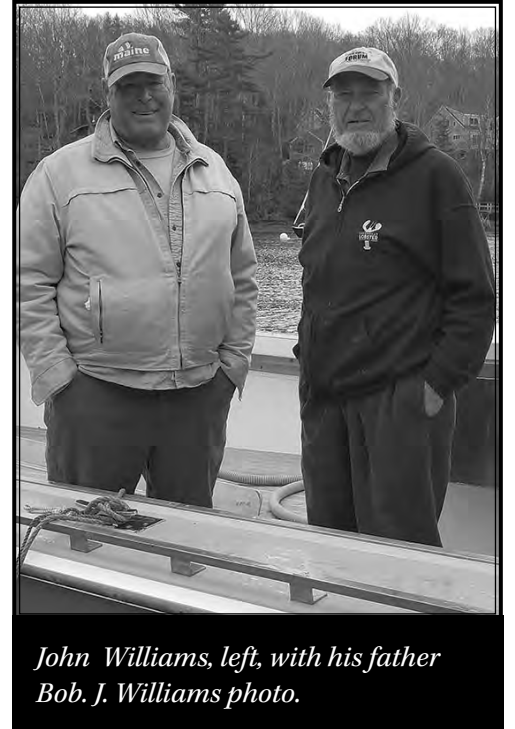
"The MLA stays involved. Getting information firsthand is the most important thing," Williams said, reflecting on the right whale battle. "There's so much stuff going on. The MLA used to be about conservation and education. But we've had to veer off into right whale issues and wind development."

Williams knows just how complicated these issues are. He served for four years as a member of the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Team (TRT), a consortium of over 60 members of organizations, agencies, fishermen and scientists that advise NMFS on its plan for right whale conservation.

"It was eye-opening," Williams said of his time on the TRT. "Everyone talked. It would take two or three hours to get an answer to one question. It was a process and you just had to go through it. I'm glad I did." He recalled at one TRT meeting seeing some of the Massachusetts fishing representatives "fly off the handle" and leave the room in anger. "Well, that was it. You don't get to speak again. And you need to be at the table," he said.

He hesitates to predict the future for the Maine lobster fishery yet emphasizes one important thing. "My point of view is that we want to keep most fishermen fishing. We want the young guys to be able to make a living. The [existing whale] rules are a pain in the ass, yes. They mean quite a bit more shop work," Williams said. "But we'll find a way to go fish."

Williams, who several years ago was awarded the MLA's Golden V-notch award for his contributions to the lobster fishery, will step down from the board in March. "I enjoyed going to the meetings and being involved. Judy has sat through every meeting I ever went to. I won't miss driving to Belfast [for monthly MLA board meetings]. It's the drive back that's hard," he said. "But I never worked with a better group of men and women. It's been a pleasure."



John Williams, left, with his father Bob J. Williams photo.

#### MARK YOUR CALENDAR

*MLA Annual Meeting*

*Friday, March 1, 9 a.m.*

*Samoset Resort, Rockport*

**All MLA members are invited to attend.**





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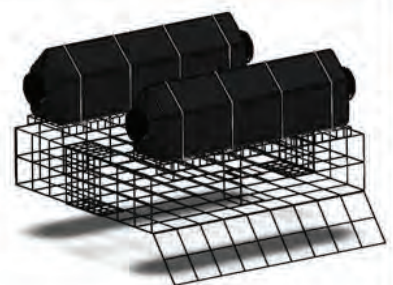
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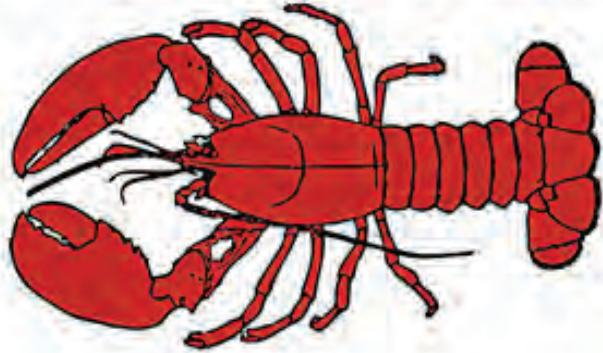



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## MLA Seeks Nominations for Board of Directors

**MLA Members -- Don't miss your opportunity to influence the future of your organization and your industry!**

### Did you know?

- MLA Directors are elected for a 3-year term
- MLA Directors meet monthly (except August)
- Board members expected to attend at least 4 meetings/yr

### Overview of MLA Board

- Maximum # of Board members: 21
- Current Board: 21 members
- **Number of Directors with Terms expiring: 7**
- Average age of MLA Board: 49
- Youngest MLA Board member: 28
- Oldest MLA Board member: 75

### MLA Board representation

- Zone A 4 (2 expiring)
- Zone B 3
- Zone C 3 (2 expiring)
- Zone D 3 (1 expiring)
- Zone E 3 (2 expiring)
- Zone F 2
- Zone G 3
- Islands represented 4

### 2024 Board Priorities

- Dedicated lobstermen who care about the future of the industry
- Lobstermen who can talk about the industry's needs and priorities
- Balanced industry representation across the state

### MLA Director Nomination Form (detach and return)

#### Nomination Requirements

- To make a nomination, you must be an MLA member in good standing.
- All nominees must hold a Maine lobster license & be an MLA member in good standing.
- Deadline for nominations: January 31, 2024.
- Feel free to nominate yourself, or someone else.



**Thank you for helping to keep the MLA strong!**

#### Nominee Information (must be MLA member)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Fishing Port: \_\_\_\_\_

Zone: \_\_\_\_\_ Town of residence: \_\_\_\_\_

Please let us know how this nominee could contribute to the MLA Board:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

#### Person submitting nomination (must be MLA member)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Lobster Lic. #: \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail your nomination to the MLA office: MLA, 2 Storer St, Ste 203, Kennebunk, ME 04043  
Or feel free to call in your nomination to 967-4555 or email: amberjean@mainelobstermen.org.**



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**C9.3 Tier 3 Commercial Ratings:**  
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<b>Dennis' Welding &amp; Marine</b> Beals, ME	<b>Journey's End</b> Rockland, ME	<b>Sacchetti Marine and Industrial LLC</b> Plymouth, MA	<b>Hinckley Yacht Service</b> Portsmouth, RI
<b>Front Street Shipyard</b> Belfast, ME	<b>Fairhaven Shipyard &amp; Marina, Inc.</b> Fairhaven, MA	<b>Windward Power Systems</b> Fairhaven, MA	<b>Rhode Island Engine Company, Inc.</b> Narragansett, RI

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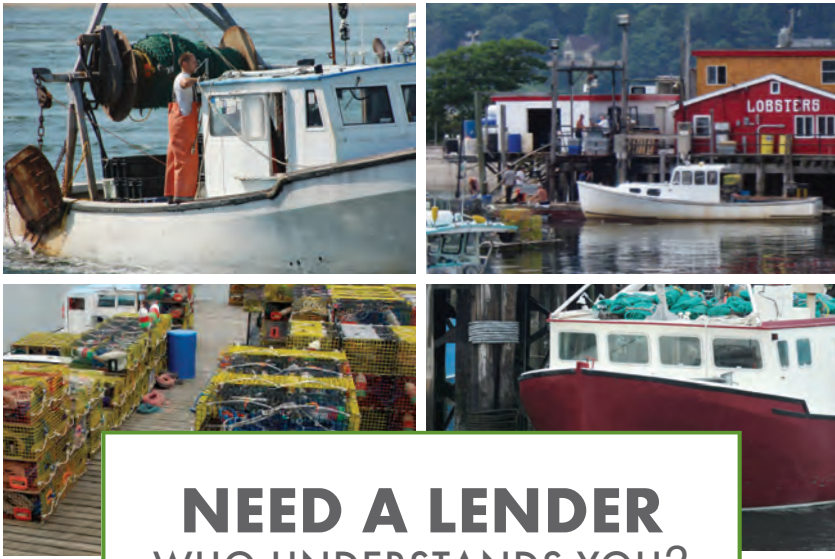
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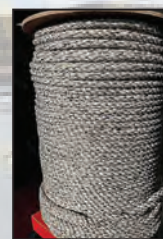
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but the threats are not over.*



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## DMR AQUACULTURE LEASE APPLICATION STATUS AS OF 12/15/23

### *Experimental Lease Applications: Terms Up to 3 Years, Size to 4 Acres, Non-Renewable*

Blue Hill	Quinby, Kipp	E side N of Carlton Isl narrows, Blue Hill Salt Pond	3.9 acres	Shellfish/Algae	3 yrs	App rec'd 9/1/23; comments due 10/7/23
Bremen	Davidson, Colby	E of Hog Island, Muscongus Bay	4 acres	Marine Algae	3 yrs	Lease Granted December 11, 2023
Bremen	Davidson, Colby	E of Hog Island, Muscongus Bay	3.89 acres	Marine Algae	3 yrs	App2 rec'd 9/27/22; site report published
Bremen	Genthner, Gary Jr.	E of Cow Island, Muscongus Bay	3.99 acres	Marine Algae	3 yrs	App rec'd 9/14/23; comments due 10/14/23
Bremen	Harvey, Shannon	Southeast of Cow Isl, Muscongus Bay	4 acres	Marine Algae	3 yrs	App rec'd 9/1/23; comments due 10/7/23
Bristol	Unicorn Oyster	E of Perkins Point, Damariscotta Rvr	3.9 acres	Shellfish	3 yrs	App rec'd 11/17/22; site visit completed
Brunswick	Green, Christopher	The Reach	2.71 acres	Shellfish	3 yrs	App rec'd 11/18/22; site visit completed
Chebeague Isl	Chebeague Island Oyster Co.	SW corner Chandlers Cove, Casco Bay	2.4 acres	Shellfish	3rs	App rec'd 3/21/23; comments due 4/22/23
Chebeague Isl	Jordan, John	W side of Gr Chebeague Isl, SW of Division Pt	4 acres	Marine Algae	3 yrs	App rec'd 9/21/23; comments due 10/21/23
Chebeague Isl	Jordan, John Jr.	W of Great Chebeague Isl, SW of Seal Ledge	3.98 acres	Marine Algae	3 yrs	App rec'd 9/21/23; comments due 10/21/23
Chebeague Isl	Robinson, Gordon	E of Great Chebeague Isl, Casco Bay	4 acres	Marine Algae	3 yrs	Apps 1&2 rec'd 10/3/23; comments due 11/4/23
Cumberland	Nappi, Brent	East of Sturdivant Isl, Casco Bay	4 acres	Marine Algae	3 yrs	App rec'd 4/11/22; site report published
Damariscotta	Black Stone Point Oysters LLC	E of Blackstone Pt, Great Salt Bay	3.45 acres	Shellfish	3 yrs	App rec'd 5/9/23; comments due 6/10/23
Deer Isle	Salt of the Earth Seafarm LLC	E of Barred Isle, Penobscot Bay	3.95 acres	Marine Algae	3 yrs	App rec'd 6/15/23; comments due 7/15/23
Edgecomb	Glidden Point Oyster Co.	SW of Dodge Pt, Damariscotta River	3.97 acres	Shellfish	3 yrs	App rec'd 12/1/22; site visit completed
Falmouth	Martin, Thomas	E of Brothers Islands, Casco Bay	0.15 acres	Shellfish	3 yrs	Lease Granted 10/16/23
Falmouth	Nappi, Brent	S of Clapboard Isl, Casco Bay	4 acres	Marine Algae	3 yrs	App rec'd 4/11/22; site report published
Freeport	DiMauro, Levi	W of Little French Isl, Casco Bay	3.92 acres	Marine Algae	3 yrs	App rec'd 1/10/23; site visit completed
Freeport	Love Point Oysters LLC	East of Pettingill Island, Maquoit Bay	3.99 acres	Shellfish	3 yrs	App rec'd 6/1/23; site visit completed
Freeport	Ryan, Stuart	SW side of Williams Isl, Casco Bay	2.4 acres	Shellfish/Algae	3 yrs	Pub. Hearing 1/10/24 1pm Freeport Town Office
Frenchboro	Starburst Enterprises, Inc.	Blue Hill Bay, Eastern Cove, Rich's Head	3.9 acres	Marine Algae	3 yrs	App rec'd 12/7/23; comments due 1/6/24
Friendship	Cutts, Joe	E end of Friendship Long Isl, Meduncook Rvr	2.2 acres	Shellfish	3 yrs	App rec'd 12/13/22; site visit completed
Harpswell	Dutton, Terry	N-NE of Flash Island, Ridley Cove	3.99 acres	Marine Algae	3 yrs	App rec'd 6/22/23; comments due 7/23/23
Harpswell	Weeks, Benjamin	E/Dingley Isl, SE/Long Isl, New Meadows Rvr	4 acres	Marine Algae	3 yrs	Apps 1&2 rec'd 5/23/23; comments due 6/25/23
Harpswell	Wilson, David	Wilson Cove, Middle Bay	4 acres	Shellfish	3 yrs	App rec'd 5/2/22; site visit completed
Harpswell	Wilson, David	SE of Doughty Pt, Long Reach	4 acres	Shellfish	3 yrs	App rec'd 4/12/22; site visit completed
Isleboro	Grindle, Kimberly	Turtle Head Dove, Penobscot Bay	4 acres	Marine Algae	3 yrs	App rec'd 1/31/23; site visit completed
Isleboro	Lindelof, Jett	E of Job Isl, Penobscot Bay	4 acres	Marine Algae	3 yrs	App rec'd 3/21/23; site visit completed
Isleboro	Lindelof, Lake	W of Middle Isl, Penobscot Bay	4 acres	Marine Algae	3 yrs	App rec'd 3/21/23; site visit completed
Lincolnton	Heal, Nicholas	East Ducktrap Harbor	3.99 acres	Marine Algae	3 yrs	App 1 rec'd 6/29/23; comments due 7/29/23
Long Island	Great Ledge Cove Seafood LLC	W of Lil Chebeague Isl, Casco Bay	4 acres	Marine Algae	3 yrs	App rec'd 6/20/23; comments due 7/22/23
Long Island	Shearwater Ventures LLC	NW of Lil Chebeague Isl, Casco Bay	3.86 acres	Marine Algae	3 yrs	App rec'd 3/21/23; site visit completed
Northport	Heal, Nicholas	East Ducktrap Harbor	3.99 acres	Marine Algae	3 yrs	App 2 rec'd 6/29/23; comments due 7/29/23
Portland	Restorative Aquaculture LLC	WSW of Mackworth Isl, Casco Bay	3.38 acres	Shellfish/Algae	3 yrs	App rec'd 2/18/22; site report published
Searsport	FV 11th Hour, Inc.	SW of Sears Isl, Penobscot Bay	3.94 acres	Marine Algae	3 yrs	App rec'd 3/21/23; site visit completed
Searsport	Nichols Fisheries	S of Sears Isl, Penobscot Bay	3.94 acres	Marine Algae	3 yrs	App rec'd 1/17/23; site visit completed
South Bristol	Glidden Point Oyster Co.	W of Prentiss Isl, Damariscotta River	3.99 acres	Shellfish	3 yrs	App re-rec'd 2/28/23; site visit completed
South Bristol	Nor'Easter Oyster Co.	Mid. Branch, NE of Peabow/W of Foster, Johns Rvr	3.32 acres	Shellfish	3 yrs	App rec'd 7/18/23; comments due 8/19/23
South Bristol	Norumbega Oyster Inc.	Eastern Shore S of Merry Isl, Damariscotta Rvr	2.78 acres	Shellfish	3 yrs	App rec'd 2/28/23; site visit completed
St. George	Albatross Fisheries	W of Caldwell Island, end of St. George River	4 acres	Marine Algae	3 yrs	App rec'd 7/13/23; site visit completed
St. George	Miller, Hyvarinen, Philbrook	NW of Seavey Ledges, Penobscot Bay	3.99 acres	Marine Algae	3 yrs	App rec'd 6/1/23; comments due 7/1/23
St. George	Miss Madisyn	W of Caldwell Isl, end of St. George Rvr	4 acres	Marine Algae	3 yrs	App rec'd 10/10/23; comments due 11/11/23
St. George	Schroeder, Jeffrey	Turkey Cove, St. George River	.9 acres	Shellfish	3 yrs	App rec'd 2/23/23; site visit completed
St. George	Schroeder, Jeffrey	Turkey Cove, St. George River	2 acres	Shellfish	3 yrs	App rec'd 6/1/23; site visit completed
St. George	Tarbox, Brian	NW of Norton Isl, Wheeler Bay	3.99 acres	Marine Algae	3 yrs	App rec'd 6/22/23; comments due 7/22/23
Steuben	Pinkham, Randy	E of Chair Pond Head, Pegeon Hill Bay	3.99 acres	Marine Algae	3 yrs	Apps 1&2 rec'd 3/28/23; comments due 4/29/22
Steuben	Sokoloski, Victor	E of Chair Pond Head, Pegeon Hill Bay	3.99 acres	Marine Algae	3 yrs	Apps 1&2 rec'd 3/28/23; comments due 4/29/22
Stonington	Greenhead Lobster LLC	Penobscot Bay	3.5 acres	Shellfish	3 yrs	App rec'd 10/12/23; comments due 11/11/23
Stonington	Greenhead Lobster LLC	Between East Penobscot Bay and Jericho Bay	4 acres	Marine Algae	3 yrs	App rec'd 10/12/23; comments due 11/11/23
Waldoboro	Bennett, T & Simmons, A	N of Haystack Island, Medomak River	2.52 acres	Shellfish	3 yrs	App rec'd 3/3/22; site report published
Walpole	Dodge Cove Marine Farm	N of Glidden Ldg, W of Fitch Cv, Damariscotta Rvr	1.9 acres	Shellfish	3 yrs	App rec'd 3/21/23; site visit completed
Yarmouth	Gerber, Caitlin	SE of Moshier Island, Casco Bay	4 acres	Marine Algae	3 yrs	App rec'd 8/25/22; site visit completed
Yarmouth & Freeport	Dirigo Marine Resources	NE of Moshier Island, Casco Bay, Yarmouth &	3.9 acres	Marine Algae	3 yrs	App rec'd 8/4/22; site report published
York	So ME Sustainable Shellfish	W of Sewall's Bridge, York Rvr	0.97 acres	Shellfish	3 yrs	App rec'd 3/21/22; site visit completed

***Understand the process! You can make a difference!***



## Standard Lease Applications: Terms Up to 20 Years, Size to 100 Acres, Renewable

Bar Harbor	Pemaquid Mussel Farms LLC	Mt Desert narrows, E of Googins Ledge	32 acres	Shellfish	20 yrs	Lease Granted 8/31/23
Bay Harbor	Acadia Aqua Farms LLC	SW of Googins Ledge, Frenchman Bay	48 acres	Shellfish	20 yrs	Hearing completed 3/28/22
Beals	Downeast Institute	Near Mud Hole Pt/Eastern Bay, Mud Hold Cove	3.95 acres	Shellfish	20 yrs	Scoping Session 12/6/23 6pm Downeast Institute
Beals	The Flying Place LLC	W of Beals-Great Wass Cswy, Flying Place Pound	5.57 acres	Shellfish	20 yrs	App rec'd 3/21/23; site review TBD
Boothbay Harbor	Yentsch, Carlton	W of Samoset Rd, Bottle Cove	1.12 acres	Shellfish	20 yrs	App rec'd 10/27/22; site visit completed
Brunswick	Ferda Farms LLC	E of Lower Coombs Isl, New Meadows Rvr	2.33 acres	Shellfish	20 yrs	App rec'd 2/28/22; site visit completed
Chebeague Isl	Great Ledge Cove Seafood LLC	NE L'il Chebeague Isl, Wstrn Chandlers Cv	6.85 acres	Marine Algae	20 yrs	Public Hearing 8/15/23 1:30pm Chebeague Island Hall
Chebeague Isl	Hunt, Stewart	N/NE of Seal Ledge, Casco Bay	13.75 acres	Shellfish/Algae	20 yrs	Lease Granted 9/2/23
Chebeague Isl	Linda Kate Kelp LLC	SW of Basket Isl, Casco Bay	16 acres	Marine Algae	20 yrs	Scoping session 11/17/23 3pm Chebeague Island Hall
Damariscotta	Mook Sea Farms Inc.	Days Cove, Damariscotta Rvr	4 acres	Shellfish	20 yrs	App rec'd 11/8/22; site visit completed
Deer Isle	Barrows, Abigail	South of Big Hay Isl, Pickering Cove	4.24 acres	Shellfish	20 yrs	App rec'd 7/26/22; site visit completed
Deer Isle	Deep Blue Aquaculture LLC	W of Hog Island, Eastern Penobscot Bay	41.2 acres	Shellfish	20 yrs	App rec'd 4/4/23; site review TBD
Deer Isle	Melvin, Allison & Klein, Jesse	Between Oak Pt & Campbell Isl, Fish Creek	4.74 acres	Shellfish	20 yrs	App rec'd 11/21/23; site review TBD
Edgecomb	Glidden Point Oyster Co.	Damariscotta River	.2 acres	Shellfish	20 yrs	Scoping session 7/27/23 3pm Edgecomb Town Hall
Freeport	Coffin, Bailey	W of Sow & Pigs Isl, Casco Bay	6.84 acres	Shellfish	20 yrs	Public Hearing 5/23/23 1pm Freeport Town Hall
Freeport	Sparta, Kenneth Curtis	W of Crab Isl, Casco Bay	8.25 acres	Shellfish/Algae	20 yrs	App rec'd 3/25/22; site visit completed
Georgetown	Gaffney, Michael & Mark	N of L'il Phoebe Isl, Robinhood Cove	7 acres	Shellfish	20 yrs	Public Hearing 11/15/23 1pm Georgetown Comm Ctr
Hancock	Taunton Bay Oyster Co, Inc.	South of Burying Island, Taunton Bay	7.46 acres	Shellfish	20 yrs	App rec'd 10/26/23; site review TBD
Harpswell	Butterfield, Keith	SW of Lower Goose Isl, Casco Bay	25 acres	Shellfish	20 yrs	Scoping session 1/14/22 4pm Harpswell Town Hall
Harpswell	Goose Island Oysters LLC	W of Upper Goose Isl, Middle Bay	10.4 acres	Shellfish/Algae	20 yrs	App rec'd 1/31/23; site visit completed
Harpswell	Love Point Oysters LLC	Middle Bay, SW of Upper Goose Isl	3.20 acres	Shellfish/Algae	20 yrs	App rec'd 2/11/22; site visit completed
Harpswell	Quahog Bay Conservancy	E of Snow Island, Quahog Bay	1.36 acres	Shellfish	20 yrs	App rec'd 5/18/23; site review TBD
Harpswell	Restorative Aquaculture LLC	E of Scrag Island, Middle Bay	9.89 acres	Shellfish	20 yrs	Application Withdrawn
Harpswell	Wilson Cove Oysters LLC	Wilson Cove, Middle Bay	3.21 acres	Shellfish	20 yrs	App rec'd 8/22/22; site visit completed
Long Island	Great Ledge Cove Seafood LLC	S L'il Chebeague Isl, NW Chann. Rocks, Casco Bay	9.03 acres	Marine Algae	20 yrs	App rec'd 4/9/23, site review TBD
Long Island	Ocean's Balance	West of Cow Isl Ledge, Casco Bay	4 acres	Marine Algae	20 yrs	App rec'd 12/1/22; site visit completed
Long Island	Summit Point LLC	N of Cow Isl, Casco Bay	6.4 acres	Marine Algae	20 yrs	App rec'd 3/29/23; site review TBD
Newcastle	Dodge Cove Marine Farm	SE of Dodge Pt, Damariscotta River	12.26 acres	Shellfish	20 yrs	Lease Granted 9/18/23
Newcastle	FareWell LLC	Upper Dodge Cove, Damariscotta River	3.6 acres	Shellfish	20 yrs	Scoping Session 11/4/23 10am Newcastle Fire Station
Newcastle	George Faux, Inc.	S of Great Salt Bay, Upper Damariscotta Rvr	1.8 acres	Shellfish	20 yrs	App rec'd 2/15/22; site visit completed
Newcastle	Maine Oyster Inc.	E & S of Lehman Isl, Upper Sheepscoot Rvr	10 acres	Shellfish	20 yrs	Lease Granted 8/31/23
Newcastle	Norumbega Oyster Inc.	E of Upper Dodge Pt, Damariscotta Rvr	6 acres	Shellfish	20 yrs	App rec'd 9/9/22; site visit completed
North Haven	Maine Island Aquaculture LLC	SW of Hog Isl, Marsh Cove	15 acres	Shellfish/Algae	20 yrs	Pub.Hearing 4/4/23 North Haven Comm Bldg
Phippsburg	Clam Hunter Seafood (T Watson)	North end of Morse Rvr, Spirit Pond	2.52 acres	Shellfish	10 yrs	Scoping session 9/14/22 6pm Phippsburg Library
Phippsburg	Clam Hunter Seafood (T Watson)	W of Parker Head, Kennebec Rvr, Mill Pond	.96 acres	Shellfish	10 yrs	Scoping session 9/14/22 6pm Phippsburg Library
Phippsburg	Hermit Island Oyster Co. LLC	Hermit Isl, Small Pt Hbr, New Meadows Rvr	2.51 acres	Shellfish	20 yrs	Lease Granted 11/27/23
Phippsburg	Hermit Island Oyster Co. LLC	The Branch, New Meadows River	0.62 acres	Shellfish	20 yrs	Lease Granted 11/27/23
Scarborough	Saltwind Seafarm LLC, Matthew Hassler	W of Nonesuch Point Scarborough River	2.31 acres	Shellfish	20 yrs	App rec'd 7/11/23; site review TBD
South Bristol	Dewey's Shellfish LLC	NW of Peters Island, Damariscotta River	0.58 acre	Shellfish	20 yrs	App rec'd 8/16/21; site visit completed
South Bristol	Heron Island Oyster Co.	Fitch Cv @ Glidden Ldg, E side Damr Rvr	1 acre	Shellfish	20 yrs	App rec'd 10/4/21; site visit completed
Southport	Brewer, Jodi & Morning Star Fisheries	N of Dot's Isl, Sheepscoot Rvr, Ebenecook Hbr	1.37 acres	Marine Algae	20 yrs	App rec'd 6/6/23; site visit completed
St. George	Albatross Fisheries	Deep Cove, W of Port Clyde, St. George River	4.41 acres	Marine Algae	20 yrs	App rec'd 3/21/23; site visit completed
St. George	Balano, JW & McCoy, MR	Harrington Cove, Wheeler's Bay	1.98 acres	Shellfish	20 yrs	App rec'd 7/26/22; site review TBD
St. George	Cotton, J; Thomas, S; Devil's Apron Sea Farm	End of St. George Rvr, Deep Cove, W of Pt Clyde	5.74 acres	Marine Algae	20 yrs	Scoping session 6/5/23 3pm St George Town Office
St. George	Miller, Keith	SE of Elwell Isl, Rackliff Bay, Penobscot Bay	11 acres	Marine Algae	20 yrs	App rec'd 8/2/23; site review TBD
St. George	Miller, Keith & Ryan	SE of Elwell Isl, Wheeler Bay	12.8 acres	Marine Algae	20 yrs	Scoping session 9/19/23 7pm St. George Town Office
St. George	Miller, Keith & Ryan	West of Norton Isl, Rackliff Bay	11.1 acres	Marine Algae	20 yrs	Scoping session 9/19/23 7pm St. George Town Office
St. George	Miss Madisyn LLC	Deep Cove, W of Pt Clyde, End of St. George Rvr	4.44 acres	Marine Algae	20 yrs	App rec'd 5/30/23; site visit completed
Steuben	Francis, Arnold	E of Birch Point, Dyer Bay	2.91 acres	Shellfish	20 yrs	App rec'd 8/18/22; site visit completed
Steuben	Francis, Arnold	Smelt Brook, Dyer Bay	3.56 acres	Shellfish	20 yrs	App rec'd 8/18/22; site visit completed
Stonington	Brewer, Robert	SW of Andrews Isl, Penobscot Bay	3.26 acres	Shellfish	20 yrs	Lease Granted 12/1/23
Swan's Island	Joyce, Jason & Joshua	Mill Pond, Burnt Coat Harbor	9.95 acres	Shellfish	20 yrs	Scoping session 1/23/23 Swan's Island Town Office
Unorg. Terr.	Baines, Robert & Cole	W Penob. Bay, W of Hewitt Isl, S of Clam Ledges	7.33 acres	Marine Algae	20 yrs	Public Hearing 11/9/23 1pm Thomaston Town Office
Yarmouth	Butterfield, Keith	SE of Little Moshier Isl, Casco Bay	2.72 acres	Shellfish	20 yrs	Lease Granted 12/7/23
Yarmouth	Henninger, Thomas	Little John Isl, Casco Bay	6.37 acres	Shellfish	20 yrs	App rec'd 4/4/23; site review TBD
Yarmouth	Summit Point LLC	S of the Nubbin, Casco Bay	9.3 acres	Marine Algae	20 yrs	App rec'd 3/29/23; site review TBD

*For an interactive source of pending lease applications,  
please see DMR's table of Pending Aquaculture Lease Applications, where you can find maps and documentation.*

*Go to: [www.maine.gov/dmr/](http://www.maine.gov/dmr/) and from the Aquaculture dropdown menu, select  
Maine Aquaculture Leases and LPAs, then Pending Lease Applications.*

*Scoping Session and Hearing information can also be found on the calendar at [www.maineobstermen.org/events](http://www.maineobstermen.org/events)*

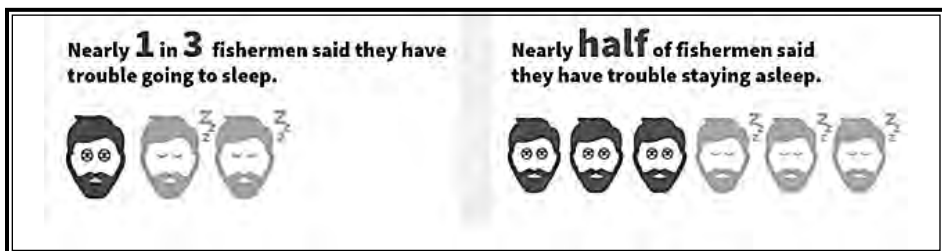


## TO YOUR HEALTH: *Dealing with insomnia*

By Sally Hamm, MD, MPH and Ann Backus, MS, Harvard Chan School of Public Health

It's late. So late. You're tired. So tired. You should be asleep by now. What time is it anyway? It seems like you've been lying here for hours. You check your phone, mutter something not suitable for polite company under your breath. You know you need to sleep or you'll feel like you were run over by a boat when the alarm goes off in just a few hours. You're strong. You're sturdy. You're used to pushing yourself to do things you don't want to do. You're so tired it hurts, but you just can't force yourself to sleep. The frustration is building, and you keep running through your mind all the things you'll have to do tomorrow, all the people who are counting on you to be on your game. Maybe you get up and walk around. You look around for anything that might help. You realize that in the morning it'll take a lot of caffeine to cover up this drag, and then you'll be buzzed and tired. You have Insomnia.

Unfortunately, you're not alone. Globally, one-third to two-thirds of adults struggle with insomnia symptoms, and 10-15% are so severe that they qualify for an insomnia disorder. In a recent study of commercial fishermen in Alaska, Oregon, and Massachusetts by the Northeast Center for Occupational Safety and Health, nearly one in three of the 262 fishermen who responded to the study surveys said they have trouble going to sleep and nearly half of the fishermen who responded said they have trouble staying asleep.



Insomnia can be caused by pain, stress, or a poor sleeping environment. It can also be a symptom of medical conditions like high blood pressure, diabetes, heart failure, or COPD, or mental health struggles like depression, anxiety, or PTSD. It can be a side effect of certain medications and of alcohol use. The insomnia based on these causes is called secondary insomnia. The insomnia that just comes out of the blue without any of those causes is called primary insomnia. Having a family history of insomnia can also increase your risk, as can social isolation.

The Do's and Don'ts of Sleep Hygiene	
Do	Don't
Make it dark with black-out curtains or shades.	Consume caffeine within 6 hours of sleep, or drink more than roughly 3, 8 oz cups of brewed coffee a day.
Adjust heaters, layers, and blankets to around 65°F where the body sleeps best.	Drink alcohol within 4 hours of bedtime, and/ or drink more than 2 standard drinks per day.
Take a break from electronics 30 minutes before bedtime.	Exercise aggressively within 4 hours of sleep.
When possible, keep a consistent bedtime.	Eat heavy or spicy foods within 2 hours of bedtime.
Lower the sound. You can't always control the noise around you, but a pair of noise-cancelling headphones, or even ear plugs, can reduce the variability, which alerts your mind to pay attention.	Watch TV or scroll through your phone in bed.
When possible, keep a consistent bedtime. Even if the bedtime has to vary day to day, keep a consistent bedtime routine to signal to your body and brain it's time to wind down.	Toss and turn. If you can't fall asleep after 20 minutes in bed, get up, move to somewhere else with low light, and do something boring without a screen until your mind is settled enough to try again. Don't teach your brain to associate lying in bed with being frustrated.

Both reduced sleep quantity and quality can lead to compromised daytime function including fatigue, difficulty focusing, mood problems, irritability or aggression, impulsivity, reduced motivation, and increased errors and accidents. Long-term, insomnia increases the risk for high blood pressure, heart attacks, strokes, diabetes, obesity, depression, anxiety, erectile dysfunction, chronic pain, and addiction.

Insomnia can also be a vicious cycle. Lying awake in bed wanting to sleep but not being able to sleep is frustrating. Frustration activates stress hormones and alertness centers in the brain, and a stimulated mind and body has trouble falling asleep. Sometimes the solutions you try can make it worse. Looking at a screen, to scroll or even just to check the time, causes your eyes to send signals to your brain to turn off the melatonin your body produces that, in turn, would normally lead to sleep.

Alcohol might knock you out, but it interferes with sleep quality and makes the morning symptoms that much worse. Modern sleep medications can have a short-term benefit, but when you use them more than a couple of weeks, you can develop a psychological dependence that makes it hard to sleep without them. Taking caffeine to compensate for inadequate sleep can also create a dependence on caffeine. Taking it too late in the day can interfere with the next night's sleep. Tobacco might calm your nerves in the moment, but nicotine is also a stimulant that interferes with sleep.

So, what can be done to help? If you're struggling with insomnia, it's worth taking an extra visit to the doctor just for that, because insomnia can be the first or most noticeable symptom of some other medical or mental condition.

In the meantime, set your sleep up for success with something called Sleep Hygiene. You spend up to a third of your life in your sleeping space, so invest in ways to make your room or bunk conducive to sleep.

Given that insomnia can be a symptom of some serious medical conditions, if practicing good sleep hygiene as outlined above does not help it may be time to seek the care of a healthcare professional. And because reduced quantity and quality of sleep can result in cognitive impairment and poor-decision-making, insomnia is not only a health issue but a safety issue as well for commercial fishermen.

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## ROAD MAP TO MAINE'S SEAFOOD FUTURE RELEASED THIS MONTH

By *Melissa Waterman*

For anyone running their own business, it takes a lot of effort to peer up from day-to-day concerns and take a look around at the wider world. Those involved in Maine's expanding aquaculture sector or those working at sea fishing for lobster, scallops, and other commercial species might not think that they have anything in common.

But that commonality is exactly what SEAMaine (Seafood Economic Accelerator Maine) highlights. "The goal is to make connections among all the arms of Maine's seafood industry, to find areas where we all share common ground," explained Sara Rademaker, founder and president of American Unagi in Waldoboro and SEAMaine co-chair. SEAMaine is funded by a 2020 grant from the U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration with additional funding from the Maine Technology Institute and FocusMaine.

According to a SEAMaine report, Maine's seafood sector contributed over \$3.2 billion in total economic output to the Maine economy in 2019. Retail seafood (\$692 million), lobster harvesting (\$511 million), and seafood processing (\$343 million) were the largest industries contributing to total economic output. Maine's seafood businesses supported over 33,300 jobs statewide in 2019. Harvesting, including lobster, non-lobster species, and aquaculture, is the largest employing segment of the seafood sector, supporting over 12,700 jobs, followed by retail seafood outlets, including restaurants (8,550).

Seafood is clearly an important element in Maine's economic landscape, but a very diverse one. Links among businesses seemed few and far between.

"We had been meeting together earlier to discuss ways that we could do better together," Keri Kaczor, Maine Sea Grant Environmental Literacy and Workforce Development program leader and co-chair of SEAMaine workforce development subcommittee. "It was fireworks, there are so many brilliant innovative people who want to share their experiences and knowledge."

With the EDA funding, the loose group organized itself around a specific goal: to devise a road map for Maine's seafood industry designed to help the sector thrive in a future full of economic and environmental uncertainties.

The connection between those who catch marine species in the wild and aquaculturists who farm marine species was not always clear. "Fishermen have a concern for stability and economic viability as the environment or economy changes," Rademaker noted. "Aquaculturists try to control and to manage

things." And yet the two facets of Maine's seafood industry found that they share common issues, such as having adequate cold storage capacity in the state or having modern transportation systems in place to move their products to market. "The seafood industry in Maine is broad and this work has done a good job of opening lines of communication. There are common areas that will help all of us."

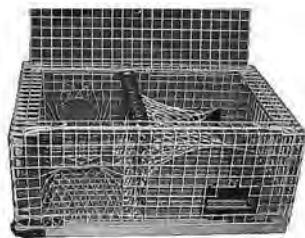
The first thing SEAMaine set out to do was to organize itself into five subcommittees and begin collecting data. "The question we asked was 'what do we all need?'" Rademaker said. There was a lot of ground to cover: workforce needs, market opportunities, transportation issues, economic projections, and more. For the next three years during the Covid pandemic, SEAMaine produced a series of reports that describe Maine's current seafood industry, its economic impact, and its future opportunities and obstacles.

While gathering reams of data, SEAMaine also started a mini-grant program for already existing seafood businesses and organizations. Maine Maritime Academy, for instance, received funds toward developing a Mariculture training certificate, specifically creation of training modules for the Academy's Center for Professional Mariner Development in Bucksport. The SEAMaine workforce development subcommittee created online toolboxes and videos for businesses to assist them in bringing new people into the state's seafood industry. "We wanted to change the narrative about seafood and seafood processing," Kaczor said. "Processing, for example, involves new technologies. There're opportunities for different training pathways and career advancement."

On January 17 at Atlantic Sea Farms in Biddeford, SEAMaine will release its Road Map for the Maine Seafood Industry. The Road Map will lay out steps that private businesses and public agencies can take to improve workforce development, economic growth, and resiliency within the seafood sector. Its creators see the Road Map as a document available to all describing what the Maine seafood sector is today and what it could be in the future.

"It's been a big ambitious endeavor. There's a whole lot of value to the seafood industry through the connections that have been made in this process. It demonstrates the shared values of the industry," said Rademaker.

"Anyone can point to it and reference it to support their own initiatives," Kaczor said. "I'm really excited about making it a reality." For more information and to read SEAMaine's reports, go to <https://www.seamaine.org>.



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# In the NEWS

## NEFMC SETS GROUND FISH CATCH LIMITS

The New England Fishery Management Council set groundfish catch limits for the 2024 Northeast fishing year at its December meeting in Newport, R.I. The



NOAA photo.

2024 total allowable catch for U.S. boats will include 151 metric tons of Eastern Georges Bank cod, an 11.9% increase from the 2023 fishing year. There will be 3,100 metric tons available for Eastern Georges Bank haddock, a 104% increase from last year; and 71 metric tons for Georges Bank yellowtail flounder, a decrease of 33%. The U.S. commercial groundfish sub-annual catch limit for Georges Bank haddock

was set for 6,570.9 metric tons, a 41 percent% from the previous year. For Georges Bank yellowtail flounder, the sub-ACL will go down 33% to 56.1 tons. The Framework 66 adjustment revisits the Gulf of Maine haddock quota, setting the 2024 catch limit to 1,435.1 metric tons. That is down 9% from 1,559 tons allocated during 2023; that number that was a boost from the original Gulf of Maine limit of 1,208 tons.

## NEW BILL COULD AID FISHERMEN'S SAFETY

A federal program that protects the health and wellbeing of commercial fishermen should be expanded to include substance use disorder and worker fatigue, a group of lawmakers from New England and Alaska said. The lawmakers want to expand the Commercial Fishing Occupational Safety Research and Training Program. The program is designed to help the nation's fishermen remain safe despite the hazardous conditions they face at sea. Republican Senator Susan Collins, who is one of the lawmakers pushing for the change, said expanding

the program would help fishermen access more safety training and mental health resources. The lawmakers' proposed changes would increase the program's annual funding from \$6 million to \$12 million and remove a cost-share requirement.

## ON-BOARD FISHERY MONITORS CASE BEFORE SUPREME COURT IN JANUARY

The Supreme Court will hear arguments in January in *Loper Bright Enterprises v. Raimondo*. The case challenges a federal rule that requires the fishermen to pay for the cost of fisheries observers on their vessels who monitor compliance with fishery management rules. It is anticipated that the Supreme Court justices will consider a broader question: whether to overrule or limit a 1984 decision in *Chevron v. Natural Resources Defense Council*. In that decision, the court held that when a federal statute is ambiguous, courts should defer to an agency's interpretation of that law if it is reasonable. The Chevron case now is a cornerstone of administrative law. The decision shifted power from Congress and the courts to agencies, and it is unpopular among businesses.

## NO ADVERSE IMPACTS TO MARINE MAMMALS FROM OFFSHORE WIND PROJECT, SAYS NOAA

NOAA issued a biological opinion in late December that found a New Jersey offshore wind project which has already received preliminary approval from the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management is likely to "adversely affect" whales and other marine mammals, but that its construction, operation and eventual dismantling will not seriously harm or kill them. The Atlantic Shores project is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of any species of endangered whales, sea turtles, or fish. The ruling is nearly identical to one the agency issued in April for the now-canceled Ocean Wind I and II projects, which would have been built in the same general area.

# NEW ENGLAND FISHERMEN'S STEWARDSHIP ASSOCIATION



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The New England Fishermen's Stewardship Association is an alliance of the wild harvesters of the waters off of New England, dedicated to educating the public about how best to manage our seafood resources through sound science and best practices of conservation used by fishermen, with a view toward economic well-being, ecosystem sustainability, and U.S. food security.

[www.nefishermen.org](http://www.nefishermen.org)



**For groundfish, long line, gill net, herring seining, scallop and other dragging contact:**

Jerry Leeman III, NEFSA Founder & CEO  
[jerryleeman@fishermenstewardship.org](mailto:jerryleeman@fishermenstewardship.org)  
207-615-6483



**For lobster, crab, clam/worm, elver fisheries and menhaden seining contact:**

Dustin W. Delano, Chief Operating Officer  
[coo@fishermenstewardship.org](mailto:coo@fishermenstewardship.org)  
207-615-6352

# Events Calendar

More details on all of these events can be found online at [www.maine lobstermen.org](http://www.maine lobstermen.org)

**January 2**

Maine Fishermen's Forum registration opens at [www.maine fishermensforum.org](http://www.maine fishermensforum.org).

**January 10**

Aquaculture Public Hearing - Stuart Ryan, 1 p.m., Freeport Town Office.

**January 17**

Aquaculture Advisory Council meeting, 10 a.m.-noon, DMR Office Building or via Teams.

**January 18-19**

U.S.-Canada Lobster Town Meeting, Crowne Plaza, Moncton, New Brunswick.

**January 23-25**

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission winter meeting, Arlington, VA.

**January 30-February 1**

New England Fishery Management Council meeting, Portsmouth, NH.

**February 12-13**

Sea Grant American Lobster Initiative Regional Lobster Research and Outreach Summit, Portland.

**February 25**

2nd Annual Chowder's On! Community Luncheon and Fundraiser, Kittery Community Center. Tickets at [www.portsmouthnhtickets.com/organizations/kittery-community-center](http://www.portsmouthnhtickets.com/organizations/kittery-community-center).

**February 29 - March 2**

Maine Fishermen's Forum, Samoset Resort. FMI: [www.maine fishermensforum.org](http://www.maine fishermensforum.org).

**March 21-24**

Massachusetts Lobstermen's Association Annual Weekend, Emerald Resort & Conference Center, Hyannis, MA.

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## DONATION JAR YIELDS MORE THAN \$1,000 FOR #SAVEMAINELOBSTERMEN

By MLA staff

Who says a little can't go a long way?

For the past several months, a spare change jar wrapped in a #SaveMaineLobstermen sticker has been sitting on the counter at Main Street Variety in Northeast Harbor. Every so often, store owner Ben Lunt would empty the jar, count the change, convert it into dollar bills, and then tuck them away for safe keeping.

The jar was placed there by local lobsterman Chris Moore, who thought it would be a good way to collect a little money to help the industry. Little did he know that that spare change would eventually add up. Recently, Moore sent a check for \$1,044.84 to the MLA's Legal Defense Fund.

When thanked for organizing such a generous donation, Moore quickly turned the praise back on the MLA, thanking it for the work it has done over the past few years to protect Maine's lobstering heritage.

It just goes to show you how a few cents here and there can add up! Do you have a local store that might be willing to place a spare change jar on its counter and help just like Ben and Chris did? We'd be happy to send you the sticker!

*Time to make plans to attend the second annual Chowder's On! community luncheon on Sunday, February 25th in Kittery. The fundraiser benefits the Maine Lobstermen's Community Alliance. Last year's event brought out the crowds to enjoy fine chowder, an auction and raffle. Tickets go on sale January 7 at [www.portsmouthnhtickets.com/organizations/kittery-community-center](http://www.portsmouthnhtickets.com/organizations/kittery-community-center).*



Shop owner Ben Lunt with the \$1,000 jar! C. Moore photo.

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## FISHERY'S PAST CAPTURED AT PENOBSCOT MARINE MUSEUM



*Laura W* was a lobster boat built and owned by Freddy Lenfesty of Jonesport, Maine.

Photographs tell a story. The history of the Maine lobster fishery and the many other commercial fisheries of the state are captured in collections of historic photographs carefully curated by the Penobscot Marine Museum in Searsport. With over 100,000 images digitally available on its website, one can search easily for the people, boats and harbors that have been at the heart of Maine's fisheries over the years.

This month *Landings* features a selection of traditional lobster boats from the Atlantic Fisherman and National Fisherman collections. These wooden boats were sturdy but elegant, embodying many generations of fishermen's knowledge.

To search the Penobscot Marine Museum's digital photo collections, go to [www.penobscotmarinemuseum.org](http://www.penobscotmarinemuseum.org).



Oscar Simpson of Criehaven by his new 36' lobster boat, built by Mackinen Boat Shop in S. Thomaston.



*The Swan*, built by Vinal Beal and his son Osmond in 1954, runs up Moosabec Reach. LOA: 33'; beam 9'.



Lobsters being put into cars at Guy Francis's lobster pound in Corea.



Carroll Alley of Prospect Harbor gives his 32' lobster boat *Elsa Louise* an overhaul and paint job.



### POWER AT WORK

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

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