

The Section 6 Species Recovery Rope Survey is Underway for the Lobster Fishery from Maine to Connecticut



The Maine Department of Marine Resources, with funding from the NOAA Section 6 Species Recovery Grants to States Program, is conducting surveys of lobster harvesters to provide data that will inform future whale protection regulations from Maine to Connecticut.

Harvesters from Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut as well as those who fish in the offshore statistical areas within Management Area 3 are asked to complete this survey by the end of September.

Harvesters are being asked to complete a brief survey on how vertical lines are rigged and fished. Information will include rope type and diameter; trap configuration, distance from shore, depth, and type of surface system.

Without a better understanding of vertical lines, regulators are more likely to implement sweeping regulations which might not be any more effective at protecting whales. Good information from industry, including these surveys, will increase the likelihood of targeted, effective regulations.

Personal or identifying information will be kept confidential and removed prior to distribution of survey results; however, we ask for your name, phone number and, in the case of Maine harvesters, your landings number, so we can contact you if necessary to confirm information provided in the survey.

Here is the link: <https://www.maine.gov/dmr/science-research/species/lobster/ropesurveylandingpage.html> or you can visit www.lobstermen.com and it will be on the HOME page.

Participation should take less than 10 minutes and YOUR participation is critical to ensure the data collected is a true depiction of the lobster fishery.

End line or vertical line samples

The MLA will also be collecting as many end line/ vertical line samples, we are looking for complete end lines and we need to collect at least a name and phone number with each sample so we can contact them to get additional information about the end line (e.g. how many seasons fished, etc.). I've attached the data sheet so you have a sense of what we're looking for. These can be dropped off at the MLA office at 8 Otis Place, Scituate, MA 02066 or at the Delegates meeting on September 19th or mailed to the MLA office.

The Rope Breaking Datasheet can also be found at www.lobstermen.com HOME page for the basic information we need collected with each sample. These tags should be attached to the end line sample so we can keep straight who's donated what. A fisherman can certainly donate more than one sample if he fishes different configurations or fishes different rope in different areas. If someone does give more than one sample, please tag both ropes and label them 1 of 2 and 2 of 2 for example.

Please do not hesitate to call for assistance with any of the surveys, please contact Caitlin Cleaver with FB Environmental at 207-706-9466 or by email at caitlinc@fbenvironmental.com or call Beth Casoni at the MLA 781-545-6984 xt1.