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Joint letter of support sent for Endangered Species Act reform

December 15, 2025

The Honorable Bruce Westerman
Chairman,
Committee on Natural Resources
U.S. House of Representatives

Re: Support for ESA Amendments Act of 2025

Dear Chairman Westerman:

We write to express our strong support of your proposed bill titled “Amendment in the Nature of a Substitute to H.R. 1897,” short-titled the “ESA Amendments Act of 2025” (referred to herein as the “Bill”). The Bill would make important amendments to improve and clarify the Endangered Species Act (“ESA”), and we appreciate your pursuit of long-overdue ESA reform.

The undersigned trade associations represent many of our Nation’s great fisheries, ranging from Maine to Hawaii, as well as the hard-working men and women that make our fisheries succeed. But success is becoming harder to achieve for all U.S. fisheries in an increasingly burdensome regulatory environment. And for the fisheries that compete with large, subsidized foreign fleets, these regulatory challenges create distinct disadvantages that are almost impossible to overcome. We help our fleets and fishermen navigate the maze of federal laws and regulations that govern U.S. fisheries, as well as engage in advocacy, education, stewardship, marketing, and collaborative research to support our fleets. In addition to expressing our general support for the Bill, we write to emphasize two issues that are indispensable to any ESA reform effort.

First, over at least the last three decades, the National Marine Fisheries Service (“NMFS”)¹ has—as a matter of internal practice and longstanding policy—violated the ESA’s express requirement that agency decisions must be based on the “best scientific and commercial data available.” 16 U.S.C.



§ 1536(a)(2). Almost three decades ago, the Supreme Court explained that the “obvious purpose” of that requirement “is to ensure that the ESA not be implemented haphazardly, on the basis of speculation or surmise” and “another objective (if not indeed the primary one) is to avoid needless economic dislocation produced by agency officials zealously but unintelligently pursuing their environmental objectives.” *Bennett v. Spear*, 520 U.S. 154, 176-77 (1997).

Unfortunately, NMFS repeatedly violates this longstanding ESA mandate by applying precautionary assumptions and worst-case scenarios when faced with uncertainty rather than objectively applying the best available data. NMFS claims it must

do so because it believes the ESA requires it to “give the benefit of the doubt to the species.” But this is exactly the type of “speculation and surmise” prohibited by the Supreme Court in *Bennett v. Spear*. Moreover, NMFS’s position was recently and unconditionally rejected by the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals in *Maine Lobstermen’s Association v. NMFS*, 70 F.4th 582 (D.C. Cir. 2023) (“*MLA v. NMFS*”).

MLA v. NMFS involved a biological opinion based on speculative modeling and other analyses that were intentionally biased with precautionary assumptions to assume the worst impacts. The D.C. Circuit Court held that NMFS’s decision to “indulge

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¹ As used in this letter, “NMFS” refers to NMFS’s Protected Resources Division. NMFS’s Protected Resources Division is distinct from NMFS’s Sustainable Fisheries Division. The former is statutorily responsible managing federally protected species, such as ESA-listed species. The latter is responsible for managing federal fisheries (along with regional fishery management councils).

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The Massachusetts Lobstermen's Association will continue
its efforts on your behalf to conserve the resource, protect your
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with increasing benefits as they are developed. MLA stands ready to
help you in anyway, at anytime — just let us know how!
Safe on the water and good fishing!

ATTENTION ALL MLA MEMBERS!

Are you receiving the Massachusetts Lobstermen's Association weekly emails? If not, please contact Julia Logan, Administrative Director, at jlogan@lobstermen.com or (781) 545-6984 ex. 3 to be added to our mailing list.

Having your email on file is essential. Our weekly updates provide time-sensitive information directly from MLA Executive Director Beth Casoni, including regulatory developments, operational guidance, and critical news impacting the fishing industry.

We want to ensure you never miss important information that supports you, your business, and the future of our fishery.

Please reach out today so we can keep you informed.

Safe fishing,

Julia Logan
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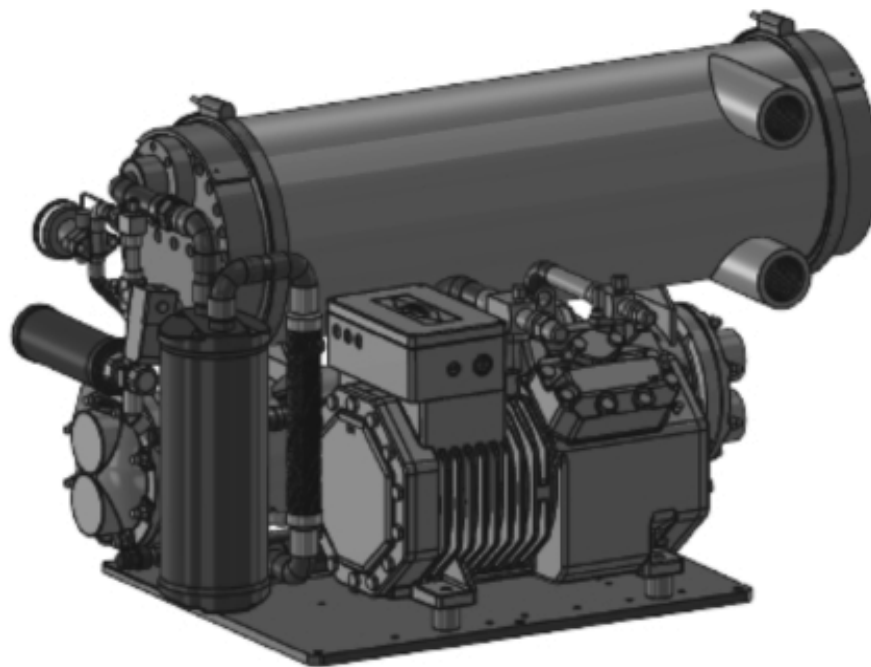




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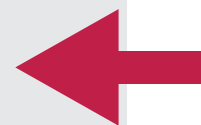
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As the HAULER TURNS

Happy New Year to you and your family! May 2026 be the best year possible.

As the Massachusetts Lobstermen's Association (MLA) enters its 63rd year, we remain proud to stand as a strong, credible, and unified voice for the commercial lobster industry. For more than six decades, the MLA has worked tirelessly to advocate on behalf of its members, protect working waterfronts, and ensure that fishermen can continue to sustainably harvest our iconic American lobster for generations to come. As challenges continue to grow—from regulatory pressures to economic uncertainty—our commitment to you and this fishery has never wavered.

With the New Year, we are excited to kick things off with one of our most anticipated events: the Massachusetts Lobstermen's Association 2026 Annual Weekend & Industry Trade Show, taking place January 30–February 1 at the fabulous Margitaville Cape Cod in Hyannis. This annual gathering brings together fishermen, industry leaders,

vendors, and partners from across the region for a weekend of education, networking, and camaraderie.

This year's event will feature more than 40 vendors, showcasing the latest products, services, and innovations that support the commercial lobster industry. Attendees can also take part in several informative seminars covering timely topics that directly impact your business and livelihood. In addition, we will be offering many FREE raffles for MLA Members and MLANPBPC Insured Members, making this a great opportunity not only to learn and connect, but also to walk away a winner.

If you are interested in exhibiting at the event, we will gladly make room for you. Please do not hesitate to reach out—even in the days leading up to the show—as our goal is to bring together everything the commercial lobster industry needs to remain strong, resilient, and successful. This event is about supporting working fishermen and the businesses that serve them.

You will find plenty of information about the Annual Weekend & Trade Show throughout this newspaper. To book a room or purchase meal tickets, please visit www.lobstermen.com or contact Tracey at 781-545-6984, ext. 2. Whether you can join us for the full weekend or just for the day, we truly hope to see you there.

On the advocacy front, last month the MLA signed on to a regional fisheries organization letter supporting reform of the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Reform of the ESA is long overdue. For far too many years, the lobster fishery has been subjected to worst-case-scenario management, despite strong conservation measures already in place and a proven track record of sustainability. Enough is enough. Fishermen deserve management decisions that are based on sound science, realistic risk assessments, and an understanding of the real-world impacts on coastal communities.

The collective effort behind this letter sends a clear and powerful message: we are united, we are aligned, and we are committed to meaningful



change. We encourage all members to take the time to read this important letter and understand the significance of this moment. We would also like to thank the Maine Lobstermen's Association for leading this effort and helping to bring organizations together across state lines.

Strength comes from unity, and it is critical that our organizations continue to speak with one clear, strong voice on this issue. Together, we can advocate for a future that protects both the resource and the fishermen who depend on it.

In closing, I remain deeply grateful for the opportunity to serve this industry and the people who make it what it is. Time seems to move faster each year, but my passion for this work and my commitment to you has never faded. I am proud to stand alongside hardworking lobstermen and women who continue to adapt, persevere, and lead by example. It is an honor to represent you, to fight for your livelihoods, and to help ensure that this fishery remains strong for future generations. Thank you for your continued trust, support, and dedication to the Massachusetts lobster industry.

Calms Seas and Full Pots,

Beth Casoni

Executive Director

Massachusetts Lobstermen's Association



May 2026 be filled with joy & love!



Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries

mass.gov/MarineFisheries

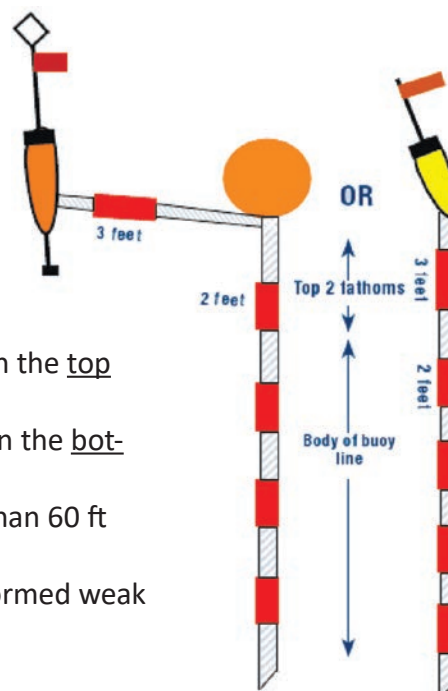


Commercial Trap & Pot Gear Compliance Guide

Updated: June 2, 2025

State Marking Requirements

- If using fully-formed weak rope with the “MASS LOBSTER” ribbon, only one solid mark is required, 3 ft length, within 2 fathoms of the buoy.
- All other vertical lines must have a **minimum** of 5 marks.
 - One solid mark, 3 ft length, within 2 fathoms of the buoy.
 - Two solid or non-solid marks, 2 ft lengths, in the top 50% of the line.
 - Two solid or **non-solid** marks, 2 ft lengths, in the bottom 50% of the line.
 - Spaces between marks cannot be greater than 60 ft apart in the vertical line (not including the fully-formed weak rope with ribbon option above).



If you are using a **red** vertical line (includes Rocky Mount red and candy cane weak ropes), all marks must be **white**.

If you are using a non-red vertical line (includes **white** and Everson weak ropes), all marks must be **red**.

Image: Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan, Northeast Lobster and Jonah Crab Gear Marking Requirements. NOAA Fisheries, 2025.

Common ways to mark your gear:

- Solid marks: Section of single-colored rope, shrink wrap tubing, tape, spray paint.
- Non-solid marks: Woven twine, Southshore sleeve with red/white tracer, candy cane rope.

NOTE: Weak contrivances/ropes with required colors can double as marking materials, such as sections of weak red rope and a Southshore sleeve with a red tracer.

Marking Requirements for Dual State/Fed Permit Holders

If fishing within Federal waters:

- a 1 ft solid **green** mark is required within 6 inches of the top 3 ft solid **red** mark.
- for marks below the top mark, a 1 ft solid **green** mark is required within 6 inches of every solid **red** mark; a 1 ft non-solid **green** mark is required within 6 inches of every non-solid **red** mark.

Additional Information

- Commercial vertical lines must be 3/8” diameter or less.
- The marking scheme is designed to help identify gear belonging to the MA fixed gear fisheries when entanglements are observed.

For more info on approved weak contrivances and marking materials, go to:
<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/ALWTRP>



Weak Rope/Contrivance Requirements

- Sections of weak rope or weak contrivances must occur at least every 60 ft in the top 75% of the vertical line.
- If using fully-formed weak rope with the "MASS LOBSTER" ribbon for a vertical line, no other weak contrivance is required. A solid marking is still needed near the buoy!

Examples of weak contrivances that break at ~1,700 lbs force:



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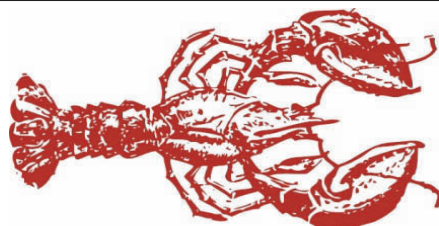
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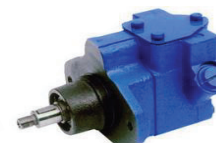
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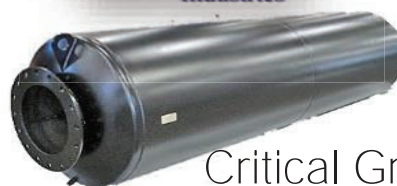
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New England Fishery Management Council

The Council responds to reduced federal capacity, sets 2026 priorities without revisiting Northern Edge work

NEWPORT, RI — The New England Fishery Management Council (NEFMC) held its December meeting and took actions on the 2026 Priorities.

REDUCTION IN REGIONAL MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

The Council heard an update on recent reductions to federal science and management resources including a total loss of 545 National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) positions, including 50 staff positions within the Northeast Region alone. These reductions have not only delayed management actions, but directly affected stock assessments, surveys, and data streams.

In 2025, several planned stock assessments were replaced with “data updates,” which are “*summaries of new data that have become available since the last management track assessment. Specifically, they update (1) total U.S. catch (landings and discards) by commercial and recreational sector, as appropriate, and (2) aggregated NEFSC survey indices.*” Data updates are expected for many stocks in 2026 as well, see the full NRCC schedule here. The Council is responding to these reductions through the Omnibus Management Flexibility Action and the Risk Policy work (see below).

2026 COUNCIL PRIORITIES

The Council reviewed and advanced its 2026 Priorities, which function as a workplan guiding staff, committees, and management actions for the coming year. There was significant discussion around restarting work to consider allowing scallop fishing on the **Northern Edge**.

Ultimately, the Council **voted not to restart** this previously discontinued work, citing multiple, competing management concerns including potential conflicts with offshore lobster fisheries and overlap with Atlantic cod Essential Fish Habitat (EFH). Proponents of restarting the amendment cited industry hardship in the scallop fleet and restricted opportunities across the region.

The Council also approved priority updates to support upcoming management needs for **Atlantic and river herring** and supported exploring a **monkfish and skates** individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) system. The Council Chair acknowledged that the proposed 2026 workload outweighs current staffing resources and does not include the stafftime needed for EO 14276 and the Council’s Inflation Reduction Act initiatives.

REVISED RISK POLICY

The Council received an update on the implementation of the revised Risk Policy. This policy will be used to assign a level of risk to each Fishery Management Plan through a systematic process of scoring and weighting multiple factors including stock status and uncertainty, climate and ecosystem, and economic and community importance. The Policy is currently in an “alpha phase,” and is scheduled for review by the Scientific and Statistical Committee in April and final Council approval in June 2026. If approved, the policy will integrate with revisions to harvest control rules and will be used for the Northeast Multispecies (groundfish) and Small-Mesh Multispecies (whiting) FMPs in 2026.

HOLISTIC STRATEGIC PLANNING

The Council received a report from Bret Wiedoff of the Parnin Group on phase II of the Holistic Strategic Planning process. The update highlighted the Gap Analysis; which pulled together input from over 75 respondents from across a range of industry, science, and NGO partners. The findings included:

- A process slowed by too many steps, unclear responsibilities, and limited staff capacity
- Communication gaps and unclear treatment of scientific uncertain-

ty that weaken public trust and make it hard for stakeholders to see how their input matters

- Management plans that are rigid and slow to adjust, lagging decisions behind rapid environmental and economic changes
- Short-term pressures that crowd out long-term planning
- Ecological, social, and economic data that are not fully integrated

The Gap Analysis also highlighted many strengths within the Council process including strong communication channels, broad stakeholder representation, a commitment to scientific rigor, an open and collaborative process, and dedicated staff. This strategic planning work will conclude in 2026.

OTHER NEWS

Terry Alexander returned to the Council as an appointed at-large member representing Maine. Terry is a fourth-generation commercial fisherman from Cundy’s Harbor, Maine. He has previously served for three terms on the New England Fishery Management Council from 2012 to 2021.

The 2026-2028 **Advisory Panel** (AP) selection is complete, the AP list is available on each FMP page, under “Committee & Advisory Panels,” the new term starts January 2026.



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Reform

FROM PAGE 1

in worst-case scenarios and pick ‘pessimistic’ values in order to give ‘the benefit of the doubt’ to the species” was “not just wrong; it was egregiously wrong.” *MLA v. NMFS*, 70 F.4th at 595, 598. The Court explained that NMFS “misconceived the law, wrongly claiming the legislative history of the ESA had ordained—if legislative history could ever ordain—a precautionary principle in favor of the species.” *Id.* at 599. The Court further reasoned that “[w]hen the Service applies a substantive presumption to distort the analysis, the public can have no confidence that economic dislocation is needed to protect a species and is not the result of speculation or surmise by overly zealous agency officials.” *Id.* at 599-600. In so holding, the Court observed that NMFS had improperly used this presumption in “other biological opinions” and had “even enshrined this reading of legislative history in its *Endangered Species Consultation Handbook 1-7 (1998)*.” *Id.* at 597.

Despite the D.C. Circuit Court’s clear holding, NMFS has subsequently and inexplicably decided that *MLA v. NMFS* is “limited to the facts of the case” and, thus, the agency continues to inject precautionary assumptions into its ESA decisions a matter of policy. To make matters worse, NMFS does so deceptively (knowing its position is at odds with *MLA v. NMFS*), such as by conveniently omitting terms like “benefit of the doubt,” “worst case,” and “conservative” from its documents while still using and applying the *same* biased analyses that are intentionally designed to be precautionary or reflect worst-case scenarios.²

NMFS’s blatant recalcitrance requires Congress to act. We therefore strongly support Section 2(e) of the Bill, which would codify the holdings in *Bennett v. Spear* and *MLA v. NMFS* to require that the “best scientific and commercial data available” must be “impartially gathered and objectively applied without reliance on precautionary assumptions in favor of a species or other assumptions or policy prescriptions that bias the

application.” This language would prohibit agencies from applying the “precautionary principle,” “precautionary” or “pessimistic” assumptions, and “worst-case scenarios” when evaluating actions and making decisions under the ESA—just as Congress intended. For similar reasons, we support Section 503 of the Bill, which would make clear that, when conducting Section 7 consultations, agencies may only consider effects that are “caused by the action itself,” “reasonably certain to occur,” and based on “clear and substantial information.” See *MLA v. NMFS*, 70 F.4th at 600 (when the agency “lacks a clear and substantial basis for predicting an effect is reasonably certain to occur; . . . the effect must be disregarded in evaluating the agency action”).

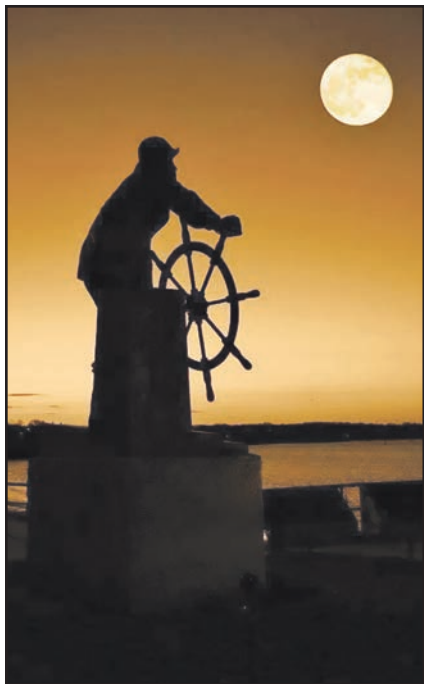
Second, Section 7(b) of the ESA has been exploited by environmental activists and misapplied by judges, causing significant uncertainty for the regulated community and administrative obstacles for agencies. Specifically, Section 7(b)(4) requires NMFS to issue an incidental take statement (“ITS”) when it completes a “no jeopardy” biological opinion. 16 U.S.C. § 1536(b)(4). One prerequisite in Section 7(b)(4) states that, for any ESA-listed marine mammals involved, NMFS must “conclude[] that . . . the taking is authorized pursuant to section 101(a)(5) of the [Marine Mammal Protection Act (“MMPA”)].” *Id.* § 1536(b)(4)(C). To receive an incidental take authorization under Section 101(a)(5) of the MMPA, a fishery must first obtain a “negligible impact determination” (“NID”) from NMFS. 16 U.S.C. § 1371(a)(5)(E)(i)(I).

However, through biased and unreasonable guidance, NMFS has made it almost impossible for a fishery that has incidental take of marine mammals to obtain a NID. For example, NMFS has admitted that issuing a NID for Northeast lobster fisheries would require “massive shutdowns of federal fisheries.”³

But shutting down federal fisheries—or any other human activities essential to a thriving society—was never the intent of Congress. In fact, in 1979, Congress amended the ESA’s “jeopardy” standard to make that clear. Before 1979, the Act’s poorly

² For example, after being alerted to the *MLA v. NMFS* case, NMFS surreptitiously edited a draft biological opinion for the Hawaii longline deep-set fishery to omit the term “worst case analysis” while making no changes to the substantive analysis (which was intentionally designed to be precautionary and reflect a worst-case scenario).

³ *Ctr. for Biological Diversity v. Raimondo*, No. 18-cv-112, Dkt. 228 at 26 (D.D.C.).



worded “jeopardy” standard led to the infamous “snail darter” case, where the Supreme Court halted work on the Tellico dam based on the ESA listing of a small fish (which has since been delisted). See *TVA v. Hill*, 437 U.S. 153, 172 (1978). Congress’s

Sincerely,

Patrice McCarron

Patrice McCarron
Executive Director
Maine Lobstermen’s Association

Beth Casoni

Beth Casoni
Executive Director
Massachusetts Lobstermen’s Association

V. Olsen

Virginia Olsen
Executive Liaison and Political Director
Maine Lobstering Union

legislative response to that decision in 1979 was intended to “lighten[] the load to avoid paralysis” by requiring any “jeopardy” determination to be supported by a finding of likely jeopardizing effects. *MLA v. NMFS*, 70 F.4th at 596.

Environmental activists eager to shutdown fisheries and other important societal activities have subsequently looked to other provisions of the ESA to create the “paralysis” they desire. In fact, that is exactly what those groups tried to accomplish in two lawsuits challenging NMFS’s biological opinions applicable to Northeast lobster fisheries. In those lawsuits, the plaintiffs argued that the biological opinions were unlawful because NMFS had not issued a Section 101(a)(5) authorization under the MMPA for incidental take of right whales. In two consecutive opinions from Judge James Boasberg of the federal district court for the District of Columbia, the plaintiffs obtained favorable rulings—one criticizing NMFS for not including an ITS for right whales in the biological opinion (because no MMPA authorization

had issued) and another criticizing NMFS for including right whales in the ITS (also because no MMPA authorization had issued). See *Ctr. for Biological Diversity v. Ross*, 613 F. Supp. 3d 336 (D.D.C. 2020); *Ctr. for Biological Diversity v. Raimondo*, 610 F. Supp. 3d 252 (D.D.C. 2022). The court therefore invalidated both biological opinions.

Although NMFS’s approach to the ITS in those biological opinions was reasonable and the district court’s rulings were wrong, the fact remains that Section 7(b)(4) of the ESA is poorly written and creates ambiguity that can be exploited by environmental activists, allowing them to obtain illogical court opinions that whipsaw the agency and allow for no reasonable solution—creating the very “paralysis” Congress wanted to avoid. And, as a general matter of good policy, there is no compelling reason why NMFS should have to demonstrate compliance with the MMPA in order to achieve compliance with an entirely separate federal statute, the ESA. Linking the two statutes in this way provides *no additional substan-*

tive protections for species—because each statute’s protections continue to separately apply—and, instead, only creates administrative barriers, opportunities for litigation mischief, and, ultimately, paralysis.

Accordingly, we strongly support Section 501 of the Bill, which would amend Section 7(b)(4) of the ESA to eliminate the provisions in that subsection that unnecessarily refer to Section 101(a)(5) of the MMPA—i.e. 16 U.S.C. § 1536(4)(C) and (4)(iii). This administrative change would not reduce or otherwise change the fundamental protections provided by the ESA or the MMPA. This is a common-sense reform that will allow NMFS to administer and independently comply with both the ESA and MMPA without the cloud of “gotcha” litigation filed by environmental activists seeking to capitalize on technicalities to achieve their policy goals of curtailing or shutting down U.S. fisheries and other industries.

We strongly support the ESA Amendments Act of 2025 and appreciate your consideration of these comments.

Jake Eaton

Jake Eaton,
Secretary
New Hampshire Commercial Fishermen’s Association

Lisa Damrosch

Lisa Damrosch,
Executive Director
Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen’s Associations

E.K. Kingma

Erik K. Kingma, Ph.D.
Executive Director
Hawaii Longline Association

Dustin Delano

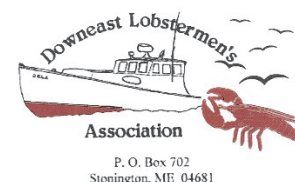
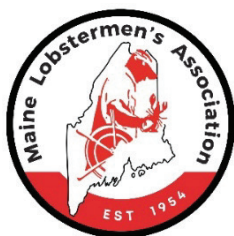
Dustin Delano
Chief Operating Officer
New England Fishermen’s Stewardship Association

Sheila H. Dassatt

Sheila Dassatt
Executive Director
Downeast Lobstermen’s Association

Hank Soule

Hank Soule
Deputy Director
Atlantic Offshore Lobstermen’s Association





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Annual Weekend & Industry Trade Show **2026** January 30-February 1, 2026

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

FRIDAY JANUARY 30, 2026

**EXHIBIT HALL HOURS: 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM,
BALLROOM - MAIN LEVEL**

- 9:30 AM** **TIMEZERO PRO SEMINAR**
Room: Fins Left, Lower Level
- 11:00 AM** **NORTHEASTERN WORKSHOP**
Pre-Registration Required
Room: Continental Drifter, Lower Level
- 1:30 PM** **mCDR & LOCNESS SEMINARS**
Room: Fins Left, Lower Level
- 3:30-6:00 PM** **MLA HOSPITALITY SUITE**
Room: Fins Right, Lower Level
- 7:00-9:00 PM** **HAWAIIAN THEMED DINNER**
Room: Fins, Lower Level
- 7:30-8:30 PM** **SILENT AUCTION**
- 8:45 PM** **BEST HAWAIIAN ATTIRE CONTEST**
Winners to be Announced
- 9:00-11:00 PM** **MLA HOSPITALITY SUITE**
Room: Fins, Lower Level

Don't forget to sign up for Saturday's craft at the MLA Booth!

SATURDAY January 31, 2026

**EXHIBIT HALL HOURS: 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM,
BALLROOM - MAIN LEVEL**

- 9:30 AM** **CRAFT** - Sign-up at the MLA booth
Room: Continental Drifter, Lower Level
- 9:30 AM** **MA DIVISION OF MARINE FISHERIES
& ENVIRONMENTAL POLICE SEMINAR**
Room: Fins Left, Lower Level

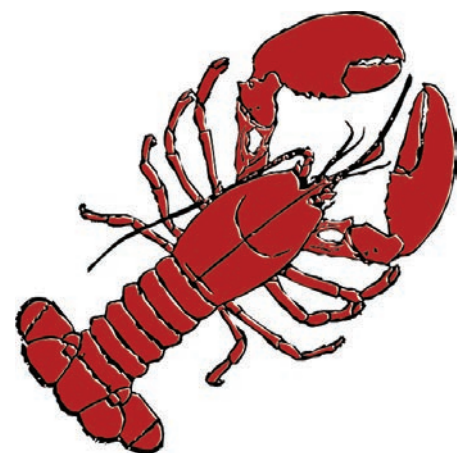
- 11:30 AM** **GHOST GEAR IN NEW ENGLAND SEMINAR**
Room: Fins Left, Lower Level
- 1:30 PM** **A TOOL FOR FISHERMEN SEMINAR**
Room: Fins Left, Lower Level
- 3:30-6:00 PM** **MLA HOSPITALITY SUITE**
Room: Fins Right, Lower Level
- 7:00 PM** **AWARDS DINNER**
Room: Fins, Lower Level
- 8:00 PM** **AWARDS PRESENTATION**
- 8:30 PM** **ENTERTAINER GEORGE LYONSE**
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to these great entertainers.*
- 9:00-11:00 PM** **MLA HOSPITALITY SUITE**
Room: Fins, Lower Level

SUNDAY FEBRUARY 1, 2026

**EXHIBIT HALL HOURS: 8:00 AM - 10:00 AM,
BALLROOM - MAIN LEVEL**

- 9:30 AM** **RAFFLE DRAWINGS**
- 10:00 AM** **DOORS CLOSE**

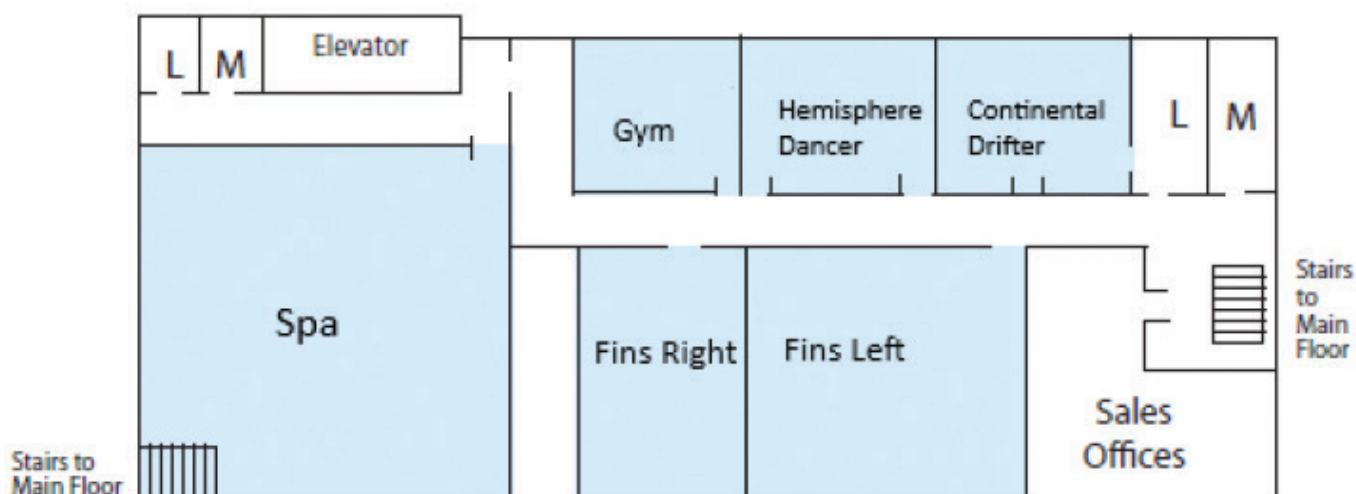
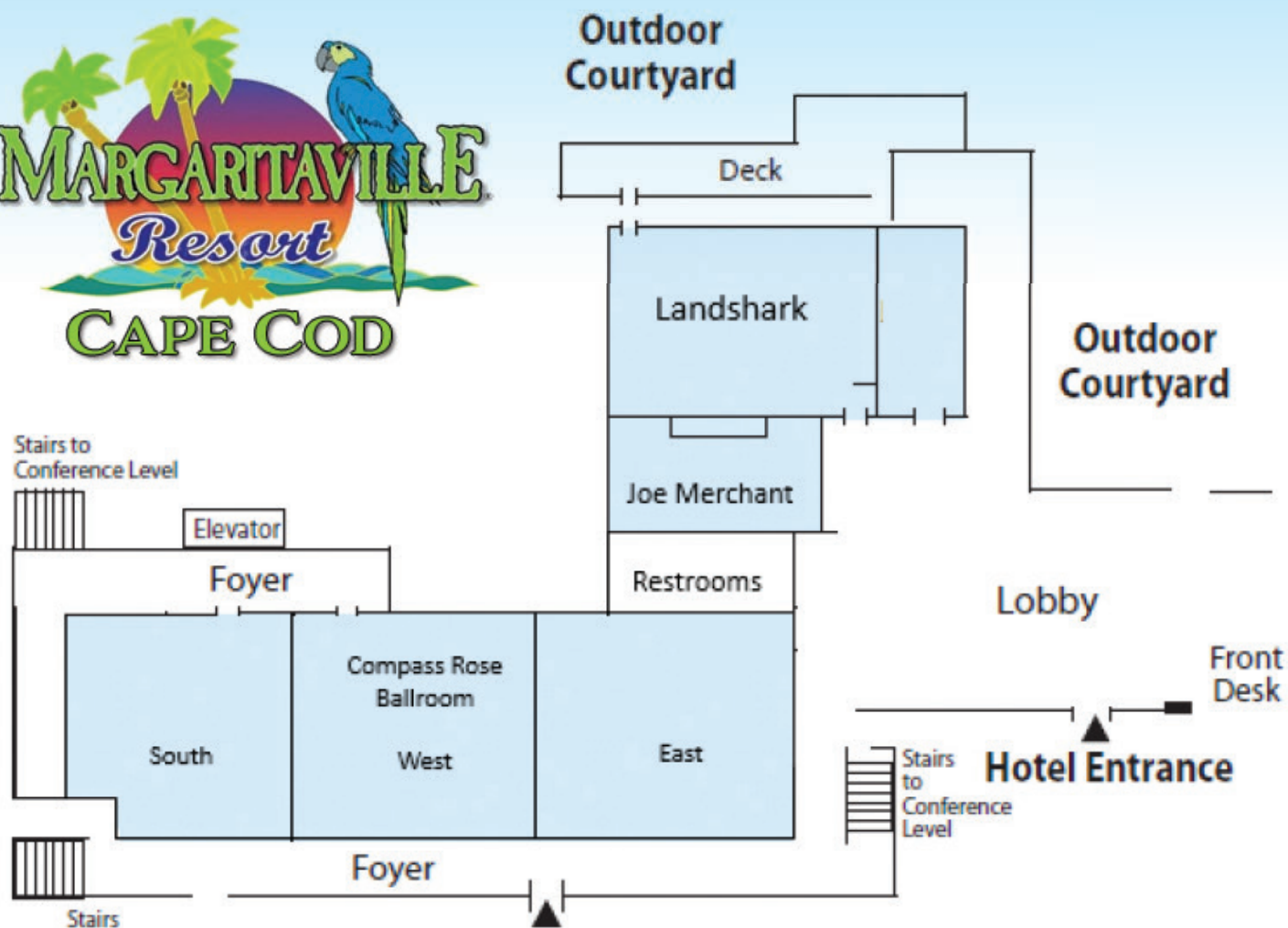
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HOTEL FLOOR PLAN





Annual Weekend & Industry Trade Show **2026** January 30-February 1, 2026

WEEKEND SEMINARS

Friday January 30, 2026 — 9:30 AM — Room: Fins Left, Lower Level

Nobeltec Timezero Pro

Presented by **Heidi Leaman, Nobeltec**

Join us at this year's MLA Tradeshow Weekend for an exclusive Nobeltec Timezero software demonstration with Heidi Leaman, Nobeltec Regional Sales Manager. Explore the powerful new features of Timezero Version 5, designed to make your time at sea safer, smarter, and more efficient. Discover how to customize your Timezero set up with different modules and learn how to seamlessly integrate your Timezero system with onboard sounders and radars. Plus, don't miss Ryan Lind, Director of Sales at Blue Ocean Gear, as he showcases their innovative Smart Buoy technology and its integration with Timezero.

Heidi and Ryan will be at the Chris Electronics Booth at this year's show, so be sure to swing by with your Timezero software and Blue Ocean Gear questions!

Friday, January 30, 2026 — 11:00 AM — Room: Continental Drifter, Lower Level

Lobster Fishery Research: Join Our Focus Group at the 2026 MLA Annual Weekend & Trade Show

Jonathan Grabowski and Kelsey Schultz, researchers at Northeastern University working on impacts to the lobster fishery, will be holding a focus group discussion at the upcoming 2026 Massachusetts Lobstermen's Association Annual Weekend & Trade Show on Friday, January 30th, 2026. This focus group is a follow-up for those who completed our survey on the social and economic impacts facing the American lobster fishery. During the focus group, we'll be discussing your observations and concerns about the direction of the lobster fishery. Specifically, we want to hear from you about how changes and uncertainty in the industry including right whale regulations, media coverage, and other stressors have affected you, your business, and your community. We will also share preliminary results from our 2024-2025 survey. This is an opportunity for your voice to be heard and to help shape how these findings are communicated to fisheries managers. Participants will receive \$200 cash for their time.



Pre-registration is required to join the focus group. If you received an invitation email from Kelsey Schultz and have not yet responded or have completed the survey and would like to participate, please contact her at schultz.k@northeastern.edu or 330-933-2265 to register.

Haven't taken the survey yet? There's still time to participate. The survey takes only 10-15 minutes of your time, and you will be entered into a raffle to win \$100. Please scan the QR code to complete the survey and make your voice heard.

Friday, January 30, 2026 — 1:30 PM — Room: Fins Left, Lower Level

Marine Carbon Dioxide Removal (mCDR) & LOC-NESS Wilkinson Basin Study: Part 1: What is Marine Carbon Dioxide Removal (mCDR)?

Presented by **Sarah Schuman**

The LOCNESS project is an example of a larger suite of experimental technologies called marine carbon dioxide removal (mCDR) that seeks to leverage the ocean's ability to draw down excess carbon dioxide from the atmosphere by enhancing the ocean's natural carbon pump. As this field matures, commercial fishermen need to be at the planning and decision-making table. Sarah Schumann is an Rhode Island fisherman and director of the Fishery Friendly Climate Action Campaign who has been carving out space for the fishing industry to have a voice in the future of mCDR. Sarah will present an overview of the field of mCDR and will share what she has learned through her participation in mCDR conferences and working groups, her role as a fishing industry observer on the LOCNESS field trial, and a set of virtual roundtables that she facilitated in collaboration with the Responsible Offshore Development Alliance last year to gather input from U.S. fishermen for a set of guidance memos on "fishery sensitive" mCDR.



**Annual Weekend
& Industry
Trade Show** **2026**
January 30-February 1, 2026

WEEKEND SEMINARS

Part 2: LOC-NESS Wilkinson Basin Study

Presented by **Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute**

The Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution (WHOI) has completed its EPA-approved, small-scale environmental research trial of ocean alkalinity enhancement (OAE) in the Gulf of Maine as part of the LOC-NESS Project. The LOC-NESS research trial was conducted August 13-17, 2025, in the Wilkinson Basin of the Gulf of Maine, approximately 50 miles off the coast of Massachusetts. WHOI scientists gradually added alkalinity to the water using highly purified sodium hydroxide—commonly used to adjust the pH of drinking water—along with an inert, red tracer dye known as Rhodamine Water Tracer (RWT) over the course of 6 hours. After releasing the alkalinity on August 13, the LOC-NESS team followed the patch of alkalinity in a fully equipped research vessel through August 17, monitoring the physical, chemical, and biological conditions of the ocean to assess OAE's potential for safely removing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. Come speak with the science team to learn about the project's early results.

Saturday, January 31, 2026 — 9:30 AM — Room: Fins Left, Lower Level

Navigating Mass. Marine Fisheries: Science, Policy & Enforcement

Presented by **Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries & Massachusetts Environmental Police**

Presenters: Dan McKiernan, Bob Glenn, Story Reed, Dr. Tracy Pugh, Steve Wilcox and Jared Silva

The Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF) is charged with the conservation & management of the Commonwealth's marine resources. Its work includes overseeing both recreational and commercial harvests of saltwater finfish, shellfish, and crustaceans such as lobster and crab. DMF develops and implements policies that promote long-term sustainability while balancing the needs of a diverse and complex coastal fishing industry.

State officials will provide updates on current fishery trends, whale activity and protections, lobster stock status, and the results of the Gloria Michelle research vessel's spring and fall trawl surveys. They will also review adjudicatory proceedings and address additional issues of pressing concern for the industry.

The Massachusetts Environmental Police will discuss their role in protecting natural resources through enforcement, education, and public outreach. Their work supports the effective implementation of U.S. marine resource laws, which are designed to maintain sustainable fish populations, safeguard threatened species and their habitats and ensure that marine resources remain available for future generations.

Saturday, January 31, 2026 — 11:30 AM — Room: Fins Left, Lower Level

State of Ghost Gear in New England

Presented by **Laura Ludwig, Center for Coastal Studies**

The New England GEAR Team has been working to collect, recover, recycle and dispose properly of ghost gear and retired fishing gear since 2023. This seminar will highlight the industry collaborations in Massachusetts and Maine which underpin the work with Center for Coastal Studies, Gulf of Maine Lobster Foundation, OceansWide, Rozalia Project, Blue Ocean Society and Net Your Problem. From grappling back traps and salvage-lifting gear balls to recycling rope and creating massive sculptures, this overview will share the results of three years of creative, collaborative fishing gear removal, disposal and recycling efforts in the Gulf of Maine.

Saturday, January 31, 2026 — 1:30 PM — Room: Fins Left, Lower Level

Ocean Data: A Tool for Fishermen

Presented by **Cape Cod Commercial Fishermen's Alliance**

Many different scientific groups in the region collect data about the ocean environment using tools ranging from sensors in lobster pots to autonomous underwater vehicles. Where does all that information go, and how can you access it? Join collaborators from the environmental Monitors on Lobster Traps (eMOLT) Program, the Northeast Regional Association of Coastal Ocean Observing Systems, and the Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries to check out demonstrations of different data tools designed for fishermen, learn how to interpret the information, and provide feedback on how we can make the tools more useful to the lobster industry.



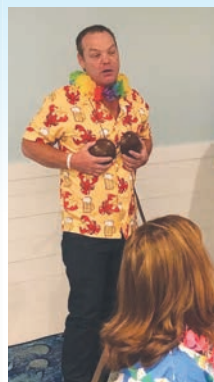
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*The images depicted are just a likeness of what it could look like, subject to change.

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Craft: Seashell Trinket Dish and Ordainments

When: Saturday @ 9:30 A.M

Where: Finns Conference Room, Lower Level

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- Fisheries Management in the US and Canada
- Science-Industry Collaborative Tagging Projects
- Trade, Tariffs, and Traceability
- Harvester and Shoreside Sector Updates

Registration is now open to the public. There are a limited number of free tickets for commercial fishermen, thanks to the Sonnenberg Travel Fund



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MASSACHUSETTS DIVISION OF MARINE FISHERIES

2024 LOBSTER TABLES



PRELIMINARY TABLE 1. Permit Information for the Massachusetts Lobster Fishery, 2017-2024 ¹

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Coastal Permits								
Issued	1,088	1,081	1,066	1,047	1,031	1,011	990	955
Fished	714	712	698	661	663	654	622	611
Did Not Fish	308	309	315	319	296	283	301	275
Incomplete	8	10	11	11	16	9	11	11
Not Reporting	58	50	42	56	56	65	56	58
Offshore Permits								
Issued	171	156	150	137	133	131	121	115
Fished	66	73	70	65	59	52	51	54
Did Not Fish	9	7	7	6	9	9	9	9
Incomplete	1	0	2	2	2	0	0	0
Not Reporting	95	74	71	64	63	70	61	58
Offshore Non-Trap Permits								
Issued	236	236	242	246	231	237	233	230
Fished	83	75	70	80	74	72	76	67
Did Not Fish	10	8	8	8	6	6	9	8
Incomplete	3	3	1	1	0	0	0	0
Not Reporting	140	150	163	157	151	159	148	155
Seasonal (Student) Permits								
Issued	96	100	104	102	101	105	82	80
Fished	46	52	46	58	54	50	42	45
Did Not Fish	31	23	10	14	9	11	27	20
Incomplete	1	1	25	19	18	22	0	0
Not Reporting	18	24	23	11	20	22	13	15
Recreational Permits²								
Issued	6,427	6,118	6,481	6,244	5,771	5,555	5,245	4,882
Fished	3,599	3,412	3,353	3,343	3,026	2,844	2,642	n/a ³
Did Not Fish	1,099	1,107	1,032	1,104	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Not Reporting	1,729	1,599	2,096	1,797	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Data Sources: ¹Trip-Level Reports (DMF and NMFS VTR data); ²Beginning in 2021, reporting methods for recreational harvest changed and it is no longer possible to differentiate between non-fishing activity, and non-reporting; ³Unavailable at the time this report was produced.

PRELIMINARY TABLE 3. Massachusetts Commercial Lobster Landings, Traps Fished, and Estimated Value for 2018-2024

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Total Landings	18,439,451	17,866,857	16,797,873	17,029,592	15,499,957	16,014,810	16,471,265
Total Estimated Value	\$88,821,161	\$95,491,339	\$78,307,441	\$125,383,208	\$83,030,006	\$99,772,267.11	\$115,298,858.15
Total Traps Fished	398,148	380,402	369,029	361,481	346,923	364,410	346,122
Average Price (\$) / Lb	\$4.82	\$5.34	\$4.66	\$7.36	\$5.36	\$6.23	\$7.00
Ave. Lbs. Trap-Haul	1.6931	1.4850	1.5697	1.5542	1.3256	1.5339	1.5978
Ave. Lbs. /Trap	44.35	44.59	43.29	44.57	42.19	41.79	45.01
Territorial (State Waters)							
Landings	10,753,269	10,271,565	9,039,659	9,573,878	8,303,038	7,943,479	6,021,104
Estimated Value	\$51,797,522	\$54,897,482	\$42,140,607	\$70,489,275	\$44,477,625	\$49,487,874.36	\$42,147,726.25
Trap Landings	10,630,391	10,167,760	8,997,134	9,521,291	8,279,102	7,922,092	6,018,431
Traps Fished	290,279	274,322	259,546	258,626	241,952	254,547	208,333
Non-Trap Landings	122,879	103,895	42,525	52,588	23,936	21,387	2,672
Non Territorial (Federal Waters)							
Landings	7,686,181	7,595,292	7,758,214	7,455,713	7,196,919	8,071,331	10,450,162
Estimated Value	\$37,023,639	\$40,593,857	\$36,166,834	\$54,893,933	\$38,552,381	\$50,284,392.75	\$73,151,131.90
Trap Landings	7,029,161	6,892,240	6,976,830	6,589,814	6,358,003	7,308,417	9,560,341
Traps Fished	107,869	106,080	109,483	102,855	104,971	109,863	137,789
Non-Trap Landings	657,020	703,052	781,384	865,899	838,916	762,914	889,821

Data Sources: Trip-Level Reports (DMF and NMFS VTR data), SAFIS Dealer Database

TABLE 4. Number of active commercial lobstermen and lobster landings by homeport for 2024.

Homeport data taken from vessel information on permit applications. In cases where no vessel or homeport was specified, the primary port of landing was used. Catch data encompasses all reported landings, regardless of gear type, while effort data represents only trap effort. Shaded areas denote towns which rank in the top 10 for number of fishermen, total catch, or total effort. Some cities and towns are combined to protect the confidential nature of the data.

City / Town	Fishermen		Catch (Pounds)					Effort ¹		
	Number	Rank	Territorial	Non-Territorial	Total	Percent	Rank	Traps	Percent	Rank
Barnstable-Falmouth ²	5	21	*	*	38,160	0.23%	31	949	0.28%	36
Beverly	21	11	340,823	275,990	616,813	3.74%	6	12,294	3.57%	9
Boston	27	9	246,088	140,431	386,519	2.35%	13	12,070	3.51%	10
Chatham	30	8	152,950	413,017	565,967	3.44%	8	9,639	2.80%	13
Cohasset	22	10	218,148	15,521	233,669	1.42%	17	7,436	2.16%	14
Danvers-Salem	9	18	96,564	41,033	137,597	0.84%	21	3,719	1.08%	23
Dartmouth-Westport	14	14	33,592	521,976	555,568	3.37%	9	7,059	2.05%	15
Dennis	9	18	20,604	0	20,604	0.13%	36	2,180	0.63%	29
Duxbury-Marshfield	51	3	531,036	345,474	876,510	5.32%	4	26,989	7.84%	2
Eastham	9	18	168,406	0	168,406	1.02%	18	2,500	0.73%	27
Essex-Ipswich-Rowley	7	19	*	*	12,303	0.07%	39	892	0.26%	37
Fairhaven	10	17	60,406	16,541	76,947	0.47%	28	2,154	0.63%	30
Gloucester	134	1	919,610	3,443,922	4,363,532	26.49%	1	63,515	18.46%	1
Harwich	5	21	81,249	51,709	132,958	0.81%	22	2,226	0.65%	28
Hingham	4	22	*	*	88,999	0.54%	26	2,800	0.81%	26
Hull	22	10	170,157	84,987	255,144	1.55%	15	9,914	2.88%	12
Islands ³	21	11	23,748	66,955	90,703	0.55%	25	5,515	1.60%	17
Manchester	15	13	89,480	42,344	131,824	0.80%	23	4,149	1.21%	22
Marblehead	41	4	478,214	112,370	590,584	3.59%	7	18,371	5.34%	6
Marion-Mattapoisett	6	20	*	*	27,658	0.17%	32	1,490	0.43%	33
Nahant	11	16	*	*	234,474	1.42%	16	5,247	1.52%	19
New Bedford	34	6	42,016	2,538,017	2,580,033	15.66%	2	19,618	5.70%	5
Newburyport	6	20	5,456	12,781	18,236	0.11%	37	1,863	0.54%	32
Orleans	3	23	23,228	0	23,228	0.14%	35	817	0.24%	38
Yarmouth	4	22	*	*	24,698	0.15%	34	1,070	0.31%	35
Plymouth	51	3	506,263	122,931	629,194	3.82%	5	23,978	6.97%	3
Provincetown	31	7	316,675	179,908	496,583	3.01%	10	13,220	3.84%	8
Quincy	3	23	13,168	0	13,168	0.08%	38	703	0.20%	39
Revere-Winthrop	9	18	79,031	0	79,031	0.48%	27	3,534	1.03%	24
Rockport	56	2	563,799	672,209	1,236,008	7.50%	3	23,154	6.73%	4
Salisbury	4	22	*	*	69,006	0.42%	30	1,424	0.41%	34
Sandwich	21	11	244,898	175,195	420,093	2.55%	12	11,871	3.45%	11
Saugus	12	15	96,051	18,805	114,856	0.70%	24	5,970	1.73%	16
Scituate	39	5	237,138	226,621	463,758	2.82%	11	15,284	4.44%	7
Swampscott	9	18	*	*	164,339	1.00%	19	5,206	1.51%	20
Truro	5	21	26,200	0	26,200	0.16%	33	2,085	0.61%	31
Wellfleet	7	19	50,533	93,029	143,562	0.87%	20	4,389	1.28%	21
Weymouth	5	21	*	*	74,166	0.45%	29	3,415	0.99%	25
Out of State	18	12	0	290,168	290,168	1.76%	14	5,393	1.57%	18
Statewide Totals	790		6,345,093	10,126,173	16,471,265			344,102		

¹The number of “Traps” for each city/town represents the sum of each individual’s maximum traps fished for the year
²Barnstable includes Hyannis; Falmouth includes the village of Woods Hole, and Cuttyhunk Island
³The town of Edgartown, Menemsha, Nantucket, Tisbury and Vineyard Haven are all included under “Islands”
*Confidential Data





MASSACHUSETTS DIVISION OF MARINE FISHERIES

2024 LOBSTER TABLES



2023 Lobster Trap Vertical Line Density

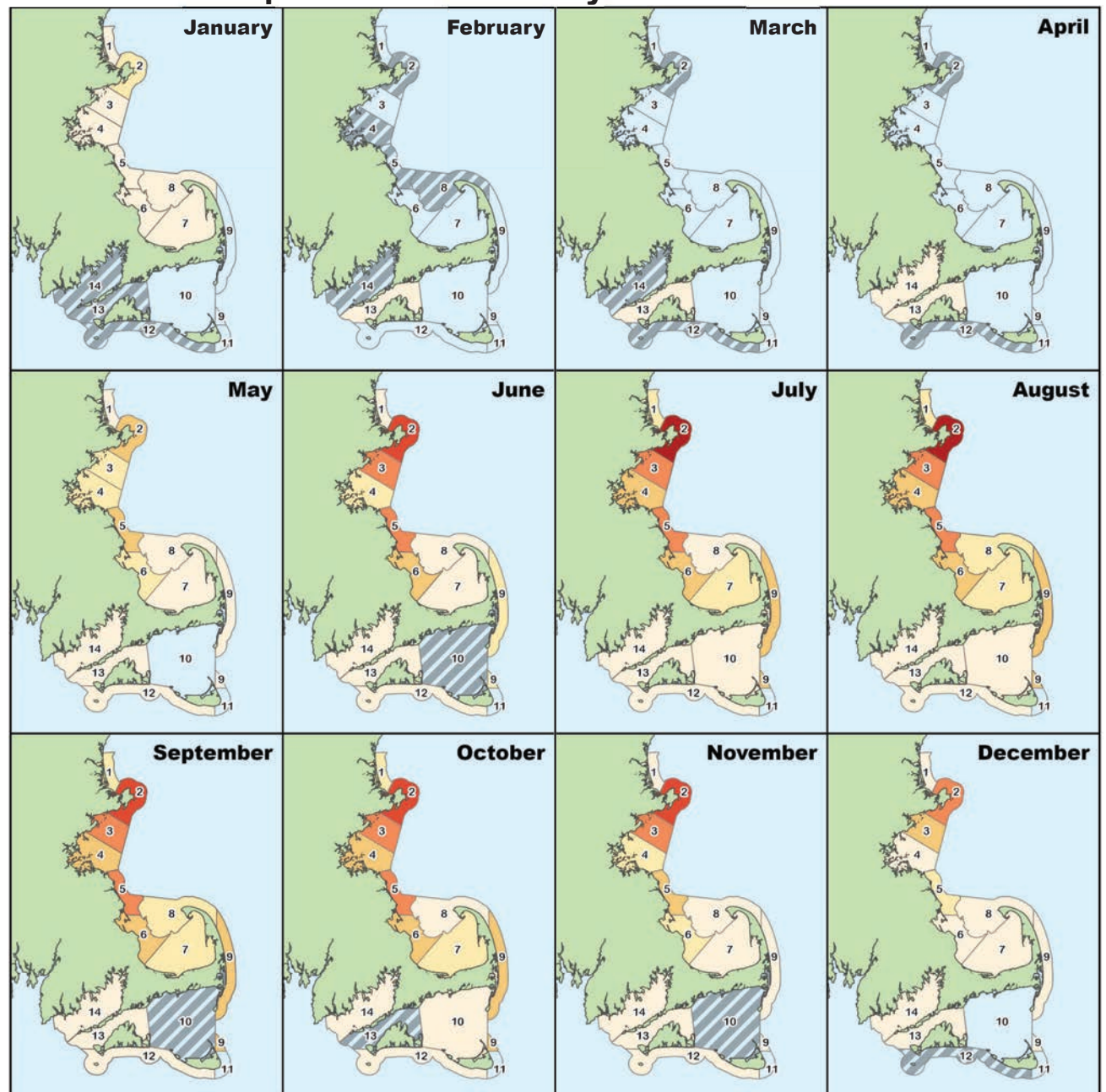
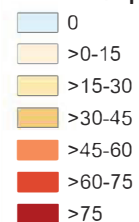


Figure 1.

2023 vertical line density (lines per square mile) across state waters Statistical Reporting Areas (SRAs) by month. The Massachusetts Bay Restricted Area closure affecting SRAs 1-9 was in effect from February 1st through May 8th in 2023. The South Islands Restricted Area was implemented for the first time from February 1st until April 30th, primarily impacting SRA 12 in state waters. Fishing activity reported during the closures was closely monitored and extensively reviewed using both harvester-reported and tracking data. Noncompliance within a closure was largely characterized by fishing activity on or near the federal-state waters boundary line and/or potential reporting errors.

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2023 Lines per Square Mile



N Spatial Reference
Name: WGS 1984 UTM Zone 18N
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Map Units: Meter
0 10 20 40 Miles
Updated: 12/31/2025





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Early insights into the future of large-scale seed-based eelgrass restoration in MA

The last whiffs of fog gave way to the powerful rays of the midsummer sun, already high in the sky at 8:30am on July 29, as two DMF divers from the Habitat Program, Dr. Forest Schenck and Iris Seto, climbed up the swim ladder and back onto the deck of the R/V Alosa. Cool beads of seawater from Salem Sound dripped off their dive gear and from the handful of eelgrass shoots Forest held aloft to show project co-lead Jill Carr of the MassBays National Estuary Partnership, who assisted as topside support on this effort. These are reproductive shoots (or repros), which can grow to over six feet at this location, their length and bright chartreuse coloring distinguishing them from their smaller emerald-colored vegetative kin. Each repro boasts numerous peapod-like structures about the length of a pinky-finger, called spathes, many of which are on the cusp of bursting under the strain of containing 10–15 seeds. The seeds, green to brown in color, are the size and shape of a grain of rice with ribbing down their sides. Collecting these tiny packets of new life, which also represent new hope for eelgrass restoration in Massachusetts, was the team's objective.

In Massachusetts, self-sustaining, resilient eelgrass meadows are among the most important—but also the most imperiled—coastal marine ecosystems: they create habitat for numerous marine species including commercially and recreationally important fish and invertebrates, store carbon, filter water, buffer the coastline from wave energy, and stabilize the seafloor. Alarming, in the last 30 years, eelgrass has disappeared from half of the areas where it used to thrive, a loss of roughly 18,000 acres. Planting eelgrass seeds, tens of millions of them year after year, may be the best hope for counteracting these losses.



Project co-lead & DMF diver Dr. Forest Schenck briefs the dive team on the deck of the R/V Michael Craven.



DMF Diver Iris Seto surfacing with a bag full of eelgrass repros.

An hour earlier, in the cool gloom of a thick fog bank, Forest and Iris splashed into the water and descended to the kaleidoscopic green hues of lush eelgrass meadow that blankets the seafloor in this area of Salem Sound. They used stakes and rope to steadily and carefully bring order to this wild watery world of undulating grass, schooling russet pollock, and skittering crustaceans. When they finished, the ropes formed twenty parallel lanes along the seafloor in a rectangular area the size of two Olympic swimming pools. Soon these lanes would host an aquatics competition of sorts—a race to collect eelgrass seeds.

Information on how many seeds eelgrass meadows produce in Massachusetts and how many can be collected sustainably (to avoid damaging the remaining meadows) is scarce. By precisely controlling and documenting a collaborative experimental eelgrass seed collection effort in Salem Sound, DMF and partners at MassBays and Salem Sound Coast Watch sought to address these knowledge gaps.

Back in Salem Sound, the R/V Alosa was joined by a second DMF research vessel, the R/V Michael Craven, filled with additional scuba tanks, fish totes, and more divers. By 11am, a total of ten divers, organized into five buddy pairs, began a series of two, hour-long dives to hand collect eelgrass seeds. Seven of the eight divers joining Forest and Iris were from DMF's Dive Team including additional members of DMF's Habitat Program (Kate Frew and Mark Rousseau), Invertebrates Program (Laura Tomlinson and Jacob Dorothy), Shellfish Program

(Terry O'Neil and Alex Boeri), and Dive Safety Officer Ashley 'Peach' Bueche. The tenth diver was Dr. Phil Colarusso, a marine biologist and eelgrass expert from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. In addition to Jill, the divers are supported topside by Captain Bill Hoffman and Bart DiFiore of DMF's Fisheries Research and Monitoring Program, Brooke Dejadon of DMF's Shellfish Program, and the Massachusetts Department of Fish and Game's Communications Director, Julia Hopkins, who photo-documented the effort.

Forest used the repros collected during his earlier dive to brief the divers, who had varying experience levels working with eelgrass, on what they would look for underwater. Search image committed to memory, each diver was given a large mesh bag, assigned a 40-meter-long by 2-meter-wide lane, and instructed to collect as many seed-bearing shoots as possible. Some friendly back and forth ensued among the divers regarding who will collect the most repros as they completed their final safety checks.

Underwater, with divers ready at the start of their respective lanes, the beep of the hydrophone signaled the divers to start collecting. The hydrophone would beep every fifteen minutes to pace the diver's movement, evenly distributing their collection effort along their lane. Quickly the mesh bags began filling with the buoyant eelgrass repros. By looping the straps on their collection bags around the underwater lane lines the divers slid their haul along with them as they moved, keeping their

Eelgrass

FROM PAGE 29

hands free to pluck out repros laden with seeds from the meadow while being careful not to disturb the eelgrass rhizomes anchoring the plants into the sediment below or accidentally collect vegetative shoots. Curious pollock hovered and flit around the bags suspended in the water column above the divers, grabbing micro-fauna dislodged from the eelgrass during collection for an easy meal.

All told, the divers collected over 11,000 eelgrass repros, holding around 1,000,000 seeds. A crane was used to lift totes full of eelgrass from the deck of the R/V Craven into the back of a DMF pickup truck. Forest and Jill then drove the eelgrass to DMF's Cat Cove Laboratory where it would be held in tanks of seawater for six weeks to allow the seeds to release naturally from the spathes and fall to the bottom of the tank. The seeds were then separated from the plant material and stored for planting or research. Given their small size (five hundred seeds per teaspoon) and hardness, the seeds are ideal for distributing to partners for restoration and research. Ultimately, this collection effort in Salem Sound yielded over 200,000 seeds suitable for planting, enough to support five pilot eelgrass seeding restoration efforts in communities from Plymouth to Gloucester.

What does this all mean for the feasibility and sustainability of seed-based restora-



Bags of eelgrass reproductive shoots and dive gear on the deck of the R/V Michael Craven.



Project team on the deck of the R/V Michael Craven. Standing in back row from left to right: Terry O'Neil, Mark Rousseau, Laura Tomlinson, Dr. Phil Colarusso, Dr. Forest Schenck, Alex Boeri, Iris Seto, Peach Bueche, and Bart DiFiore. Kneeling in front row from left to right: Captain Bill Hoffman, Brooke Dejadon, Jill Carr, Kate Frew, and Jacob Dorothy.

tion in Massachusetts? Careful monitoring by DMF's dive team prior to and after the collection effort on July 29 revealed that the divers collected just shy of 50% of the seed-bearing eelgrass shoots present in the designated collection area. Zooming out, the collection area targeted represents just 0.01% of the 400+ acre continuous eelgrass meadow mapped by the MA Department of Environmental Protection in this area of Salem Sound. By extrapolating the density and productivity of repros from the surveys across the meadow, a conservative estimate is that this meadow produces upwards of one billion eelgrass seeds annually. Using existing eelgrass restoration guidelines to limit seed collection from wild populations to 10% of the total seeds produced results in a suggested cap on seed collection from the meadow in Salem Sound of 100,000,000 seeds annually. This is more than enough to support large-scale eelgrass restoration efforts in the region. In fact, at the collection rate managed on July 29 (one million seeds in a day) it would take ten divers 100 days to collect 100,000,000 seeds—meaning DMF collection capacity limits will be reached well before the sustainability threshold is approached.

DMF's work in Salem Sound suggests at least some natural eelgrass meadows in Massachusetts are capable of sustainably supporting large-scale seed-based eelgrass restoration. However, complementary surveys of eelgrass meadows conducted in other estuaries reveal inconsistent levels of seed production across the state, suggesting site-specific monitoring may be needed to set sustainable seed collection limits. Further, only one in five seeds collected



Project co-lead Dr. Forest Schenck and Kate Frew process eelgrass repros at DMF's Cat Cove Laboratory in Salem, MA.

on July 29 were successfully recovered following processing at DMF's Cat Cove Laboratory. To address the bottleneck in suitable seed processing infrastructure in Massachusetts, DMF plans to renovate the seawater system at Cat Cove to improve the Laboratory's ability to operate as an Eelgrass Seed Restoration Facility. DMF hopes these upgrades will provide a pathway for more groups to pursue eelgrass conservation and restoration throughout the state. The seeds of restoration are growing in Massachusetts. Now we must find the hands to sow them.

*By Dr. Forest Schenck,
Marine Fisheries Habitat Specialist,
and Mark Rousseau,
Habitat Program Manager*

www.mass.gov/news/early-insights-into-the-future-of-large-scale-seed-based-eelgrass-restoration-in-massachusetts

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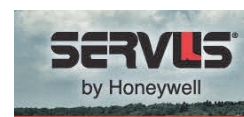
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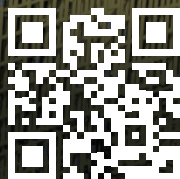
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A. Authorization:

Pursuant to Section 118 of the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA; 16 U.S.C. 1387), the implementing regulations at 50 CFR Part 229, and subject to the terms and conditions below, NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) issues this Authorization Certificate, which, when presented in combination with a current/valid state or federal fisheries permit, authorizes the taking of non-endangered/non-threatened marine mammals incidental to commercial fishing operations in Category I or II fisheries.

B. Terms and Conditions:

- **All incidental mortality or injury of marine mammals occurring in the course of commercial fishing operations must be reported to NMFS within 48 hours after the end of each fishing trip in which the incidental death or injury occurred, using the appropriate reporting form, even if the trip is observed.**
- This Authorization Certificate, or a copy of it, must be on board the vessel during commercial fishing operations.
- Authorization Certificate holders must comply with any applicable take reduction plans and emergency regulations.
- If requested to do so by NMFS or a designated contractor providing observer services to NMFS, an Authorization Certificate holder must take aboard an observer to accompany the vessel on fishing trips and must possess a valid Commercial Fishing Vessel Safety Examination decal issued by the U.S. Coast Guard.
- When necessary to deter a marine mammal from damaging fishing gear, catch, other private property, or from endangering personal safety, the vessel owner, operator, or crew members may use measures which do not result in serious injury or death of the animal pursuant to the deterrence provisions of the MMPA.
- A marine mammal may not be intentionally killed in the course of commercial fishing operations except where imminently necessary in self-defense or to protect the life of a person in immediate danger. Such lethal taking **must be reported to NMFS within 48 hours** after the end of each fishing trip in which the mortality occurred, using the appropriate MMAP mortality/injury reporting form.
- Any marine mammal incidentally taken must be immediately returned to the sea unless directed otherwise by NMFS or a NMFS-authorized observer.
- This Authorization Certificate, or a copy, must be made available upon request to any state or federal enforcement agent authorized to enforce the Act, any designated agent of NMFS, or any contractor providing observer services to NMFS.
- This Certificate is not transferable. In the event of a change in vessel ownership, the Authorization Certificate is void and a new Authorization Certificate must be obtained by the new owner.
- If the registered vessel is sold or destroyed or is replaced by a new designated vessel, an authorization must be obtained for the new vessel.
- Any person who violates these Terms and Conditions, regulations under 50 CFR Part 229, or any provisions of Section 118 of the MMPA, shall be subject to the penalties set forth in the MMPA.
- This certificate is valid from January 1, 2026 through December 31, 2026

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AD#4 (10/25) **SEEKING** – Area 2 MA lobster tags – 774-271-0601

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AD#17 (9/25) **FOR SALE** – Hartco clip gun- \$300.00. Nile air-nipper HD \$150.00 Spenex Hog-ring gun-\$200.00 or all 3 for \$500. Twin Kahlenberg Airhorn D1-\$250.00 Galvanized long-line ground fish cable-2 spools -7x7 3/32", 20,000 ft. New. \$400.00 for both. Call

Bill at 508-264-1076 Please no texts.

AD#18 (6/25) **FOR SALE** – 22' Siso Lobster Boat w/ 150hp Evinrude. Needs work. Bunk trailer included. \$8,000 or B.O. Robert: 617-846-3714 (home) / 617-650-3842 (cell)

AD#19 (6/25) **FOR SALE** – 150 3ft traps w/ 7/16 ground-lines (need work) \$10 ea. 100 4ft lobster traps \$20 ea. Located in Humarock. Call: 978-815-1734

AD#20 (7/25) **FOR SALE** – Complete MA outer cape cod lobster outfit: state permit w/270 tags & all gear, 31' BHM w/Volvo diesel, mooring in Chatham harbor, skiff, walk-in bait cooler, trap building tools, dogfish & mackerel gear, & more, can transfer immediately. \$150k or bro Steve 978-257-1062

AD#21 (7/25) **FOR SALE** – Captain Wanted for Lobster/Gillnet boat. Well maintained boat, single boat owner, fair settlement. Email for more details: Lobstercapt@pm.me

AD#22 (8/25) **FOR SALE** – 59 traps some 30+ & some bigger-line-buoys \$5.00 each or bro. Call Robert at 5:00 pm 617-846-3714 or 617-650-3842

AD#23 (10/25) **FOR SALE** – Federal Area 1 Lobster Permit w/ 800 trap allocation. \$19,000. Call/text Ed at 781 534-3794 before 7PM.

AD#24 (9/25) **FOR SALE – Fishing/Marine Equipment** – new complete raw water pump for a duetz 10:15 engine \$3,000.00. New Propeller 32x30, left-hand, 5-blade, high-nibral, fits 2.5" shaft \$6,000.00 Cutlass Bearing 2.5" shaft \$100.00. Danforth Anchors- 22 lb., 3 available-\$30 each- Sea Strainer Basket 3"- \$100.00. Gillnets Standup-good condition-\$50.00 each. Call 617-694-4802 -Leave a message.

AD#25 (9/25) **WANTED** – Massachusetts black seabass pot permit. Call Connor at 508-221-2696

AD#26 (9/25) **FOR SALE** – Aluminum fuel tank 20W X 19H X 57"L – \$100.00. Aluminum

rack for Dodge 1500 P/U – \$75.00. 4 40lb Danforth anchors – \$150.00 each. 12" monk/skate webs light green – \$60.00. 12" gillnets in good condition – \$175.00 panel -frames – \$120.00 panel. Call 401-842-8165

AD#27 (10/25) **FOR SALE** – Four tall vats. 12 tote, 1,800 lb. vats. In good condition. \$200.00/each 401-842-8165

AD#28 (10/25) **FOR SALE** – American Lobster Permit -Area 2 – 420 Trap Allocation. \$35,000.00 Call Tom at 631-903-2063

AD#29 (11/25) **FOR SALE** – 28.2ft boat, built in 1976, engine cat 3208, 265HP trans 2.1 twin disk fiberglass JC hull. Area 1 Coastal lobster permit 800 traps, 700 3ft lobster traps with rope and buoys. Call Joe at 978-239-5927.

AD#30- (12/25) **FOR SALE** – [Age and illness forces sale] 40+ FISH POTS, (Blackfish / Sea bass) 20 brand new 36" X 18" X 13, 20+ traps similar sizes, excellent condition, ready to fish, with ground lines, floats, etc. GILL NETS (10 assorted, some new or recent rehangs (Hercules). Gill net reel, 48" diameter, 42" width. Holds average 4 + panels (1200'). Excellent condition, chain drive, full hydraulics. Complete tub trawl system equipped with 10" hydraulic hauler for retrieving Tub Trawls mounted on net reel. "Jamestown" / Chatham snag baiter (3-bushel size). Four totes set up with stainless magazine hook storage 125 hooks (500 total), 300 additional hooks storage system (4 totes), fast and simple to use. Over half mile, set up for Cod, blue fish, Spiny Dog fish, or what have you. Loads of extra clips, gangions, boxes of brand-new Mustad E-Z Baiter hooks. Still mounted on boat, can demonstrate. Located in Freeport, Long Island, New York. \$1500.00 – 2000.00. Also-1978 36 ft., Stanley-3208 caterpillar 375 HP, Approx. 1500 HRS on rebuild. Full electronics, current USCG Inspection, 2 survival suits, ready to fish. BEST OFFER over \$5000.00 takes all. Call/text Captain Rich Hunter. 347-836-5382. I will most likely get back to you after 6:00 pm.



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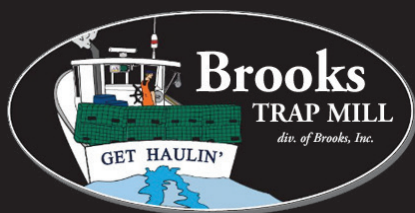


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