MAINE OFFICIALS GO ON OFFENSE REGARDING WHALE RULES

By Melissa Waterman

During July Governor Janet Mills and the Maine Congressional delegation expressed strong opposition to the mandate from the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) requiring additional right whale protections. In April, states with commercial lobster fisheries were directed by NMFS to reduce the risk posed by the fishery to right whales by between 60% and 80%. As a result, Maine lobstermen must remove 50% of all vertical lines from the water to achieve the 60% reduction in risk.

But, as Governor Mills stated in a letter to commercial lobstermen released on July 11, "...it is clear to me — as it is to you — that the federal government’s pending regulations are unfair, unreasonable, and unwarranted. I will not stand idly by as Washington attempts to threaten your livelihoods and our way of life." Mills cited the lack of data linking the gear used by Maine lobstermen to any recent right whale entanglements and deaths. Shortly after Mills sent her letter to lobstermen, the Canadian Department of Fisheries and Oceans confirmed that eight right whales have died in the Gulf of St. Lawrence this summer. Three more were seen to be entangled in fishing gear in that region in July.

Mills explained that she had directed Commissioner Kilcher to evaluate a risk reduction target for Maine that is commensurate to any actual risk posed by the Maine lobster industry — not the 60 percent risk reduction target assigned by the National Marine Fisheries Service. The Commissioner will come back to the industry in August, as promised, to share the Department’s findings and put forward a plan to reduce risk in Maine.

In response, the Maine Lobstermen’s Association (MLA) commended Mills’ action. "The Maine lobster industry understands that right whales are at risk and we want to be part of the solution. But as the Governor rightly points out, the data show that Maine is just a small part of a large and complex problem," wrote MLA executive director Patrice McCarron. "Maine’s solution must be right-sized to reflect the risk our fishery poses to right whales. We will not implement changes to our fishery to achieve an arbitrary goal if those measures won’t actually benefit the right whale.”

On July 21, lobstermen turned out in force at a rally in Stonington to protest NMFS’ actions. Governor Mills, Senator Susan Collins, Representative Chellie Pingree and Representative Jared Golden were in attendance. Rep. Golden said to lobstermen, “The new NOAA regulations could put many Maine lobstermen out of business without a guarantee that any right whales would be saved. It is important to Maine communities and the lobster industry that we continue to fight against unfair rules and inaccurate information. We’re calling for solutions based on sound science and good data that protect lobstermen and whales.”

Aquaculture is big news in Maine. Newspaper stories proclaim, "The future looks bright for Maine’s growing aquaculture industry." Fresh-faced entrepreneurs smile for the cameras in their foul weather gear in front of their cages or hold up long strands of kelp. To many, the growth of aquaculture businesses appears to have come out of nowhere, a tidal wave surging along the coast of Maine.

The reality is quite different. Maine has been in the forefront of aquaculture due to many factors. Many entities, including Maine Sea Grant, have helped foster Maine’s aquaculture boom. 

Continued on page 18
COASTAL OUTLOOK

Thoughts from MLCA President Patrice McCarron

If you are a Maine lobsterman, all you have heard about this summer is North Atlantic right whales. The endangered species has been in the minds of lobstermen, state legislators, Maine’s Congressional delegation and Governor Mills. Eight right whales have died in Canadian waters by the end of July, from a population now estimated to be below 450 in number. The Department of Marine Resources (DMR) spent long hours in June meeting with lobstermen in each of the seven lobster zones to understand which strategies would work best to remove 50% of Maine’s vertical lines and the operational, safety and economic concerns associated with those changes. As our lead article this month indicates, lobstermen are up in arms about that plan and held a rally in Stonington last month to express their concerns.

In response to NMFS’ plan and lobstermen’s protests, Governor Mills decided to take action in mid-July. As you will read, the Governor called upon DMR to undertake its own analysis of interactions between lobstermen and right whales in order to assess the true risk. Maine lobstermen might pose. “My Administration will not allow any bureaucrat to undermine our lobster industry or our economy with foolish, unsupported, and ill-advised regulations,” she wrote to Maine lobstermen. DMR will hold a second series of meetings with lobstermen in August to share the results of its analysis.

DMR has also continued with its three-year study of the ropes used in the state’s lobster fishery, whose preliminary results we highlight in this issue. The study is designed to provide better data on how lobster gear is configured by lobstermen in different areas of the Gulf of Maine, the functional breaking strength of vertical lines in use in the fishery, and the strain vertical lines experience when hauling under various conditions. Some environmental organizations are promoting the notion of 1,700-pound breaking strength rope in the fishery, which typically would allow a right whale to break free of that rope if encountered. Data from DMR’s research indicate that ropes fished by Maine lobstermen featuring knots or splices often break at 1,700 pounds of strain now. The results of the project will provide insight into which rigging methods achieve 1,700-pound breaking strength to inform gear configurations to protect right whales in the future.

While the plight of right whales and of Maine lobstermen have dominated the news this summer, other issues continued to draw attention. New or expanded aquaculture leases have caused concern in several communities along the coast in recent months. Landings continues its series on aquaculture in the state with a look at the impetus for the sector’s growth. As the article indicates, no one specific factor triggered the growth but rather it has resulted from a mix of private and public actions.

Landings also continues its series on health issues and lobstermen by looking at the problem of high blood pressure. The “quiet” killer — high blood pressure — afflicts nearly half of all adults in America, many of whom have no idea they have the condition. Untreated, high blood pressure can cause a multitude of other illnesses, including heart attack and stroke.

Jeff Grenier is a Maine artist whose love of the coast permeates his pen and ink drawings. He learned how to handle a boat as a child in Friendship where his grandfather lived. The world of the working waterfront inspired Grenier as a child and, as an artist, now inspires his work.

Recently he began doing pen and ink portraits of lobster boats and their home ports. “An honest day’s hard work deserves respect, and it is with respect that I treat each of my subjects,” Grenier explained.

Summer is also the season of feasting along the shore and lobster often serves as the centerpiece of summertime meals. Antonina Pelletier offers a review of Maine resident Barton Seaver’s seafood cookbook, Two if By Sea, which is full of tasty seafood recipes. Seaver, who has served as a chef-ambassador for the Maine Lobster Marketing Collaborative and an international proponent of sustainable seafood, celebrates not only the iconic Maine lobster but also familiar species such as blue mussels and cod. Bon appetit!

I hope you are having a relaxing summer and I welcome your feedback on this issue and future story ideas.

Substitute to Landings, where lobstermen get their news!

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Maine Aquaculture Association [https://maineaqua.org]

Founded in 1976, the Maine Aquaculture Association (MAA) is a membership organization for aquaculturists. Its members grow finfish, shellfish and sea vegetables in both fresh and saltwater using a variety of farming methods. The MAA and its member growers are widely recognized as pioneers in the development of innovative and sustainable farming aquaculture farming practices.

The Maine Aquaculture Innovation Center [https://www.maineaquaculture.org]

The Center was established in 1988 by the Maine Legislature with a mission to assist in developing economically and environmentally sustainable aquaculture capacity in Maine; serves as a source of educational information to enhance public visibility and acceptance of aquaculture; and encourages strategic alliances tasked with promoting research, technology transfer, and the commercialization of aquaculture research.

The Aquaculture Research Institute at the University of Maine
[https://umaine.edu/aquaculture]

The Aquaculture Research Institute (ARI), established in 2009, brings together researchers and faculty from multiple disciplines at UMaine, key industry partners, and applied R&D opportunities, to enable UMaine's aquaculture research portfolio to embrace the entire innovation development pipeline.
The Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Team (TRT) met in April 2019 and recommended new regulatory measures for the lobster fishery in the Northeast. The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) set a target to reduce the risk of entanglement to North Atlantic right whales by 60 percent. While the State of Maine has recently challenged the 60% goal and is currently assessing its own risk reduction target, each state or lobster management area is working to define regional strategies to reduce the risk of entanglement to right whales in their area. The Maine Department of Marine Resources (DMR) staff is currently gathering information on what can be accomplished through meetings with the lobster industry. Potential measures could include a combination of trawl minimums by distance from shore, trap reductions, and the use of weaker rope on all or a portion of vertical lines.

DMR recognized that data on the diversity of gear and vertical line configurations in the fleet were missing in the TRT management discussions, and applied for funding through the Section 6 Specified Research Grants to States program. The project aimed to develop a baseline of information by region and relative to gear’s use by distance from shore. Awarded in the summer of 2018, the project includes three parts: a gear survey, testing the functional breaking strength of vertical lines in use in the fishery, and understanding the strain vertical lines are under when trawling. The survey was conducted in August 2018 through January 2019 in collaboration with Maine Lobstermen’s Association, Massachusetts Lobstermen’s Association, the Atlantic Offshore Lobstermen’s Association, the University of Maine, New Hampshire Fish and Game, and the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management.

In total, the survey had 647 responses from Maine, 139 responses from Massachusetts, 57 responses from New Hampshire, 13 responses from Rhode Island, and 11 responses from offshore fishermen. The survey was available through an online portal on the DMR website. In Maine, Massachusetts and Area 3, the survey was also administered by phone. Within Maine, the responses were distributed across Zones A through G. Zone A, the largest zone, had the lowest response rate, and Zone D, the third largest zone, had the highest rate. The survey collected data on the area fished, traps per trawl, and vertical line configuration. Preliminary findings support what was generally understood about the Maine lobster fishery — gear configurations and rope diameter used in vertical lines increase as gear is fished further from shore.

In addition to the gear survey, project partners collected used vertical line samples in order to test the breaking strength of rope. Understanding the breaking strength of vertical lines already in use helps inform regulations that outline weak rope requirements. As of June 2019, 215 breaking strength tests have been completed. The manufacturer types and types of rope varied, and the average age of the rope ranged from 3 to 6 seasons. Preliminary findings show the smaller the rope diameter, the lower the breaking strength regardless of rope type, and that the presence of knots and splices significantly lowers the breaking strength of the rope. Survey results show that 96% of ropes currently fished are modified with a knot, splice, or both. Forty-eight percent have both knots and splices. Given the lower breaking strengths of ropes with knots and splices, most of the rope being fished has a functional breaking strength that is less than the manufacturers’ breaking strength. This suggests that using certain types of knots and splices that are already being fished will help meet weak rope requirements. Preliminary results demonstrate that rope weakens as it is fished. Data show a significant, negative relationship between the breaking strength of rope and number of seasons fished.

DMR tested the relationship between rope breaking strength, diameter, rope modifications, and number of seasons fished. Results show that both diameter, rope modifications, and number of seasons fished significantly impact breaking strength. Rope diameter and modifications have the strongest influence on breaking strength followed by the number of seasons fished. A major concern with proposed weak rope requirements is the potential impact to the safety of fishing operations. The project team documented the strain vertical lines are under while being hauled in varying fishing conditions and gear configurations. Eleven fishermen have participated to date. Based on the initial research findings, vertical line strain is most impacted by the combination of traps per trawl and the depth in which the gear is set. DMR, FB Environmental Associates (FBE), and the University of Maine are continuing to collect load cell data to understand where and how weaker ropes can be fished safely. Additionally, testing is being conducted to modify existing gear to achieve a weak rope equivalent for consideration as regulations are developed. Lastly, project partners will talk with fishermen to improve understanding of how any trawling up requirements will affect the strain that vertical lines are under. These data will provide insight as the lobster industry determines best fishing practices, and alternative fishing set ups to meet the new regulations.

ForBy FB Environmental Associates

DMR ROPE STUDY REVEALS OPTIONS FOR WEAK ROPE

Th e Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Team (TRT) met in April 2019 and recommended new regulatory measures for the lobster fishery in the Northeast. The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) set a target to reduce the risk of entanglement to North Atlantic right whales by 60 percent. While the State of Maine has recently challenged the 60% goal and is currently assessing its own risk reduction target, each state or lobster management area is working to define regional strategies to reduce the risk of entanglement to right whales in their area. The Maine Department of Marine Resources (DMR) staff is currently gathering information on what can be accomplished through meetings with the lobster industry. Potential measures could include a combination of trawl minimums by distance from shore, trap reductions, and the use of weaker rope on all or a portion of vertical lines.

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Maine Lobstermen’s Association

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

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Mountain Loebstermen’s Association Update

The following opinion piece by Patrice McCarron, executive director of the Maine Lobstermen’s Association, was published in the Portland Press Herald on July 27.

As Executive Director of the Maine Lobstermen’s Association (MLA), I applaud Governor Mills’ July 11 Message to Maine’s Lobster Industry acknowledging the federal government’s “disturbing lack of evidence connecting the Maine lobster industry to recent right whale deaths.”

Maine’s lobstersmen understand that right whales are at risk and we are committed to being part of the solution. But as Governor Mills rightly points out, the data show that Maine is just a small part of a complex problem.

Lobstersmen recognize that the right whale population will not improve without everyone doing their part to aid in the species’ recovery. However, assigning 60% of the risk to our fishery, which has only one confirmed right whale entanglement dating back to 2002 and zero confirmed serious injuries or mortalities, will not save the species.

Maine’s solution must reflect the actual risk Maine lobstersmen pose to right whales. We should not be forced to implement changes to achieve an arbitrary goal if those measures won’t realistically help the right whale population recover.

The MLA fully supports Governor Mills’ request that the Department of Marine Resources “evaluate a risk reduction target for Maine that is commensurate to any actual risk posed by the Maine lobster industry.”

What is often lost in this debate is that the population of North Atlantic right whales was only 295 in 1997 when federal regulators first required U.S. fishermen to implement conservation measures. In the ensuing years, the right whale population increased to more than 450 whales. During this time, Maine lobstersmen adopted many measures including removing floating line from the surface of the water, adding weak links to help whales break free from buoy lines, replacing 27,000 miles of floating line between traps with whale safe rope that sinks, removing 30% of Maine’s buoy lines, and marking Maine’s gear to identify the origin of gear if a whale becomes entangled.

The National Marine Fisheries Service concluded in its 2008 Final Rule that “NMFS believes large whales rarely occur inside many of Maine’s bays, harbors, or inlets...” These waters were exempted from the federal whale plan, but as a precautionary measure, the state of Maine still requires Maine lobstersmen to implement whale-safe measures there. Published data show that since 2010, changes in ocean conditions have led to major shifts in right whale distribution, making them even more rare in the waters off the Maine coast.

So what is happening to right whales? Accumulating evidence points to climate as a crucial factor in determining right whale distribution, food availability, overall health, birth rates, as well as injury and mortality rates. Importantly, the changing climate has affected the distribution of the copepod, Calanus finmarchicus, the right whale’s preferred food. Large aggregations of right whales have followed shifting copepod aggregations to Massachusetts’ Cape Cod Bay during winter and Canada’s Gulf of St. Lawrence during summer where they spend significant time feeding.

Massachusetts lobstersmen do not fish those waters where more than half the population of right whales are feeding during the winter. The U.S. has also implemented a successful plan to shift shipping traffic and slow ships in U.S. waters when right whales are present.

The current crisis for right whales was set into motion when large numbers of them began feeding in Canada’s Gulf of St. Lawrence where no effective whale protection measures were in place. Since 2016, 15 right whale deaths and three serious injuries have been attributed to Canadian vessel strikes and gear entanglements. There are simply no mitigation measures that Maine lobstersmen can implement that would have prevented these tragedies.

Under the leadership of the Mills Administration, Maine will not sit idly by during this crisis. In addition to identifying measures to reduce the risk Maine’s lobster fishery poses to right whales, the Mills Administration has pledged to expand and uniquely mark Maine lobster gear to increase confidence that any unidentified rope removed from whales did not originate from Maine, and to require all Maine lobstersmen to report where and when they fish in order to track potential overlap with whales.

Thank you, Governor Mills, for standing with Maine lobstersmen in seeking whale protection measures that reflect the risk posed by our fishery, and demanding sound science to provide assurance that the sacrifices our lobstermen make will actually aid in the recovery of the right whale population.

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Board of Directors’ Meeting Schedule
All meetings take place in Belfast, unless otherwise indicated.

No meeting in August
September 11, 5 p.m., Darby’s restaurant

Maine Lobstermen’s Relief Fund
Fourth Lobstermen’s Relief Fund benefit is scheduled for August 30 at Cooks Lobster and Ale House.

Maine Board of Directors met on July 10 in Belfast. The summer membership renewal is underway. Business renewals are in process and harvester renewals will go out in August. Membership director Andi Pelletier spent the day at the Stonington Lobster Boat races speaking with lobstersmen and signing up new members. She will be at the Winter Harbor and Long Island lobster boat races in August. The Maine Lobstersmen’s Community Alliance fourth Lobstermen’s Relief Fund benefit is scheduled for Friday, August 30 at Cooks Lobster and Ale House.

Board members reported that lobster landings remain very slow, and bait has not been an issue thus far. Most docks are sourcing a variety of baits. Quotes for fresh hering have been high so lobstersmen are looking at other baits.

Stocking Sturgeon

The episodic menhaden fishery opened July 15. The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) voted to open the directed Area 1A herring fishery on July 15.

The Mills administration is currently filling seats on the Maine Climate Council, including one designated for fishers. Since the work of this Council could have a significant impact on all Maine fisheries, the MLA board voted to put several names forward to serve on the Climate Council and its coastal and fisheries subcommittee.

The MLA board next discussed its general support for aquaculture in Maine but also noted that it remains concerned over the number of new leases, the size of many of those leases and the state’s procedure in consulting exist-
процентов от общего количества. Ожидается, что 5,844 миллиона фунтов будет выловлено, что составляет 40% от общего количества.

В разделе "Менхаден" говорится о вылове 2,438,677 фунтов в 2019 году, который был осуществлен после окончания федерального сезона в Мэн. Федеральная служба разрешила создателям ловли мэнхадена присоединиться к сезону Мэн, чтобы сохранить баланс популяций мэнхадена и угрозы для редких белых китов.

Лобстерман Пакет Дори с зимовыми хобби, на которых они собирают информацию о ловле лобстера и мэнхадена, также участвовал в марафоне на острове Мэн. Он говорил о том, что лобстерманы больше не хотят, чтобы их добыча была уничтожена.

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July 10, 2019

Dear Mr. President:

We write to urge your intervention in a matter of serious economic importance to the State of Maine. The livelihoods of thousands of hardworking lobstermen and women are currently under grave threat from new regulations under development by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

Under pressure from the ongoing lawsuit filed against the agency, NOAA officials have also admitted that the tool has not been through a scientific peer review, a cornerstone of fishery management decisions. NOAA has shifted its limited aerial resources to Canada which will lead to more stringent rope or trap reductions, Maine lobstermen and their communities depend on it. That is why successful efforts by NOAA to save the right whales must focus on developing effective regulations that will actually reduce the risk to right whales while limiting negative impacts on fishermen.

The voices of hard-working Americans — like lobstermen — are too often ignored by the governing process. Your administration has made a point of targeting regulations that you believe are ill-conceived or overly burdensome. By applying the same logic to Maine’s lobster industry and intervening in the implementation of NOAAs regulations on Maine lobstermen, you can prevent unfair harm to an iconic Maine industry and save many good American jobs.

Maine’s historic lobster industry is an economic engine for our state, directly producing almost $500 million in revenue and an estimated $1 billion in total economic impact each year. This industry supports 4,500 lobstermen and their families, as well as thousands of others employed by lobster dealers and seafood processors, vessel and trap manufacturers, restaurants and businesses, and rural communities along Maine’s coast.

In the regulatory process, Maine lobstermen have been largely forgotten. For centuries, Maine lobstermen have been subjected to NOAA regulations regarding right whales. Past administrations have imposed similar measures that provided little positive effect on the struggling whale population, but required significant operational adaptations by lobstermen who have had to bear safety and economic costs. Maine lobstermen have already incorporated significant changes to their gear, including weak links, converting to sinking rope between traps, and removing thirty percent of their buoy lines from the Gulf of Maine.

Meanwhile, some Canadian fisheries continue to use heavier gear or floating lines that are more likely to cause a serious entanglement. In the past two years, fourteen of twenty-two confirmed right whale deaths were found in Canadian waters. So far in 2019, there have been six right whale deaths, all of which took place in Canada. Three of those deaths have been attributed to ship strikes, not fishing gear entanglements. And three right whales have suffered non-fatal rope entanglements in Canadian waters this year compared to no such incidences in the Gulf of Maine.

In the regulatory process, Maine lobstermen have been largely forgotten. This dynamic was evident in April, when NOAAs Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Team (ALWTRT) announced plans to reduce the perceived risk of death to these whales from vertical trap lines by 60 percent, despite the fact that Maine lobster gear has not been conclusively tied to any of these tragic deaths.

As a result of strong pressure from NOAA and out of concern that their dissent would lead to more stringent rope or trap reductions, Maine lobstermen and industry representatives participating in the ALWTRT meeting agreed to these measures. Their concern was warranted given that NOAAs Deputy Assistant Administrator for Fisheries warned ALWTRT members that if they did not put forward ideas, NOAA would formulate a plan for them without industry input. The Maine Department of Resources (DMR) staff participating also agreed to these measures while reserving the right to object to the final rule as implemented by NOAA. Furthermore, conservation groups on the ALWTRT were openly advocating for a 100 percent line reduction to so-called “rope-less fishing,” which given the lack of existing effective technology, would likely result in plummeting harvest and economic impact each year. This industry supports 4,500 lobstermen and their communities they support.

We want you to know that a failure of the lobster fishery would devastate entire Maine communities. All of us know too well what happens to Maine towns when an anchor industry fails; they nearly disintegrate, and it can take decades to recover. This must be avoided.

For centuries, Maine lobstermen have been responsible stewards of our marine resources. Indeed, their livelihoods depend on it. That is why successful efforts by NOAA to save the right whales must focus on developing effective regulations that will actually reduce the risk to right whales while limiting negative impacts on fishermen.

We, along with the lobster industry in Maine, stand ready to work with your administration to achieve that outcome. We would be pleased to meet with you or your staff personally as well as to facilitate a meeting with Maine lobstermen to discuss this situation. We know from experience that they would greatly appreciate having an opportunity to have their voices heard.

Continued on page 8

MAINE LOBSTERMEN’S ASSOCIATION UPDATE

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

Farm Credit East specializes in providing loans and lines of credit to Maine’s commercial fishing industry. With long- and short-term financing options for real estate, boats and equipment, Farm Credit East is the right choice for you. We provide attractive rates and solid advice for aquatic businesses of every type and size. Our lending experts understand your business.

Call them today at the branch office closest to you.
July 11, 2019
Dear Maine Lobster Industry Member,

In light of pending federal regulations to protect right whales, Commissioner Keliher has held a series of Zone Council meetings to gather feedback from Maine's fishermen about how these regulations could impact your operations, your livelihood, our economy, and our state. I am grateful to the more than 1,200 fishermen who took the time to participate in these meetings and share their views.

Commissioner Keliher has briefed me on what he learned, and it is clear to me — as it is to you — that the federal government's proposed regulations are unfair, unreasonable, and unwarranted. I will not stand idly by as Washington attempts to threaten your livelihoods and our way of life.

Maine's lobster industry is a critical pillar of our state's economy and it is that way because of your hard-work and that of generations before you. To people around the world, Maine lobster is more than just a culinary delicacy, it is a proud symbol of our state's strong work-ethic and our unshakable grit and determination. Today, Maine's 4,800-plus commercial harvesters and nearly three thousand wholesale dealers support their families, breathe life into their communities, provide jobs, and help sustain a unique and treasured way of life.

But Maine lobstermen also face mounting challenges, like questionable tariffs out of Washington and a worsening bait shortage. These issues are difficult enough to confront without the heavy hand of the federal government trying to make life even harder for you through misguided regulations — ones not even supported by data.

There is a disturbing lack of evidence connecting the Maine lobster industry to recent right whale deaths. To the contrary, the six right whale deaths in Canada this year, in addition to the three right whales recently discovered entangled in Canadian waters, are evidence that the Maine lobster fishery is not the primary problem for right whales.

Based on the lack of evidence connecting the Maine lobster fishery to recent right whale mortalities and the risk of negatively and profoundly altering our fisheries because of these pending regulations, I have directed Commissioner Keliher to evaluate a risk reduction target for Maine that is commensurate to any actual risk posed by the Maine lobster industry — not the 60 percent risk reduction target designed by the National Marine Fisheries Service. The Commissioner will come back to the industry in August, as promised, to share the Department's findings and put forward a plan to reduce risk in Maine.

Maine may be known across the globe for its lobster, but the federal government should know, too, that it understimates our determination to protect this great state and the fisherman, like you, who are at the heart of it. My Administration will not allow any bureaucracy to undermine our lobster industry or our economy with foolish, unsupported, and ill-advised regulations.

I stand with you and I will do everything I can as your Governor to protect your rights and your livelihoods and defend Maine's lobster industry in the face of absurd federal overreach.

Sincerely,

Janet T. Mills, Governor

Governor Mills letter to Maine lobstermen

July 16, 2019
Dear Mr. President,

I hope you and the First Lady are well. Ann and I are spending this summer in Mid-Coast Maine, at the center of our world-renowned lobster industry. The customers coming into the restaurant where Ann and I work have shared a great deal of information on the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) proposed regulations to protect the North Atlantic right whale. I have grave concerns about the disproportionate effect these rules would have on Maine's lobster fishery and our people.

Although well-intended, there is no evidence to support that the proposed restrictions on lobstering in Maine waters will save even one whale. This is unfortunately another federal overreach in response to big money environmentalists. It will hurt one of the last great fisheries in America; Maine lobster. I am not saying the loss of right whales is not a problem it is; but penalizing Maine fishermen won’t save these whales.

Facing and trying to avoid an environmental-group lawsuit under the Endangered Species Act, NOAA wants a 50 percent reduction in the number of Maine's end lines, which are the fishing ropes connecting lobster traps on the ocean floor to the buoys. This 50 percent reduction, as Maine is almost 80 percent of the U.S. lobster fishery, will generate a 60 percent risk reduction to right whales per the regulator's risk calculation tool. For perspective, a 40 percent reduction is a decrease of almost 400,000 lines.

Here's the bottom line: This is a statistical shell game. Our lobstermen and -women are in the sea; scientists are in the lab. Reducing risk on a computer can be a significant source of stress, which may be affecting both calving and reproduction. Time will tell whether these changes have a positive effect on the population, especially the number of calves born, which has fallen in recent years.

Here are the facts:

Maine's lobster industry switched to marked gear and weak links in the late 1990s to reduce entanglements and allow for any entanglement involving gear from Maine to be identified as such. The whale population almost doubled since the adoption of those changes. Maine's lobster fishery adopted additional modifications in 2009 and 2014.

The vast majority of deaths have occurred in Canadian waters and in U.S. waters south of Maine. The spike in whale deaths began around 2010, and what NOAA terms a “mass event” started in 2017. None of the “mass event” deaths occurred in Maine waters.

Right whales do get entangled in fishing gear, but the gear -like gill nets and crab traps -could be from anywhere along the Atlantic seaboard where the whales swim. A study published last month in the journal Diseases of Aquatic Organisms) reviewed all 70 right whale deaths from 2003-2018; entanglement was identified as the cause of death in 22 cases, 14 of which were recognized as Canadian snow crab fishing gear. I was identified as U.S. gear, and the remains unidentified.

Other factors contributing to or correlating with the spike in right whale fatalities since 2010:

- The six deaths in 2019, as of the date of this letter, occurred in Canadian waters, with three deaths preliminarily linked to ship strikes. Canada lowers the speed for ships in shipping channels upon a whale sighting; yet Maine lobstermen have reported that they are still clocking ships exceeding the speed limits at almost double the speed. Studies have also found that ocean noise from ships can be a significant source of stress, which may be affecting both calving and the increase in ship strikes.

- NOAA has continued to grant seismic testing permits in the areas where the whales roam. This testing has been preliminarily tied to interfering with the whales’ sonar.

- The U.S. Navy, this past fall, implemented changes to its activities near right whale habitat along the east coast and especially off the coast of Florida near the whale's calving habitat. The risks to the whales from the Navy’s various testing and training activities also includes entanglement, ship strikes, and sonar interference. Time will tell whether these changes have a positive effect on the population, especially the number of calves born, which has fallen in recent years.

Former Governor LePage Letter to President Trump

Julie Eaton addresses the crowd at the July lobstermen rally. MLA photo.
Offshore wind turbines generate vibrations that also may interfere with whale sonar. Troublesome about this problem: the offshore wind industry is backed by several of the same big environmental groups now portraying our lobster fishery as whale killers. Moreover, the lobster fishery’s need to access the Gulf of Maine presents an obstacle to the growth of offshore wind. Reducing the environmental groups the investors support. This is a significant conflict of interest and our lobster industry will never have enough money to fight them. You and I, as businessmen, do not fear lawsuits. Bureaucrats do. Instead of accepting the lawsuit and having these issues and the related science aired in court to allow reasonable people to arrive at reasonable, common-sense solutions, NOAA is caving, making Maine’s lobster industry the scapegoat. As with Maine’s softwood lumber industry, Maine’s lobster industry is collateral damage. How much can a small, poor, hardworking state like Maine take from the 1,000-pound gorilla at NOAA? The process by which NOAA has handled this issue has been marked by poor communication, a lack of notice, and a rush to implement; it has been the epitome of federal bureaucracy and the opposite of how government should operate. This entire rulemaking process has been a disservice to the hardworking people in this industry, our state, and the American taxpayer.

Therefore, based on our discussions, we offer the following suggestions to address this issue:

- Take action on known facts, not speculation. Use real data.
- Identify what else has changed in the right whale’s habitat since 2010, since lobstering hasn’t.
- Put the resources and the regulations where the whales are dying, which is not the Gulf of Maine. Regulations must be specific to how/where the fishing and entanglements happen, not one-size fits all.
- Require NOAA to give equal attention to all possible factors rather than single out those unable to fight back by choosing one causal factor to provide a big statistical change but not a real-world change, destroying one of our planet’s most sustainable fisheries in the process.
- Conduct better research on what gear is causing fatal entanglements;
- Identify what else has changed in the right whale’s habitat since 2010, since lobstering hasn’t.
- Put the resources and the regulations where the whales are dying, which is not the Gulf of Maine. Regulations must be specific to how/where the fishing and entanglements happen, not one-size fits all.
- Require NOAA to give equal attention to all possible factors rather than single out those unable to fight back by choosing one causal factor to provide a big statistical change but not a real-world change, destroying one of our planet’s most sustainable fisheries in the process.
- Conduct better research on what gear is causing fatal entanglements.

Without it, lobstermen will continue to bear the burden for every fishery whose gear entangles a right whale anywhere in the Atlantic Ocean.

- Work with Canada to increase entanglement identification and response. Review the regulations implemented since 2009 to identify any unintended consequences harmful to whales.
- Increase research, including more flyovers, on whale migration in the Gulf of Maine. Maine’s lobster fleet already report whale sightings. They could be a valuable partner in whale protection; instead, NOAA is making them the enemy.
- Let the lawsuit go forward. NOAA must be an impartial arbiter rather than caving to big-money environmentalists. Continuous lawsuits are not a solution either, but this calls for independent review.

Maine’s entire lobster industry is in turmoil because these businesses cannot plan what their next year will look like. This issue reminds me of the plight of the coal miners in West Virginia for whom you have advocated so passionately. Liberal environmentalists disparage the hard, dangerous jobs done by real people.

Maine lobster is an American icon, as is the image of our lobstermen and -women—small businesses whose families have gone to sea for decades and who care deeply about our environment, including whales. Unfortunately, Maine is collateral damage when it comes to farming, fishing, and forestry—or prime industries. All we hear is how the federal government’s decisions on trade and tariffs are better for the country. The good people of Maine need to be a priority. In the meantime, let’s use common sense and take action that will truly protect the right whales.

Sincerely,

Paul R. LePage
Honorary Chair
Maine People Before Politics

MLA President Kristan Porter’s Letter to the Bangor Daily News

July 20, 2019

I applaud Gov. Janet Mills’ pledge to ensure that any new whale protection measures reflect the actual risk posed by Maine’s lobster fishery and are based on sound science to ensure these sacrifices will benefit right whales.

Maine lobstermen remain committed to being part of the solution. But we cannot solve a problem that occurs largely outside of Maine waters. Research points to climate change as the critical factor in determining right whale distribution and health. Large numbers of right whales now feed primarily in Massachusetts’ Cape Cod Bay and Canada’s Gulf of St. Lawrence.

While right whales are rare along Maine’s coast, lobstermen adopted many whale conservation measures over the past 20 years, including removing floating line at the water’s surface, adding weak links to buoy lines, removing 27,000 miles of floating groundline, removing 30 percent of buoy lines and marking gear to identify its origin. Efforts by U.S. fishermen supported an increase in the whale population from 295 to 450 whales during this time.

Now the federal government is asking Maine lobstermen for an additional 60 percent risk reduction. This does not pass the straight face test for a fishery that has only one confirmed right whale entanglement and no confirmed mortalities.

Maine lobstermen stand ready to help right whales recover. But as Governor Mills rightly points out, Maine’s solution must reflect the real risk our fishery poses to right whales. Maine lobstermen should not be forced to implement changes if those measures won’t actually help the right whale population recover.

LIFEJACKETS FOR LOBSTERMEN

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Everyone knows someone who never came home. I’d never worn a lifejacket, and I never really thought about it. [Lifejackets for Lobstermen] called me to do a survey and it got me thinking, and I keep thinking about it,” said a lobsterman from Phippsburg as he bought a new lifejacket.

I’ve never fallen overboard, but I lost a boat once. That scared me enough. My sternman got his leg caught in some rope and got pulled to the rail but got out before going over. That scared me more than it scared him. My sternman’s my nephew,” said a lobsterman from Bass Harbor.

For more information about Lifejackets for Lobstermen, go to www.facebook.com/LifejacketsforLobstermen or call 800-343-7527.
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MAINE LOBSTER AND RIGHT WHALES

With new regulations being enacted to protect endangered North Atlantic right whales, the Maine Lobster industry is facing a situation that is complex and continually changing. You can now find the most up to date information about the issue, as well as a video featuring the voices of our fishermen, in the industry’s new content hub at RightWhalesandMaineLobster.com. The goal of the hub is to present to industry members, media and interested parties a balanced view of the issues.

The MLMC has been working closely with the DMR, MLA and MLDA to make sure the industry’s voice is heard. Through the content hub and other communications, we will continue to emphasize the importance of maintaining the economic health of the fishery and our coastal communities while also demonstrating our commitment to taking reasonable measures to protect right whales.
The 2019 Racing Season is Dedicated to Galen Alley, who dominated the racing scene for 10 years.
TO YOUR HEALTH: BLOOD PRESSURE A SILENT MENACE

By Elisabeth Maxwell

According to the American Heart Association, nearly half of all adult Americans live with high blood pressure; many people don’t realize they are suffering from it at all. It is possible a person can experience high blood pressure for years without recognizing any symptoms. If left untreated, high blood pressure can cause damage to the heart and blood vessels and lead to an increased risk of heart attack and stroke.

Jordan Porter, a doctor of nursing practice and family nurse practitioner at the Down East Community Hospital has strong family connections to the lobster fishery. "Historically, high blood pressure has been dubbed the ‘silent killer’ among the medical community because a large proportion of those living with high blood pressure do not exhibit any symptoms," he explained. "Undetected, long-standing high blood pressure significantly increases the risk of heart failure, stroke, kidney disease, abnormal heart rhythms like atrial fibrillation, heart attack, and dementia." The severity of these conditions is why it is so important for all adults to connect with a primary care provider (physician, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant) for blood pressure screening and an assessment of risk factors. The United States Preventive Services Task Force, the American College of Cardiology, and the American Heart Association recommend that all individuals 18 years or older should be screened at least yearly for high blood pressure, he noted.

There are many risk factors associated with high blood pressure. These include:

- **Age:** Risk of high blood pressure increases as you grow older.
- **Family history:** It is more likely for you to have high blood pressure if family members are also affected by it. It is possible, talk to close relatives to find out if they have a history of high blood pressure.
- **Weight:** Being overweight or obese can cause an increased demand of blood to supply tissues with oxygen and nutrients. This high blood volume may lead to increased pressure on blood vessels.
- **Tobacco:** Smoking and chewing tobacco causes an immediate, temporary increase in blood pressure as well as long-term damage to the lining of artery walls. Over time, the arteries become narrower and increase the risk of heart disease.
- **Sodium:** High levels of sodium in your diet can cause high blood pressure by retaining fluids.

**Potassium:** Sodium levels in our cells are balanced by potassium so if your diet is too low in potassium, it can lead to increased levels of sodium and thus increased blood pressure.

**Alcohol:** Long-term, heavy drinking can seriously damage heart health and lead to a variety of complications including high blood pressure. If you are at risk for high blood pressure or other related cardiovascular conditions, your doctor may recommend that you monitor your blood pressure on a regular basis. This may be done by learning how to operate and read a blood pressure cuff at home, or by using automatic cuffs that can be found in some pharmacies and other health facilities such as gyms or wellness centers.

Because high blood pressure is so common, it is important to monitor your blood pressure even if you do not visit a doctor on a regular basis. Your blood pressure naturally varies throughout the day and may be affected by your daily activities. Therefore, it is important to look at long-term trends when diagnosing high blood pressure. If you are not visiting a doctor regularly, keep a written log of blood pressure measurements so that it is easier to identify a trend.

"Lifestyle changes to reduce the risk of high blood pressure include weight loss, a healthy diet rich in fruit, vegetables, whole grains, poultry, fish, and low-fat dairy products (the DASH diet), less than 1500 mg of dietary sodium intake daily, moderate-intensity aerobic exercise of 30 to 40 minutes at least 3 to 4 days a week, and limiting alcohol consumption in men to two or fewer drinks daily and in women to one or fewer drinks daily. Weight loss and dietary changes are considered to have the greatest positive effects on lowering blood pressure," said Porter.

While lifestyle changes can be sufficient for some people, others will need to take medication to control high blood pressure. There is a wide range of medications that may be prescribed depending on an individual’s specific situation and conditions. You should never use someone else’s medication because of the side effects and complications risks.

"The decision to initiate medication for high blood pressure is individualized and involves shared decision-making between the patient and the primary care provider," Porter said. "Medications for high blood pressure have been extensively researched over the past several decades with great outcomes for risk reduction."

He noted that in large studies, treatment with medications produced a nearly 50% relative risk reduction in the incidence of heart failure, a 30-40% relative risk reduction in stroke, and a 20-25% relative risk reduction in heart attack.

Continued on page 21
Senator Collins said, “In the past three years there has not been one entanglement of a right whale off Maine. NOAA needs to concentrate on where the whales really are. Now is the time for NOAA to listen to you.”

In May, Maine’s Congressional delegation wrote to acting NOAA director Neil Jacobs, asking him to ensure that decisions regarding right whales were based on sound science, that risk reduction standards were comparable in both the U.S. and Canada, and that the lobster industry be consulted throughout the decision-making process. In July, the delegation wrote to President Trump, pointing out that the forthcoming regulations are “a matter of serious economic importance to the state of Maine” and that they will force significant economic hardship on the lobster industry without concrete evidence they will benefit the whales. On July 16, Maine’s former Governor Paul LePage voiced his concern over the pending whale regulations in a letter to the President. He wrote, “Although well-intended, there is no evidence to support that the proposed restrictions on lobstering in Maine waters will save even one whale. This is unfortunately another federal overreach in response to big money environmentalists. It will hurt one of the last great fisheries in America: Maine lobster. I am not saying the loss of right whales is not a problem it is; but penalizing Maine fishermen won’t save these whales.”

Representative Pingree told lobstermen at the rally what many of them were likely thinking, “There’s a right way to do this and a wrong way. These regulations aren’t the way.”

Hugh Reynolds exudes energy. The president of Stonington-based Greenhead Lobster talks fast, moves fast, and gives the impression of a man who knows where he’s going. And one place he’s going to is Bucksport, where the company in late July opened a new 15,000-square-foot lobster processing plant in the Bucktown Heritage Park.

“I’ve been in the business 22 years, primarily in live lobster,” Reynolds said. “We’re changing now, concentrating on the domestic market and ‘Made in Maine’. The new plant will use high-pressure processing equipment to produce flash frozen raw tails and fresh cooked lobster claws and knuckle meat. ‘We will use a proprietary technology to ensure an extended shelf life for the claws and knuckles,’ Reynolds added.

Some might wonder why Reynolds would open a new plant so far from his home base in Stonington. The answer is simple. “Bucksport is the closest location to Stonington with adequate water and sewer infrastructure,” he explained. “We will need between 8,000 and 12,000 gallons of water per day just for hygiene. Finding enough labor and sewer connections in Stonington were obstacles that we could overcome with enough money. But ultimately the one thing we couldn’t overcome is finding enough water.”

It’s not the first time that Reynolds has set up shop away from Stonington. In 2016 Greenhead Lobster opened a 20,000-square-foot lobster holding facility in Seabrook, New Hampshire, just 30 miles from Logan International Airport in Boston. Proximity gave Greenhead the ability to ship live lobsters with minimal delay to anywhere in the world, particularly to the then-burgeoning Asian market.

“I won’t beat around the bush, the tariffs [retaliatory tariffs imposed by China on American goods] have hurt exports to China. Canada is making up for it,” Reynolds said. “The new plant is one way to capture the value of lobster for the domestic market.” The Bucksport facility will run nine months each year, employ approximately 40 people and process between 2 and 3 million lobsters in its first year, according to Reynolds.
Aquaculture continued from page 3

proval process, each license is specific to certain gear and certain species and thus can be approved without the more extensive review that is required for experimental or standard leases. Gaining an LPA license requires attending a mandatory DMR meeting on topics such as biosecurity, animal health and pub- lic health risks associated with aquaculture activities. Sebastian Belle, director of the Maine Aquaculture Association, concedes that the aquaculture sector has grown in recent years, but not at an alarming rate, in his opinion. “If you look at the data, we have increased by 200 acres in the last twenty years,” he said. “It’s not as big a growth spurt as many believe.” He does agree that LPA leases have made entry into the aquaculture world easier for individ- uals. “The LPA process lowered the barrier for working waterfront families who were interested in diversifying their income,” he said. “It’s a non-confrontational process designed to allow people to test a site at a small scale. If it’s a bad spot they can change before they go through the long pro- cess for a permanent lease.”

An additional impetus for the growth of aqua- culture ventures in the state has come from a program created by a collaboration of pub- lic and private entities. Called “Aquaculture in Shared Waters,” the Maine Sea Grant program helps fishermen or those from fishing communi- ties learn how to start an aquaculture business. Funding comes from the National Sea Grant Program and takes place in cooperation the University of Maine Cooperative Extension, Maine Aquaculture Association, Maine Aquaculture Innovation Center, Coastal Enterprises Inc., and the Island Institute in Rockland.

Dana Morse, Maine Sea Grant extension agent based at the Darling Center, has been involved in the program from its inception in 2013. “Aquaculture is grow- ing internationally, nationally and regionally,” Morse said. “It’s an opportunity for fishing families to diversify their income. [Aquaculture in Shared Waters] is a dedicated training program that delivers technical information to people interested in aquaculture.” More than 150 individuals have attended the 11-week program since 2013, studying everything from site selection, equipment, per- mitting and regulation to environmental monitoring, business planning, and financial management. “Fifty or so have started new businesses or augmented an existing business as a result of the training,” he said.

Morse sees the uptick in aquaculture ventures in Maine as the product of a happy confluence of forces, not the result of one driving factor. “Globally aqua- culture is going up and Maine is known for its high-quality products like oys- ters and macroalgae. Also there’s a strong interest in good food tied to place. Overlay that with chefs doing cool things with seafood and it all comes togeth- er — you have something with energy. Maine is definitely on the radar screen for people interested in shellfish, seaweed, even salmon farms on land,” he said.

Davis noted that the Aquaculture Top Gun contests, begun in 2018, have generated even more attention on Maine aquaculture. The col- laborative effort, led by the Maine Center for Entrepreneurs (MCE) in partnership with the Gulf of Maine Research Institute, Maine Aquaculture Association, and FocusMaine and sponsored by the Maine Aquaculture Innovation Center, fea- tures fledgling aquaculturists making five-minute pitches about their businesses to a panel of busi- ness experts. The two winners each year receive $5,000 each to expedite their company’s growth. “Most have been interested in oyster aquacul- ture,” Davis said. “There’s a tremendous market now and the Maine brand is strong.”

But oysters are only one of many marine species cultivated in Maine’s waters. “Maine aquaculture has distinguished itself over the years by its diver- sity of species,” Belle noted. “We tend to grow more species at any one time, which is good. If you grow lots of things, if any one species does poorly you have another to move to.” During the past 28 years he has seen the aquaculture industry in Maine shift to one increasingly composed of people from commer- cial fisheries as well as newcomers to the state. But he worries that changing demographics may put the brakes on the sector’s growth. “You see it marching up the coast. Maine is one of the most popular states to retire to. Increasingly the majority living in a coastal community didn’t grow up on the coast. They don’t think of the ocean as a place to make a living,” he said.

“I think we will continue to see a diversification of species, people and places related to aquaculture,” Morse said. “There are still a lot of good places to grow things on the coast.”
OCEAN HIGH SCHOOL HIRES FIRST EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Maine Ocean School, the state’s latest magnet high school, located in Searsport, hired its first full-time executive director in July. Kylie Bragdon is a fourth-generation lobsterwoman born and raised in Winter Harbor, where she serves as a town selectman. She previously worked at KidsPeace, a special purpose private school in Ellsworth.

The Maine Ocean School is a public magnet high school that provides a “hands-on, minds-on” education on the water, in the lab, and in the classroom. Students pursue a theme-based high school education focused on Maine’s maritime connection, with an emphasis on leadership, work ethic, and the transferable skills associated with careers involving the ocean. The first class of students began attending the tuition-free school in 2018.

ALEWIFE AND BLUEBACK HERRING NOT ENDANGERED

As part of its joint responsibility with U.S Fish and Wildlife Service for implementing the Endangered Species Act, NOAA reviewed whether alewife and blueback herring require protections under the Act. A comprehensive status review determined a low risk of extinction for alewife and blueback herring throughout their range as well as for four alewife distinct population segments (DPS) and three blueback DPSs along the east coast of the U.S.

While river herring have declined from historical numbers, recent fisheries management efforts in place at the federal and state levels help to reduce the risks from fishing mortality for these species. Although some areas within the range continue to struggle, robust populations of these broadly distributed species are found in other portions of their ranges, with some areas supporting populations in the millions or hundreds of thousands. With continued management and additional efforts to improve habitat connectivity, populations in areas of the range that are at low levels may also see improvements in the future.

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207-963-7195
“It’s What Fishermen Read” www.FishermensVoice.com

CANADA ASSESSES ITS MARINE MAMMAL PROTECTIONS

The Canadian Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) submitted a “progress report” in July detailing protections for over 200 Canadian fisheries that interact with marine mammals, including the two most valuable — lobster ($2.1 billion CD) and crab ($1 billion CD). The submission is the first test of Canada’s ability to meet upcoming requirements in the U.S. Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA). By January 1, 2022, all countries with fisheries interacting with marine mammals that export seafood products to the U.S. will have to demonstrate they have marine mammal protections that are the same or of comparable “effectiveness” to measures taken in the U.S. Canada is the largest seafood supplier by value to the U.S., at $4.3 billion CD in 2017.


SCALLOP FISHERY GOING STRONG

America’s harvest of scallops is increasing to near-record levels at a time when the shellfish are in high demand and the value of the fishery has surged in recent years. Sea scallops, harvested mostly by boats operating in the Atlantic Ocean, are one of the most valuable fisheries in America. New data from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) says the harvest topped 8.2 million pounds last year, the highest total since 2011 and the fifth-highest in history. According to federal statistics going back to 1945, American scallops were worth $532.9 million at the dock last year. That’s the third-highest figure on record and more than $100 million higher than the 2014 total. The scallop industry is thriving as a result of years of conservative management that has allowed the valuable shellfish to grow. Federal fishing managers are working on potential changes to the rules governing the scallop industry that could go into effect in 2021. Fishermen who operate small boats are hopeful for the management changes will work for vessels of all sizes.
You can find more information, links, and photos at www.mainelobstermen.org.

August 6-8
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission summer meeting, Arlington, VA.

August 10
Shellfish Field Day, Downeast Institute, Beals.

August 12
NMFS Scoping meeting on modifications to the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan related to right whales, University of Maine at Machias Performing Arts Center, 6 to 9 p.m.

August 13
NMFS Scoping meeting, Ellsworth High School Performing Arts Center 6 to 9 p.m.

August 14
NMFS Scoping meeting, Medomak Valley High School, Waldoboro, 6 p.m to 9 p.m.

August 15
NMFS Scoping meeting, South Portland High School, Portland 6 to 9 p.m.

August 19
NMFS Scoping meeting, Urban Forestry Center, Portsmouth, NH, 6 to 9 p.m.

August 27-28
Scallop Plan Development Team meeting, Woods Hole, MA.

September 6
MLA Directors meeting, Darby’s in Belfast, 5 p.m.

September 10
Maine Lobster Marketing Collaborative Board meeting, Island Institute, Rockland 1 p.m.

September 11
MLA Directors meeting, Darby’s in Belfast, 5 p.m.

September 21

September 24-26
New England Fishery Management Council meeting, Gloucester, MA.

ARTIST CAPTURES FLAVOR OF MAINE’S WORKING HARBORS

By Melissa Waterman

As a child, Jeff Grenier, 41, discovered the ocean. That wasn’t hard to do in a place like Friendship. “My grandfather’s rowing skiff was tied up at Harlan Wallace’s wharf [now part of the Friendship Fishermen’s Co-op]. He [Bill Jameson] would take us out on his boat. I learned geography on that boat,” Grenier recalled.

Grenier received a degree in fine art from the University of Maine at Machias. He tried teaching art for a time then moved out of state to work as a land surveyor, like his father Drew. But the pull of his home state grew stronger and in 2017 he moved back with his wife and five children.

“The way life unfolds is never quite the way we imagine it as kids,” Grenier said. “I thought of one of the places my grandfather’s rowing skiff was tied up at Harlan Wallace’s wharf [now part of the Friendship Fishermen’s Co-op]. He [Bill Jameson] would take us out on his boat. I learned geography on that boat,” Grenier recalled.

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Grenier’s art can be found at his website, at www.littlecranberryart.com. His pen and ink drawings focus not only on the beauty of the Maine coast but also the details of its working waterfronts and the men and women who make their living on the sea. “An honest day’s hard work deserves respect, and it is with respect that I treat each of my subjects,” Grenier explained. “Some boats are a little more used than others. A little grime, a little rust, missing paint or some worn-off lettering doesn’t bother me. Each boat represents so much to each owner. I hope to capture what they see and feel about their boats in each drawing I create.”

He’s received a lot of questions about his web site’s name and, like many things, it’s related to his childhood. “I thought of one of the places my grandfather’s rowing skiff was tied up at Harlan Wallace’s wharf [now part of the Friendship Fishermen’s Co-op]. He [Bill Jameson] would take us out on his boat. I learned geography on that boat,” Grenier recalled. “After the end of Inktober, I was drawing boat portraits for lobstermen, sport fishermen, and recreational boaters.”

Grenier showcases his work, which also includes fine drawings of Maine game fish, on his web site www.littlecranberryart.com. His pen and ink drawings focus not only on the beauty of the Maine coast but also the details of its working waterfronts and the men and women who make their living on the sea. “An honest day’s hard work deserves respect, and it is with respect that I treat each of my subjects,” Grenier explained. “Some boats are a little more used than others. A little grime, a little rust, missing paint or some worn-off lettering doesn’t bother me. Each boat represents so much to each owner. I hope to capture what they see and feel about their boats in each drawing I create.”

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**Maine Lobstermen’s Association**

*Est. 1954*

The MLA advocates for a sustainable lobster resource and the fishermen & communities that depend on it.

**Become a member today!**

Membership matters for your future & the future of the lobster industry.

### Benefits of Membership
- **E-weekly:** a round-up of lobster news & a snapshot of the lobster, bait, and fuel prices for the entire coast
- Discounts at marine businesses
- MLA hat and bumper sticker
- Special events including trainings and trips that benefit you.
- Voting privileges to elect the Board of Directors.
- A voice on issues affecting your industry

### MLA Vessel Insurance program
This unique and affordable policy was created by lobstermen for lobstermen. It is not a generalized marine policy!
- Lobster boat racing coverage
- Credit when you lay-up without any limitation of how long your boat is out of the water; lay-up credit available
  - Credits and discounts for MLA members with CG Drill Conductor Certification within 5 years
  - Automatic coverage for observers & sea-samplers with P&I
  - Coverage for Loss of Earnings
  - Coverage of older and wooden vessels

Call today and find out how you can save money AND get better coverage!

Join online today at [www.mainelobstermen.org/membership](http://www.mainelobstermen.org/membership)

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### MLA MEMBERSHIP FORM

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

#### Harvester Membership Levels
- **First Time Member** $200
- **Highliner** tee-shirt size $350
- **Harvester** $250
- **Harvester Family*** $325
- **Junior Harvester** (under 18) $125
- **Senior Harvester** (over 65) $125
- **Retired Harvester** (no longer a captain) $50

#### Individual Membership Levels:
- **Sternman** $50
- **Lobster Friend** $100
- **Lobster Lover** $250

#### Payment info:
- Pay with: Visa MasterCard Check: 
- Credit Card #: ___________ Exp. date: ___________ CV code: ___________
- Billing town/state/zip: ___________

#### Additional Contributions:
- **Donation** $_________
- **Legal Defense Fund** $_________

Total enclosed: ___________

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**Legal Defense Fund:** The MLA is a part of the court case brought by environmental groups who want extreme whale protection measures. MLA’s intervention ensures Maine lobstermen have a voice in any court decisions that affect our fishery. MLA cannot fight this battle without your support. Please consider a donation to **MLA Legal Defense Fund**. No amount is too small. Thank you.
MLA Merchandise

MLA members take 10% off!

Order Info:

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Hat (circle style) #1  #2  #3  #4
Qty: _______ _______ _______ _______

Total hats: _______ +Shipping: $7.50

Total Cost: _______

 MLB Hats
Wear a hat featuring your favorite MLA logo. All hats, washed canvas Adams style hat except 2017. one size fits all $15.00

2020 MLA Hoodie
large logo on back of a 8 oz, 50/50 navy sweatshirt, with a small text logo in red and white on front chest
navy
M/L/XL/2XL
$45.00

2020 MLA Kids Hoodie
large logo on back of a 8 oz, 50/50 navy sweatshirt, with a small text logo in red and white on front chest
navy
S/M/L/XL
$30.00

2020 MLA T-shirt
large logo on back of 100% cotton tee with a small text logo on front chest
olive green
S/M/L/XL/2XL/3XL
$20.00

2020 MLA Women’s T-shirt
large logo on back of 60/40 cotton, trim fit tee and a small text logo on the front chest
teal
M/L/XL/2XL
$20.00

2020 MLA Kids T-Shirt
large logo on back of a 100% cotton, royal blue tee with a small text logo in white and red on front chest
royal blue
S/M/L/XL
$40.00

2019 MLA Hoodie
large logo on back of a 9 oz, 50/50 light grey sweatshirt with a small text logo on front chest
light grey
M/L/XL/2XL
$40.00

Fish Smarter Long sleeved T-shirt (FSNH)
large text on back and small MLA text on front chest
Navy
L/XL/2XL
$20.00

#1 - 2019 Logo
#2 - Lobster
#3 - 2018 Logo
#4 - 2017 Logo

MLA Hats
Wear a hat featuring your favorite MLA logo. All hats, washed canvas Adams style hat except 2017. one size fits all $15.00

Yellow
Red
Please contact me when it becomes available!

Shipping Info:

Name: ____________________________
Address: __________________________________________________________
City/State/Zip: ____________________________
Phone: ____________________________
Email: ____________________________

Payment info:

Circle one: Master Card Visa Check (#__________)
Credit Card #:_________________________ CV #:_________________________
Exp. Date:_________________________
Billing address:_________________________
Billing City/State/Zip:_________________________

Vote for an MLA flag!

Yellow  Red
Please contact me when it becomes available!

MLA Merchandise

Buy online at www.mainelobstermen.org, write us a note, or call 967-4555

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Looking for an MLA flag for your boat or business? Vote and tell us which one you prefer!

www.mainelobstermen.org
or on the order form below
By Chris Timms, Maine Maritime Museum

On June 5 Maine Maritime Museum had the pleasure of hosting the Maine Lobsterman’s Association (MLA) Board of Directors for their monthly meeting. The MLA Board toured the "Lobstering & the Maine Coast" exhibit and offered feedback on how the exhibit can be updated with relevant and up-to-date information. "Lobstering & the Maine Coast" is housed in a 6,200-square-foot, two-story building on the Museum’s campus. The exhibit opened in 2015 and was developed with expertise from the Maine Lobstermen's Association, University of Maine's Darling Marine Center, the Gulf of Maine Research Institute, and others.

MLA Board members suggested several additional concepts for the exhibit that the Maine Maritime Museum looks forward to adding in the months ahead. One new item will be near the entrance to the exhibit, where the history of the lobster trap is told, from early lath variants to the modern welded mesh trap. The museum will add an interactive display that explains the welded mesh trap in greater detail. What are its components? What are its characteristics? And what is it like to open one up time after time? In the lower level of the exhibit, a century of changes in lobster boat design is documented through our historical working watercraft collection. This is complemented by a number of videos that show modern lobster boats under construction and in action. We will add information that answer questions such as what are the key mechanical and technological components on a modern lobster boat? We plan on displaying equipment, from pot haulers to VHF, that will educate our visitors about the tools of the trade.

The MLA board of directors before the exhibit's wall of buoys at the Maine Maritime Museum. MLA photo.

The MLA board of directors before the exhibit's wall of buoys at the Maine Maritime Museum. MLA photo.

"Lobstering & the Maine Coast" portrays lobstermen’s increasingly complex roles as harvester-scientist-entrepreneurs, and the skills needed to transport, market, and profit from a perishable seafood. We hope to add to the exhibit materials that reflect contemporary issues in the fishery, including how the industry—and more importantly, individuals—navigate complex regulations and changing ecological conditions.

Maine Maritime Museum plans to phase in these updates, and others, through 2020. We would love to hear your thoughts. Please contact me at ctimm@maritimeme.org.

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