



# LANDINGS

News & Views from Maine's Lobstering Community

September 2024 | Vol. 32, No.9

## LOBSTERMEN FRUSTRATED BY REPORTING SOFTWARE

By Melissa Waterman

The acronyms are enough to make your head spin. LEEDS. VESL. eVTR. The array of electronic reporting systems for federal and state lobstermen can give the average person a serious headache. For the lobstermen who must use these systems, however, the difficulties they encounter may make the difference between being able to fish or not.

Starting in January 2023, all Maine lobstermen began reporting their lobstering trips each month so that Maine could comply with Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) lobster management plan regulations. Prior to that date, only 10% of lobstermen, randomly selected each season, had to report.

Anticipating the reporting requirement, the Department of Marine Resources (DMR) contracted with software firm Bluefin Data LLC to design software — the VESL mobile reporting application, suitable for iOS and Android systems — specifically for Maine lobstermen. In addition, state-only lobstermen can report on a computer through the department's own LEEDS system, used to renew fishing licenses online.

As Maine lobstermen were navigating the state's reporting requirements, the Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office (GARFO) rolled out its federal electronic vessel trip reporting requirement and software applications in April this year. In addition to Maine's VESL program, lobstermen fishing in federal waters can use GARFO's Fish Online program, which only works on the Web via computer and is not Internet Explorer compatible, or its eTrips Online or eTrips Mobile programs for reporting.

"Prior to April 1, GARFO was not fully compliant with Addendum 26 (of ASMFC's lobster fishery management plan)," explained Rob Watts, head of DMR's Landings Program. "When they made the changes to become compliant, there wasn't enough support provided for the roll out. There was insufficient outreach to harvesters by GARFO, causing many of the harvesters to call DMR very confused with what was now required. To further complicate matters, what data DMR was being required to collect was still being modified after April 1, so our [software] developers had to scramble."

The state and federal vessel trip reporting requirements were intended to collect the same data from different segments of the lobster fleet required by the ASMFC lobster management plan. Where DMR set out to create a lobster spe-

cialized reporting system, it was not clear what data was being collected. The state and federal vessel trip reporting requirements were intended to collect the same data from different segments of the lobster fleet required by the ASMFC lobster management plan. Where DMR set out to create a lobster spe-

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Photo courtesy of the Lobster Institute.

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## ASMFC CONSIDERING SECOND DELAY FOR GAUGE INCREASE

By MLA staff

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) Lobster Board has initiated the process, Draft Addendum XXXI to Amendment 3 of the lobster fishery management, to consider postponing the gauge size increase for the U.S. lobster fishery until July 1, 2025. The gauge increase is currently scheduled to go into effect on January 1, 2025.

A meeting was held between U.S. and Canadian lobster fishery managers and industry members in June 2024 to discuss the management structures and stock assessments of the two countries. Based on this meeting, the Board determined that postponing implementation of Addendum XXVII's biological measures to July 1, 2025, would reduce negative impacts to the U.S. and Canadian lobster industries in 2025 and allow Canada more time to consider implementing complementary management measures.

"The Board's decision to initiate a new Addendum that will delay implementation of the first minimum gauge size increase in Addendum XXVII until July 1, 2025, provides



MLA photo.

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## COASTAL OUTLOOK *Thoughts from MLCA President Patrice McCarron*

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*Thank you!*

Where did the summer go? Here we are galloping into September and another busy fall. This month Maine lobstermen are steadily hauling their traps as the days grow shorter, confident that the fall season will be a productive one.

On a beautiful Sunday in August the second annual Music, Masts & Lobster Traps celebration took place at the Boothbay Railway Village Museum, where more than 500 people came to learn about the Maine lobster fishery and to hear the rocking sounds of The Mallett Brothers Band, Paddy Mills, and Muddy Ruckus. The legendary Dave Mallett surprised the crowd and performed as well. People attending the event, which raised funds for the Maine Lobster Community Alliance, enjoyed Mast Landing Brewery beers, food from a variety of local food trucks, and a multitude of educational exhibits related to lobstering. It was a perfect end to another fine Maine summer. Thanks to all who made the afternoon such a resounding success.

In other news, Maine lobstermen are wading through a thicket of electronic reporting applications in order to comply with the 100% reporting rule instituted last year as required by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's (ASMFC) lobster management plan. This spring NMFS's Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office (GARFO) required changes to Maine Department of Marine Resources' (DMR) reporting software called VESL which has led to major headaches for both lobstermen and the department, as we explore in this month's issue.

Maine lobstermen were heartened to learn that the ASMFC's Lobster Board has started the process to consider delaying implementation of changes to the gauge and vent size. The changes are required under Addendum 27 to the lobster management plan but have met with strong

resistance from lobstermen, dealers, and processors, who are concerned about supply of small lobsters from Canada being cut off. The board is considering a new implementation date of July 2025.

Maine's application for an offshore floating wind technology lease passed all regulatory hurdles, and on August 19, the Bureau of Offshore Energy Management (BOEM) issued the lease. The state intends to construct and operate up to 12 floating offshore wind turbines 28 nautical miles off southern Maine, capable of generating up to 144 megawatts of electricity. This is the first lease for floating wind turbines ever issued in the U.S.

Meeting the EPA standards for diesel engines has been a long process for lobstermen throughout New England. Tier III standards are required for newly built vessels or for installation of a new engine. The Maine Clean Marine Engine Program within Maine's Department of Environmental Protection has been instrumental in helping lobstermen meet the EPA standards. The program, funded through the federal Diesel Emissions Reduction Act, can cover as much as 40% of the cost of a new engine and installation for qualifying fishermen.

Portland artist Timothy Goldkin has always been interested in history, particularly that of the city he grew up in. In August Goldkin's latest work, an 8'x10' mural of an historic photograph of Portland's working waterfront, was unveiled on the side of Casco Variety off Commercial Street. "[The mural is] an attempt to help preserve our future by reminding us of the invaluable contributions of our seafaring forebearers and those still working on the water today," Goldkin said at the unveiling.

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

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*The Mallett Brothers Band. MLA photos.*

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*Dave Mallett, left, performed an acoustic set before the band took the stage. Above, colorful MLCA and MLA hats for sale.*



## HARPSWELL MAKES CLEAR RESIDENTS' RIGHT TO FISH

On July 11, the Harpswell board of selectmen unanimously approved a town policy that specifically details the right of town residents to fish. Harpswell has 385 fishing vessels which generate approximately \$68 million in annual revenue, according to Harpswell's draft comprehensive plan. Yet the town also has a large population of people unconnected to the fishing industry who have moved into the area recently, either as retirees, summer residents, or as a result of the COVID pandemic.

The new policy affirms town support for the state law protecting fishermen's activities. It also cites support for the legal doctrine known as "coming to the nuisance." The legal defense can be invoked when the "nuisance" activities were happening before the complainant moved to the area, or when the complainant should have known the activities were happening. We publish the full text of the town's policies here.

### Town of Harpswell Right to Fish Policies

Harpswell is a "working waterfront community." Commercial fishing, lobstering, shellfish harvesting and processing, boat building, repair and service, and similar marine-related activities are at the core of what Harpswell is and should remain. These Right-to-Fish Policies serve as a guide for the Town of Harpswell and the Harpswell community in protecting the working waterfront and commercial fishing from potential nuisance complaints by aiming to prevent contention in commercial fishing zones and other areas of the community, and limiting restrictions that have the potential to adversely impact commercial fishing and marine businesses.

### Educational Activities

It is a policy of the Town to ensure that there is adequate education and outreach to new residents about commercial fishing and marine industries that rely on the waterfront. New residents, especially those in the commercial fishing zones, should be given informational materials about living near the working waterfront. This proactive approach aims to reduce potential future conflicts and supports local businesses.

### Funding for Activities

It is a policy of the Town to create a funding mechanism to support initiatives focused on educating new residents about commercial fishing, enhancing the town's capacity to support marine resource industries, and expanding access to the waterfront for commercial fishing activity including shellfish harvesting in the intertidal zone.



Photo courtesy of the Portland Press Herald.

### Periodic Review of Ordinance Provisions Governing Commercial Fishing Uses

It is a policy of the Town to maintain commercial fishing as a permissible use including appropriately scaled commercial fishing related uses as a home occupation and accessory use across all zoning districts. To implement this policy, the Town should periodically review its land use ordinances to ensure that commercial fishing related uses are preserved and maintained throughout the Town, and that provisions are adopted which unequivocally allow the storage of commercial fishing equipment, such as lobster traps, rope, and other fishing gear, on private premises throughout Harpswell.

### Nuisances

State law provides that a private nuisance action may not be maintained against a person engaged in a commercial fishing activity or a commercial fishing operation so long as the activity or operation is undertaken in compliance with applicable licensing and permitting requirements and other applicable statutes, rules and ordinances (see 17 M.R.S.A. § 2807). It is the policy of the Town to support and recognize the application of this state law, as well as the legal doctrine of "coming to the nuisance" which may prevent actionable nuisance claims, in order to minimize the potential for conflict involving commercial fishing and to make residents aware of these provisions.

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# MAINE OFFSHORE WIND RESEARCH ARRAY LEASE COMPLETED

*BOEM Press release*

On August 19, the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) confirmed completion of Maine's floating offshore wind energy research lease. The lease area covers slightly less than 15,000 acres in federal waters located 28 nautical miles off southern Maine. The state intends to construct and operate up to 12 floating offshore wind turbines, the first in the country, capable of generating up to 144 megawatts of electricity.

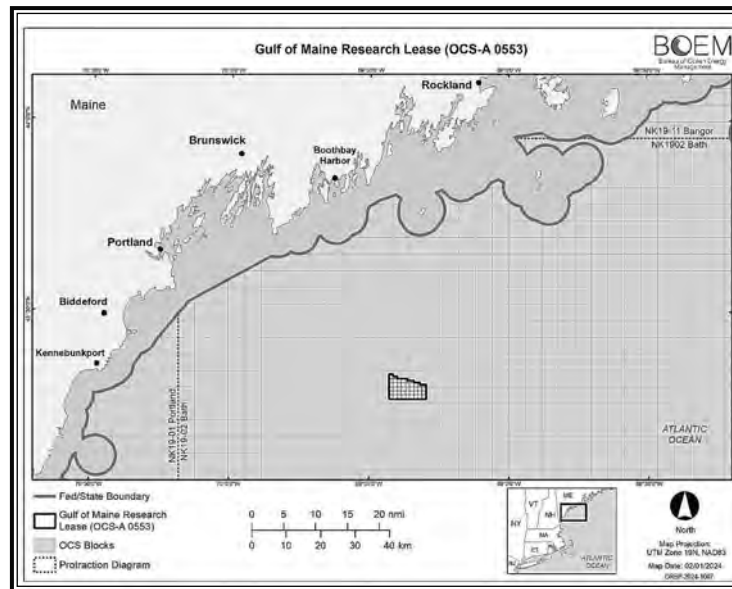
The research array will allow researchers to conduct studies to evaluate floating offshore wind as a renewable energy source. Research conducted on the array will evaluate its compatibility with existing ocean uses and assess its potential effects on the environment, supply chains, and job creation.

"Clean energy from offshore wind offers an historic opportunity for Maine to create good-

paying jobs, reduce our reliance on fossil fuels, and fight climate change by cutting greenhouse gas emissions," said Maine Governor Janet Mills. "This lease between the State and BOEM to support the nation's first research array devoted to floating offshore wind technology is the result of extensive engagement with stakeholders and communities across our state to establish Maine as a leader in responsible offshore wind, in balance with our state's marine economy and environment."

BOEM received the research array application from Maine in October 2021. In May 2024, BOEM offered the lease to the state after completing a Final Environmental Assessment and associated finding of no significant impacts.

Construction activity on the research array is not likely to occur for several years. Maine is first required to submit a Research Activities Plan to BOEM, which will undergo environmental review under the National Environmental Policy Act.



*Reporting continued from page 1*

cific app, VESL, GARFO simply added lobster to its long list of fisheries already reporting trip data into the federal system.

DMR Commissioner Patrick Keliher, who serves on the ASMFC, does not hide his displeasure with GARFO's recent changes to the VESL software. "Things were progressing nicely until we had to make these changes. People were comfortable and had trust in the VESL system," he said. "Now there are duplicate fields. Some ask for ring and mesh size, which is for groundfishing or scalloping. It's GARFO's 'one-size-fits-all' approach."

It has been a challenge for lobstermen. "Forget VESL," said a Downeast lobsterman who fishes in federal and state waters and wished to remain anonymous. "I use FishOnline." He has encountered frustrating problems using all the reporting programs. "It used to be last year that I would write down stuff and people would report it for you. Not anymore."

He also noted that reporting has proved to be an added burden for local buying stations. "You come in and they must enter the VTR number, which changes

every day. It's 14 digits long." The Vessel Trip Report (VTR) number is the lobsterman's permit number, the year, month, day and time. "I hear from other guys with federal permits, older guys, that they are thinking of just getting done even though having a federal permit with the boat makes the boat worth more. They are saying it just ain't worth it."

Keliher is aware of lobstermen's frustrations. "So much has been pushed on lobstermen in the last six years, this is just one more thing," he said.

He noted another problem that reflects GARFO's lack of understanding of a lobsterman's point of view. "With VESL now you get to the end of putting in your information and hit 'submit.' Then a new page shows up that says something like 'you are now entering the federal system'. Well, lobstermen say 'what's this? I don't want to go to the federal system' and leave," he said, losing all the data they have entered.

The problem there, said Watts, is that the VESL program is required to certify the individual reporting. If an individual is a lobsterman operating in federal waters using VESL, the VESL app directs them to GARFO's Fish Online page. Once the lobsterman gets there, GARFO issues the electronic token [specific to that individual] that goes back to VESL. "GARFO created a new log-in page for this that is different from the original Fish Online page but it doesn't update immediately, which has added to the confusion," he said.

Helping lobstermen, some of whom may not have smart phones, good Internet connections, or feel comfortable on computers at all, is a priority within DMR. Extensive, step-by-step materials on the DMR website explain how to set up accounts, how to troubleshoot problems, and who to speak to when hitting bumps. Landings program staff are available to talk through the process and help unsnarl some of the problems.







Keliher and DMR staff met with GARFO in late August to discuss the situation. "The Landings program staff have bent over backwards to help people and will continue to do so," Keliher emphasized. "I ask [lobstermen] for patience. We are there to help fix this. The more you use it, the easier it will be."

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## STATE PROGRAM HELPS LOBSTER BOATS HIT TIER III STANDARDS

By Paul Molyneux, National Fisherman. Reprinted with permission

State and Federal programs have helped hundreds of fishermen upgrade to Tier III engines. Lynne Cayting, Mobile Sources Section Chief at Maine's Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), has been helping fishermen and other vessel operators in Maine repower with more environmentally friendly engines since 2009. "Since the Maine Clean Marine Engine Program started, we've helped put new engines in hundreds of lobster boats," says Cayting, referring to the federally funded DERA (Diesel Emissions Reduction Act) program that enables the DEP to pay as much as 40 percent of the cost of a new engine and installation.

"Some years, we spend over a million dollars," she says. "That is DERA money and VW money." The VW money Cayting refers to comes from a settlement Volkswagen made with the U.S. after the German company was found to have falsified emissions data. "Each state received a certain amount of the settlement based on the number of registered Volkswagens," says Cayting. "And we use the VW money to leverage more DERA funding."

According to Cayting, fishermen are permitted to increase their engine horsepower by 20 percent, and they have to work through a boatyard. "There's no application you can access online," says Cayting. "The boat shops have the applications. If someone wishes to participate, they need a yard to certify that the engine has three years of remaining useful life. If an engine is beyond its useful life with high hours, it's not eligible—unless it's been rebuilt." Cayting notes that the amount of funding available for repowering projects depends on the emission reductions from the project, which factors in how much fuel the boat has been burning. "We ask for fuel receipts, the more fuel a fisherman has consumed, the more funding we can provide, up to 40 percent, and that includes the entire system, new fuel lines, and other materials related to the engine.

If a vessel's engine is worn out, or the fishermen aren't fishing hard and burning fuel, they likely won't qualify. "The government needs to get the most bang for its buck," says Cayting. We can't fund projects that really won't make a difference in overall emission reductions.

*...the program has put \$6.7 million into helping fishermen repower with clean engines.*

When it comes to engines, Cayting notes that the choices vary with the fishermen's needs and preferences. "Lately, we've seen a lot of Scania's and FPTs," she says. It used to be more Cummins and Cats on the bigger boats. Usually, the fishermen work it out with the yard."

Checking her numbers, Cayting reports that the program has put \$6.7 million into helping fishermen repower with clean engines. This program has numerous benefits, including a 45% reduction in NOx of 97.8 tons/year, and economic stimulus in rural communities by potentially creating and retaining jobs for engine distributors, dealers and boatyards, and fishermen and their co-ops. "We repowered some larger vessels, including the midwater trawler, the Providian, in 2012," Cayting says. "Out of 180 projects, the majority have been fishing vessels. Actually, we're starting to see repeats. A boat that was repowered to Tier II, which was the requirement in 2009, is now ready to go to Tier III."

Maine is not the only state with a program to get the dirtiest engines out of the fleet. California launched its state-funded Carl Moyer program in 1998 with the goal of bringing diesel engines on land and water up to standards that exceed those of the EPA. "The Moyer Program has funded 509 commercial fishing projects over the last 25 years. More than 150 commercial fishing projects have



Photo courtesy of Maine Coast News.

been funded in the last decade alone," says Lynda Lambert, Public Information Officer II at California Air Resources Board (CARB). "A project can be funded anywhere between 50 and 85 percent of the eligible costs. New zero-emission commercial fishing vessels and repowers of existing commercial fishing vessels can also receive funding through CARB's Clean Off-Road Voucher Incentive Project, CORE."

CARB's Commercial Harbor Craft regulation, which applies to various types of vessels, including commercial fishing vessels, is expected to result in an 89% reduction in diesel black particulate matter and a 52% reduction in NOx by 2035. In 2022, the state allocated \$60 million to help vessels comply. "To date, one zero-emission fishing vessel project was preliminarily selected for grant funding," says Lambert.

The program is helping engine suppliers out of state as well. According to Tim Sandeman, Vice President of Sales at Seattle's Cascade Engine Center, Cascade has shipped a number of John Deere and Scania engines to California for state-supported fishing vessel repower projects. "We're not directly involved," says Sandeman. "We sell through our dealers there. We sold quite a few in 2022 and 2023, not as many this year." Sandeman notes that the market is subdued on the West Coast, and manufacturers are focused on moving their established products. "Last year in Bristol Bay was bad," says Sandeman. "Good for fish, but bad for price, so there's not a lot of boat building going on."

According to Sandeman, the boats being built keep their engines below 800 horsepower. Lambert, in California, points out that the state programs don't allow for any horsepower increase. With the Tier IV regulatory relief extended and likely to continue, there is little call for Tier IV from the West Coast fishing industry.

"I haven't heard of looking at Tier IV for fishing vessels," Sandeman says, noting that MAN is currently the only manufacturer with an after-treatment system compact enough for consideration.

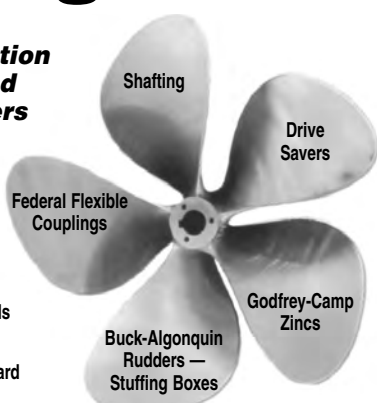
Emissions standards for fishing vessels are expected to become more stringent as states and the federal government strive to control dangerous pollutants. Fortunately, programs like those in Maine, California, and other states can help with the cost of an upgrade.

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## MAINE LOBSTERMEN'S ASSOCIATION UPDATE

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Richard Howland, Islesford, 460-3016  
Robert Ingalls, Bucks Harbor, 271-7199  
Jason Joyce, Swan's Island, 526-4109  
John McCarthy, Vinalhaven, 863-9984  
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## STEAMING AHEAD BY KRISTAN PORTER, MLA PRESIDENT

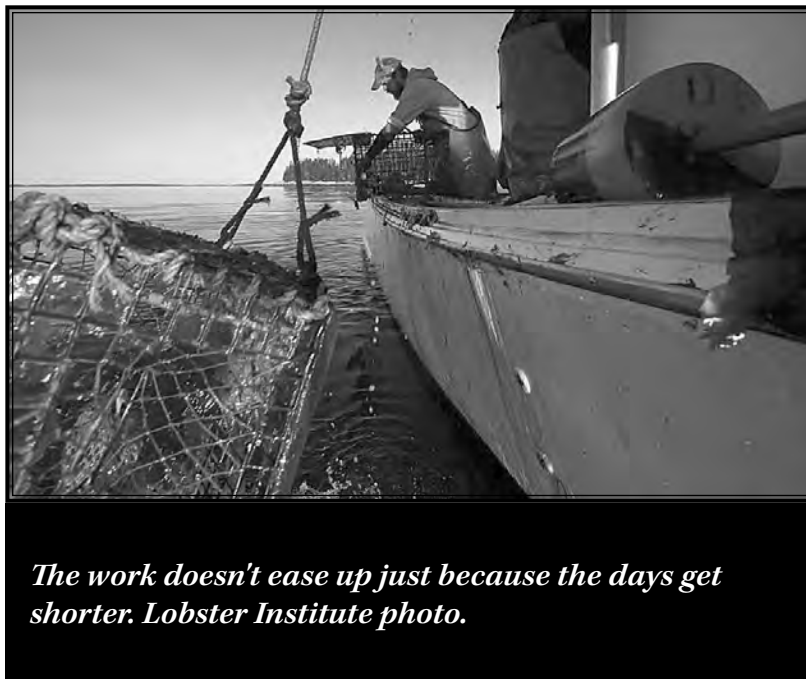
Learning the ins and outs of lobstering can take years to accomplish. I'm probably not unlike most fishermen who learned from a combination of my own trials and errors and the bits I have picked up from other fisherman along the way. Some guys, especially the older ones, are willing to help you out with general knowledge, like when the tide turns in a certain spot or the best way to rig up a ground line, but when it comes to the tricks of catching more lobster they are a little less helpful.

It's a complex social and economic situation we have going on in the world of lobstering. For a lot of us, it's what we were born into and it's how we measure ourselves. Going hard is, well, it's just what you do. Sure, we all want what is best for the fishery and for its future, but we also are in competition with our neighbors and friends for those lobsters on the bottom.

Of course, we all think we have that little secret that no one else knows, whether it be a certain bait or hot trap set up. And we are always wondering what is that other guy's secret that gave him such a good haul yesterday. Then there's the guy who gives you a bunch of BS to try to get the upper hand: "They looked horrible over there, don't even bother to haul 'em." It doesn't matter what harbor you fish from, every place has at least

one of these guys. Everything is fair game, you just need to be aware that it is a game.

The best part of being in this business is that we really do all look out for each other. We work on the water every day. The weather can make life miserable, the boat can break down, or, as has been too true in past years, someone can go overboard and be gone in an instant. Each town or area most likely has groups or families that don't get along, but when someone is in trouble, nobody leaves you hanging.



*The work doesn't ease up just because the days get shorter. Lobster Institute photo.*

It's a lot like the troubles the lobster fishery faces over and over. It could be whales, wind turbines, gauge change, or any of the multiple issues we all have to deal with. For the industry to rally behind the MLA, it was NMFS's looming whale regulations that would have destroyed our fishery that pulled us all together. Having a major catastrophe hanging over their heads really prompts people to put their differences aside.

When you get down to it, most lobstermen aim to work together to do what is best for the lobster community. We don't always agree on how best to get there, but we generally have the same goal. The MLA is there to lead us towards that goal. And don't worry, MLA will always tell it like it is. We will never try to feed you any BS.

#### MLA BOARD MEETING

The MLA Board did not meet in August. The next meeting will be September 4 at 5 p.m. at Darby's restaurant in Belfast.

#### ASMFC CONSIDERS DELAYING GAUGE INCREASE TO JULY 2025

At its August meeting, the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's (ASMFC) American Lobster Management Board initiated Draft Addendum XXXI (31) to Amendment 3 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for American Lobster to consider postponing the implementation of the LMA 1 gauge increase due to take effect on January 1, 2025.

In response to concerns raised by lobster industry groups, dealers, and processors, the Maine Department of Marine Resources (DMR) spearheaded a meeting in June between U.S. and Canadian lobster fishery managers and industry members to discuss impacts of a U.S.-only gauge increase on the two countries.

The ASMFC voted to consider a delay in the gauge increase to reduce negative impacts to the U.S. and Canada lobster industry and allow Canada more time to consider implementing complementary management measures.

The MLA's President Kristan Porter told reporters, "Delaying the gauge increase until July 2025 is a big win for lobstermen at a time when our industry continues to face enormous challenges. The MLA has been on record in opposition to a gauge increase since 2023, but we are satisfied, at least, that ASMFC is listening to the concerns of

the Maine lobster industry about the serious unintended consequences of a U.S.-only gauge increase."

The Lobster Board also approved Addendum XXX (30), which clarifies that foreign imports of lobster smaller than the new minimum gauge size will be prohibited. These size restrictions do not apply to lobsters travelling in-bond through the U.S.

#### NATIONAL ANTI-OFFSHORE WIND GROUP FORMED

A new national coalition aimed at fighting offshore wind projects from California to New England has been formed. The National Offshore-wind Opposition Alliance, NOOA, aims to bring a national profile to what is currently a fractured movement of dozens of local groups. According to its president and founder Mandy Davis, the group's acronym is intentionally a riff on that of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the U.S. agency that oversees federal ocean conservation policies and assists in permitting offshore wind facilities.

"Our mission is to protect the oceans, the Great Lakes, and nearby communities from the negative impacts of industrialization by offshore wind 'farms' and the nearshore and onshore infrastructure necessary to support and deliver electricity to the grid. We work to educate the public, mobilize affected communities, dialogue with government officials, engage the media, and strategically litigate to end the threat of offshore wind proliferation," the group stated. NOAA will be politically neutral and will not take donations from the fossil-fuel industry, Davis has said.





# MAINE LOBSTERMEN'S ASSOCIATION UPDATE

## MAINE RESEARCH ARRAY LEASE AWARD COMPLETED

On August 19, the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) announced that Maine has been awarded the nation's first floating offshore wind energy research lease. The lease area covers a little under 15,000 acres located 28 nautical miles off southern Maine where up to 12 floating offshore wind turbines could be deployed using floating platform technology designed by the University of Maine.



As a research lease, the State of Maine or its designated operator will propose and conduct research regarding environmental and engineering aspects of the proposed project. This information will be made public and used to inform future planning, permitting, and construction of commercial-scale floating offshore wind projects in the region.

The research array will use floating offshore wind platform technology designed by the University of Maine and deployed by the developer, Diamond Offshore Wind. Construction activity on the research array is not likely to occur for several years.

## UMAINE RECEIVES \$12.5 MILLION TO CONTINUE FLOATING TURBINE DEVELOPMENT

In July the University of Maine announced that it was awarded \$12.5 million through the U.S. Department of Energy's Advanced Research Projects Agency-Energy (ARPA-E) to advance the research and development of its VoltturnUS + floating offshore wind turbine technology. This funding, awarded under the ARPA-E ATLANTIS (Aerodynamic Turbines Lighter and Afloat with Nautical Technologies and Integrated Servo-control) program, will enable UMaine to continue work in the field of floating offshore wind turbines with goals of further reducing costs through innovation and accelerating industrialization. The ATLANTIS program aims to develop innovative floating turbines that are lighter and more efficient, using advanced design tools and real-world data.

## FEDS CONTINUE TO PUSH ROPELESS FISHING

NOAA Fisheries received \$9.7 million in Inflation Reduction Act funds for key partnerships with state, academic, non-profit, and science-based organizations to support North Atlantic right whale recovery efforts. The ASMFC will receive approximately \$6.9 million to support fishing industry partners testing innovative gears that reduce large whale entanglement risk.

Duke University's Marine Geospatial Ecology Lab, which developed the right whale density model used in NMFS's Decision Support Tool, and the Flammang Lab at New Jersey Institute of Technology will share \$2.8 million to improve right whale monitoring and modeling efforts.

## RIGHT WHALE UPDATES

As of August 23, there have been five reported right whale deaths for 2024. These include the right whale found off Martha's Vineyard in January with Maine lobster gear, two right whale calves found dead due to vessel strikes off Georgia in February and March, adult RW 1950 due to vessel strike found offshore of Virginia, and a partial carcass found off southwest Nova Scotia in May.

There have also been three serious injuries reported in 2024. There was a calf found off Virginia Beach injured by vessel strike, a calf in the Gulf of St. Lawrence injured from entanglement (reported disentangled), and RW 1271, injured by entanglement, sighted in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. NMFS treats these serious injuries as mortalities because they assume the whales will not survive.



There have been four additional entanglements reported including RW 4143 off Block Island, RI, in April, RW 4510 in the Gulf of St. Lawrence in May (reported gear free in June), unknown RW in June in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, and RW 3301 in August in the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

*Continued on page 8*

## RIGHT WHALE INJURY, ENTANGLEMENT UPDATE 8/28/24

Date	Right Whale	Location Found	Determination
<b>MORTALITIES (5)</b>			
January 2024	RW 5120	Martha's Vineyard, MA	U.S., Maine gear. Final findings pending.
February 2024	2023 Calf of #4340	Savannah, GA (offshore)	Probable vessel strike (blunt force trauma).
March 2024	2024 Calf of #1612	Cumberland Island, GA	Probable vessel strike (sharp force trauma).
March 2024	RW 1950	Virginia Beach, VA (offshore)	Probable vessel strike (blunt force trauma).
May 2024	Unknown	SW Nova Scotia, CAN	Partial carcass found, COD not determined.
<b>SERIOUS INJURIES (3)</b>			
March 2024	2024 Calf of #1950	Virginia Beach, VA	Vessel Strike.
June 2024	2023 Calf of #1812	Gulf of St Lawrence	Entanglement. Line in mouth, body & flippers. Disentangled July 11 retrieving 150' of multiple line types.
July 2024	Dropcloth #1271	Gulf of St Lawrence	Entanglement. Previously sighted in CN with lesser entanglement in 2019
<b>ENTANGLEMENT (4)</b>			
April 2024	RW 4143	Block Island, RI	2 types of line exiting each side of mouth. Gear free March 22 Cape Cod Bay and July 3 Georges Bank.
May 2024	RW 4510	Gulf of St Lawrence, CAN	Heavy line with 2 polyballs. Sighted gear free on 6/6/24 in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, with extensive injuries.
June 2024	Unknown	Anticosti Island, CAN	Large RW with blue line through mouth, trailing 20' aft of flukes.
August 2024	RW 3301 Neptune	Shediac Valley, Gulf of St. Lawrence, CAN	Rope exiting the mouth

Source: [www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/marine-life-distress/2017-2024-north-atlantic-right-whale-unusual-mortality-event](https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/marine-life-distress/2017-2024-north-atlantic-right-whale-unusual-mortality-event)





# MAINE LOBSTERMEN'S ASSOCIATION UPDATE

MLA Update continued from page 7

## BAIT UPDATE

### Menhaden Fishery

The Department of Marine Resources (DMR) closed Maine's state allocated menhaden fishery on August 25 due to estimates that the 23,642,650 pounds of quota had been landed. Non-commercial menhaden license holders were not impacted by this closure and may continue to harvest 1,050 pounds per harvester and per vessel each day, and recreational fishermen may take up to 25 fish per day for personal use.

DMR requested that ASMFC allow Maine's menhaden fleet to participate in the Episodic Event Set Aside (EESA) fishery program. If Maine is approved to participate in the EESA, it will likely begin on Monday, September 2. The EESA harvest would occur on Mondays and Thursdays, with a daily limit of 7,000 pounds. Same day reporting remains in effect for this fishery. Purse seines are an allowed gear under the episodic fishery. ASMFC has allocated 7,828 lb. overage for the Episodic Event Set-Aside (EESA).

Maine's overall state allocated menhaden quota was reduced as late as August 2024 due to the continued submission of late landings reports from the 2023 season. DMR sent a notice to Maine's menhaden license holders that those who are not reporting or submitting timely reports are impacting fellow fisherman. Those who did not fish must submit a "did not fish" report.

According to DMR, "Late reports received after we utilize our 2024 allocated quota will mean that any quota received via transfers will go towards addressing overages rather than allowing for additional fishing opportunity. Additionally, our quota can be reduced in future years as it was in 2024, if overages exceed our year-end quota."

### Herring Fishery

The Area 1A herring fishery has been open since June 30 with a catch limit (ACL) of 5,474 metric tons (mt), which includes the deduction for the 2022 overage and an 8% buffer for closing the fishery. ASMFC allows 73% of the quota to be landed through September 30, and the last 27% through December 31. Category A permits are allowed five consecutive landing days a week, from Sunday to Friday, and may harvest up to 32,000 lbs. (8 trucks) per vessel. These vessels may transfer herring at sea to another vessel but cannot transfer to a carrier vessel; carrier vessels may not receive at-sea transfers from harvester vessels.

Cumulative Landings Atlantic Herring			
As of August 22, 2024			
Area	Quota (mt)	Total Catch	% of Annual Catch Limit
1A	5,474	1,492	27%
1B	819	69	8%
2	5,449	51	1%
3	7,484	3,913	52%
Annual Catch Limit	19,141	5,525	29%

Source: NMFS Atlantic Herring Quota Monitoring

Small mesh bottom trawls vessels with Category C or Open Access D permits may land herring six consecutive days a week, from Sunday to Saturday. The fishery will be adjusted to zero landing days when the Season 1 quota is projected to be landed. The default herring spawning closures are August 28 for Eastern Maine, and September 23 for Western Maine and Mass/New Hampshire.

www.maine lobstermen.org

*Join the party!*  
6:00pm - 9:00pm  
**NOV 2nd 2024**  
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**The Maine Lobster Knowledge Trust**

**Who owns your fishing data?**

**No one knows the ocean better than fishermen.** But when it comes to debates over resource management, quotas, and other regulatory decisions the fishing industry's opinions are often dismissed as anecdotal.

That's because fishermen often don't have the data regulators demand to back up their observations. It's often locked up in plotters or held in government databases that are hard to access. If you cannot use your data, do you even own it?

**Arm your observations with the Fisheries Knowledge Trust**

The Fisheries Knowledge Trust is an industry-owned organization that collects and standardizes fishermen's data so it can be used to inform fishery regulations.

**Reclaim your data**

Work with the Trust to collect your reporting data from NMFS or export your data from plotters so you're prepared for the next challenge

**Speak as a fleet**

The Trust standardizes and stores your data independently so your fleet can quickly respond to fishery closures and other management decisions.

**Never lose control**

Too often research leaves the fishing industry out in the cold. Fishermen always have the final say over where and how their data is used.

**Join our project with Maine Lobstermen's Association**

The Trust is currently working with the Maine Lobstermen's Association and the Lobster Institute to crowdsource data from plotters (e.g. Time Zero) to help address urgent regulatory issues like management closures that threaten the lobster fishery.

Scan the QR code to learn more.

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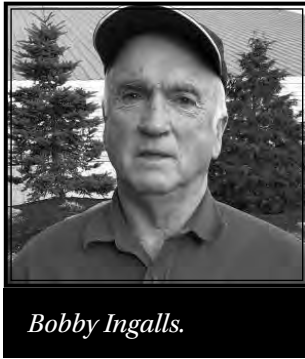


## MAINE LOBSTERMEN'S ASSOCIATION UPDATE

### MEET THE MLA BOARD MEMBERS

By Melissa Waterman

Bobby Ingalls, 76, has been making the long drive from Bucks Harbor to MLA board meetings for more than three decades, since 1986 according to Ingalls. When he began serving on the board, meetings were held alternately in Damariscotta and Ellsworth. Now MLA board meetings all take place in Belfast, a good two-hour drive when the weather is clear, a much longer trip during the winter months. "I ride with Kristan [Porter] or Sonny [Beal], we catch up on the ride. It goes quick when you are with someone. It's a long one if you are by yourself," Ingalls admits.



Bobby Ingalls.

Ingalls paid \$5 for his first lobster license in 1960, when he was twelve. "My only other job [than lobstering] was pumping gas for a few winters," Ingalls said. His father Arden had joined the MLA in 1955. After he died in 1963, Ingalls took over his father's boat, a 29-foot wooden boat built in Salmon River, Nova Scotia.



Bobby Ingalls with his father Arden in 1954.

When he started out in those days, everything was different. A lobster license basically meant you could fish wherever and whenever you wanted, provided you did not encroach on another lobsterman's territory. Of course, landings were low in the 1960s. "If you got 300 pounds on a day in the fall it was the highlight of the year," Ingalls recalled. "But you weren't as boxed in then."

Being a member of the MLA board allows Ingalls to keep up on all the issues facing the fishery. "I want to know what's coming down the road. Every month there seems to be something new." He also appreciates the importance of the organization and the dedication of the MLA board members. The MLA's success in fighting the

National Marine Fisheries Service's proposed right whale protection regulations was an historic milestone in the organization's history. "We came through pretty good," Ingalls said. "Others around here are worried about aquaculture but I tell them we almost lost the fishery. A lot of people don't realize how close it was. And it hasn't gone away."

Ingalls thinks the diversity of perspectives on the board is part of its strength. "We might not all agree with each other but we always leave the meeting as friends. Everyone has the fishery at heart," he said.

He marvels at how much lobstering has changed since he got his license in 1960, yet is encouraged to see that the desire to fish remains strong among younger people. "Now there's four generations of one family that I fish alongside of, how about that?" he said.

On Orr's Island, Herman Coombs, 48, is busy. This summer he's been out tuna fishing, managing his two pokey boats, lobstering and finishing refurbishing his daughter Jocelyn's lobster boat. In the spring he went scalloping out of Gloucester.

Coombs' family has been living on and fishing from Orr's Island for generations. "I started when I was about 11, fishing with my cousin who I called my uncle," he said. "I fished wooden traps then, it was all I could afford." As a young boy, he fished from his family's wharf for many years. "I stayed away from people," Coombs said. Eventually he started fishing from Mackerel Cove on the island, where he hung out with Teddy Bear, a local lobsterman who was also a member of the MLA. One day he signed up. And before long he found himself nominated for the MLA board.

"Elliott Thomas was getting off and they wanted someone from Zone F. I had gone through the Lobster Leadership Institute program and I wanted to know what was going on," Coombs recalled. "The other part that was enjoyable was traveling to the meetings with [MLA board members] Willis Spear and Craig Stewart. I heard lots of stories."

During Coombs' years on the board the MLA has faced a number of storms, including the federal right whale rules, wild swings in lobster prices, and the arrival of offshore wind development proposals in the Gulf of Maine. "I was there for a lot of this stuff so it wasn't a big surprise to me. Not fun, that's for sure, and it still isn't," Coombs said.

Like Ingalls, Coombs appreciates the camaraderie among the board members.

"It's a bunch of great guys from different areas of the coast. No matter how long the discussions are, how heated they get, when it's time to vote, even if it's not your opinion, we all stand by the vote because it's how the board voted," Coombs said.

He does miss the lobstering world he started out in when he was a youngster, however. "It was a lot simpler then. No tags, no zones. You just went fishing," Coombs said. "I still just want to be left alone. As long as I'm allowed to have traps with endlines, I will still be fishing."



Monique and Herman Coombs with children Riley, left, and Jocelyn, right. M. Waldrep photo.

### MLA BUSINESS MEMBER OF THE MONTH: ACADIAN SEAPLANTS MAINE

Jake Patryn grew up in Jonesboro, where he lobsters and also operates a kelp aquaculture farm. In addition, he manages Acadian Seaplants Maine, a branch of the international Canadian company Acadian Seaplants.

Patryn's occupations have always been linked to the ocean and, from his perspective, it simply makes sense to become an MLA business member. "We all have our own challenges and we should all be supporting each other," he said.

Acadian Seaplants Maine employs people to harvest wild rockweed throughout the Maine coast. The seaweed is processed in Canada for use in a variety of items, everything from animal feed and farm products to personal cosmetic items. Harvesting takes place primarily in the Hancock and Washington county areas.

Wild-harvested seaweed is a growing business in Maine. Department of Marine Resources landing figures show that pounds landed in the state annually have grown from slightly more than 15 million in 2019 to 19.8 million in 2023. According to Patryn, Acadian Seaplant Maine harvesters collect rockweed either by hand, using a specially designed



tool that cuts then rakes the seaweed, or via a mechanical harvester which uses a hydraulic cutter and pump system to gather the rockweed. The seaweed is cut above the state-mandated cutting height and less than 20% of harvesting area is removed annually, which allows beds to recover rapidly.

Patryn believes that organizations like the MLA and others involved in Maine's fishing economy are all facing their specific issues and need to communicate well in order to help each other out when necessary. "Everyone has their own particular battle yet all the fisheries have a lot of similarities. For one thing, everyone knows a lot about their own part of the coast. We are in a way experts," he said. "We all respect the ocean. Collectively we all benefit when we work together."

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## THE MAINE LOBSTERMEN'S ASSOCIATION HITS THE DOCKS

According to the Island Institute, there's about 3,500 miles of Maine coast. That coast includes hundreds of small harbors, many of them located at the end of lengthy peninsulas jutting into the Gulf of Maine. It takes a long time to visit these communities, particularly during the summer months when it seems visitors from the four corners of the earth are traveling the highways and local roads in search of Vacationland.

This summer Maine Lobstermen's Association Membership Director Sunshine Mechtenburg set out to check in with lobstermen throughout the state to let them know what the organization is up to. She stopped by the Tenants Harbor Fisherman's Co-op, North End Lobster Co-op, Vinalhaven Fishermen's Co-op, South Bristol Fisherman's Co-op, Interstate Lobster, as well as the Beals-Jonesport Co-op, Stonington Lobster Co-op, Friendship Co-op, Ash Cove Lobster, Henry Allen's Seafood, Glen's Lobsters, Angie's Lobster Wharf, Erica's on Basin Point, Simmons Lobster Wharf, and the Spruce Head Fishermen's Co-op. "I'm genuinely impressed by each of the wharves I've visited. Their operations run so smoothly, and they've been incredibly welcoming, allowing me to spend time there and talk with members and non-members alike," she said.

Sunshine found lobstermen in every harbor concerned about the season, the possibility of changes to the minimum legal size for lobsters, and the looming presence of offshore wind farms in the Gulf. She also found many lobstermen who were proud to say they were MLA members and had been for years. After all, the MLA has been looking out for Maine lobstermen for 70 years now.

Her travels aren't over yet. Look for Sunshine on the docks this fall wearing a brilliant MLA yellow T-shirt. You can't miss her!

*It's the start of another day in Stonington and this young lobsterman's hat tells the tale.*



*Sunshine at Henry Allen's Seafood in Harpswell.*



*Nothing beats a good day on the water for South Bristol Fisherman's Co-op members, other than something cold from this MLA decorated cooler.*





## THE MAINE LOBSTERMEN'S ASSOCIATION HITS THE DOCKS



*Small but mighty, the North End Lobster Co-op on Westport Island keeps the lobsters moving.*



*Living the dream on Vinalhaven!*



*No worries on a fine day in Friendship.*

*A busy day on the docks at Interstate Lobster in Harpswell.*





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## We can't predict the challenges to come. 2028 is right around the corner and we must be ready.

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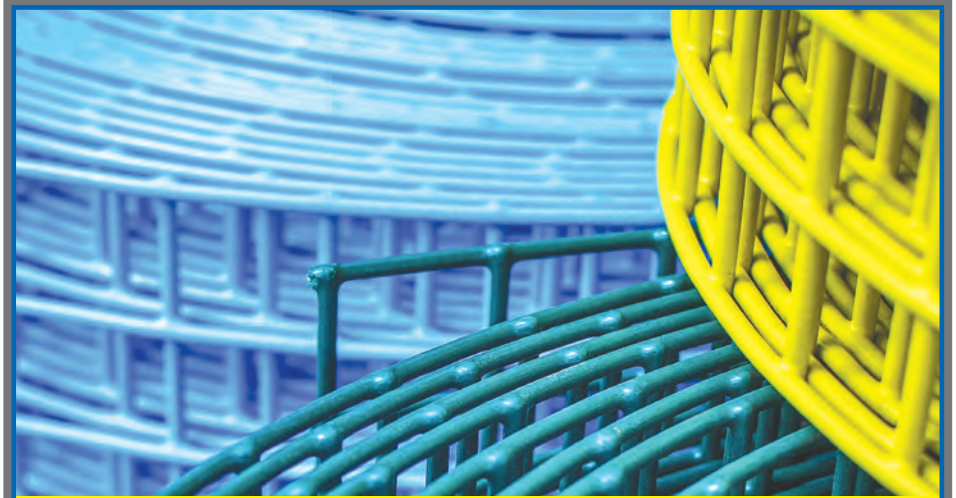
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## TO YOUR HEALTH: *Loss of hearing and dementia*

By Melissa Waterman

Everyone knows that a lobster boat can be a loud place to work. The diesel engine roars, the hoist squeals, everything aboard makes noise. You can't use earplugs to block the sound because you need to be aware of what's happening around you. Over time, the unrelenting noise of the boat can have a marked effect on your hearing.

Some hearing loss, particularly of higher sounds, is a natural result of growing older. Lobstermen, however, may suffer a significant loss of hearing far earlier than most people.

Hearing loss isn't just the annoyance of constantly saying "What?" during conversations. Recent research indicates that unaddressed hearing loss is one factor in the future development of dementia.

*... losing one's hearing definitely has a negative effect not only on your brain but on your quality of life*

We go to our yearly wellness check-up where our blood pressure and other markers of health are evaluated. We visit the optometrist to get our eyes checked regularly. We head to the dermatologist to get screened for skin cancer. But how often do you get your hearing checked?

Hearing impairment is the third most common chronic condition experienced by older adults, but only 20% have had a hearing test in the past five years, according to the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. More than half of those older than 18 report having hearing problems, but only 11% have sought treatment.

That's not good.

According to research published in The Lancet last December, hearing impairment is strongly associated with future dementia. The research indicated that that 8% of dementia cases could be prevented with professional hearing loss management. In addition, people with hearing loss who use hearing aids have a 19% lower risk of cognitive decline and a 17% lower risk of dementia com-

pared to people with untreated hearing loss.

Another recent study conducted by the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health found that study participants with moderate or severe hearing loss had a 61% higher rate of dementia than participants with normal hearing. Participants with mild to severe hearing loss who used hearing aids had a 32% lower prevalence of dementia over time.

Still unclear is how hearing loss affects the brain's thinking and memory functions. Some researchers suggest that as hearing loss continues, the brain is starved for input. Sections of the brain begin to decay from lack of use. A study released last year indicated that the particular areas of the brain affected by hearing loss are associated with attention and executive function in the frontal cortex.

Whatever the relationship, losing one's hearing definitely has a negative effect not only on your brain but on your quality of life.

Enter hearing aids.

Research shows that using hearing aids can positively affect brain health. But most people who need hearing aids don't get them, in part they think it shows they are old, or they are put off by the expense.

A federal law passed in 2019, however, requires most insurance companies to cover the costs of hearing aids, including Affordable Care Act policies. Up to \$3,000 of the cost of hearing aids is covered, and that coverage is available every 36 months (<https://www.maine.gov/pfr/insurance/frequently-asked-questions/hearing-aid-mandate>).

In 2022 the FDA approved the sale of over-the-counter hearing aids (<https://www.nidcd.nih.gov/health/over-counter-hearing-aids>). Now you can buy a hearing aid directly, without visiting an audiologist. These devices are intended to help adults over 18 with perceived mild to moderate hearing loss. If everyday speech or other sounds seem muffled, if you have a hard time hearing when you are in a group or noisy area, or you need to keep the TV turned up much louder than other people do, you probably have mild to moderate hearing loss.

So don't dilly-dally. If you have been working on a lobster boat for years, you likely have hearing loss. It doesn't have to go untreated. Make an appointment with an audiologist to learn what degree of loss you have experienced and don't hesitate to get a hearing aid. It will keep your brain healthier later in life.

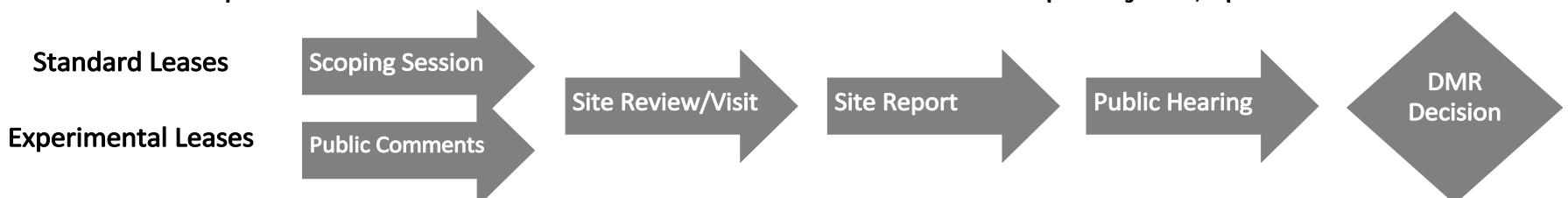
### DMR Aquaculture Lease Applications: New Activity (7/26/24 to 8/23/24)

Beals	Downeast Institute	Elmer's Pound, Black Duck Cove, Western Bay	1.14 acres	Shellfish	Standard	20 yrs	Scoping Session 8/27/24 5pm The Downeast Institute
	Downeast Institute	Elmer's Pound, Black Duck Cove, Western Bay	.84 acres	Shellfish	Standard	20 yrs	Scoping Session 8/27/24 5pm The Downeast Institute
	The Flying Place LLC	W/Beals-Great Wass Cswy, Flying Place Pound	5.57 acres	Shellfish	Standard	20 yrs	App rec'd 3/21/23; site visit completed
Boothbay Harbor	Yentsch, Carlton	W of Samoset Rd, Bottle Cove	1.12 acres	Shellfish	Standard	20 yrs	Public Hearing 1pm 9/24/24 DMR W Boothbay Harbor
Bremen	Genthner, Gary Jr.	E of Cow Island, Muscongus Bay	3.99 acres	Marine Algae	Experimental	3 yrs	App rec'd 9/14/23; site visit completed
	Harvey, Shannon	Southeast of Cow Isl, Muscongus Bay	4 acres	Marine Algae	Experimental	3 yrs	App rec'd 9/1/23; site visit completed
Chebeague Isl	Robinson, Gordon	E of Great Chebeague Isl, Casco Bay	4 acres	Marine Algae	Experimental	3 yrs	Apps 1&2 rec'd 10/3/23; site visit completed
Deer Isle	Salt of the Earth Seafarm	E of Barred Isle, Penobscot Bay	3.95 acres	Marine Algae	Experimental	3 yrs	App rec'd 6/15/23; site visit completed
Harpswell	Weeks, Benjamin	E/Dingley Isl, SE/Long Isl, New Meadows Rvr	4 acres	Marine Algae	Experimental	3 yrs	Apps 1&2 rec'd 5/23/23; site report published 7/30/24
Isleboro	Grindle, Kimberly	Turtle Head Dove, Penobscot Bay	4 acres	Marine Algae	Experimental	3 yrs	Lease Granted 8/12/24
Jonesport	Nautical Farms LLC	N of Roque Island, Shorey Cove	12.24 acres	Marine Algae	Standard	20 yrs	App rec'd 7/30/24; site review TBD
Lincolnville	Heal, Nicholas	East Ducktrap Harbor	3.99 acres	Marine Algae	Experimental	3 yrs	App 1 rec'd 6/29/23; site visit completed
Long Island	Great Ledge Cove Seafood	W of L'il Chebeague Isl, Casco Bay	4 acres	Marine Algae	Experimental	3 yrs	App rec'd 6/20/23; site visit completed
	Summit Point LLC	N of Cow Isl, Casco Bay	6.4 acres	Marine Algae	Standard	20 yrs	App rec'd 3/29/23; site report published 8/1/24
Newcastle	Norumbega Oyster Inc.	E of Upper Dodge Pt, Damariscotta Rvr	6 acres	Shellfish	Standard	20 yrs	Public Hearing 10/3/24 1pm Town of Damariscotta
Northport	Heal, Nicholas	East Ducktrap Harbor	3.99 acres	Marine Algae	Experimental	3 yrs	App 2 rec'd 6/29/23; site visit completed
South Bristol	Dewey's Shellfish LLC	NW of Peters Island, Damariscotta River	0.58 acres	Shellfish	Standard	20 yrs	Public Hearing 1pm 9/23/24 DMR W Boothbay Harbor
St. George	Miller, Keith	SE of Elwell Isl, Rackliff Bay, Penobscot Bay	11 acres	Marine Algae	Standard	20 yrs	App rec'd 8/2/23; site visit completed
	Tarbox, Brian	NW of Norton Isl, Wheeler Bay	3.99 acres	Marine Algae	Experimental	3 yrs	App rec'd 6/22/23; site visit completed
Yarmouth	Summit Point LLC	S of the Nubbin, Casco Bay	9.3 acres	Marine Algae	Standard	20 yrs	App rec'd 3/29/23; site report published 8/13/24

For an interactive source of pending lease applications, please see DMR's table of Pending Aquaculture Lease Applications, where you can find maps and documentation. Go to: [www.maine.gov/dmr/aquaculture/maine-aquaculture-leases-and-lpas/pending-lease-applications](http://www.maine.gov/dmr/aquaculture/maine-aquaculture-leases-and-lpas/pending-lease-applications)

### Understand the Process — You Can Make a Difference!

Standard Leases are renewable and available for terms up to 20 years, up to 100 acres;  
Experimental Leases are non-renewable and available for terms up to 3 years, up to 4 acres.



All Scoping Sessions, Public Comments Deadlines, and Public Hearings dates and locations are listed on the calendar at [www.maine lobstermen.org/events](http://www.maine lobstermen.org/events) and include links to corresponding DMR Notices.

## MAINE DMR SCOUTS THE GULF OF MAINE FOR RIGHT WHALES

By Nicole Ogrysko, *Maine Public*. Reprinted with permission

As the 100-foot-long whale watch vessel *Acadia Explorer* idles at the dock in Bar Harbor on this day in late July, passenger Sarah Leiter with the Maine Department of Marine Resources (DMR) opens her laptop. “This is the game plan for the next two days,” she said, pointing to a map of the Gulf of Maine marked with a series of red dots arranged in a grid-like pattern. They show the locations of 26 passive acoustic monitors listening for North Atlantic right whales about 30 feet underwater.

On this trip, Leiter’s team will swap out some of the units that need new batteries and will conduct visual surveillance for whales. They’ll travel at 10 knots along a predetermined path that zigs and zags in and offshore, stopping first at a point just southwest of Swan’s Island. “Then along the coastline off of MDI, past Mount Desert Rock over to site 6, and then we kind of create the same pattern following a U, until we get to the last visual waypoint, and then we end up back in Bar Harbor,” Leiter said.

Along the way, the crew scans the water almost constantly, looking for signs of marine life. So far this year they’ve seen humpback, fin and minke whales. But no right whales. “All data is equally useful data, so those zeros are just as important as finding a pile of right whales,” said Erin Summers, who leads the new marine mammal research division for DMR.

Trips like these in the Gulf of Maine were once more common. Every spring, North Atlantic right whales were once known to migrate northward from their calving grounds off the southeastern United States to feed in the Gulf of Maine. But that all started to change 15 years ago when the endangered whales were seen in the Gulf less frequently, and researchers shifted their focus to the areas where larger aggregations were known to be, in Cape Cod Bay and the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

The Gulf of Maine has lacked consistent survey effort since then. This summer, DMR is launching its own research program, an initiative that includes the acoustic monitoring, these boat surveys and now monthly flights over the Gulf of Maine to search for right whales. Eventually, researchers will also monitor and sample for copepods, a type of zooplankton, that serve as a critical food source for right whales.

The program received an initial \$17 million in federal funds from Congress back in 2022. The funds were included in a federal budget bill that also provided a regulatory pause for the lobster fishery, a last-minute measure that the Maine congressional delegation championed.

Summers said the data that are collected will be used to tell — what DMR officials and the fishing industry hope — will be a more accurate story of when the whales are moving and where they are in relation to Maine’s lobster fishery. That information, along with new harvesting data from lobstermen, will also play a role in developing models that the federal government will use in coming years to eventually write new regulations that are intended to reduce risks to right whales.

If lobstermen are forced to take steps to prevent entanglements with their fishing gear, Summers said they should have confidence that their efforts will actually make a difference in preserving the right whale population. “We want to foster that buy-in and have them have some confidence in the information that’s being used that affects their daily lives, their income, their culture, their economic efficiency, all of that,” she said.

Patrice McCarron, acting chief operating officer of the Maine Lobstermen’s Association, said the state’s research will fill an information void that has persisted since right whale survey efforts dwindled. “To have more information about how far offshore they are, what numbers of whales we may or may not be seeing, and how many are randomly coming through closer to shore,” she said. “Is it one, or five, or 10? Or is it zero?”

And though state researchers have yet to see a right whale firsthand during this new initiative, the network of passive acoustic monitors placed in the Gulf of Maine has picked up several right whale vocalizations during each time of the year. A right whale sighting here and there is to be expected, McCarron said. But she believes the data will ultimately show what fishermen already believe to be true. “I think it’s the hope of most Maine lobstermen that it’s going to document what their knowledge about the ocean and right whales tells them, that right whales are very rare.”

So rare, in fact, that many seasoned lobstermen say they’ve never seen one in Maine waters. Researchers say that claim is not surprising, as most lobster fishing boats are too close to the water to provide a view of the whales, which feed about four feet below the surface. It’s also often difficult to spot right whales in the ocean, even when you’re looking for them, said Orla O’Brien, who leads aerial surveys for the New England Aquarium. The aquarium has added new surveillance flights over the Gulf of Maine this summer and earlier this month O’Brien spotted a right whale named Butterfly nursing her calf about 15 miles southeast of Jonesport. ...

Having more eyes on the Gulf of Maine, however, will help. And O’Brien said the additional information coming from the state of Maine should help scientists



*Preparing to retrieve a passive acoustic monitor in the Gulf. DMR photo.*

better monitor the species and track their behavior through changing environmental conditions.

But the data gathered in the coming months will provide a more accurate picture of what’s really happening in the Gulf of Maine, Leiter said. “The research will tell us. We’re out here to figure this out, where they are and when,” she said. “And we know we’ve had occasional single animals visiting the Gulf of Maine at really odd times, and this will help us kind of suss some of that out and figure out what is going on. It’s the truth, and that’s what we’re interested in.”

DMR officials acknowledge their time is relatively limited. While Congress paused federal restrictions on the lobster fishery through 2028, the National Marine Fisheries Service has said it wants to restart discussions next fall about a new set of rules to protect right whales from entanglement.



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## ISAAC BEAL HAS A BOAT TO GET READY

By Jon Johansen, Maine Coast News. Reprinted with permission  
The article has been edited for length

One of the most noted race boats 20 to 25 years ago was the 28-footer *Christopher*, raced by Isaac Beal of Beals Island. She was built by Mariner (Lovey) Beal, Isaac's father, and was launched in 1976.

She made her first appearance in the 1990s, then in 1998 Isaac got serious. He raced her for seven years, dominating Gasoline Class C and the Wooden Boat Race. She was retired in 2005. After a few years lobstering she was placed out back with the hope of having some much-needed repairs done.

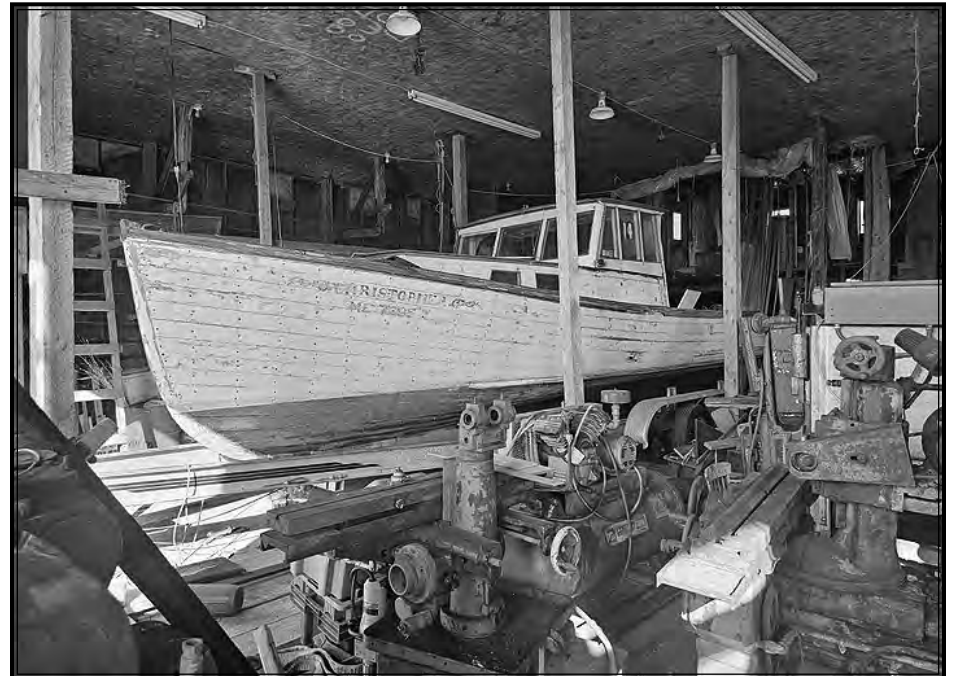
This April, Alonzo Alley, yard manager at Jonesport Shipyard, was helping Isaac's son Christopher, for whom the boat is named, move some moorings around his yard with a telehandler. Alonzo knew that Isaac would love to see his boat racing again. So he hooked on to her trailer and dragged her out. He took her to Jonesport Shipyard and placed her in Bert Frost's old shop. The repairs have begun.

"Chris always hung around with dad," said Isaac. "He was Gramp's boy. He would go out there and sit with dad, of course dad would sit down a lot because he had emphysema and heart trouble and they would talk. Chris asked him what he was going to name her? Well, you know what happened after that."

"Dad wanted a new boat and he was in his late 60s. I told him that I would help him because I had my other stuff to do, herring and seining. He would have a plank for each side ready and I would go in and help him get them put on. We got the deck laid and I made the houses all up on sawhorses and ready to put on. I always did the windshields and I did that for him. Finally, we got her ready. She had a used shaft and a used propeller. When she went in the water, I think she had a 130 hp Chevy. He was happy because she was a nice-looking boat and everybody wanted to buy it off of him. He used her four years and then he passed away."

Mariner had planned that when he passed away the boat would be sold to pay all his expenses. Mariner's wife, however, wanted Isaac to have the boat. He explained, "I had a Gower boat that was 20 years old. She was a nice boat, I used that for 10 years. Mother said, 'No, I want you to have the boat.' I said, 'Well, I will sell mine and I will pay all of the bills.' So, I got the boat. I fished her from '80 up until about '85 then I started mussel dragging with the herring boat I had."

Isaac raced *Christopher* a few times in the 1990s. Racing can be serious business and money can dictate success. "I lucked out," said Isaac. "I was doing the salmon business and I had a big scow with a boom on it. I got a call at 9 o'clock



Christopher in the shop at the Jonesport Shipyard. J. Johansen photo.

one night. I had a terrible headache so I went to bed early. I got that call and they wanted me to come down, a boat had grounded on a ledge down by Hall's Island and filled. I tried to work my way out of it because I felt miserable. [But] I went and got one of my workers, Oscar Norton, and we went down. I got the mast up on the deck and run a line down through it so I could get her upright. The Coast Guard put the pumps in her and the water would just keep slopping over the deck. I said, 'Well, she's got a hole in her somewhere.' When the tide was down the bottom of her was sitting right on the beach, no keel on her. She wouldn't sit upright so I had the boom right out and brought her up here to the Shipyard and they hauled her out. Then I had Chris dive down to get the keel. Then I called Sune [former owner of the Jonesport Shipyard] and said to him, 'I have got the keel, it is on the bow of my scow. When I get my check, they get the keel.' I charged them \$5,000 and I said, 'Now I am going racing.'"

Isaac took the wooden rudder off *Christopher* and bought a stainless steel one. He hauled back the engine as far as he could and then bought a lightweight reduction gear. He ran the 350 Chevy engine for a couple of races and then switched to a 455 Oldsmobile. He dominated the circuit for seven years and claimed he never had to run her hard. He said when he got near the crowd he would open her up as they loved the sound that came from her straight pipes.

The 502 is still in her, but Isaac says that it is stuck. That is not the biggest problem though. He explained, "I was going to repair her right there by my shop, but I never got to it. My wife got sick and I was tied to Beals Island for about eight years. I took care of her myself and then I got sick." There is a lot of work to do on the hauling side of the boat. She will need new sharprisers, frames and planks. He added, "I need to put ribs down back. The ribs were getting poor on the hauling side because she has a wet floor." So far he has been able to refasten her from the stem to the bulkhead. "I have got almost 685 screws in her," he said. The entire trunk cabin and house will be replaced too.

*Christopher* was the next-to-the-last boat Isaac and his father built together. The hope is to have *Christopher* ready for next year's racing season, but Isaac isn't sure. "I don't know what to say. I have got so many things wrong with me. I have got a plastic aorta valve. I have got a stint. I have got a pacemaker. I have got a metal and plastic leg and a brace on the other leg. And I have diabetes."

Isaac goes to the yard whenever he can and works several hours each day. He has help when he needs it from the Shipyard workers, who he is teaching the ins and outs of wooden boat repair.

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# MAINE LOBSTER DELEGATE SELECTION PROCESS HIGHLIGHTS DEDICATION TO FISHERY

*By Kevin Kelly, MLA Director of Advancement*

For many of us, change is hard. Sometimes, however, things can change and fundamentally stay the same. I experienced this firsthand at the 77th annual Maine Lobster Festival in Rockland this summer.

I was honored to represent the Maine Lobstermen's Association during the 2024 Lobster Delegate Competition. For 75 years this is the event was known as the Maine Lobster Festival Sea Goddess competition. After years of declining participation, organizers heard loud and clear from young people in the community that they were no longer interested in what, to some, looked like a beauty pageant. Instead, they wanted to return the event's focus on community service and advocacy for the lobster fishery, which is so important to the identity of midcoast Maine. This summer is the second year of the Maine Lobster Festival Delegate Competition.

On July 24, I joined State Representative Vickie Doudera, Shannon Landwehr, president/CEO of the Penobscot Bay Regional Chamber of Commerce, and Alexis Saba, senior manager of academic programs at the Farnsworth Museum, for a day-long session to meet this year's candidates. We shared lunch and conversation before we met individually with the seven young women vying for this year's title. During our chats, each candidate described their motivation for competing, spoke eloquently about the people who have inspired them in their young lives, and importantly, spoke about what Maine's lobster industry means to each of them. Some come from lobstering families or work on lobster boats themselves, some come from families whose small businesses support the industry, and others live in communities whose identities are rooted in this heritage industry. All expressed an deeply held desire to represent and promote this industry at events throughout New England in the year ahead.

Two days later, we joined the delegate candidates and their families at a banquet at the Samoset Resort where each woman made a presentation to the audience and answered additional questions from the judges. It was apparent is that while each was doing her best to "win" the title, in the end it wouldn't matter to them who prevailed. They had become friends, and they would be supportive of whomever was chosen. What was also apparent is that we, the judges, had our work cut out.

On July 31, the opening night of the 2024 Festival, we all gathered again on the main stage in Rockland's Harbor Park. The audience was filled with friends, neighbors, the contestants' families, and visitors from around the world. Each was there for the same reason that people have filled the audience for so many years — to see the joy on the winner's face and to show their appreciation for each candidate's willingness to speak publicly for an industry that means so much to the state.

In the end, the title of 2024 Lobster Festival Delegate was presented to Caitlyn Lamb of Cushing. Caitlyn recently graduated from Oceanside High School and plans to attend Maine Maritime Academy this fall to study Marine Engineering Operations. Caitlyn's family has a rich history in the area and personal connec-

tions to the lobster industry. She'll be an amazing voice for the lobster festival and the industry during the next year.

The competition itself may have changed since it began in 1947, but the spirit remains the same — to proudly represent and advocate for Maine's lobster industry. There is no question each of these intelligent and talented candidates will do just that — and Maine is better because of it.

We'd also like to thank everyone who turned out for the MLA's Summer Fundraising Dinner at the Quarry Tavern at the East Wind Inn in Tenants Harbor on August 15. Not only did attendees enjoy a delicious three-course meal, which of course included lobster, but they listened with interest as MLA's acting COO and policy director Patrice McCarron and board member Bob Baines discussed the challenges facing the industry and the MLA's continued efforts to address those issues. Special thanks to Brian and Danielle Turner and their team at the East Wind for hosting the event and for their hospitality.


Guests at the Samoset Resort were treated to a special art show to benefit the MLA during the week of August 16. Seven local Maine artists participated in the show, each pledging to donate at least half of any sale to the MLA. Participating artists include Amy Kelly, Jennifer Pope, Betty Heselton, Shelley Breton, Lynn Ericson, Cheryl Seavey, Kelly jo Shows. The MLA was also delighted to once again participate in the 47th annual Maine Wild Blueberry Festival in Machias on Saturday, August 17.



*Congratulations to 2024 Maine Lobster Festival Delegate Caitlyn Lamb. L-R: Jenna Vanryn, Hannah Hall, Jillian Barnard, Lamb, Chelsea Gaiero, Lyla Brooks, Natalee Hitz. MLF photo.*


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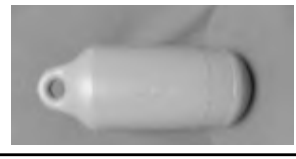
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# MLA MEMBER DISCOUNT DIRECTORY



*Many thanks to the businesses that not only support us but offer a discount to YOU, our members.*

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## Newspapers

### Commercial Fisheries News

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### New England Propeller Inc

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### Nautilus Marine Fabrication, Inc.

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## Museums & Entertainment

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Portland, ME – Special discounts to shows at the Cross Arena in Portland! Use promo code GFRIEND at checkout. Order by phone, online, or in person at the box office.

### Seacoast Tours of Freeport

Freeport, ME – 15% off tours for MLA members. Must show MLA card. 207-798-2001

### Maine Maritime Museum

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## Fishing, Marine & Industrial

### Hamilton Marine

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### North Atlantic Power Products

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### Trident Sustainable Plastic Solutions

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## Fuel & Electricity

### Midcoast Solar, LLC

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## Gifts

### Maine Camp Outfitters

Sunset, ME – 10% off all apparel and promotional product orders. 800-560-6090

### Maine Lobstermen's Association

Kennebunk, ME – 10% off all apparel 207-967-4555

## Hotels

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**Hampton Inn, Downtown/Waterfront** – (Portland, ME)

**Hampton Inn, Rockland/Thomaston** – (Rockland, ME)

**Residence Inn by Marriott** – (Scarborough, ME)

*Discount: Special rates for MLA members and Business Supporters. Please contact the MLA for booking information, or mention MLA when booking.*



**Show your MLA card to receive great discounts at these fine businesses!**

## In the NEWS

### ADDED TAX BENEFITS FOR WORKING WATERFRONT LANDOWNERS

A new Maine law that went into effect in August strengthens the working waterfront section of the current land use tax program, which provides tax relief for owners of land designated as working waterfront. Sponsored by Rep. Dan Ankeles of Brunswick, the law strengthens the tax program and adjusts certain recapture penalties, providing Mainers who use their own residence for their commercial fishing business a larger incentive to enroll. "While more still needs to be done, this increase in available tax relief and relaxation of the penalties in the working waterfront current use program is an important and necessary change," said Ankeles in a press statement.

### VINEYARD WIND PICKS UP THE PIECES, STARTS WORK AGAIN

On August 13 Vineyard Wind was allowed to restart some construction work installing turbine towers and nacelles. In July a blade snapped on a wind turbine, sending foam and debris into the ocean, some of which is still washing up around Buzzards Bay and Cape Cod. The Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE) suspended all operations and construction activities shortly after the accident. It issued an "updated suspension order" on August 13 to allow some work to resume. However, the revised order still prohibits blade installation or power production at the 24 turbines installed so far on the planned 62-turbine, 806-megawatt rated array.



### MORE FEDERAL MONEY TO PROTECT RIGHT WHALES

In mid-August the Biden Administration committed nearly more than \$9 million in funding for partnerships aimed at conserving North Atlantic right whales. Nearly \$7 million of the money will go to the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, which will use it to test ropeless fishing gear in partner-

ship with the fishermen. Slightly less than \$3 million will be split between Duke University's Marine Geospatial Ecology Lab, Marine Ecology and Telemetry Research, and the Flammang Lab at the New Jersey Institute of Technology to build a nearly real-time modeling system to predict the East Coast distribution of right whales.

### ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS SUE OVER SEAFOOD IMPORTS

The Center for Biological Diversity, the Natural Resources Defense Council, and the Animal Welfare Institute filed a lawsuit in the U.S. Court of International Trade against the federal government, alleging that regulators are not doing enough to protect marine mammals in foreign fisheries. The suit claims that the U.S. federal government has failed to enforce the import provisions of the Marine Mammal Protection Act, which require foreign fisheries to implement the same protections as U.S. fisheries before exporting products to the U.S. The conservation groups are asking the court to ban seafood imports from fisheries that allow too many marine mammals to be killed, as required under U.S. law.

### A NEW COMMERCIAL PIER COMING IN BOOTHBAY HARBOR

Boothbay Harbor is getting a new commercial fishing pier. The Boothbay Region Maritime Foundation signed a contract with Fuller Marine to build the dock and seawall at Carter's Wharf, the former site of the Sea Pier. Only licensed commercial fishermen and buyers will be considered for the wharf's use.



The \$2.1 million project was funded with a state grant, the Mildred McEvoy Foundation, and other anonymous grants and donations. Additional donations are being sought for the final phase of the project, which will include the construction of a 28-foot by 64-foot buying station, fuel station, and marina.

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**Commercial Fisheries News**  
[fish-news.com/cfn](http://fish-news.com/cfn)

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# Events Calendar

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

**August 26-September 23**

NOAA Gulf of Maine Hydrographic Survey. FMI: <https://nauticalcharts.noaa.gov/updates/noaas-2024-hydrographic-survey-season-is-underway>.

**September 4**

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

**September 19**

Shellfish Advisory Council meeting, 11 a.m.-2 p.m., DMR office, Augusta.

**September 23**

Aquaculture public hearing, Dewey's Shellfish, 1 p.m., DMR office, West Boothbay Harbor.

**September 24**

Aquaculture public hearing, Carlton Yentsch, 1 p.m., DMR office, West Boothbay Harbor.

**September 24-26**

New England Fishery Management Council meeting, Gloucester, MA.

**October 21-22**

Ropeless Consortium Meeting, Providence, RI. [www.ropeless.org](http://www.ropeless.org).

**October 23-24**

North Atlantic Right Whale Consortium, Providence, RI. [www.narwc.org](http://www.narwc.org).  
October 21-24  
ASMFC Annual Meeting, Annapolis, MD.

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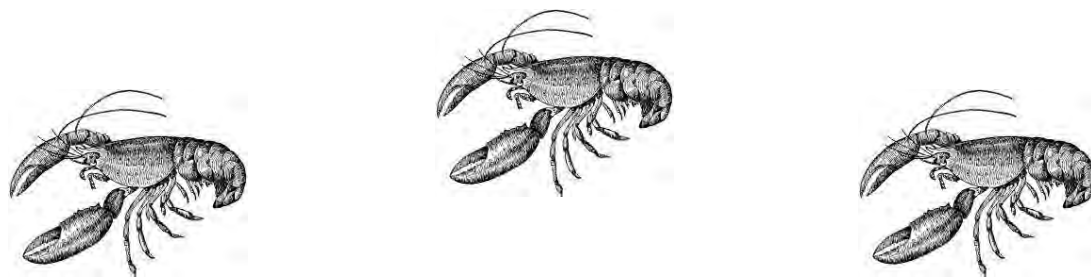
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Gauge delay continued from page 1

additional time for on-going conversations with Canada about shared management measures that can support stock resilience throughout the Gulf of Maine and create a level playing field for U.S. harvesters. It also provides time for the lobster industry in the U.S., including harvesters and dealers, to prepare for the changes outlined in Addendum XXVII," Department of Marine Resources (DMR) Commission Patrick Keliher said in a press statement.

The Board also approved Addendum XXX to clarify that the smallest lobster allowed for foreign imports matches the smallest legal lobster in effect for the U.S. industry as required under the Mitchell Provision of the Magnuson-Stevens Act. The current smallest minimum gauge size for lobster in the U.S. is 3¼ inches, and when the LCMA 1 gauge size increases as required under Addendum XXVII, this will change to 3-5/16 inches. Foreign imports smaller than the new minimum gauge size would be prohibited.

"The Lobster Board's approval of Addendum XXX ensures compliance with a requirement under federal law that limits the size of imported lobsters to the smallest size lobster that can be caught in the U.S.," said Keliher.

These recent actions by ASMFC are in response to concerns raised by Maine's lobster industry over Addendum XXVII, adopted in May 2023, which created a trigger mechanism to change the gauge and escape vent sizes if there is a decline in small lobsters in order to protect the lobster spawning stock biomass. In October 2023, ASMFC announced that surveys of sub-legal lobsters indicated that the population had fallen below the trigger level, requiring the gauge and vent size changes to take place. Keliher, who serves on the ASMFC board, pushed for a delay to discuss how to handle changes in fisheries management and trade with Canada.

**A Big Round of Applause to everyone who made this year's Music, Masts & Lobster Traps such a success!**

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Pat Farrin & Sons Dirt Works

And thanks to the hundreds of supporters who bought tickets to attend and celebrate our lobstering heritage!

**2024 Maine Lobster Boat Races schedule**

**June**

15 (Saturday) – Boothbay Harbor, Ashlee Lowrey at 808-9230

16 (Sunday) – Rockland Harbor, Nick O'Hara at 542-4348 or Mike Mayo at 542-1879

23 (Sunday) – Bass Harbor Pier, Colyn Rich at 479-7288

29 (Saturday) – Jonesport-Beals (Moosabec Reach), Roy Fagonde at 610-4607

**July**

14 (Sunday) – Stonington, Jeff Eaton at 598-0488

21 (Sunday) – Friendship, Robin Reed at 975-9821

28 (Sunday) – Harpswell, Amanda Peacock at 756-3104 or Kristina York at 449-7571

**August**

10 (Saturday) – Winter Harbor, Chris Byers at 963-7139

11 (Sunday) – Merritt Brackett (Pemaquid), Brent Fogg at 350-7712 or Sheila McLain at 677-2100

17 (Saturday) – Long Island, Lisa Kimball at 332-3968 or Amy Tierney at 317-1576

18 (Sunday) – Portland, Katie Werner at 807-1832

**October**

19 (Saturday) – Awards Banquet



# COMMEMORATING PORTLAND'S WORKING WATERFRONT HISTORY

By Melissa Waterman

In early August, a new mural showing an historic scene of the Portland waterfront was unveiled on Custom House Wharf. Fishermen and members of the public involved in protecting the city's remaining working waterfront properties attended. The 8-by-10-foot mural by Portland artist Timothy Goldkin, Ramble More Design, is located at the corner of Custom House Wharf and Commercial Street on the side of Casco Variety. The image, housed in the Library of Congress, shows sailing vessels berthed between Custom House Wharf and Portland Pier early in the 20th century.



"This mural is more than a public work of art; it's a window to our past and an attempt to help preserve our future by reminding us of the invaluable contributions of our seafaring forebearers and those still working on the water today," Goldkin stated in a press release at the time.

Creating the mural and getting permission to install it was a personal mission for Goldkin, who grew up in Portland. "I'd imagined the piece for a couple of years. Then I asked

Maggie [Donovan, owner of Casco Variety] about doing it and she said fine. I had to get a permit from the Portland Historic Preservation Board and then I applied for grants," Goldkin said. "I didn't get any."

Goldkin works primarily as a print maker, creating a variety of printed images on metal and other mediums using alternative printing processes. He also has a longstanding interest in history, particularly that of Portland. As he quickly admits, as an artist he likes to dabble in other forms of expression and so he has ventured into mural making.

Many months after unsuccessfully applying for grants to fund the mural, Goldkin was talking with the executive director of Tempo Arts, an arts organization in Portland. She encouraged Goldkin to put together a sponsorship packet to solicit financial help from local businesses. "I took it around and five businesses bought in," Goldkin said. "And then I got a Maine Arts Commission grant this winter."

To create the large mural, he built three wooden panels to attach to the building. He treated each with an exterior grade glue then laid thin sheets of paper upon which the image had been digitally printed in sections onto the panels. "The tiles of paper have folds, wrinkles in them. It's an organic moment that adds texture to the composition," Godkin said. He applied 15 layers of varnish onto the panels to seal them from the elements. Godkin also made the frame for the large mural out of wood that he'd aged and weathered.

The installation is part of Goldkin's broader initiative to bring historical artworks into public spaces across Maine, fostering community engagement and preserving local heritage. He is particularly concerned about the city's working waterfront. "I'm an outsider in the fine art world," Goldkin said cheerfully. "I just wanted this to be here."



Photos courtesy of Timothy Goldkin.



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