STATE, MLA WEIGH IN ON HABITAT AMENDMENT

By Melissa Waterman

The 90-day public comment period for the New England Fishery Management Council’s (NEFMC) Omnibus Essential Fish Habitat Amendment 2 (OHA2) closed on January 8. The Council held public meetings throughout the Mid-Atlantic and New England states over the three months to get public comment on the six-volume amendment whose provisions, once implemented, will apply to all fishery management plans within those regions.

The most significant part of the amendment deals with proposed changes to the network of year-round and seasonal closed areas in New England waters. Various areas have been closed to fishing for the past 20 years. The amendment reconiders those closures based on impacts of fishing activity; location of high densities of juvenile groundfish, and the spawning behavior of targeted species such as cod. Changes to the different areas, known as Essential Fish Habitat and Habitat Management Areas, are presented in the amendment as “alternative actions.”

The Maine Department of Marine Resources (DMR) met in January with fishermen along the coast to hear their thoughts about the amendment. Their concerns focused primarily on the effect the proposed closed areas would have on a variety of commercial fisheries and the meaning of the term “fishing gear capable of catching groundfish.”

In DMR’s official comments submitted to the NEFMC, Commissioner Patrick Keliher states, “The Machias Habitat Management Area (HMA), as currently configured and included in both alternatives, abuts the maritime boundary line with Canada and is largely contained within the ‘grey

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40TH MAINE FISHERMEN’S FORUM COMING IN MARCH

By Melissa Waterman

It was 1975. Jimmy Carter was about to gain the White House, the Eagles ruled the airwaves, and the ominous theme music of the hit movie Jaws terrified just about everyone. In Maine a group of people involved in Maine’s fishing industry decided it was time to put on an event for fishermen, organized by fishermen. Thus was born the Maine Fishermen’s Forum, now celebrating its 40th year.

Today the Forum, which traditionally is held at the Samoset Resort in Rockport in early March, is a must-attend event for fishermen throughout New England. The Forum’s goal is to be a neutral arena in processing, selling and serving Maine lobster and other locally harvested seafood. Bayley’s is also credited as the original creator of the world-famous Maine lobster roll.

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We welcome our readers to the new year in this issue of Landings. Thus far the weather has been fairly typical of the Maine coast in the winter: first bitterly cold, then mild, then cold again with the standard array of high winds and a blizzard with blowing snow and ice. It’s a good time of the year to hunker down and get ready for the upcoming fishing season.

For many the kickoff of the season is the annual Maine Fishermen’s Forum, which takes place early each March in Rockport. This year is the 40th anniversary of the three-day event and, as our preview of the Forum indicates, it should be as informative and fun as ever. Don’t miss the MLAs Annual Meeting which starts off the Forum on Friday morning.

This is also the 100-year anniversary of an iconic family lobster business. Bayley’s Lobster Pound was started by Steve and Ella Bayley in Scarborough in 1915. Ella began picking meat from the cul lobsters her husband could not sell and making lobster rolls which she sold from the family’s kitchen. She made them in hot dog rolls because her husband didn’t like the crust! Years later the Bayley family is still going strong, ushering their business into its second century.

Landings also takes a look this month at some of the regulatory changes that are taking place far out at sea. The New England Fisheries Management Council has finally released a sweeping review of habitat protections in place in New England. When implemented as law, the 6-volume Omnibus Essential Fish Habitat Amendment will apply to all commercial fisheries in the region. Maine lobstermen as well as the Maine Department of Marine Resources have weighed in on some aspects of the amendment that they believe could hurt fishermen in the state.

We also highlight a little-known case brought to the U.S. Court of International Trade in New York that may have repercussions here in Maine. In January the Court declared that the United States must enforce a provision of the Trade Agreements Act that requires seafood imported to the country to comply with whale and dolphin protection measures used here. What effect that may have on Maine’s seafood industry is an outcome many are interested in learning. Our first insight will be in June when the proposed rule is expected to be published.

With a new year and a new session of the state Legislature underway in Augusta, it’s a good time to take a look at the Joint Committee on Marine Resources. This month Landings introduces the committee’s members, most of whom are newcomers to Augusta, and a list of bill titles of interest to Maine’s lobster industry. And we hear from MLA’s president, David Cousins, on the ups and downs of the lobster industry over the past few years and the opportunity those changes present.

Landings introduces us to another newcomer, Cyrus Sleeper, who recently joined the Maine Lobster Marketing Collaborative. The Collaborative is responsible for raising recognition of Maine lobster as a brand and boosting marketing of Maine lobster in this country and abroad. Sleeper, a 26-year-old South Thomaston lobsterman, is the newest and youngest member of the organization. Landings also features a column from the Collaborative’s executive director, Matt Jacobson, on his vision for moving the organization forward.

And what would winter be without the threat of tax time looming in April? This month in Landings we examine the tax ramifications of the Affordable Care Act for lobstermen and their families. It might seem complicated but there are plenty of resources out there to help you when it comes time to fill out those endless tax forms. Maine’s Marine Patrol Bureau has a new leader, Colonel Jon Cornish has been named the new head of Marine Patrol, taking the reins from Colonel Joe Fessenden following his 40 years of service. This transition took place through a formal ceremony in January.

Finally, Landings continues its profiles of Maine lobstermen with an article about 87-year-old Merle Gilliam of Phippsburg. Gilliam stopped fishing when he was 84 and turned his hand to making precisely-finished lobster boat models. Which, as he notes, is fine with him because he never really liked lobstering anyway!
GUEST COLUMN: Important to identify your marketing targets

By Matt Jacobson

In the early days of modern air combat, finding the enemy was a challenge. There was little technology to help find targets, and pilots had to rely on seeing the target before they could engage. Some of the best fighter pilots – like Ted Williams – had phenomenal visions that allowed them to find the enemy and attack before the other pilot could.

During training, pilots began to think about the concept of BVR – Beyond Visual Range. When a target is BVR, the challenge for a fighter pilot is magnified: Can I find the target? Will I waste my gas and have to land before I’m able to engage? Will I be surprised when the target appears out of nowhere to shoot me down? Over time, lots of effort went into developing a capability to attack an adversary that was BVR.

From an air-combat perspective, it is increasingly difficult today to be out of range, even if you cannot be seen. We’ve largely solved the BVR problem in air-to-air combat.

Similarly in the lobster industry our target customers are BVR, and we have a difficult time seeing and identifying them. Consider our supply chain: the fishermen sells to the processor or dealer, who adds value and sells to a distributor, who sells finally to the customer. We have little knowledge of who is actually buying lobster to eat and why they do it. Unlike other foods and industries, we do not have to invent authenticity; we just have to tell our story to people who are eager to hear it.

You may have seen the news that the Collaborative recently hired one of the world’s best food marketing agencies to help us with this challenge. Weber Shandwick are the people who:

- Put milk mustaches on America’s lips and helped stem a 30-year decline in milk consumption
- Helped McCain Foods shift perceptions of potatoes and French fries—highlighting the positive nutrient contributions of potatoes around the world
- Took pork from being a maligned meat to a celebrated center-of-the-plate lean protein
- Helped tart cherries break out of the pie shell and on to the super-fruit stage
- Cracked the code to connect America-grown pistachios with health-conscious consumers in Japan and help increase exports.

You’ll hear much more about Weber Shandwick’s plans for Maine Lobster at the Maine Fisherman’s Forum in March. This much is clear: we are going to be telling our story – your story – to the world. We are going to talk about the men and women of our industry.

A review of this list shows that Maine lobster has the potential to meet nearly every aspect our final customer values. Unlike other foods and industries, we do not have to invent authenticity; we just have to tell our story to people who are eager to hear it.

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Making a plan for the future is just common sense

By Patrick Keliher
Commissioner, Department of Marine Resources

The lobster industry’s steadfast commitment to sustainable harvesting practices, combined with favorable environmental conditions, has resulted in strong and steady landings for the past decade. This past year, the strong catch (usually off the charts in some areas) was matched by a strong price. When most folks think things are going well with those two variables, my phone rings a lot less. But even in the good times, I think we need to keep the lines of communication open and continue to discuss the future of this fishery. For me, this means getting out and talking to people in their hometowns and harbors, to get a sense of the similarities and differences in what you all are seeing on the water and in your communities. I have learned a lot and had great conversations on many tough issues. For these reasons, I remain committed to this approach as our best chance to find ways that continue to strengthen the lobster industry for future generations.

I envision this [lobster management plan] as a living document that is regularly updated, keeping us all on the same page about where we are and where we are headed.

One initiative that has become a high priority for me as I think about the future is the development of a fisheries management plan (FMP) for the lobster fishery. You may recall that in 2013 the Legislature expanded upon DMR’s existing authorization to develop FMPs for our state’s marine resources by specifying what those plans should contain and what they should seek to accomplish. Rockweed was the first fishery the Department addressed, so that we could begin to develop a consistent management approach along Maine’s coast. The scallop and urchin fisheries have also made good progress over the past year on several key components of their own plans. I have made the lobster fishery’s plan the priority for staff this year.

Lobster is by far Maine’s most valuable fishery and a critical part of Maine’s coastal economy and identity. As I have said many times at public meetings: while there is already an FMP at the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission level, developing our own Maine plan is the way for us to take charge of our own destiny. The Maine fishery represents the vast majority of overall landings; we have a long and proud tradition of involving industry members to develop common-sense approaches to address any management challenges that may come our way. For these reasons, it only makes sense to me that we would put in the time and effort to develop a Maine lobster FMP that will help us navigate into the future.

Like all FMPs, the Maine lobster FMP will include such things as goals and objectives for the fishery; a description of the biology of the species; a description of the fishery; stock status; current management measures; recommendations to achieve goals; current research and future research needs; and a characterization of how lobster fits into the broader ecosystem. In practical terms, it means wrestling with tough questions, such as: what management measures should we consider when we start to see a decline? How can we provide for reasonable entry opportunities without compromising the health of the resource?

There was a rumor going around this past fall on the marine radio and in some meetings that the lobster FMP will be used as a tool to get around the Legislature or the regulatory process in order to institute changes. THAT COULD NOT BE FURTHER FROM THE TRUTH. The plan itself will have no authority. While it will set some boundaries and goal posts, it will NOT have the rule of law. I envision this as a living document that is regularly updated, keeping us all on the same page about where we are and where we are headed. The Lobster Advisory Council will be the primary body that develops the lobster fishery management plan, but there will be opportunity for participation in this process from the lobster zone councils and others within the industry.

Of course, other conversations will keep chugging along even as we work on the FMP. The industry should be ready this winter as we head into another Legislative session which has many new bills that could impact the lobster industry. Many of these will focus on topics we have been bringing to you for the past three years. These include latent effort in the fishery, possible changes to limited entry, and implementation of a tiered licensing system. Keep in mind that these are NOT Department bills, but rather ones that have been introduced by Legislators on behalf of people within their districts. We do not know the details of these bills as of yet, but urge you to monitor these conversations and weigh in with your Legislators and the Department as you are able.

I also want to raise a concern that has been on my mind a lot in recent months. Many fishermen have spoken to me about the increasing amount of illegal activity offshore – people fishing sunken trawls or over the trap limit. To ensure fairness we must have a level playing field for all. For a small group of fishermen to participate in an activity that affects all license holders is totally unacceptable. I have directed the Bureau of Marine Patrol to focus on this illegal activity and ensure we have 100% compliance for our trap limit. Those who are found guilty of violating these rules and laws will receive the maximum loss of license.

In closing, I look forward to keeping the lines of communication open so we can continue to work together to tackle the issues that are critical to the future of the Maine lobster industry.
TALES OF THE PAST: Merle Gilliam, Phippsburg

By Nancy Griffin

Merle Gilliam of Phippsburg started lobster fishing with his father in 1937 and retired three years ago, two months short of his 84th birthday. But he says he never did like it.

“I liked fishing, just not lobstering,” said Gilliam.

He started his fishing career by going out with his father, like so many Mainers, at age 9. “We went tuna fishing every summer. I’ll bet I helped catch 2,000 tuna. Catches were always pretty good in those days. Some summers we’d catch a hundred or so. They were a lot more plentiful then.”

When he graduated from high school, Gilliam had his first boat built, a 32-foot wooden lobster boat. “In those days, when I got out of high school, we did all kinds of fishing—at least three things a year. We went for tuna, then we went lobstering, and then we went longlining for hake, haddock and other stuff, but we just called it trawling.”

“When I began lobstering, we fished with wooden traps. It was many years before we saw the wire traps,” said Gilliam. “I’ve seen a lot of changes in my life.”

After 18 years, he sold that first lobster boat and went longlining for the next 30 years, starting out on his father’s boat. Then, after about 10 years, he bought the boat from his father.

“I got out of trawling [longlining] because I saw the handwriting on the wall,” said Gilliam. “The government was starting to step in and tell you what you could do. So I went lobstering. It was all that was left to me. I had to do it, but I didn’t like it!”

He sold the longliner and his next vessel was called the June E, a 35-foot jonesport. The next one was a 33-foot fiberglass boat. “By that time we had five grandchildren, so that boat was called the Five Grand,” said Gilliam. His next and last boat was the 33-foot fiberglass June G. He has fished mostly with a sternman, although sometimes he went alone. Both Junes were named for his wife. The pair celebrated 67 years of marriage last November.

Gilliam remembers that when he began harvesting lobsters, the price was only 15 cents a pound, “and they were fewer then. They’re a lot thicker now,” said Gilliam. He doesn’t recall the exact price he was being paid when he retired, but believes it was around $3 a pound.

Gilliam was born and raised in the West Point area of Phippsburg, and has lived there for all but the two years he was serving in the army. He and June still live in a tidy beige house on the water’s edge where they raised their family.

He figures the Gilliams arrived in Maine in the late 1700s, probably from England, via Newfoundland, and “about all of them were fishermen.” His father tried Grand Banks fishing briefly, but didn’t care for it, and warned Gilliam not to go. A family story says his great-grandfather, a Nelson who moved to Maine from Oslo, Norway, was lost when a Grand Banks schooner disappeared with all hands on board, fishing out of Jonesport and Beals Island.

And while Gilliam might not have liked lobster fishing, two of his three sons, aged 38 to 63, are lobstermen, and the third works for a lobster dealer. Although Gilliam says he wasn’t really good at lobstering, the fact that he supported his family by lobstering for 45 years might indicate otherwise.

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Merle Gilliam at home with one of his model lobster boats. Photo by Nancy Griffin.

Buoy Wanted!

Maine Maritime Museum wants to include YOU in the largest lobsters exhibit in the state, opening this summer.

Share your story by sending us a new or freshly painted buoy and a photo of yourself, as well as details about who you are, where you fish, how long you’ve been in the industry and how your boat got its name. We also welcome photos and videos of you at work!

Buoys can be left with your MLA representative or dropped off at the museum: 243 Washington St. in Bath. Photos and videos can be easily uploaded at www.dropitto.me/mainemaritime using the password “lobster”.

Questions? Contact Curator of Exhibits Chris Hall at 207-443-1316 or hall@maritimeme.org.

See page 24 to learn more!

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Merle Gilliam at home with one of his model lobster boats. Photo by Nancy Griffin.

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Continued on page 18

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TIME TO THINK ABOUT HEALTH INSURANCE AND YOUR TAXES

By Melissa Waterman

Filing your income tax is one of the less-pleasant tasks of the winter. This year it might prove to be even more of a headache for those who have enrolled in health insurance plans under the Affordable Care Act (ACA).

In a nutshell, the issue is this: to make health insurance plans affordable, the ACA provides a subsidy to people who make less than a certain amount of money. That subsidy is called an advance premium tax credit. The tax credit is calculated for 2014 based on the amount of income you estimated you would make in that year when you completed your insurance application. When you file your 2014 income tax return this year, the IRS will want to know if you made more or less than that estimated amount. If more, you may owe some of that tax credit back to the government.

"It will be a different process for different people," cautions Emily Brostek, executive director of Consumers for Affordable Health Care Foundation in Augusta. "If you have insurance through your employer, you will just check a box [on your 1040 form] indicating you had insurance throughout 2014. But if you purchased your plan through the Health Insurance Marketplace, you will need to fill out additional tax forms.

So get ready for Form 1095-A. By early February, individuals who enrolled through Maine’s Health Insurance Marketplace should receive IRS Form 1095-A in the mail as well electronically through their healthcare.gov online account. Form 1095-A gives individuals the information needed to fill out IRS Form 8962, which reconciles the advance premium tax credits you received in 2014 with the premium tax credits you were entitled to.

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"You bring the 1095-A form to an accountant and they use it for the 8962 form.

For people who typically do their taxes on their own, this year will be challenging. I would suggest getting a professional to do it for you," Maine Lobstermen’s Association health insurance Navigator April McNaught said. There is a cap on how much of the tax credit you can be required to repay (see box). That cap can vary from $300 to $2,500, depending on income and family size. However, if you make more or less than that estimated amount. If more, you may owe some of that tax credit back to the government.

Penalties for not having qualifying health insurance in 2014 are relatively low, but they will steadily increase in 2015 and 2016. If you remained uninsured for part of 2014, you only owe a penalty for the months you were without coverage after a three-month grace period. Your penalty will be pro-rated and it will be withheld from your 2014 tax refund. For 2014 the penalty is 1% of your adjusted gross income or $95, whichever is greater. For the 2015 tax year, the annual penalty will be $325 per adult and $162.50 per child, with a maximum of $975 per family, or 2.5% of your adjusted gross income. In 2016, it will be $695 per adult and $347.50 per child, with a maximum of $2,085 per family, or 2.5% of adjusted gross income.

"We worry about people who don’t realize that there is a penalty for not having health insurance in 2014 and may miss the enrollment period in 2015 and then will face another penalty next year," Brostek said. "So it’s important to find out what the penalty might be and the cost of plans now."

Brostek also cautions people to fill out their income tax forms earlier this year than in the past in part because the process is new both to income tax filers and to the IRS itself. "I really encourage people not to wait," she said. "The IRS doesn’t have the resources it has had in the past to answer questions so it’s important to get into it now."

FREE HELP IS AVAILABLE FOR FILING YOUR TAXES

To calculate what your penalty might be if you do not enroll in a health insurance plan, the non-partisan Tax Policy Center of the Urban Institute and Brookings Institute in Washington, D.C., have devised a calculator. Visit http://taxpolicycenter.org/taxfacts/aca/calculator.cfm to calculate your potential penalty.

If you are concerned about filing your income tax on your own this year but do not have the means to hire an accountant, help is available. CASH Maine is a collaboration of ten statewide coalitions, composed of 50 organizations and businesses, working to help low- and moderate-income Mainers make the most of their money. CASH Maine offers free tax preparation during the tax season to those with a household income less than $53,000. To make an appointment for tax help, call any of the numbers below:

- Capital Area (Augusta): 621-3430
- Eastern Maine: 973-3500
- Calais (Washington County): 255-9399
- Lubec (Washington County): 733-2491
- Machias (Washington County): 255-9399
- Milbridge (Washington County): 664-2424
- Greater Portland: 699-0753
- Midcoast Maine: 321-8375
- Wabanaki: 866-6545
- York County: 324-5762, ext. 2718

The IRS also offers people assistance in filing their personal income tax. The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program offers free tax help to people who generally make $53,000 or less, persons with disabilities, the elderly and limited English speaking taxpayers who need assistance in preparing their own tax returns. In Maine some VITA providers are also CASH Maine sites. IRS-certified volunteers provide free basic income tax return preparation with electronic filing to qualified individuals.

In addition to VITA, the Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) program offers free tax help for all taxpayers, particularly those who are 60 years of age and older, specializing in questions about pensions and retirement-related issues unique to seniors. The IRS-certified volunteers who provide tax counseling are often retired individuals associated with non-profit organizations that receive grants from the IRS.

For more information, visit http://irs.treasury.gov/freetaxprep/
MAINE LOBSTERMEN'S ASSOCIATION UPDATE

In January, I traveled to Providence, Rhode Island, for the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Team (TRT) meeting. The TRT is the management group, established under the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA), which advises the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) on the whale plan. This TRT focuses on the protection of Atlantic large whales and is composed of 60 stakeholders from fisheries, state agencies, conservation groups and the science community. And like the whale plan, it addresses fixed gear fisheries along the entire Atlantic coast from Maine to Florida.

Maine is lucky to have excellent representation for our lobster fishery on the TRT. In addition to myself and Terry Stockwell from the Maine Department of Marine Resources, we have three lobster industry representatives: Jim Tripp from the offshore fishery, Dwight Carver from the Downeast fishery, and Stevie Robbins who has worked in all aspects of the lobster fishery. When questions arise about the safety and feasibility of management options, these guys are able to tell it like it is. At this past meeting, Dwight did a fabulous job of explaining safety concerns and Jim was able to talk about the realities of these measures in the fishery.

But with a group of 60 stakeholders, despite bringing your ‘A Team’ to the table it is very difficult for such a large and diverse group of people to come to agreement. As a representative of Maine’s lobster industry, my marching orders are clear. I am there to protect the interests of Maine lobstermen. The usual dynamic is that the conservation groups are looking for solutions that seem radical to the fishing industry, and the fishing industry pushes to keep the status quo. NMFS (and the science and conservation communities) constantly remind the group that whales continue to get entangled in fishing gear and need further protection that is why we are there.

There was a lot of talk at this meeting about our failure to meet PBR, the Potential Biologic Removal rate (the number of whales that can be lost each year due to interactions with humans). PBR is the standard set under the MMPA to protect whales. Unfortunately entanglements from U.S. fisheries exceed PBR, entanglements from Canadian fisheries exceed PBR, and ship strikes exceed PBR. Combined, we aren’t even close to meeting it. NMFS has developed a plan with multiple indicators to monitor the effectiveness of the whale rules over the coming years.

Yet January’s meeting was quite different from any I’ve attended over the past 15 years. With the groundline rules in place since 2009 and the vertical line rules finalized in late 2014, this was the first TRT meeting when we haven’t been under the gun to get new management measures in place. For the first time, NMFS provided a process for stakeholders to bring forward proposals to make adjustments to the whale rules.

The process was long and exhausting, yet progress was made. Everyone at the table was able to give a little. In the end, the TRT made the latest iteration of the whale plan better for fishermen. Through additional gear marking, the rules finally may shed some light on which fishing gear is actually ending up on whales. These changes are expected to be finalized in the coming months and in place for the June 2015 implementation date.

Compromise may be a dirty word to some but in this case, it benefits Maine lobstermen! As always, stay safe on the water!

Maine Lobstermen’s Association

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

President: David Guerri
So. Thomaston, 207.594.7518
1st VP: Jim Dow
Bass Harbor, 207.288.9846
2nd VP: Kristan Porter
Cutler, 207.255.3306
Sec/Treasurer: Arnold Gamache, Jr.
So. Bristol, 207.644.8110

Directors
Bob Baines, Spruce Head, 596.0717
Dwight Carver, Beals, 497.2895
Gerry Cashman, Port Clyde, 372.6429
Jim Henderson, Camp Ellis, 468.4363
Robert Ingalls, Cushing, 354.6404
John Williams, Stonington, 367.2731
Elliott Thomas, Yarmouth, 846.6201
Jay Smith, Nobleboro, 563.5208
Jack Merrill, Islesford, 244.4187
Jason Joyce, Swan Island, 526.4109
Mark Jones, Boothbay, 633.6054
Dwight Carver, Rockport, 207.594.7518

Maine Lobstermen’s Association
203 Lafayette Center
Kennebunk, ME 04043
info@maine Lobstermen.org
207.967.4555
www.mainelobstermen.org

MAINE LOBSTERMEN’S ASSOCIATION UPDATE

STEAMING AHEAD

In January, I traveled to Providence, R.I., for the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Team (TRT) meeting. The TRT is the management group, established under the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA), which advises the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) on the whale plan. This TRT focuses on the protection of Atlantic large whales and is composed of 60 stakeholders from fisheries, state agencies, conservation groups and the science community. And like the whale plan, it addresses fixed gear fisheries along the entire Atlantic coast from Maine to Florida.

Maine is lucky to have excellent representation for our lobster fishery on the TRT. In addition to myself and Terry Stockwell from the Maine Department of Marine Resources, we have three lobster industry representatives: Jim Tripp from the offshore fishery, Dwight Carver from the Downeast fishery, and Stevie Robbins who has worked in all aspects of the lobster fishery. When questions arise about the safety and feasibility of management options, these guys are able to tell it like it is. At this past meeting, Dwight did a fabulous job of explaining safety concerns and Jim was able to talk about the realities of these measures in the fishery.

But with a group of 60 stakeholders, despite bringing your ‘A Team’ to the table it is very difficult for such a large and diverse group of people to come to agreement. As a representative of Maine’s lobster industry, my marching orders are clear. I am there to protect the interests of Maine lobstermen. The usual dynamic is that the conservation groups are looking for solutions that seem radical to the fishing industry, and the fishing industry pushes to keep the status quo. NMFS (and the science and conservation communities) constantly remind the group that whales continue to get entangled in fishing gear and need further protection that is why we are there.

There was a lot of talk at this meeting about our failure to meet PBR, the Potential Biologic Removal rate (the number of whales that can be lost each year due to interactions with humans). PBR is the standard set under the MMPA to protect whales. Unfortunately entanglements from U.S. fisheries exceed PBR, entanglements from Canadian fisheries exceed PBR, and ship strikes exceed PBR. Combined, we aren’t even close to meeting it. NMFS has developed a plan with multiple indicators to monitor the effectiveness of the whale rules over the coming years.

Yet January’s meeting was quite different from any I’ve attended over the past 15 years. With the groundline rules in place since 2009 and the vertical line rules finalized in late 2014, this was the first TRT meeting when we haven’t been under the gun to get new management measures in place. For the first time, NMFS provided a process for stakeholders to bring forward proposals to make adjustments to the whale rules.

Maine fared extremely well under the vertical line rules, with a plan based on adding more traps to a trawl as you move offshore, along with expanded gear marking. Lobstermen fishing inside Maine’s exempted waters did not see any new regulations. Maine avoided two seasonal closures proposed for Jeffrey’s Ledge and Jordan’s Basin. However, we needed a few tweaks, so Maine submitted a proposal to expand the existing ½ mile buffer allowing singles around three Pen Bay islands to be applied to other islands in Penobscot Bay as well as the Isles of Shoals. Maine also asked NMFS to create a process for fishermen to make changes based on safety concerns. The states of Rhode Island and Massachusetts submitted proposals to regain the ability to fish singles in coastal waters, offering expansion gear marking in exchange. New Hampshire asked for the ability to cap vertical lines if lobstermen turned in trap tags. The conservation community again proposed the seasonal closure of Jeffrey’s Ledge and Jordan’s Basin.

This is where it was clear that things have changed. There was a real willingness among all the stakeholders to find compromises that worked. There was a recognition that fishermen need to be able to fish, but also are expected to make reasonable changes in areas where whales are most at risk.

To this end, the majority of proposals were approved by the TRT. Maine was able to expand its island buffer to the additional islands. Lobstermen fishing the Isles of Shoals will add an additional mark to those singles since there is a higher occurrence of whales off this part of the Maine coast. And NMFS will establish a working group to create a process for dealing with safety concerns of individual fishermen. The states of Rhode Island and Massachusetts got their singles back in coastal waters in exchange for marking that gear.

The conservation community was not able to gain adequate traction to get the seasonal closure of Jeffrey’s Ledge or Jordan’s Basin. This was obviously a non-starter from Maine’s perspective, and our contingent strongly opposed this proposal. However, the group compromised and agreed to uniquely mark gear fished in these areas, because that gear may be more likely to be encountered by a whale.

The process was long and exhausting, yet progress was made. Everyone at the table was able to give a little. In the end, the TRT made the latest iteration of the whale plan better for fishermen. Through additional gear marking, the rules finally may shed some light on which fishing gear is actually ending up on whales. These changes are expected to be finalized in the coming months and in place for the June 2015 implementation date.

Compromise may be a dirty word to some but in this case, it benefits Maine lobstermen! As always, stay safe on the water!

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As always, stay safe on the water!

Patrice

February 2015 | LANDINGS | Page 7
The MLA Directors met on January 7. They reviewed the list of bill titles from the Legislature available to date, though the details of the bills were not available. DMR has a few bills in, one of which will seek to gain additional authority to aid in enforcement, especially in the offshore areas. Rep. Kumeika put forward a bill which could extend the fishing day in the fall and others looking at licensing and latent effort. The members of the Joint Committee on Marine Resources are almost entirely new this session; MLA staff and as many directors as possible plan to attend a “Meet and Greet” with the committee.

The directors discussed the NEFMC (the Council) Omnibus Habitat Amendment. Patrice will make comments at the public hearing in Portland and submit MLA’s written comments to the Council. Those comments will emphasize the lobster industry’s concern that lobster gear might be excluded from closed areas in the future; oppose any opening of existing closures, especially Closed Area II, which contains more than one-third of the Gulf of Maine’s egg-bearing lobsters at certain times of year; oppose the eastern Maine closures; and oppose any measures that would undermine the diversity of Maine’s small boat fishing fleet.

The directors discussed the success of the 2014 lobster season in stark contrast to the 2012 season. They talked about how the industry might become proactive in replicating the 2014 season in future years by not oversupplying the market during the summer months and landing quality, shipable lobster. The directors identified several important factors which should guide discussion, namely that lobstermen don’t want to be told that they can’t fish and the industry needs something predictable that they can count on each year.

Patrice will be attending the Take Reduction Team (TRT) meeting in January to support Maine’s proposal to extend the ¾ mile buffer in the whale rules to additional islands in Penobscot Bay and the Isles of Shoals. MLA will neither oppose Massachusetts’ efforts to fish singles in state waters, but will strongly oppose the proposal from the conservation community to implement a seasonal closure of Jeffrey’s Ledge and Jordan’s Basin to protect whales.

Maine’s Commercial Fishing Safety Council’s January meeting was postponed due to a lack of quorum. MLA will attend the next meeting to discuss MLA’s interest in changing Coast Guard regulations that require repacking a life raft every two years, as opposed to the three years, which seems to conflict with Coast Guard rules.

The directors discussed details of the MLA Annual Meeting on March 6 at 9 a.m. at the Samoset Resort, as well as details of the Maine Fishermen’s Forum. The next directors meeting will be held on February 4 at Noon at Darby’s. University of Maine researchers will present their studies on cod and cusk barotrauma.

The MLA Directors also met on December 3. Terry Stockwell from DMR reviewed the Council’s Habitat Amendment. MLA expressed concern over the potential for lobster traps to be excluded from closed areas and noted that the Habitat Amendment was expansive, making it difficult to determine how the various options might affect Maine. Terry also urged MLA to monitor the market during the summer shed and landing quality, shippable lobster. In a University of Maine study, bottom-dwelling fish are rapidly brought to the surface. In a University of Maine study, bottom-dwelling fish are rapidly brought to the surface. NOAA photo.

GOOD NEWS ON WHALE RULES FROM TRT

The TRT, which advises NMFS on the large whale plan, met in January in Providence, R.I. Maine’s contingent included Patrice McCarron and Dwight Carver from the MLA, Jim Tripp from Forge DMR and Terry Stockwell from DMR. DMR staff Sarah Cotnoir and Erin Summers also attended. The MLA was the only Maine lobster industry organization that attended the meeting.

Maine submitted a proposal to amend the whale plan to expand the ¾ mile buffer, which allows setting single traps, to all the Penobscot Bay islands (including Monhegan, Criehaven, Matinicus) in addition to those islands already included (Monhegan, Criehaven, Matinicus). Additionally, Maine requested that this buffer include the Maine portion of the Isles of Shoals. Those fishing singles in the Isles of Shoals buffer will have to add an additional unique mark because of their proximity to whales on Jeffrey’s Ledge.

The conservation groups attending the meeting made a strong push to adopt seasonal fishing closures on Jeffrey’s Ledge and Jordan’s Basin as part of the whale plan. In the end, a compromise was reached which will require anyone lobstering in those proposed closure areas to specially mark their endlines, thus indicating that the trap was fished there. In the end, a compromise was reached which will require anyone lobstering in those proposed closure areas to specially mark their endlines, thus indicating that the trap was fished there.

The TRT is forming a subcommittee to look at how to have a conservation equivalency for boats with unique safety concerns when complying with the whale plan, such as those who do not feel they can fish the minimum trawl requirements.

PRELIMINARY MENHADEN ASSESSMENT RESULTS ARE POSITIVE

The ASMFC released the 2014 Atlantic menhaden stock assessment and will discuss the document at its winter meeting in February. While the assessment and its results are not final, the initial results are positive. A new model was developed, dividing the fishery into northern and southern components, as well as bait and reduction components. According to the draft benchmark stock assessment and based on the current reference points, the stock is not overfished and overfishing is not occurring.

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING OF THE MEMBERS OF MAINE LOBSTERMEN’S ASSOCIATION, INC.

Notice is hereby given that the Annual Meeting of the members of the Maine Lobstermen’s Association, Inc. will be held at the Samoset Resort, Rockport, Maine, on Friday, March 6, 2015 at 9:00 in the morning.

Dated at Damariscotta, Maine this 1st day of December, 2014.

MAINE LOBSTERMEN’S ASSOCIATION, INC.

Current Officers:
David Cousens, President
Jim Dow, 1st Vice President
Kristan Porter, 2nd Vice President
Arnold Gamage, Secretary/Treasurer

Nominations
Nomination form included in paper

MLA 61ST ANNUAL MEETING

Friday, March 6, 2015
9:00am to 10:15am at the Samoset Resort
DMR RULEMAKING

The Department of Marine Resources is conducting rulemaking on four lobster issues. The DMR has not yet published rulemaking necessary for compliance with the federal whale rules.

Lobster Trap Tag Attachment (Chapter 25.08)

Maine DMR is proposing to remove the requirement that a trap tag be attached to the trap only by the means for which the tag was designed. With this change, lobstermen could securely attach the tag by other means (for example, hog rings) which would enable them to change gear over and reuse tags already in their possession. Under the current system, they must cut the tag out and bring it to a DMR office to get replacement tags. This change in rule is pending approval of a conservation equivalency from the ASMFC. If the conservation equivalency is not approved by ASMFC, DMR will not advance the proposed rule for adoption, and will notify the industry. Comments are due February 20.

Kittery Lobster Trawl Limits (Chapter 25.04)

The trawl limit proposed in the vicinity of Kittery is unchanged from the existing trawl limit in law. For consistency with all regions, DMR is seeking to adopt this trawl limit in regulation rather than in statute so that it is easier to make changes requested by industry as necessary. Comments due by Feb. 23.

Hancock County Lobster Trawl Limits (Chapter 25.04)

The trawl limit in Hancock County is proposed to be amended so that it does not conflict with changes to minimum trawl lengths that will be necessary for compliance with the NMFS’ whale rules, which go into effect in Maine on June 1, 2015. With the new whale rules, there will be a minimum number of lobster traps per trawl based on the different lobster zones and distance from shore in order to reduce the number of buoy lines in the water. This proposed rulemaking would amend the area in Hancock County where it is unlawful to have more than three traps on a trawl. Comments due by Feb. 23.

Frenchboro Island Limited Entry Program (Chapter 25.97)

This proposed rulemaking would also address a recent island limited entry referendum vote on Frenchboro. It would create the Frenchboro Island Limited Entry program, allowing up to 14 commercial island resident lobster licenses to be issued annually. Comments due by Feb. 23.

LOBSTER TRAP REDUCTIONS (BUT NOT IN MAINE!)

American Lobster Permit Holders (Areas 2, 3, 4, and 5)

NMFS has approved a final rule that implements conservation measures for the Southern New England stock of American lobster, as recommended by the ASMFC. NMFS will implement the following conservation measures beginning on May 1, 2015:

Area 2: Mandatory v-notching of egg-bearing female lobsters;
Area 3: Minimum carapace size increase to 3 17/32 inches;
Area 4: Mandatory v-notching of egg-bearing female lobsters, and an annual seasonal closure from February 1 through March 31 (beginning in 2016); and
Area 5: Mandatory v-notching of egg-bearing female lobsters, and an annual seasonal closure from February 1 through March 31 (beginning in 2016).

In addition, NMFS will implement a series of annual trap reductions for Areas 2 and 3, beginning with fishing year 2016. The first reduction will take effect on April 30, 2016, just prior to the start of fishing year, and every year after following the schedule below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effective Year (Date of Trap Reduction)</th>
<th>Area Reductions 2</th>
<th>Area 3 Reductions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fishing Years 2014 and 2015</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishing Year 2016 (April 30, 2016)</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishing Year 2017 (April 30, 2017)</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishing Year 2018 (April 30, 2018)</td>
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<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishing Year 2019 (April 30, 2019)</td>
<td>5%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishing Year 2020 (April 30, 2020)</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishing Year 2021 (April 30, 2021)</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the next several weeks, NMFS will inform each permit holder of their reduced 2016 allocation based on the first round of trap reductions and will provide instructions on how and when to transfer traps later in 2015. The reduced allocation will be the amount available for transfer. Revised allocations based on the first year of trap reductions and subsequent transfers made during 2015 will take effect on May 1, 2016.

MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE TO CONSIDER LOBSTER BILLS

The First Session of the 127th Legislature convened in December, 2014. Senator Michael Thibodeau of Winterport was sworn in as Maine Senate President and Representative Mark Eves of South Berwick was sworn in as Speaker of the House. The 151-member House is comprised of 80 Democrats, 69 Republicans and two independents. The 35-member Senate is comprised of 20 Republicans and 15 Democrats. The Legislature re-elected Matthew Dunlap to serve as Secretary of State and Janet Mills to serve as Attorney General, and elected Terry Hayes as State Treasurer for the next two years.

Cloture, the deadline for Legislators to submit bill titles to the Revisor’s Office, was January 5. Legislators can only introduce proposals during this First Regular Session after the cloture deadline if approved by the Legislative Council. The following legislative requests (which will be assigned an LD for tracking) of interest to the lobster industry have been submitted to date:

LD 98, An Act Amending the Trap Limit for the Swans Island Lobster Conservation Area, Sen. Langley of Hancock

An Act To Establish a Limited Lobster and Crab Commercial License (LR 776), Rep. Kumiega of Deer Isle

An Act To Lower from 70 to 65 the Age at Which a Person May Obtain a Reduced-fee Lobster and Crab Fishing License (LR 1759), Rep. Gilway of Searsport

An Act To Establish an Exemption for Certain Veterans to the Lobster and Crab Fishing License Apprenticeship Program (LR 1350), Rep. Kumiega of Deer Isle

An Act To Extend the Legal Hours To Harvest Lobsters (LR 1088), Rep. Kumiega of Deer Isle

An Act To Improve Lobster Licensing (LR 1315), Rep. Alley of Beals

An Act To Increase Entry into the Lobster Fishery (LR 775), Rep. Kumiega of Deer Isle

An Act Regarding the Purchase of Trap Tags in the Lobster Fishery (LR 779), Rep. Kumiega of Deer Isle

An Act To Create the Ocean Acidification Council (LR 372), Rep. Devin of Newcastle

An Act To Address Ocean Acidification (LR 114), Rep. Devin of Newcastle

An Act To Address and Mitigate the Effects of Marine Debris (LR 1585), Rep. Devin of Newcastle

An Act To Allow Retired Marine Patrol Officers To Obtain up to 2 Marine Fisheries Licenses (LR 1490), Sen. Burns of Washington

An Act To Amend the Alewives Restoration Program in the St. Croix River (LR 1481), Rep. Turner of Burlington

An Act To Prohibit False Labeling of Marine Organisms (LR 1715), Rep. Chapman of Brooksville

An Act To Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue for the Purchase and Development of the Bar Harbor Ferry Terminal as a Multimodal Transportation Facility (LR 283), Rep. Hubbell of Bar Harbor

An Act To Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue To Support Waterfront Development (LR 886), Sen. Haskell of Cumberland

The deadline for state agencies to submit proposals for legislation was December 3, 2014. The DMR has submitted the following bill titles:

An Act To Create a Spat Collection License (LR 507)

An Act To Create an Elver Exporter’s License (LR 508)

An Act To Make the E-mail Addresses of Department of Marine Resources License Holders Confidential (LR 509)

An Act To Amend the Emergency Rule-making Authority of the Department of Marine Resources (LR 510)

An Act To Improve Enforcement of Maine’s Marine Resources Laws (LR 511)

An Act To Add Atlantic Sturgeon and Atlantic Salmon to the List of State Endangered and Threatened Marine Species (LR 512)

An Act To Provide for Improved Reporting of Marine Resources Landings (LR 515)

An Act To Make Technical Changes to Maine’s Marine Resources Laws (LR 516)

You can track specific bills throughout the session at http://legislature.maine.gov. Click “Bill Status” and enter LD #.
LANDINGS | February 2015

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

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Calendar Islands Maine Lobster LLC
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Cranberry Isles Fishermen’s Men’s Co-op
Cushion Diesel, LLC
Damariscotta Bank & Trust Co.
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Finestkind Scenic Cruises
F W Thuston Co. Inc.
Georgetown Fishermen’s Coop
Grundens USA Ltd
Gulf of Maine Lobster Foundation
Guy Cotten, Inc
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HR Beal & Sons Inc.
Interstate Lobster Co.
Island Fishing Gear & Auto Parts
Islanders Fisherman’s Village
Island Seafood II, LLC
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Lake Pemaquid Inc.
Linda Bean’s Maine Lobster
Lobster ME
Lobster Products Inc.
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Penobscot East Resource Center
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Shucks Maine Lobster
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Superior Bait and Salt
Superior Marine Products Inc.
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The First NA
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Weavertown Seafood Inc.
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Worcesters Lobster Bait

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Cousins Maine Lobster
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Georgetown Fishermen’s Coop
Grundens USA Ltd
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Guy Cotten, Inc
Hamilton Marine
HR Beal & Sons Inc.
Interstate Lobster Co.
Island Fishing Gear & Auto Parts
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Lake Pemaquid Inc.
Linda Bean’s Maine Lobster
Lobster ME
Lobster Products Inc.
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MacBain Savings Bank
Maine Financial Group
Maine Lobster Dealers Association
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Weavertown Seafood Inc.
Weirs Motor Sales Inc.
Williams CPA Group LLC
Worcesters Lobster Bait
NEW LEADERS IN MAINE’S LOBSTER FISHERY: Cyrus Sleeper, S. Thomaston

By Melissa Waterman

In this new series we will profile some of the young men and women who took part in the Maine Lobstermen’s Community Alliance’s inaugural Leadership Institute in May, 2014 to see what they are doing one year later.

On a cold and bright day in mid-January Cyrus Sleeper, 26, is working on his new lobster boat at the Clark Island Boat Yard in St. George. The boat, a 42-foot Mussel Ridge composite vessel designed by Albert Hutchinson, looms above a visitor to the bay in which Sleeper and the finish crew are operating. “This is my fifth boat,” says Sleeper, a lean young man with a quiet smile. “I’m going to name her Centerfold.”

Sleeper was one of a dozen young lobstermen who participated in the Maine Lobstermen’s Community Alliance inaugural Leadership Institute last spring. The men and women spent two days studying all aspects of Maine’s lobster industry—from state and federal management practices to supply chain economics and marketing—before traveling to Prince Edward Island to meet with their Canadian counterparts there. In the long run, the goal of the Institute is to inspire the younger generation of lobstermen to take leadership roles in the industry. “As the Maine lobster industry copes with a rapidly changing fishery, keeping the industry relevant and profitable for the next generation is essential,” explained Patrice McCarron, president of the MLCA. “New leaders must step up in order to preserve hard-won measures that are fundamental to the lobster fishery’s abundance and ensure future prosperity.”

Sleeper has done just that. In October he was appointed by the Department of Marine Resources (DMR) Commissioner Pat Keliher to serve on the Maine Lobster Marketing Collaborative (MLMC). The Collaborative was created by the state Legislature in 2014 to develop markets for Maine lobster; it is funded by a fee levied on lobstermen and seafood processor licenses.

“To be honest, I thought the Institute would be a good opportunity to get out of town and learn new things,” Sleeper explained. “I sure did!” The trip to Prince Edward Island was a particular eye-opener. “It was like going back in time here in Maine because they use wooden traps there and have other traditions,” Sleeper said. He and the other participants fished with the island lobstermen, ate with them and stayed overnight in their homes. Sleeper kept his eyes open. “I saw some things that I’ve kept in the back of my mind that I’d like to try, like how they tie the trap to the line at the bridle,” he said.

The Institute experience also gave Sleeper a desire to get further involved in aspects of lobstering other than hauling traps. “John Sauve [who drafted a marketing plan for the state Lobster Advisory Council] talked to us during the Institute about marketing. I thought that was pretty interesting,” Sleeper said. When Peter Miller, Maine Fishermen’s Forum PO Box 288 Bath, ME 04530 (207) 442-7700

2015 SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

The Maine Fishermen’s Forum Board of Directors offers a scholarship fund to benefit immediate family members (son/daughter, or a grandson/granddaughter) or legal dependent of someone actively involved in Maine’s seafood industry, regardless of financial need or academic achievement. Undergraduates attending a two or four year college who are in at least the second year of their program or students who are in at least the second semester of their Certificate Program will be eligible. Applications will be accepted through February 25, 2015. Scholarships will be awarded by a random drawing to be held during the 39th annual Maine Fishermen’s Forum. Please note that previous winners are not eligible.

Do you qualify? Check all that apply:
☐ Are you a sophomore, junior, or senior right now? You must be at least a sophomore in college to apply.
☐ Do you have an immediate family member actively participating in Maine’s seafood industry?

What do you need to apply? Check all that apply:
☐ Complete the following application & send to the address at the top.
☐ Provide an official transcript or Registrar’s letter of current standing along with this application.

You qualify for the scholarship drawing ONLY IF you checked all 4 of the boxes above.

STUDENT INFORMATION
Student Name______________________________________
Street/Mailing Address__________________________
City________________ State______ Zip________
Home Phone__________________________
Email________________________________________________

SCHOOL INFORMATION
College/University name______________________________________
Location of college__________________________________________
Expected year of graduation______ your major__________________________
College standing as of Sept 2015 (circle one)
Freshman Sophomore Junior Senior

MAINE SEAFOOD INDUSTRY FAMILY MEMBER INFORMATION
Name________________________________ Relationship________
Street/Mailing Address__________________________
City________________ State______ Zip________ Email__________________________
Vessel Name or Commercial License Number__________________________

Describe Participation in the Maine seafood industry__________________________

Continued on page 19
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(in MA, RI) Kevin Hampson, 508-634-5503, Kevin_Hampson@miltoncat.com
MLA ITEMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Color</th>
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<td>Oatmeal</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>$10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Child Lobster Busy T-shirt</td>
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<td>Harvester Membership</td>
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MLA Items Color Size Price
Women’s Zip Hoodie Light blue S, M, L $35
1/4 Zip Fleece Navy M, L, XL, 2XL $20
MLA Classic T-shirt Gray M, L, XL, 2XL $15
Child Lobster Life Cycle T-shirt Oatmeal S $10
Child Lobster Busy T-shirt White XS, S, M $10
MLA Logo Hat Blue one size $15
MLA Beanie Gray one size $15

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Seabrook, NH -- 10% discount on all in stock items for MLA members.

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Deer Isle, ME -- Discounted annual subscription rate for $18.75 with MLA membership noted on check.

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By David Cousens  
President, Maine Lobstermen’s Association

Maine’s lobster fishing season has long been determined by when the shed happens. Most set traps out in the spring to haul bottom, but fishing officially starts when the first strong run of shedders hits.

As we have all known for years, the shed coincides with warm water temperature. 2012 had the warmest water temperature we’ve ever experienced in the Gulf of Maine and the shed was four to six weeks early. This turned out to be an economic disaster for the lobster industry. In 2014 the water temperature was more normal and the shed happened in the same time frame as it used to be. Already in 2015 scientists have stated that the Gulf of Maine is warmer than usual for this time of year and it could mean warmer waters and an early shed.

The temperature in the Gulf of Maine has been rising faster than in other places in the world because of the hydrology and geography of the Gulf of Maine. This is something we need to think about as we try to manage the lobster fishery. You may ask, “Why do we care?” and my response is that if you understand why 2012 was such a disaster, you can try to avoid that happening again.

We can’t change the water temperature, so do we simply prepare ourselves for low prices if there is an early shed? Maybe not. We can learn from past experience and talk about adapting our fishing to alleviate what caused the problems. First, we need to look at what caused the economic problem of 2012. We hauled 5 million more pounds in June than we normally do because of the early shed. This was the crux of the problem because we had no place to go with the lobster and they were too soft to hold. Canada was still processing their own lobster and was having big catches. They stop fishing at the end of June. Traditionally, the processors take two weeks to clean the processing plants and get ready for our soft shell lobster, which usually arrives about the middle of August. Because we had 5 million more pounds of lobster than we usually have, the dealers had no place to go with them. The lobsters were not keeping well because the water was so warm. In response, the price dropped so low that we essentially couldn’t afford to fish. From there, the price just never recovered to where it should have been.

Monitoring water temperatures to forecast the timing of the shed may well give us a warning if an early shed is going to happen again. We need to be aware of this situation for years to come. In 2012 we saw an early shed and 2015 how to make money. Moving forward, how should we deal with an early shed? That is a question that needs to be answered. And 1 really think we all need to wrap our heads around how we could deal with that problem as it is probably going to happen again in our future.

I believe whatever we do would have to be state-wide. The two goals would be: 1) not to put many soft shells in the marketplace till the third week of July, and 2) slow the catch until the shell on most of the lobsters is of shippable quality. This would ensure a supply of quality shipable lobsters to be able to fill the demand domestically and abroad, thus taking advantage of the live market which is more valuable to the harvester.

In closing, the economics of these two scenarios should be enough to convince people this is the right thing to do. This last year the lobster industry put away 100 million dollars more into the state economy with fewer lobsters than in the past two years, just because of the increased value of the product. I know as a harvester the 80 cents a pound more last year sure made the end of the year look better financially. I for one would like to see this trend continue.
WHOM'S WHO ON THE NEW MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

SENATORS
Linda Baker, Chair (R-Sagadahoc)
729-8381; Linda.baker@legislature.maine.gov
Sen. Baker is a retired public high school and adult education teacher of English, history, and creative writing who served on Topsham’s Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee. She is a graduate of the University of Maine System and has a Master’s Degree from the University of Southern Maine. Sen. Baker has also worked as a bank officer, a customer service supervisor, and as a financial manager for a non-profit organization. In addition to serving as Chair of the Marine Resources Committee, she will serve on the Insurance and Financial Services Committee. Sen. Baker lives in Topsham, has three children and five grandchildren.

Brian Langley (R-Hancock)
667-0625; Brian.langley@legislature.maine.gov
Sen. Langley is currently serving his third term in the Maine State Senate and formerly served one term in the Maine House of Representatives. A graduate of the University of Southern Maine and Syracuse University, he is an entrepreneur, chef, and educator. He spent more than 27 years teaching culinary arts at Hancock County Technical Center, and currently owns the Union River Lobster Pot restaurant in Ellsworth. He has previously served on the Taxation, Marine Resources, and the Education and Cultural Affairs Committees. This session, Sen Langley will Chair the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee, in addition to serving on Marine Resources. He lives with his wife in Ellsworth and has two grown children.

David Miramant (D-Knox)
236-4845; David.miramant@legislature.maine.gov
Sen. Miramant previously served one term in the Maine House of Representatives. He presently owns and operates a glider pilot business. He has previously owned other small businesses, was formerly a Captain at Delta Airlines, and served on the Camden Selectboard. He is a graduate of the University of Maine at Farmington. He lives in Camden with his wife, and has two grown children. “I look forward to serving on the Marine Resources Committee and understand the importance of this industry to our district and the entire state,” said Miramant. “We have significant challenges to address, and many opportunities to support and grow Maine’s trademark for seafood, fisheries, and aquaculture.”

REPRESENTATIVES
Walter Kumienga, III, Chair (D-Deer Isle)
479-5459; Walter.kumienga@legislature.maine.gov
Rep. Walter Kumienga is serving his third term in the Legislature. He previously served on the Deer Isle-Stonington School Committee and is on the board of Child and Family Opportunities, the Head Start grantee for Hancock and Washington counties. He was appointed Maine’s Legislative Commissioner to the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission during the 126th Legislature. He is a self-employed carpenter living on Little Deer Isle with his wife. He has two children who are both students at the University of Maine.

Robert Alley Sr. (D-Beals)
497-5562; Robert.alley@legislature.maine.gov
Rep. Robert Alley is in his first term and will serve on the Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Committee in addition to Marine Resources. He is a lifelong fisherman and a veteran of the U.S. Navy having served in Vietnam. He also worked as a teacher and was the principal at Jonesport Elementary School from 2007 to 2011. He served on the Zone A lobster council, ASMFC’s Lobster Conservation Management Team (LCMT), and Chair of the Beals’ shellfish conservation committee and Moosabec Reach Lobster Boat Race. He holds a U.S. Coast Guard master captain’s license for vessels up to 100 tons. He is a graduate of the University of Maine at Machias and holds degrees in administration from the University of Maine and Thomas College. He lives in Beals with his wife, has three grown children, five grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

Kevin Battle (R-South Portland)
831-9692; Kevin.battle@legislature.maine.gov
Rep. Battle is in his first term in the Maine House of Representatives. He has had an extensive career in both the military and law enforcement, serving more than 22 years in the United States Coast Guard and another 27 years as an officer with the South Portland Police Department. He currently serves as the Deputy Harbor Master at the Port of Portland. He lives in South Portland with his wife and has two sons.

Lydia Blame (D-York)
363-9234; Lydia.blame@legislature.maine.gov
Rep. Blame is in her first term in the Maine House of Representatives. She studied geography at Boston University, traveled around the world, worked in the environmental field with scientists and engineers throughout the Northeast and is executive director of the Sea coast Democrats. She lives in Cape Nedick with her husband, daughter, dog and two cats.

Michael Devin (D-Newcastle)
975-1132; Michael.devin@legislature.maine.gov
Rep. Devin is serving his second term in the Maine House of Representatives and is a returning member of the Marine Resources Committee. He was House Chair of the commission to study the effects of coastal and ocean acidification. He is a marine biologist focused on aquaculture working as a hatchery manager at the University of Maine’s Darling Marine Center. He formerly served on the Sea Urchin Zone Council and was chairman of the Aquaculture and Marine Technical Board at the Maine Technology Institute. He is a retired commander from the U.S. Naval Reserves. Devin is co-chair of the Legislature’s Veterans Caucus. He lives in Newcastle.

Stephanie Hawke (R-Boothbay Harbor)
380-6863; Stephanie.hawke@legislature.maine.gov
Rep. Hawke enters her first term in the Maine House of Representatives. She owns Hawke Motors with her husband and works seasonally at a local restaurant. She serves on the Boothbay-Boothbay Harbor school committee and is active in several local non-profit organizations, including the local clothing closet which provides clothing to folks in need.

Joyce McCreight (D-Harpswell)
449-3293; Jay.mccreight@legislature.maine.gov
Rep. McCreight is a first-term member of the Maine House of Representatives. She serves on the Judiciary Committee, in addition to Marine Resources. She worked for 30 years as a social worker and clinical counselor, primarily in Maine public schools. She volunteers with their local fire department, road association and with local elementary school children. She lives in Harpswell with her husband, and has two adult children and four grandchildren.

Jeffrey Pierce (R-Dresden)
737-9051; Jeff .pierce@legislature.maine.gov
Rep. Pierce enters his first term in the Maine House of Representatives. He has served as the Chairman of the Dresden Planning Board and is the founder of the Maine Alewife Harvesters of Maine and former director of the Maine Elver Fishermen’s Association. He works as a building contractor and currently lives in Dresden with his wife.

David Sawicki (D-Auburn)
753-6312; David.sawicki@legislature.maine.gov
Rep. Sawicki begins his first term in the Maine House of Representatives. He received his degree from Franklin and Marshall College in Pennsylvania. He lives in Auburn with his wife where they homeschool their four children.

William Tuel (R-East Machias)
271-8212; Wiltuel@legislature.maine.gov
Rep. Tuel enters his first term in the Maine House of Representatives. He graduated from the University of Maine at Machias with a degree in history and has spent the past 15 years serving as Communications Manager at the Sunrise County Economic Council. He’s also worked as a journalist for the Downeast Coastal Press. He lives in East Machias.

Craig Nale is the committee’s new legislative analyst. He can be reached at 287-1670; craig.nale@legislature.maine.gov.
JON CORNISH PROMOTED TO HEAD OF MARINE PATROL

By DMR Communications Office

Jon Cornish, a 30-year veteran of the Maine Marine Patrol, was officially promoted to Colonel during a change of command ceremony on Friday, January 9. Colonel Cornish took over from Joseph Fessenden who retired after a 40-year career in the Maine Marine Patrol, the last 20 as Colonel.

“Major Cornish brings the perfect combination of wisdom and practical experience to his new post,” said Commissioner of the Marine Resources, at the ceremony. “As he takes the helm today, I am confident that Major Cornish will provide the leadership necessary to take Maine Marine Patrol into the future.” The ceremony, held at the Maine Criminal Justice Academy, was attended by approximately 80 members of partner agencies, family members, Maine Marine Patrol personnel, and Governor Paul LePage.

Since July, 2014, Cornish had served as Major of the Maine Marine Patrol, taking that position after the retirement of 25-year Marine Patrol veteran Alan Talbot. Prior to that, Cornish had served 28 years in the Marine Patrol, the last nine as Lieutenant of Division I, which includes the Maine coast from Kittery to the St. George River. Colonel Cornish began his career in the Marine Patrol in 1985 as an Officer. In 2001 he was promoted to the rank of Sergeant, supervising six Marine Patrol Officers and one Boat Specialist. In 2004, Cornish became Lieutenant, taking responsibility for direction and supervision of 18 Officers and three Sergeants.

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zone’ [The "grey zone" is an area around Machias Seal Island, the ownership of which is disputed by the United States and Canada]. Should this area be approved as part of final measures, Maine scallop fishermen will be prohibited from fishing mobile bottom-tending gear in the ‘grey zone’ while Canadian fishermen would not, resulting in an inequitable outcome and failing to achieve any habitat protection.”

Keliher also expressed concern about scalloping grounds that have only recently come back into production. “Furthermore, the portion of the proposed closure west of Machias Seal Rock is an extremely productive and historically important scallop ground … The adverse socio-economic impact of the current Machias HMA proposal, or any changes to it, would be significant for Downeast Maine fishing communities.”

Commercial fisheries other than scallop harvesting would also be affected by certain of the alternative closures proposed in the amendment, among them Maine’s small but lucrative halibut fishery. “DMR opposes the expanded area encompassed by the Large Eastern Gulf of Maine HMA, and considers the NEFMC’s preferred alternative of overlaying a prohibition on all gear capable of harvesting groundfish to be a vast overreach of OHA2’s goals and objectives. Final measures including this preferred alternative would devastate the halibut fishery in this area, as well as existing groundfish, scallop and other mobile gear fisheries for a large number of Downeast coastal communities whose economies are largely or solely dependent on commercial fishing.”

The Maine Lobstermen’s Association (MLA) also weighed in on the proposed amendment. A primary issue for lobstermen, according to the Association’s formal comments to the NEFMC, is the meaning of “fishing gear capable of catching groundfish.” As noted in the MLA’s comments, “We recognize that the amendment as written does not exclude lobster gear, but it is unclear whether or not lobster fishing could fall under these restrictions in the future.”

For that reason, the MLA “strongly opposes the inclusion of Option 5 [complete restriction on use of gear capable of catching groundfish in any closed area] under any of the alternatives. In fact, the MLA urges the Council to consider explicitly allowing lobster gear to continue to be fished in habitat and spawning closed areas in the future. At a minimum, we need some assurance that lobster gear will not be re-categorized and excluded from any closure without adequate research, peer review and broad stakeholder input.”

The effect that new or expanded closures would have on the coast, particularly in the Downeast area, raised concerns among the MLA’s membership.

During the past twenty years, more coastal fishermen moved into the lobster fishery as other fisheries became more restricted. Today just a few fisheries, such as halibut and scallops, are available for established fishermen or new entrants to access. Closures instituted through the amendment could hamper those fisheries in the future. As the MLA stated in its letter, “the MLA is very leery of the size, scope and location of many of the new or reconfigured closures put forward in the amendment. Maintaining Maine’s existing fisheries is critical to the economic survival of our coastal communities, and maintaining opportunities for future emerging fisheries is critical. Maine is highly dependent upon the lobster fishery, for good or for ill. We must nurture what little diversity in the fisheries we have left along our coast. And we must not take away future opportunities for Maine fishermen to access fisheries as they emerge.”

The association echoed DMR’s opposition to closures, going so far as to state, “The MLA opposes all of the options proposed for eastern Maine (Machias, Large Eastern Maine and Small Eastern Maine habitat closures). As mentioned above, any threat of lobster trap gear being excluded from these areas is an unacceptable risk for Maine… The MLA also strongly opposes restricting the herring purse seine fishery from these eastern Maine areas.” In addition, the MLA opposed on the proposed western Gulf of Maine closure, stating “The MLA opposes any changes to the existing Western Gulf of Maine closures. This area has developed into an important lobster fishery for many Maine lobstermen. Removing or reconfiguring this area would lead to significant gear conflict and losing access to it would pose significant economic hardship to Maine lobstermen.”

“The impacts of the proposed habitat amendment reach far beyond the species it seeks to protect,” Patrice McCarron, executive director of the MLA noted. “We must speak out about the effect some of the proposed closures could have on lobstermen as well as on other Maine fishermen struggling to make a living from increasingly limited fisheries. I don’t think anyone truly understands how these proposals will impact access to our fisheries over time.”

Public comments will be analyzed by the NEFMC staff, summarized, and then reviewed by the Council’s Habitat Committee. The Habitat Committee will then make recommendations to the full NEFMC on final preferred alternatives, most likely at the Council’s April meeting. The Council will vote on those alternatives then send the document to the National Marine Fisheries Service for review (NMFS). NMFS will promulgate the final rules that will turn the amendment into law, perhaps as early as next year.

Since he retired, he has been building boat models, mostly a variety of carefully crafted lobster boat styles. But he has also built one sailboat representing a Banks boat.

“I’ll have made a hundred of them. I stopped counting after 70,” said Gilliam. “I have them in the garage, in the house, in my truck and everywhere.” He had planned to sell them, but he hasn’t tried to market them and says he’s only managed to sell a few. He doesn’t let the lack of sales slow him down, however. He’s still making his models. “I have to do something to keep busy,” he said with a smile.
"My great-grandparents bought the property from a Civil War veteran and settled here, going on to have four sons [Their eldest son, Edward, was Bayley Clough's grandfather]. My great-grandfather dug clams and caught lobsters and my great-grandmother cooked and sold the lobster through the window of the family house," Bayley Clough said. In fact, in the kitchen of the family home is where Ella Bayley created the first commercially-sold Maine lobster roll.

Bayley Clough explained how and why her great-grandmother created the lobster roll. "At the time that Ella Bayley was selling lobsters, no one wanted to buy the culls and so she picked out the meat from them to make sandwiches for her family. She started out making them on white bread, but Steve didn’t like the crust and she had to cut it off for him. That was too much work so she thought to use a hot dog roll and the rest is history."

Edward remained a part of the family business along with his four brothers and parents. He and his wife Bertha were well known in the retail area of the pound, waiting on generations of customers for over four decades. The family initially shipped lobsters to restaurants in wooden barrels on the train. Later Bayley’s Lobster Pound was one of the first companies to ship lobsters overnight. "My father [Bill Bayley] bought the business from my grandparents not long after I was born in the 1960s and he was there through a lot of changes in the lobster industry. He was one of the first shippers to Japan and Europe back in the 1980s and he expanded our physical operation significantly over the years, adding a modern tank room and processing areas," Bayley Clough said.

Bayley Clough grew up next door to the family business. She remembers spending most of her time there throughout her childhood. "My dad, grandparents, aunts and uncles and cousins all worked there at one time or another. I started helping pick lobster meat with my grandmother before I was allowed to use a knife," she said.

Over the many decades, Bayley’s Lobster Pound has seen and done just about everything when it comes to local seafood. They could not have done any of it if not for the constant support of countless local fishermen who they have relied on along the way. "We’ve processed hen clams, packed Maine shrimp, depurated steamers, processed lobster meat and lobster tails, picked crab meat, cut haddock and processed scallops. We have also sold over 30 million pounds of lobster. We still buy our products from local harvesters and sell directly to consumers, just as my great-grandparents did. This allows us to pay our lobstermen top dollar for their catch as well as serve our customers the freshest possible product," Bayley Clough explained.

Most recently, Bayley’s has expanded its retail operation to include a bar in their old bait shed on their dock overlooking the river. "Now tourists can come and see the lobster boats that caught their dinner while enjoying local oysters and steamers and local beer as well," Bayley Clough said. And Bayley’s is not done expanding their ever-growing seafood business just yet. The next addition to the business will likely be smoking seafood on the premises and perhaps a full-service seafood restaurant in the local area, which will increase the demand for catch from local lobstermen even more. "We just need to find the right site," Bayley Clough said. Stay tuned!

\[Image of lobster roll and ocean scene\]

Bayley’s continued from page 11

\[Image of people smoking seafood on the docks\]

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\[Image of people smoking seafood on the docks\]
By Melissa Waterman

In early January, the U.S. Court of International Trade in New York concluded that the U.S. government must adopt new rules under the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) to ensure seafood imported into this country meets U.S. standards for protecting whales and dolphins. The ruling will require foreign fisheries to meet the same marine mammal protection standards required of U.S. fishermen or be denied import privileges. The case was brought before the court by the Center for Biological Diversity, Turtle Island Restoration Network and the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC).

The NRDC published a report in January, 2014, called Net Loss: the Killing of Marine Mammals in Foreign Fisheries. The report noted that approximately 91% of the seafood eaten in this country is imported and that “nearly every foreign fish product sold in the United States enters the U.S. market in violation of federal law [the MMPA].” The MMPA requires that all seafood imported into the U.S. meet this country’s standards on bycatch. The Act calls for monitoring bycatch both by a government-managed observer program and by self-reporting from fishing vessels.

The report noted that species such as the endangered vaquita, the world’s smallest porpoise, is being driven to extinction by shrimp gillnets in Mexico’s Gulf of California. Under the MMPA, shrimp from this region should be barred from entering the U.S. because the fishery does not meet the more protective U.S. protection standards.

COURT CASE COULD AFFECT SEAFOOD IMPORTS

The MMPA specifically says that “The Secretary of the Treasury shall ban the importation of commercial fish or products from fish which have been caught with commercial fishing technology which results in the incidental kill or incidental serious injury of ocean mammals in excess of United States standards” and that the Secretary “shall insist on reasonable proof from the government of any nation from which fish or fish products will be exported to the United States of the effects on ocean mammals of the commercial fishing technology in use.” While individual companies have taken measures to ensure that their tuna or other seafood products are “dolphin safe,” this provision of the MMPA has not been uniformly applied to all U.S. seafood imports, argued the three organizations.

Under the January ruling, the federal government must make a final decision by August, 2016, about how to implement this requirement of the MMPA. The proposed rule is expected to be published in June 2015.

What effect the ruling might have on the Maine lobster industry is unclear. Imports of Canadian lobster into the United States remain high. According to the National Marine Fisheries Service “Fisheries of the United States 2013,” the U.S. imported more than 85 million pounds of American lobster from Canada in 2013. Could this ruling affect those imports? “The Maine Department of Marine Resources staff is aware of the settlement and will be watching this issue closely due to potential impacts to the supply chains for all fisheries, but particularly lobster, as well as possible impact to the bait supply,” DMR Commissioner Patrick Keliher commented.

DMR WINTER SHRIMP SAMPLING UNDERWAY

Four shrimp trawling vessels were selected by the Department of Marine Resources (DMR) to collect northern shrimp samples in the eastern Maine, mid-coast Maine, western Maine, and Massachusetts/New Hampshire border region beginning in late January. The purpose of the DMR project is to collect northern shrimp samples during the winter period when the shrimp are in inshore waters, to gather data on the timing of the egg hatch, and the size, gender, and developmental stage of the shrimp.

The shrimp vessels are allowed to fish once every two weeks, until the shrimp are no longer carrying eggs, for a total of five research trips in total. The boat captains can land and sell up to 1,800 pounds of northern shrimp per trip.

DMR also contracted with five shrimp trappers to collect shrimp samples beginning in February. The five trappers will collect samples from up to ten traps once every two weeks until March 20. The catch limit per vessel is 100 pounds and must be kept only for personal use.

Trawlers
Mark Carroll, Gloucester MA
Vincent Balzano, Portland.
Reggie House, South Bristol.
Lee Oxton, Vinalhaven
John Williams, Stonington.
Fred Backman, Winter Harbor

Trappers
Arnie Gamage, South Bristol
Bill Biffin, Tenants Harbor
Lee Oxton, Vinalhaven
John Williams, Stonington.
Fred Backman, Winter Harbor

From the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission:

The northern shrimp fishery was first closed in 1978 due to a stock collapse. Landings ranged from 5.1 to 9.7 million pounds during 1988-1994, and then rose dramatically to 20.1 million pounds in 1996. Landings declined to an average of 4.2 million pounds for 1999 to 2001, and dropped further in the 25-day 2002 season to 992,250 pounds. Landings then increased steadily, averaging 4.6 million pounds during the 2003 to 2006 seasons, then jumping to 10.8 million pounds in 2007 and 11 million pounds in 2008.

The proposed 180-day season for 2010 was cut short to 156 days with 13.5 million pounds landed. The 2011 season also closed early. In 2012, the season was further restricted. The Total Allowable Catch (TAC) was set at 4.9 million pounds. The season was closed on February 17, resulting in a 21-day trawler season and a 17-day trap season. In the 2013 season, only 49% of the total allowable catch was harvested (676,935 pounds of 1.39 million pounds).

In the Gulf of Maine, increasing water temperatures and a decline in phytoplankton abundance are factors which likely have and will continue to contribute to the poor recruitment in the stock.
AIR TRANSPORT OF NOVA SCOTIAN LOBSTER AN ISSUE

By Carla Allen

There’s a growing hunger for Atlantic lobster in Asia but fishermen and shippers from southwestern Nova Scotia face a monumental challenge – how to get it there.

Last fall, the Zhangzhidao Group, a Chinese seafood giant, purchased a lobster processing plant in Eastern Passage. Its subsidiary – Capital Seafoods International – will be exporting up to 10 million pounds of lobster in the near future. The new owners hired 50 new employees and are turning the plant from a seasonal to a year-round operation, spending between $1.5 and $2 million on upgrades.

John Crandall Nickerson is the Atlantic Canada manager of operations, sales and procurement for the Zhangzhidao Group. Marc Surette is the Atlantic Canada manager of logistics, administration and fisheries policies. They spoke to The Vanguard from their office in Lovitt Plaza on Main Street in Yarmouth [Nova Scotia]. Nickerson says the location of the Eastern Passage plant was a critical factor in the exporter’s decision to buy.

“Eastern Passage is logistically only 20 minutes from the airport,” he said. “They can haul lobsters out (from holding) and be there packed in three hours. Down here it’s going to take you at least four hours to get to the airport and then a few hours to get them out and packed so you’d be looking at seven hours versus three. That four hours might not mean much to some people but to a live product that has exhausted itself in 50 hours, it can make the difference between a five per cent mortality or 10-12.”

Having shipments arrive on time is especially important when the product is live, says Surette. “Bad weather can wreak havoc. The trucking route is a last resort,” he said.

When someone approaches him, trying to get him to commit several days ahead to putting 35,000 pounds of lobster on a truck, he’s not interested... unless someone wants to guarantee to take care of them once they’re on the truck. A full truckload of lobster is a quarter-of-a-million bucks. “If we can find any way to get the wheels off the ground in Halifax, or even Moncton (a minimal option), we’ll do that,” he said, referring to air freight.

Geoff Irvine, executive director of the Lobster Council of Canada, has concerns about the capabilities of Halifax Stanfield International Airport when it comes to shipping lobster. “It’s not a big enough airport,” he said. “They don’t have enough people and enough freight for the airlines to bring in consistent freighters. That’s why the shippers do a lot of trucking to Boston, Montreal and Toronto with the product to take advantage of those bigger airports.”

Under the new Canada-Korea Free Trade Agreement, current duties of up to 20 per cent on lobster products faced by Canadian exporters will be eliminated. Seoul, South Korea has a population of 10 million and fresh seafood is a favourite staple. “It’s a great opportunity with the new trade deal,” said Irvine. “It only stands to reason that we’ll send more lobster there.”

Korean Air began flying lobster to Seoul from Halifax November 30, 2014, with a flight each Sunday until December 28. Most flights carried 100 tons of product. The airline supplies seasonal freight service. “It’s only when the demand is high enough,” said Irvine. “We’re hoping they’ll stay, doing that. But it’s all a supply-and-demand business in air freight, just like it is in lobsters.”

Irene d’Entremont, a well-known francophone entrepreneur and community leader, is director on the Aerospace and Defense Industries of Nova Scotia board and has represented the Yarmouth International Airport in a volunteer capacity for many years. She says the airport commission is working on several opportunities but is not ready to divulge the subject(s). “We are looking at different projects and my talks are with the aerospace industry,” she said.

Irvine, meanwhile, says a lobster marketing initiative is planned for the future. Its implementation is dependent on industry funding and legislation pertaining to a two-cent industry levy.

According to the Canadian government’s foreign affairs, trade and development website, Atlantic Canada’s exports of lobster were worth $904.6 million and accounted for 95 per cent of all Canadian lobster exports in 2013. If Asian demand increases as expected and the problem of air transport from southwest Nova Scotia is solved, the local economy could benefit tremendously, says Marc Surette. “Stats from the Department of Fisheries for last season, at 90 per cent of the reporting in from LFA 34, was a landed value to the boats of $250 million,” he said. “That’s up over $100 million in the last 10 years. We’ve got to get them having a taste for it. And it’s working.”

Surette added that more education must be provided to potential consumers of Atlantic lobster. To do that, Zhangzhidao has hired Egg Studios in Halifax to film a documentary, with Chinese subtitles, about the lobster fishery. The company will be showing the film to its 6,000 employees (it operates eight seafood holding facilities worldwide, including two in China, and has 22 subsidiaries.) Plans are also being made to have a Chinese TV station air the film.

“We’re hoping this documentary in China will help explain the lobster fishery to 1.3 billion people that love their seafood. With the information over there we can increase demand. But we can’t benefit until we can increase the volume that we can ship, and not just for our company, for every company,” said Surette.

Zhangzhidao plans on spending up to $5 million more on another holding facility, likely in southwestern Nova Scotia. “It’s still a possibility if we are to buy a piece of land,” said Nickerson. “My preference would be Yarmouth Bar area but it might be a facility already in operation with a $1-$2 million expansion added to the existing infrastructure. Nickerson says the community has to reach out to Zhangzhidao executives about the Yarmouth airport. “People are waiting for others to knock on our door. We have to start knocking on doors ourselves.”
FIFTEEN TONS OF OLD ROPE PURCHASED IN JANUARY

Recent rope buybacks in Jonesboro, Hancock, Rockland, Harpswell and Cape Elizabeth, Maine, removed over 28,000 pounds of old, used and retired lobster fishing line from the waste stream and secured its future as part of a massive rope sculpture by New York artist Orly Genger. Additional line collected from fishing line from the waste stream and secured its future as part of a massive rope sculpture by New York artist Orly Genger. Additional line collected from twenty-two lobstermen participated in this round of the rope buybacks, and were paid fifty cents per pound ($0.50/lb) for rope which met the artist’s criteria. These regional buybacks are part of a two-year-long series of collections to procure 3 million feet or approximately 180,000 pounds of rope for Genger, who will transform it into a monumental outdoor public sculpture to be permanently installed in South Korea in 2016. Since 2009, site-specific works by Genger have been created from hundreds of thousands of pounds of retired rope from the Maine, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island inshore and offshore lobster and crab fisheries. To complete the South Korean project, another 80,000 pounds of rope will be needed before September 2015. Additional rope buyback dates and locations will be announced in the spring of 2015.

NOAA SURVEY SHIP RETURNS

The Gulf of Maine is the first area to be surveyed by NOAA ships in 2015, with a hydrographic project scheduled for about 142 square nautical miles in January and February. NOAA ship Ferdinand R. Hassler will conduct the survey from January 5 to February 13, subject to weather and operational conditions, to acquire data for nautical chart updates. The Hassler will survey areas from Fletcher Neck to Moody Beach, and from Taylor Reef to Woody Island, which are heavily trafficked by commercial fishermen and are priority areas for NOAA chart updates. After the Hassler acquires the soundings and other observations with her multibeam echosounder and sidescan sonar, the data goes to NOAA’s Office of Coast Survey hydrographic processing team in Norfolk, and then to cartographers who will update charts by this summer. You can track the ship’s route on the Marine Traffic Web site http://www.marine-traffic.com/ais/details/ships/shipid:457316/mmsi:369970091/imo:9478559/vessel:FERDINAND_R_HASSLER

RENOVED LOBSTER RESTAURANT, BUSINESS UP FOR SALE

Cook’s Lobster House is on the market. The Bailey Island waterfront restaurant is listed for sale at $1.79 million. Current owner Curt Parent promises to open the restaurant in the 1970s and then later bought the business.

2014 CATCH, VALUE UP ON PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

A big jump in fall catches helped push P.E.I.’s 2014 lobster numbers past 2013 totals. While spring landings dropped slightly, fall landings were up 16.3 percent. That spike in fall landings pushed overall P.E.I. landings in 2014 up 1.2 percent over 2013.

The increase in landed value was even more significant. Spring fishermen in 2014 received, on average, about 75 cents more per pound for their catch than they did the previous year, and fall fishermen saw their average price increase by 86 cents. The fall fishery landings jumped nearly three-quarters of a million pounds to 5,554,881 pounds and that, coupled with the price increase, saw the value of the fall catch increase more than 51 per cent to $20,711,185 in the season that closed in October, 2014. The value of the Island’s total catch of 29,116,206 pounds was $114,751,870, an increase of more than $23 million.

N.S. PENNY-A-POUND PROPOSAL GOES TO THE PUBLIC

The Nova Scotia Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture will hold a series of 16 meetings with lobstermen and seafood processors throughout February to discuss creation of a “penny a pound” levy on lobster to pay for increased marketing and promotion of Canadian lobster. Both processors and lobstermen would each pay one penny for each pound of lobster landed. The meetings will allow both sectors of the fishery to share views on the proposed fee, talk about what the money could be used for, and how the fund could be collected and administered.

TWO WIN ROCKLAND LOBSTER TRAP TREE RAFFLE

Two lobstermen were winners in Rockland’s annual Lobster Trap Raffle sponsored by Rockland Main Street, Inc. The traps are used to construct the Lobster Trap Christmas Tree that is on display from Thanksgiving through the first week of January at Mildred Merrill Park overlooking Rockland Harbor.

Donald Jib’ McMahan, Jr. of Owls Head, and Billy Bob Faulkingham of Winter Harbor each won 50 of the traps when their tickets were drawn by Rockland Mayor Frank Isganitis on January 5. The traps were manufactured by Brooks Trap Mill in Thomaston. The winning tickets were both purchased at Brooks, which was one of the sales outlets for the raffle tickets.

In addition to Brooks Trap Mill, Camden National Bank branches in Rockland, Thomaston, Vinalhaven and Waldoboro, and Hamilton Marine in Rockland, also served as sales outlets for the raffle.

Of the maximum number of 300 available tickets, 269 tickets were sold. The proceeds of the raffle, after expenses, go to Rockland Main Street, Inc., a non-profit, advocacy organization whose efforts are centered on economic development and historic preservation.
Events Calendar

February 3-5
ASMFC winter meeting, Alexandria, VA.

February 3
Lobster Zone Council D meeting, 6 p.m. at the Rockland Ferry Terminal.

February 4
Lobster Zone Council C, 6 p.m. at the Deer Isle-Stonington High School Cafeteria (ITV).
MLA directors’ meeting, 12 noon, Darby’s restaurant, Belfast. FMI: 967-4555.

February 5
Lobster Zone Council A, 5 p.m. at the Washington Academy Library, East Machias.

February 9
Lobster Zone Council F, 6 p.m. at the Yarmouth Town Hall Community Room.

February 10
MLA Health insurance enrollment assistance, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Rockland Public Library. For an appointment, call 967-4555.

February 11
DMR Public Hearing on Rulemaking for Lobster Trawl Limits and Island Limited Entry for Frenchboro, 6 p.m., Ellsworth City Hall Auditorium.

February 12
Lobster Zone Council A, 5 p.m. at the Washington Academy Library, East Machias.

February 15
DEADLINE FOR ENROLLING IN ACA HEALTH INSURANCE PLAN.

February 17
Lobster Zone Council B, 6 p.m. at the Mount Desert Island High School Library, Bar Harbor.

February 20
Deadline for comments to DMR on rulemaking for Lobster Trap Tag Attachment.

February 23
Deadline for comments to DMR on rulemaking for Lobster Trawl Limits and Island Limited Entry for Frenchboro.

March 5-7
Maine Fishermen’s Forum, Samoset Resort, Rockport.

March 6
MLA Annual Meeting, 9 a.m., Samoset Resort, Rockport.

March 15-17
Seafood Expo North America, Boston, MA.

March 20-21

Fishermen’s Forum continued from page 1

which the public and the fishing community can learn about the key marine resource issues facing the region and where conservationists, government officials, scientists, and fishermen can talk in a casual environment. Over the years there certainly have been battles among all these sectors, some taking place in the seminar rooms, others in the crowded hallways and the Samoset’s bar. Yet despite controversy and dramatic changes in the fishing world, fishermen and their families continue to mark these three days in March on their calendars and make the trek to Rockport each year.

This year the Forum starts on Thursday, March 5, with a full day of discussion about Maine’s shellfish industry. On Friday, March 6, the Maine Lobstermen’s Association holds its annual meeting at 9 a.m. The status of groundfish management in New England is the subject of a morning seminar on Friday, followed by a presentation by the Maine Lobster Marketing Collaborative on new ways to market Maine’s signature seafood. There will be a seminar on Atlantic herring management and quotas, another on new bait regulations, and a discussion of dredging projects and the permit review process in Maine. In the afternoon officials from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration will take part in a panel discussion and answer questions from the audience.

On Saturday, there will be a seminar about Maine’s eel fishery, another on the state’s seaweed industry, and an afternoon seminar about Maine’s rebounding scallop fishery. The Alewife Harvesters Association will hold its annual meeting as will the Maine Lobster Boat Racing Association.

Part of the draw of the Forum is its social events. Thursday night is the opening seafood reception, at which attendees sample the finest in Maine seafood, all donated by seafood businesses. On Saturday night is the annual auction. The proceeds of the auction go to the Fishermen’s Forum scholarship fund, which provides $1,000 scholarships for secondary education to the children of fishermen and those involved in Maine’s seafood industry. “We are hoping to give away a record number of scholarships this year to commemorate forty years,” Chilloa Young, Forum organizer, said. The closing banquet and dance will be held on Saturday night.

“Dave Carraro [from the TV show Wicked Tuna] will be at the Forum all day on Saturday,” Young said. “And the Trade Show should be amazing. It is the largest one we have ever had.”
The Maine Maritime Museum, an independent, nonprofit institution founded in 1962 in Bath, promotes understanding and appreciation of Maine's maritime heritage through gallery exhibits, an historic shipyard, educational programs, a research Library, and narrated excursions along area waterways. For many years one of its signature exhibits has been “Lobstering and the Maine Coast,” featuring lobster boats, gear and artifacts from decades past.

For several years the Museum has been involved in revamping and expanding the exhibit, which will open this summer, to reflect the current state of the industry in Maine. And it wants Maine’s lobstermen to be part of that process. Here’s how it works:

Send the Museum a new or freshly painted buoy with your colors (and any story behind it); this will become part of the exhibit.

Send the Museum a picture of yourself and/or your boat along with your name, your port, or where you fish, and how long you’ve been at it, and the story of your boat’s name.

There are no hard and fast rules. If you want to try this as a short cell-phone video while you’re working, we’d love to use it. If you have family to include, bring them in. If you have a good story you want to tell or something about lobstering that you want to get across to our 60,000 annual visitors, now is your chance. Our goal is to work up a series of mini-portraits that show the diversity of the hard-working folks in this fishery.

The deadline for buoys is March 7. Buoys can be left with your Maine Lobstermen’s Association representatives or dropped off at the museum: 243 Washington St. in Bath. Photos and videos can be easily uploaded at www.droppits.me/mainemaritime using the password “lobster.” Or, share them on our Facebook page (facebook.com/MaineMaritimeMuseum). Questions? Contact Curator of Exhibits Chris Hall (hall@maritimeme.org) or 443-1316 x326 for details.

The new “Lobstering and the Maine Coast” exhibit at the Maine Maritime Museum will open this summer. MMM photo.

Garbo Lobster

We put our name on it

Garbo depends on the hardwork and stewardship of Maine lobstermen.

Thank you!

127 Pound Rd • PO Box 334 • Hancock, Maine 04640
207-422-3217 • peted@garbolobster.com