


FISHERMEN'S VOICE

Vol. 20, No. 4 – April 2015 News & Comments for and by the Fishermen of Maine FREE



BUILDING A WOODEN LOBSTER BOAT, Part II
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Dipper Harbor, New Brunswick, Canada March, 2015. Rafts are used to store lobster traps in a harbor with a lot of big boats. Dipper Harbor in southwest New Brunswick has a few lobster processing plants. A cold snowy winter is expected to effect the early lobster season. The Lobstermen’s Town Meeting was held in St. John’s, New Brunswick this year. One of the lead topics discussed was climate change and the lobster fishery. See page 15.

Cod Extinction Unlikely

By Laurie Schreiber

ROCKPORT—Gulf of Maine cod is in trouble. But it’s not on the verge of extinction. “We want cod to be around forever. That’s fine, but I would contend that is not a problem,” said Steve Cadrin, a professor of fisheries oceanography at the UMass School for Marine Science and Technology. “When we look at marine bony fish, fishing has never forced any species to go extinct.

Cod has one of the highest egg counts of any bony fish, so if there is any fish that is resilient to ex-

If there is any fish that is resilient to extinction, it’s cod.

inction, it’s cod.” Speaking at the Maine Fishermen’s Forum in early March, Cadrin said the idea of extinction

should be taken off the table in management talks about Gulf of Maine cod. Instead, he said, the focus should be on how to avoid low recruitment in order to meet the ultimate objective of rebuilding cod for fishery production. “Even at these high fishing mortalities, cod is still sustainable,” he said. “It’s far from opti-

See COD EXTINCTION on page 8

Remember the Maine

The Sinking of the Battleship Maine

By Tom Seymour

Who hasn’t heard the rallying cry, “Remember the Maine?” And as a constant reminder of the ill-fated, American battleship, the original scroll and shield stands mounted on a life-size replica of her bow in Bangor’s Davenport Park.

Those aboard affirmed that they definitely heard two explosions.

The Spanish-American War, or as it was known at the time, “America’s War With Spain,” seems out of sight and out of mind for most people. And yet, it was only in the last decade or so that a tax on our tel-



The Maine was sunk at a mooring in Havana Harbor on February, 8, 1898. The explosion(s) in the forward munitions and coal bunkers piled the wreckage visible in this photograph. Naval personnel can be seen rowing past in the foreground, left. One of the Maine’s two smokestacks lies crumpled on the deck center. Square rigged vessel’s masts are visible in the background.

See REMEMBER on page 16

FROM THE CROWE'S NEST

On the 40th Anniversary

The high point of this year's Maine Fishermen's Forum in Rockport was the Skippers Program presentation on Friday. More than anything in memory from past years at the forum, this program's presentation spoke to the deep roots and social importance of fishing and coastal life in Maine.

The Skippers Program engages middle and high school students in hands-on study and research in coastal waters. These are the waters their families work on every day. The waters many of them see everyday. The waters to which some of their families have for generations been economically, socially and emotionally connected. This intertwining of life, work and environment is who fishing families are.

The fishing culture in Maine is uniquely alive and uniquely important in modern America. Real fishing villages where independent fishermen are the primary base of the local economy and culture. Where history, continuity and opportunity are maintained.

Skipper's Program students worked to find a solution to a real ecological problem on the coast. They created proposals that might mitigate the impact of burgeoning green crab populations and presented them to a room packed

beyond standing room. Young students presented the results of their work from a podium in a room mostly filled with strangers.

After the presentations, some parents spoke of their kids' enthusiasm for the projects they were involved in. Their kids were coming home and engaging parents in discussions of their project. One parent reported her D-average son had become fully engaged in the project, began speaking highly of school and was now a B student.

Some of these kids may grow up to be fishermen, or marine biologists or something else. More importantly, they have developed an interest in education and the immediate world around them. The world of their parents and what may be the world of their children. They express feelings of being connected at an early age in a way they can measure.

"His view of education—he's a totally different kid," said one mother speaking about her son's participation in the program. "For our community, it's amazing what it's done." The presentation was a rare moment of family, community, culture, and humanity. It could not have been a more fitting and moving event for the 40th anniversary of the Fishermen's Forum. ↓

Dr. Brian Rothschild
Appointed Hjort Scholar

Distinguished marine scientist Brian Rothschild, president and CEO of the Center for Sustainable Fisheries recently received news from Norway of his appointment as a Hjort Scholar. New Bedford resident Dr. Rothschild is known internationally for his work in fisheries science.

The Hjort Centre for Marine Ecosystem Dynamics in, Bergen which extended the honor is named for Norwegian fisheries scientist Johan Hjort (1869-1948), the preeminent marine scientist and oceanographer of his era and the first to apply statistical methods to the study of fish populations.

Recipients of Hjort Scholarships are scientists whose research is "deemed to promote scientific innovation and understanding of

marine ecosystem dynamics" according to the letter informing the professor of the award. It includes a grant in the amount of 50,000 Norwegian krone, or about \$7000, and comes following an October address Dr. Rothschild gave at a symposium in Bergen in conjunction with the 100th anniversary of the publication of Hjort's important book *Fluctuations in the Great Fisheries of Northern Europe*.

Dr. Rothschild is also Professor Emeritus and founding Dean of the UMass Dartmouth School for Marine Science and Technology. He now heads the non-profit Center for Sustainable Fisheries, an organization dedicated to the conservation of our fisheries and the economic development of our fishing communities. ↓

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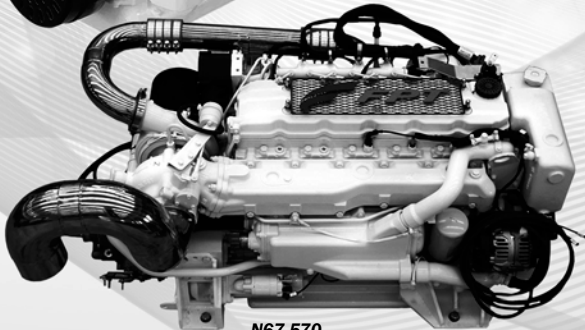
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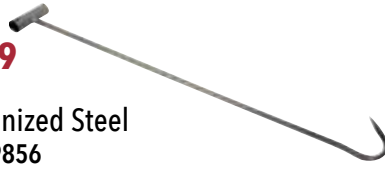
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Elver Quota Reductions Aim for Future Sustainability

By Laurie Schreiber

ROCKPORT—In 2014, landings for Maine's elver fishery were constrained for the first time by an overall state quota, set by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) at 11,749 pounds.

Fishermen ended up catching 9,690 pounds, leaving some of the quota in the water. The catch was an 8,000-pound decrease from 2013's catch of 18,076 pounds.

Value, in 2014, decreased by more than \$24 million, from \$32.9 million to \$8.4 million, attributed in part to the quota constraint and a decline in per-pound value from

2013 of nearly \$1,000.

In 2012, fishermen harvested 21,600 pounds of the valuable elvers, earning \$40.3 million.

"The most important thing you need to do is invest in an oxygen meter."

— Mike Pietrak

Earlier this year, the ASMFC imposed another quota reduction. The Maine Elver Fishermen's Association (MEFA) negotiated a reduction of only 12 percent, to 9,688 pounds, an amount that nearly matches 2014's landings. That quota is set for the 2015-2017 seasons, subject to re-evaluation prior to the start of the 2018 fishing season.

The ASMFC's initial quota proposal was 5,300 pounds. MEFA member Darrell Young expressed satisfaction with MEFA's negotiations that resulted in the 9,688-pound quota. "I'd say we made out all right," Young said during MEFA's annual meeting, at the Maine Fishermen's Forum in early March. "I know we all took cuts. We were all pretty unhappy about how it went. But the overall picture looks pretty good.

It was definitely a battle and it took a lot of time."

"The ASMFC was bound and determined we were going to take a cut," agreed MEFA member Jeffrey Pierce. "When the conservation easements and credits come into play, we should be getting more quota back. I know it's tough to look at another reduction this year."

The ASMFC reductions responded to the findings of the 2012 benchmark stock assessment, which indicated the American eel population in U.S. waters is depleted. According to information from the Department of Marine Resources (DMR), causes of decline are likely due to a combination of factors, including historical overfishing, habitat loss, food web alterations, predation, turbine mortality, environmental changes, toxins and contaminants, and disease.

At the DMR's public hearings in February 2015 to discuss the 2015 season, there were pro and con comments about the new quota. According to the DMR's hearing transcription, some representative communications included:

- "In general, I'm in support," said William Milliken of Jonesport.



Mike Pietrak, a scientist at the University of Maine/Orono's Aquaculture Research Institute, explains how to use an oxygen meter to optimize water quality for the transfer of elvers.

- In a joint email, Darrell Young, Angela Young, Julie Keene and Adam Boutin asked for an allocation of individual quotas based on

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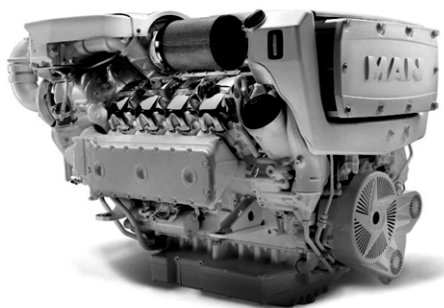
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what individual fishermen caught in 2014. And they asked for quota reimbursements from fishermen who went over their individual quotas and from fishermen who had their licenses suspended. "We are very concerned that the state is holding back quota each year from the fishermen whose fishing privileges have been suspended," they wrote. "We absolutely feel it is crucial that we are allowed to catch the entire quota....Based on the ASMFC's history in other fisheries, we can expect to have our quota cut if we don't catch it. We do not understand nor can we accept why we are being punished because of other people breaking the law, or not putting enough effort into catching their entire quota."

• Norman Bernard, speaking for the Aroostook Band of Micmacs, said, "At some point in time, we would like to negotiate for more licenses and more quota. We have tribal members that are looking to get into the industry to learn more and get into it."

After the hearings, the DMR decided to allow harvesters to fish the quota that fishermen lost in 2014 when losing their licenses; to fish quota from loss of licenses in the future; to cap the number of licenses and institute a lottery system for new entrants; and to allow transferable quota for medical reasons.

According to the DMR, Maine will also pursue up to a 25 percent increase, a number established

by the ASMFC, in overall quota for future seasons, based on stock enhancement programs such as habitat restoration projects, fish passage improvements, or fish passage construction.

"We absolutely feel it is crucial that we are allowed to catch the entire quota."

The 2015 season is set from March 22 to May 31. There are 404 state-licensed non-tribal elver harvesters and 23 state-licensed elver dealers. The four federally recognized tribes have issued 516 elver harvester licenses.

The 2014 elver season was characterized by less than one-tenth the number of poaching violations of 2013, due to the institution of a swipe card system which, combined with the individual fishing quotas, allowed managers to track landings. In 2013, elver value exceeded \$2,000 per pound,

which contributed to 219 violations related to fishing without a license, according to the DMR.

The new regime also eliminates roving trucks to pick up product. That means harvesters must have viable systems in their vehicles to hold and transport the delicate creatures to their dealers. Harvesters heard from Mike Pietrak, a scientist at the University of Maine/Orono's Aquaculture Research Institute, who explained best management practices.

"You're selling a high-quality product to eel farms elsewhere in the world," Pietrak told harvesters. "They want to continue to buy that high-quality product. How you handle those eels, how you treat them, is really important to maintaining that quality further down the line."

Pietrak said the most important considerations are water quality, habitat, and nutrition. "We're really talking about short-term holding, 12 to 24 hours,"

he said. "We don't have to worry about food and nutrition too much. We're mostly concerned about water quality and the system they're held in."

Pietrak discussed types of tanks and filtration to be considered, as well as water quality factors, such as dissolved oxygen, temperature, pH and ammonia.

"The most important thing you need to do is invest in an oxygen meter," he said. "Because dissolved oxygen is critical to the fish, this is the only way you'll know how much oxygen is in the water. This is not cheap. It will cost you \$600 to \$1,000. But it will save you, when you have that banner night and you're thinking, 'I've got lots of eels. I've got to get to the dealer.' That's the night you'll have an oxygen problem. It happens. This will be your best friend."

Pietrak said he would be willing to show harvesters how to set up their systems and deploy oxygen meters. ↓



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Eastern Maine Skippers Program Students Present at Fishermen's Forum

ROCKPORT—Green crabs were the subject when more than 65 teachers and students presented to a standing-room-only audience at the Maine Fishermen's Forum on Friday, March 6th. The group, this year's Eastern Maine Skippers Program students, came from six coastal high schools: Deer Isle-Stonington, George Stevens Academy, Jonesport-Beals, Narraguagus, North Haven and Vinalhaven. The students provided in-depth scientific details of their proposed final projects.

As part of Eastern Maine Skippers Program's (EMSP) year-long collaborative project investigating the green crabs, students have begun to conduct monitoring studies to determine how prevalent the invasive species is in their local communities before researching, designing, and presenting a solution to the green crab "invasion." The students' solutions must take into account successfully mitigating the green crabs' impact on the local environment, exploration of new markets, management of the species as a potential resource, and efficiently harvesting green crabs.

The presentations began with an assessment of the overall green crab problem and explained why the students have taken on this problem for EMSP's year-long project. Each of the schools took turns explaining which direction they decided to take their project. The proposals ranged from new trap design from Narraguagus to "crab rangers" and green crab sushi rolls from Jonesport-Beals. Vinalhaven and Deer Isle-Stonington students both talked about how EMSP has changed their school experience and expressed gratitude for having this program in their schools. Deer Isle-Stonington will be exploring

the impact green crabs may or may not have on the lobster industry. George Stevens Academy surprised everyone when they described a partnership they have already brokered with two local golf courses where they can experiment with a green crab fertilizer the students are developing.

After the presentations, the floor was opened up to questions for the schools and comments/questions about the program. A parent brought the room to tears when she stated "Since joining the Skippers program this year my son has gone from D's to B's and talks my ear off at home about what they have been working on in class. I want to thank all of the EMSP teachers and staff for providing this opportunity from my son."

This then began a wonderful round of applause for all the teachers and students during which John Williams, a Stonington fisherman, stood up to address the teachers of EMSP, "I just want to thank all of the teachers who are involved with EMSP and express my gratitude for what you are doing for these students. We know you are going above and beyond normal teacher duties and asking for nothing in return."

"Since joining the Skippers program this year, my son has gone from D's to B's and talks my ear off at home about what they have been working on in class."

— EMSP parent

The overall mood in the room was one of appreciation, pride, and pure joy of watching these amazing students present to a standing room only crowd. The students will



Deer Isle-Stonington High School Skippers Program students presenting the results of their research to a packed conference room at the Maine Fishermen's Forum on March 6, 2015. Their school was one of six in the Eastern Maine Skippers Program.

now put their proposals into action and present their findings to a panel of judges in May.

The Eastern Maine Skippers' trip to this year's Maine Fishermen's Forum was made possible through the generous support of Camden National Bank. Funds provided by the Bank helped cover the school costs of transportation, food, and substitutes for the students and teachers attending the event. In addition, representatives from Camden National's commercial lending team sat in on the students' presentations and provided feedback on the viability each of the business ideas.

By investigating the scope of and

potential solutions to the "green crab invasion", students are having an opportunity to learn and practice important skills such as active citizenship, public speaking, interpreting and using data, and applied science and engineering that will prepare them for modern fishing careers as well as post-secondary education. The project has further application beyond their high school education; however, as students are conducting "real world" research that communities can use as they seek to sustain the fishing economies that are so important to Downeast communities.

About the Eastern Maine Skippers Program

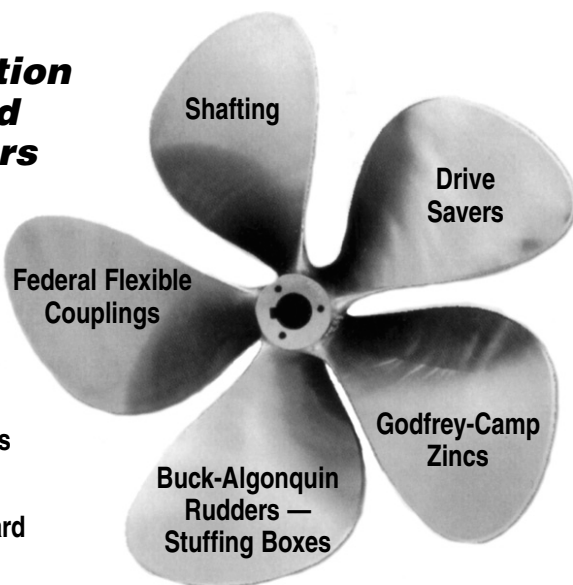
In 2012, Deer Isle-Stonington High School and Penobscot East Resource Center, a Stonington-based organization dedicated to a fishing future for Eastern Maine Communities, collaborated to create the Eastern Maine Skippers Program. EMSP is a regional program which aims to provide aspiring commercial fishermen in schools from North Haven to Eastport the skills needed to be successful fishermen in a time of rapid environmental and regulatory change. A cohort of more than 50 students from Vinalhaven, North Haven, Deer Isle-Stonington, MDI, Narraguagus, and Jonesport-Beals High Schools as well as George Stevens Academy remain in their schools and collaborate in the program via technology-based "anytime, anywhere" learning. Students also meet in person 3-4 times per year to participate in events such as meetings with the Department of Marine Resources and the Maine Fishermen's Forum. —EMSP press release. ↓

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2014 "An Awesome Year" for Lobster Fishermen

By Laurie Schreiber

ROCKPORT—Although lobster landings for 2014 were on par with 2013 and 2012, fishermen earned almost \$90 million more in 2014 than they did in 2013.

"Two thousand fourteen was an awesome year," Maine Lobstermen's Association executive director Patrice McCarron said during the MLA's annual meeting at the Maine Fishermen's Forum in early March. "You guys were making money. Value is where the story is."

According to preliminary data released Feb. 26 by the Department of Marine Resources, "For the third year in a row and only the third time ever, Maine lobster fishermen landed over 120 million pounds with a record overall value of \$456,935,346....At \$3.69 per pound, the 123,676,100 pounds landed represented an improvement of 79 cents per pound over 2013, the largest one-year increase in per-pound value since DMR and National Marine Fisheries Service began keeping records. The one-year increase in overall value was also the largest on record and at \$86,653,573 was more than the total value of the fishery 21 years earlier."

The scenario was a significant contrast to 2012, when fishermen were socked with a low boat price, although the fishery's overall value that year held steady because

of high landings.

In 2012, the boat price was generally lower than \$3. In 2014, the boat price averaged \$3.50, and was above \$4 in Zone G, the westernmost zone. The change may have been partly due to a shift in the landings cycle, said McCarron. In 2012, landings spiked in June, and were similarly strong in July and August. In 2014, landings from June through August were lower, and spiked up from September through November.

The largest one-year increase in per-pound value since DMR and National Marine Fisheries Service began keeping records.

"We shifted June and July landings to September and October, and you made more," McCarron told the audience of fishermen. "So the landings were a wash, but the value climbed. Shifting from the early to the late part of the season made the difference."

According to the DMR, the 2012 season saw an early shed that created a supply of new-shell lobsters that exceeded demand and depressed value. In 2014, the shed happened later, allowing processors, dealers, and restaurants to handle them more profitably.

Overall, the resource has expanded "dramatically" since the late 1980s, particularly in eastern Maine in the last 10 years, due to "favorable environmental conditions for growth and reduced predation on small lobsters," said DMR Marine Science Bureau Director Carl Wilson.

Wilson said, "2014 marked a return to near average levels of settlement after three successive years of low settlement, which was a favorable pattern change for the resource."

The substantial increase in lobster value contributed to an increase in value overall for Maine's commercially harvested marine resources, which generated over one-half billion dollars for the state's economy, according to preliminary data released March 5 by the DMR. That represents a jump by more than \$44 million over 2013.

Also contributing to the overall increase was an additional \$1.8 million in the value of scallops, the DMR said.

"Maine's scallop fishery also saw another year of increased landings and value as it continues to rebuild from an all-time low of 33,000 pounds landed in 2005," the DMR said. "Maine's 438 active licensed draggers and divers landed an additional 78,335 meat pounds (without the shell) over

2013 for a total of 584,173 pounds. At \$7,464,690, the value of the fishery increased by more than \$1.8 million."

Maine's 438 active licensed (scallop) draggers and divers landed an additional 78,335 meat pounds.

Additional DMR information

- Maine's softshell clam fishery grew by more than \$1.1 million to \$19.2 million, even while landings declined by more than 1.5 million pounds, dropping from 11.2 million pounds in 2013 to 9.7 million pounds.
- Landings for Maine's elver fishery, constrained for the first time by an overall state quota, declined by more than 8,000 pounds, from 18,076 pounds in 2013 to 9,690 pounds. Value decreased by more than \$24 million to a total of \$8.4 million attributed in part to the quota constraint and a decline in per-pound value from 2013 of nearly \$1,000. The decline moved the elver fishery from second most valuable to fourth.
- The softshell clam fishery reclaimed its position as the second most valuable commercial fishery.
- Atlantic herring, valued at \$16.3 million was the third most valuable fishery in 2014. ↓

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COD EXTINCTION from page 1

mal. We're not getting as much yield out of cod as we can. But we really need to take extinction and unsustainability off the table as far as arguments go. What we should be doing is managing toward optimum yield."

Cadrin said efforts to rebuild Gulf of Maine cod have been hampered by a disconnect between data and the models used to interpret the data. "What we need to remind ourselves is, data are real. Either a fisherman held that fish, or a scientist observed those fish on deck. If the data don't agree with the model, I would question the model, rather than question the data," Cadrin said. "These models have a lot of subjective decisions, and for some of these decisions there's no clear right or wrong and there are valid alternatives for each."

At the same time, he said, the information available from fishery surveys is often too noisy to draw conclusions that will help inform management decisions.

"Cod fishermen have been asking me for years, 'Are the low stock sizes the result of not allowing us to catch many fish? My default answer is, 'A good stock assessment should be able to tell the dif-



Giacalone said the problem is not with the models, but with the data, particularly given the fraction of ocean covered by the federal trawl survey. "It's not about whether they're going in the right place or not. It's about how much sampling occurs," he said, citing "a hundredth of a percent" of swept area sampled for 20 minutes once a year.

ference.' If you have good surveys, they should be able to tell if that low catch is from low fishing mortality or from a low stock size. I conclude our current surveys have

too few stations that are not fishing around the year enough to tell whether low catches are coming from a low population size or from low fishing mortality."

The most recent Gulf of Maine cod assessment said that overfishing is occurring, the stock is overfished, and the stock cannot meet rebuilding objectives even with no fishing.

"But that doesn't mean there's any threat of extinction," Cadrin said. He continued, "The crisis is not a result of irresponsible management or excessive fishing. The managers have followed the scientific advice. The fishermen have stayed within their catch limits. You hear these terms 'overfishing,' 'overfished,' and it implies the fishermen have been the cause of the problem. If we're looking for cause, it's scientific uncertainty. We haven't updated the assess-

ment frequently enough. There have been abrupt changes in perception. We have arbitrarily rapid expectations of rebuilding and arbitrarily high rebuilding targets."

Cadrin urged further scrutiny of the science.

"I don't think we should be shutting down fisheries until we uncover every rock in our assessment and make sure we're getting it right," he said. "But we also need to scrutinize the assessment to identify the problems and develop solutions. One of the primary problems is, with such low catch, we need better survey information."

Cadrin advocated for more survey stations throughout the year sampling all cod habitat.

But until the science has improved, he said, managers and fishermen need to come up with solutions to deal with the current decisions being made. Sectors have been in the throes of trying to sustain their fisheries, but because of limits on codfishing, have only been able to catch about 30 percent of the total groundfish allocation.

"There's so much multispecies not being caught," he said. "How can the fleet catch more of that allocation while staying within the limits? Those are the solutions we need work on together."

If we're looking for cause (of over fishing), it's scientific uncertainty.

"More and more fishermen are scared to death about being able to harvest their other stocks," said Vito Giacalone, chair of governmental affairs for the Northeast Seafood Coalition. "When we're at such a low level, as we are with Gulf of Maine cod right now, it is less of an economic factor where the industry is trying to land more cod, because the difference between 500 tons and 1,000 tons isn't whether you have a cod fishery or don't have a cod fishery. It's whether you go to work and catch other stocks or not."

Giacalone said the problem is not with the models, but with the data, particularly given the fraction of ocean covered by the federal trawl survey. "It's not about whether they're going in the right place or not. It's about how much sampling occurs," he said, citing "a hundredth of a percent" of swept area sampled for 20 minutes once a year. The survey is inadequate given the complex bottom geography, complex species, and additional factors such as feed and changing water conditions.

"It seems to me it's an incredible crapshoot to try to divine relative abundance only from the trawl survey," Giacalone said. "There's a lot of stuff we can get out of the survey that we can't get out of something else, but we need another way to look at whether the trawl survey is giving us the right relative abundance or is it a



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Statistical Weakness of NMFS Groundfish Surveys Criticized

By Mike Crowe

Gloucester ground fisherman and fishing industry advocate Vito Giacalone addressed what he described as the “statistical weakness” of National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) trawl survey data for inter-annual relative abundance changes for Gulf of Maine cod and other groundfish stocks.

Giacalone said the departure from using commercial catch per unit of effort (CPUE) data and and too great a reliance on the sparse stock sampling of the Northeast Fishery Science Center's (NEFSC) annual trawl surveys that is driving the “disastrous” reductions in what fishermen are allowed to catch.

Giacalone, a 35-year veteran of the Gloucester, Mass., groundfish fleet and executive director of the Gloucester Fishing Community Preservation Fund, said there is a disconnect between computer mod-

el driven assessment conclusions and fishery-dependent data. “There is no plausible explanation for the disparity between what the assessment says about the cod stocks and what fishermen see on the water,” he said. The composition of different market class sizes in the landings remains stable. This, Giacalone said, would not be the case if the assessment conclusions were correct.

Further compounding the already contentious relationship was the highly criticized decision by the NEFSC to use Gulf of Maine Cod as a test subject for expediting updated assessments. Responding to calls for shortening the time to produce more timely assessments, the NEFSC conducted an experimental assessment process.

Traditionally, the assessment process involved an open discussion of the data to be run through computer

models. The planned assessment would be announced. A formal peer review would be scheduled, which could be many months in the future, with peer reviewers typically being third-party scientists from around the world.

However, the experimental as-

This would not be the case if the assessment conclusions were correct.

assessment, conducted by the NEFSC in Woods Hole, Mass., “was unscheduled, unannounced and not transparent,” said Giacalone.

News of the experimental assessment spun out of control and the results were almost immediately broadcast as gospel, said Giacalone, with the mainstream press broadcasting NMFS's soundbite that GOM

cod was at 3 percent of its “normal” stock level.

At that point, said Giacalone, there was no getting the genie back in the bottle.

Giacalone said the amount of data gained from NMFS trawl surveys is low compared to the volume of fisheries-based data.

“We are not debating quality,” he said. We're stressing the statistical weakness of the survey and hoping to reopen the discussion around looking at existing commercial data to find comparative measures. “Compared to the NMFS trawl survey boat, commercial boats generate much more data. The question is, how do we utilize this enormous database that is currently being dismissed for this purpose? Can't the commercial data be compared to the trawl survey data?” ↓

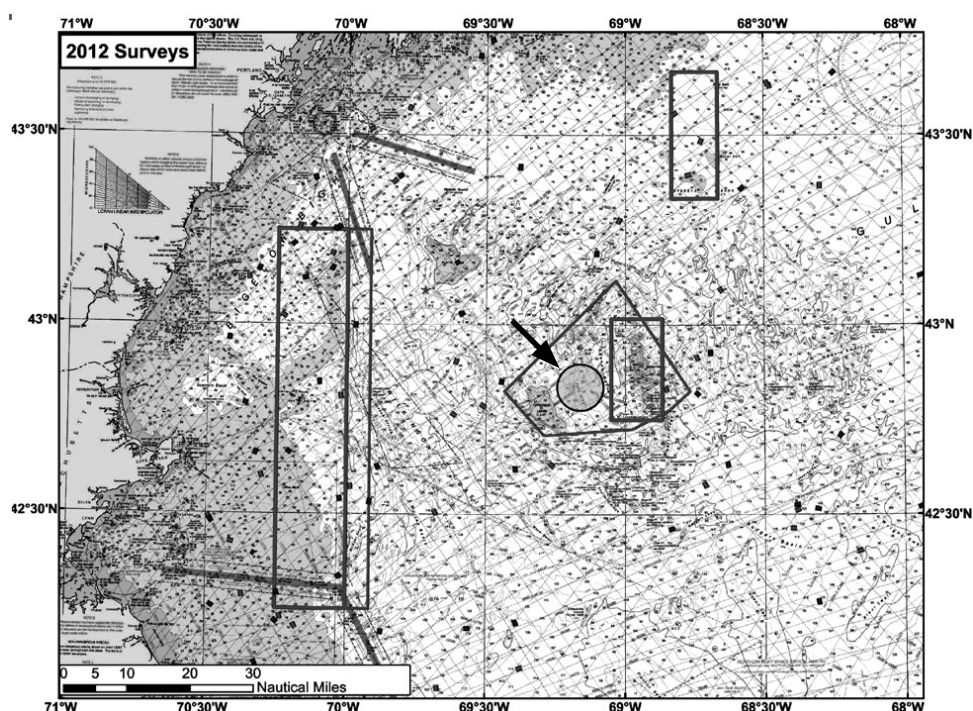


CHART A: Rectangles and the triangle mark areas closed to commercial fishing. Small squares indicate to scale NMFS one mile long Trawl Survey tows. They appear as squares to be visible at this scale. Commercial fishing vessel trawler tows range from 2-1/2 hours to 6 hours and are from 150 ft to 300 ft wide. The area in the circle with the arrow above is enlarged at right, Chart B. Data on these charts is provided by Gloucester Fishing Community Preservation Fund.

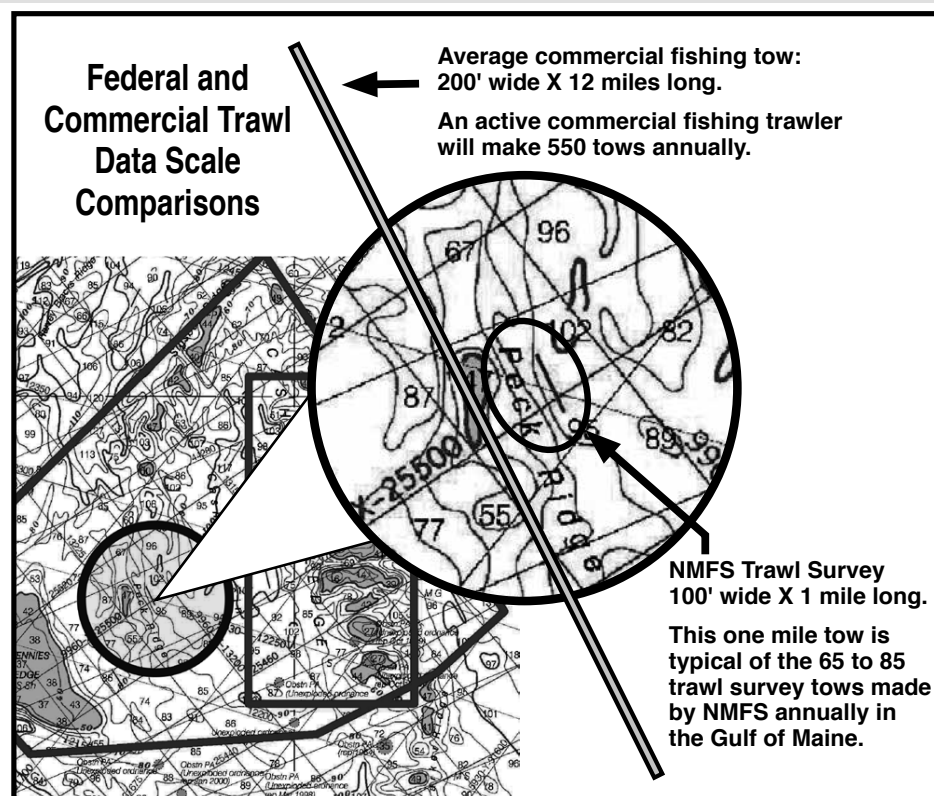


CHART B: The enlargement of a NMFS Trawl Survey tow - line within oval above. The scale and volume from this 100' x one mile NMFS Trawl Survey tow is compared to an average commercial vessel tow - 4-hour commercial tow would be 200' x 12 miles long. The thickness of the lines describing the tow widths are not to scale. The lengths are to scale. An active commercial trawler would make more than 550 trawler tows a year compared to the NMFS annual 65 to 85 GOM Trawl Survey tows.

good true abundance index.”

Giacalone advocated for better use of fishery-dependent data in the assessment.

But Michael Palmer, an assessment scientist with the Northeast Fisheries Science Center, said the assessment model does use fishery data.

“One of the bigger signals we see is truncation of size and age structure, both in the commercial and recreational fisheries,” Palmer said. “Over the last decade, especially in the last five years, we’ve had very poor recruitment of Gulf of Maine cod. There are consistent indications the Gulf of Maine cod population is in poor condition.” ↓

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Linda



"New-shells" Starred in Marketing Initiative

By Laurie Schreiber

ROCKPORT—Maine's new-shell, or soft-shell, lobsters are the focus of a new marketing initiative intended to expand markets and boost value.

New-shell lobsters are those that have molted out of their old, hard shells and are in the process of growing new, larger shells.

"That's obvious to you, not so obvious to people from away," said Weber Shandwick executive vice president of strategy Joe Frydl. "It means we have new news to share."

Weber Shandwick is the global marketing firm recently hired by the Maine Lobster Marketing Collaborative (MLMC), which succeeds the Maine Lobster Promotion Council. New marketing initiatives are fueled by a larger budget funded by increased surcharges on lobster harvester and dealer/processor licenses. In 2014, the new MLMC, established by the state legislature, had a budget of \$750,000. That doubled for 2015, and will go up to about \$2.2 million annually for the following two years, when the program must be reviewed by the legislature. By contrast, the promotion council's budget was less than \$400,000 in its final year.

Weber Shandwick executive vice president Patty Stone, food expert Michael Wehman, and Frydl shared their ideas for the new initiative at the Maine Fishermen's Forum in



Frank Gotwals, chairman of the Maine Lobster Marketing Collaborative's board of directors.

early March.

"It's not about demand for lobster generically," said Frydl. "Demand overall is healthy. People like lobster. We need to talk about Maine lobster specifically. We want to build our brand. We want to do that at the right time of year."

The meat of new-shell lobster is considered better than hard-shell lobster—sweeter and more tender. New-shells appear seasonally, and seasonality is an important driver these days among restaurants, Frydl said. Also important is "protein provenance."

"We need to position Maine new-shell lobster as a seasonal delicacy."

— Joe Frydl, Weber Shandwick executive vice president of strategy

"When you go to the supermarket, you see faceless pork. You look at the pork under the Saran wrap and it's not from anywhere," he said. "Same with chicken and beef. But the moment you attach a place name to it, it starts to mean something important. You know it's not an indeterminate, factory-raised, bland thing."

While seasonality and provenance are trendy, they have to translate into something meaningful for diners eating the food, he said.

"We need to position Maine new-shell lobster as a seasonal delicacy," he said.

For the start, Frydl said, the agency will focus outreach on a small group of chefs who influence

the wider restaurant scene, with the idea of expanding the northeast market.

The idea of provenance, he said, is about a sense of place and a way of life.

"There's a handful of people with a big influence of culinary trends" he said. "These chefs care a lot about seasonality and provenance."

Maine must distinguish itself from competitive pressures, Frydl said. He cited Alaska as a model for "juggernaut" fishing and marketing. "They're big, they're efficient, it's all about uniformity throughout the year, and they may or may not be sustainable," he said. "What does that mean for us? We have to be what they can never be. If you can't fix it, feature it. We're small. That's good." Maine lobster fishing is "deliberately inefficient. We're going to turn that into a positive when it comes to marketing. It has very much to do with being sustainable and seasonably special."

The idea of provenance, he said, is about a sense of place and a way of life, "the small towns and communities behind this industry, deliberately inefficient, and probably the oldest sustainable fishery in the entire world."

People outside of Maine love eating lobster, but they tend to think of it generically, he said. "There's a whole other level of lobster we want to generate excitement about. How does that translate into strategy? The lobster we all know is delicious. But there's a certain time of year when people who live in Maine get especially excited about eating lobster. From June to November, lobster in the cold, clear waters shed their old shells and grow new ones. That's when their meat is at its sweetest, most tender, most lobster. Maine new shells—everything else is just lobster."

Wehman said the strategy includes educating chefs about the product's seasonality and taste difference, as well as getting Maine lobster featured on menus in innovative ways.

"We want to inspire chefs with the superiority of lobster as an ingredient," Wehman said. "If we can get more people exposed to lobster as an ingredient in restaurants, that's going to influence consumers." The strategy includes expanding a partnership that began developing in 2014 with the Cul-



Weber Shandwick executive vice president Patty Stone.

nary Institute of America, as well as communications at key trade shows and through trade media.

MLMC executive director Matt Jacobson said that hiring Weber Shandwick produced considerable interest across the country.

We need to change our definition of quality.

— Matt Jacobson, MLMC executive director

"My email box started filling up," Jacobson said. "We had offers from the Los Angeles Dodgers, the Chicago Cubs. They're all willing to take our money to do a lobster promotion." But that sort of thing isn't in the offing right now. "We've got to make sure it fits with this strategy and not be chasing what looks like a cool opportunity."

"It's about making the dollar work hard," said Frydl. "If you think, 'Let's go bigger,' that money has to be dispersed much more thinly, so the impact you can have diminishes. We want to go for the good, smart, easy, solid wins. This is about building the right kind of momentum."

Jacobson noted there will be more money to expand the geography once the foundation work is done.

One fisherman wanted to know if the strategy was about moving the harvest's "weakest stuff."

"There needs to be a shift about what is 'weakest stuff,'" responded Jacobson. In the past, he said, "We've measured quality based on hardness of the shell, because it's easier to transport. That has nothing to do with taste. The people actually eating the lobster, their quality measure is very different from what our quality measure has been. So I think we need to change our definition of quality" to mean "there is a product, shedders, that are a lot better-tasting than hard shells, and a lot easier to work with." ↓

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LETTER

Salmon Debris Comes Ashore In Nova Scotia

To The Honorable Stephen McNeil, The Premier of Nova Scotia

Dear Premier McNeil,

For the second time in two years, the Jordan Bay open pen aquaculture sites have experienced the effects of super chill. Although your government and the industry are trying to downplay the losses in the media, reliable local sources report that there is almost 100 percent fish mortality. These reports are consistent with the fact that since the beginning of February, virtually no feeding has occurred at either Jordan Bay site.

The pens and nets were encased in ice for nearly a month. The sites were so severely damaged, large holes were visible in the netting and many pens collapsed from the weight of the ice.

Our entire community is now suffering the effects of the colossal failure of industrial open pen aquaculture. As reported to the NSDFA and DNR, salmon carcasses, grease and salmon pieces are washing up on kilometres of beaches, salt marshes, and people's property. Your government is expecting people to live with a magnitude of waste never seen before. What

other farming operation would be allowed to leave carcasses piled up on public lands?

There is no information available to the public on what plans, if any, the government has in place to protect our or other fishing communities from an environmental disaster of this scale. How will future lobster stocks, shellfish, Irish moss and eel harvests be affected? Each of these local, traditional fisheries has a long history of profitability and reliable employment.

When can the bay be safely used for recreation? Who is responsible for cleaning up this mess?

If your government cannot answer these questions, why would you allow restocking of these sites or the issuing of new leases?

We ask that, to prevent another predictable disaster, the Jordan Bay aquaculture leases be immediately revoked. The only way to effectively control this industry, and reduce the risk, is to put it on land. ♪

Sincerely,

Sindy Horncastle, 1-902-875-4771

Marilyn Moore, 1-902-875-2541

Jordan Bay, NS



Grand Manan, Canada. Ice bound salmon pen crushed by ice and driven ashore by tides.

Ariane Benham photo

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Forum auctioneer Dennis Damon driving up the price of Forum coffee mugs. Prices settled in at \$100 each. The mugs brought in about \$2,000 for the Forum scholarship fund.



"The Mug" in question. Jenny Bichist, Purseline Bait, had these made as a scholarship fundraiser. They were going slow at her show booth but took off when she sent a few cases to the auction.



All photos
Fishermen's Voice

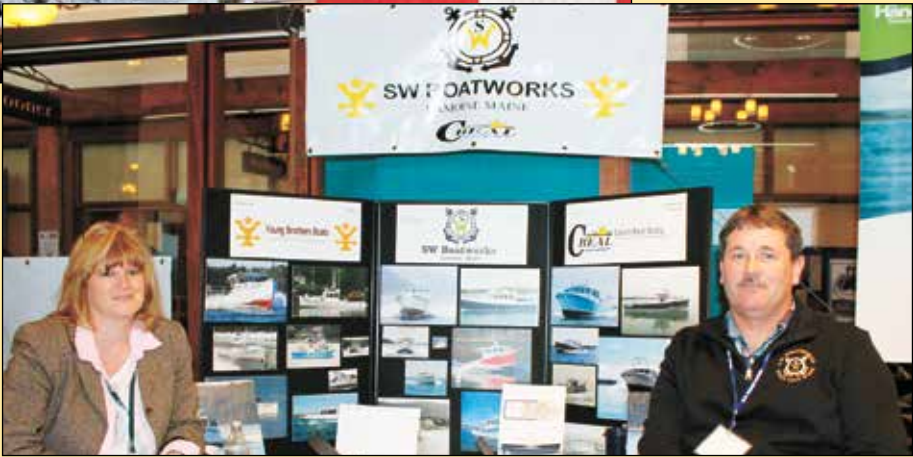
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Building a Wooden Lobster Boat

John's Bay Boat Company, Part II

Peter Kass has had a life-long interest in wooden boats. Kass still builds one boat at a time. The building methods might be called im-

proved traditional. Some of his crew have been with him for decades.

This photo essay highlights some of the steps in an ages-old building process, requiring high level skills in engineering, intuition, architec-

ture, materials, tools, and practice.

Thanks to Walt Barrows, a photographer and admirer of Kass's work, for granting the use of his photos. The boat in the photos was built in the winter of 2014-2015.



The first mold in place on the keel. Measurements taken off the keel (aft) position it properly. The wood braces from the upper left and right sides of the mold to the keel are nailed to hold the mold in place.



The first seven of the twelve molds tacked in place. On this 46 footer they are about 40" apart. The keel is set up to sit as it would in the water. The waterline will then be level. The molds are squared to the keel and then made plumb.



An important detail in a wooden boat are stop waters. These white cedar dowels are driven through holes wherever a keel seam, the joint between two parts of the keel, crosses the rabbet, the notch into which the hull's planks are set. The stop waters swell to block passage of water through the keel seam into the boat. The line of the keel seam may be visible here at a steep angle to the left of the white stop waters being saun flush with the rabbet.



After all the molds are in place, ribbands are screwed to the molds to create a surface against which the ribs of the hull will be bent. The molds and the ribbands together are the form the hull will take it's shape from. After the ribs are bent in to place, the ribbands are gradually removed as the planking is done.



White oak ribs, 1-1/2" x 2-1/2", are heated for two hours in a steam box until pliable. Hustling them to the installation point before they cool is important.



The lower end of the hot rib is driven into the pocket slot in the keel. Standing on the rib and pulling down on the end presses it against the lower ribbands first while it is being clamped to the ribbands.

More BUILDING PHOTOS on page 22



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The B Word

By Nicholas Walsh, PA

A bankruptcy filing gives a person or business a stay (stop) on debt collection, discharge of many debts, and a chance to reorganize. It can be a lifeline for a debtor at the end of his rope, for as soon as the bankruptcy petition is filed, all debt collection actions must cease. That includes phone calls, letters demanding payment, and court actions, including foreclosure. Fishermen and farmers have the benefit of a special kind of filing, about which more below.

There are two fundamental types of bankruptcy filings. In one type (characterized under the bankruptcy code as "Chapter 7"), the bankruptcy estate may sell some of the debtor's assets and use the money to pay creditors. In the second type (Chapter 11, 12 and 13), the debtor undertakes to stretch out and reduce debts, without the need to liquidate assets to pay creditors.

The first type, Chapter 7, is far and away the more common. In 2014, in Maine, of 2,094 total bankruptcy filings, 83 percent were Chapter 7 liquidations.

For the consumer, the cost of a simple Chapter 7 is around \$1,500, and it is typically over and done in a matter of a few months, without fuss. A Chapter 11, 12 or 13 bankruptcy may and often does convert to a Chapter 7 when the reorganization plan fails, perhaps due to an overly optimistic income projection.

Chapter 11, 12 and 13 bankruptcies are expensive relative to a Chapter 7, and they tend to be drawn out. Twelve years later, the Great Northern Paper bankruptcy of 2003 still chugs along, resolving a few final disputes, liquidating a few hard-to-value assets and so on; the bankruptcy estate's legal fees are well over \$1 million.

The concept of a "bankruptcy estate" is important to understand. When a person files for bankruptcy, he or she (the "debtor") loses control, to a lesser or greater extent, over his or her assets. Those assets become part of the bankruptcy estate, overseen by the bankruptcy judge, assisted by an appointed bankruptcy trustee. As a practical matter, so long as matters go smoothly and there is no funny business, the court's and the trustee's involvement will be minimal, almost non-existent. However, if the trustee believes the debtor has failed to disclose assets or is paying favored creditors under the table, the trustee and the court may become very involved indeed.

In any bankruptcy there are classes of creditors, and some get treated much better than others. The clearest distinction is between the "secureds" and the "unsecureds." An example of a secured creditor is a bank that loaned a business money, with the loan secured by a mortgage on business (non-home) real estate. If Tom files bankruptcy, the bank may ask for and will almost certainly get the bankruptcy court's permission to sell the real estate and use the proceeds to pay down or pay off the mortgage. On the other hand, suppose a couple of years before the bankruptcy Tom borrowed \$100,000 from his brother-in-law, with no security, just a promissory note. Tom's brother-in-law is an unsecured creditor, and in the typical Chapter 7 the unsecureds are lucky to get pennies on the debt dollar. This is exactly why, in lending, we pay such close attention to security for the loan, not just the paperwork, but the fair market value of the collateral as well.

Farmers and fishermen have the great advantage of being able to file a reorganization bankruptcy under Chapter 12.

Taxes, both state and federal, can be discharged in bankruptcy, if the taxes have been due for more than three years, and if an honest return was timely filed for the taxes due. There are variations and this is a complex topic.

A note on home mortgage foreclosures in bankruptcy. To avoid foreclosure, many homeowners will, after filing for bankruptcy, "reaffirm" the obligation to the bank, agreeing to pay the mortgage loan despite the bankruptcy. With the unsecured debt (credit cards, medical bills, trade debt etc.) discharged, the homeowner now has the cash flow to pay the mortgage. Saving the family home in this manner is a common reason people file bankruptcy. Reaffirmation can also be used to keep a vehicle or any other loan collateral.

In most consumer bankruptcies, the creditors get nothing or almost nothing, because of laws protecting many of the typical consumer's assets. Oddly, although bankruptcy is a creature of federal law, and is heard in a federal court, these protections ("exemptions") are for the most part found in state law and they vary greatly from state to state.

In Maine, assets in a retirement account are, to a great extent, protected. So, generally, are household furnishings. There are other protected assets: \$400 in cash, \$5,000 in a car, \$5,000 in tools of the trade, and "the debtor's interest in one boat, not exceeding 46 feet in length, used by the debtor primarily for commercial fishing." Just as with a house, if there's a vessel mortgage, the bank can and will sell the boat toward satisfaction of the loan. On the other hand, if the fisherman owns the boat free and clear, or if the boat has value in excess of the loan balance, the value is exempt from creditors.

A short list of unprotected "non-exempt" assets – assets which may be used to pay creditors – includes ATVs, snowmobiles, extra vehicles, valuable collections, non-residential real estate including camps, brokerage accounts, and bank accounts.

The exemption of most importance to many consumers is for equity in the home. Maine provides that \$47,500 of the equity in a person's home cannot be reached by creditors. If the consumer is 60 years of age or older, or is disabled, or resides in the home with minor dependents, the exemption rises to \$95,000. You can have but one home: if you own a house and a camp, only one gets the exemption.

Florida and Texas have no limit to the exemption one can claim in the home, and millionaires smelling trouble commonly head to those states and buy a \$20 million place and move in. That way they can sell the home after receiving a bankruptcy discharge, leaving them a few bucks to rub along on.

There is an important detail here, of great importance to the average consumer. A mortgage lender does not have to respect the home equity exemption. If a bank loaned money secured by a mortgage on a residence, the bank may sell the home toward satisfaction of the debt, without any concern for the \$47,500 or \$95,000 exemptions. But if there is no mortgage, or if the home's value significantly exceeds

the mortgage loan balance, \$47,500 or \$95,000 of that equity will be exempt from creditors.

Farmers and fishermen have the great advantage of being able to file a reorganization bankruptcy under Chapter 12. Under Chapter 12, mortgage lenders and other secured creditors must be paid, over time, the value of the collateral pledged for the debt, but any balance owed in excess of the value of the loan's collateral can be treated as unsecured debt, and unsecured debt is generally paid little or nothing in Chapter 12 cases. That means if you owe the bank \$300,000 on a boat mortgage, but the boat is now worth \$100,000, you can discharge \$200,000 of the loan balance and pay the \$100,000 over time. Another great advantage of Chapter 12 is that payments on that \$100,000 can be stretched out for years, often with reduced interest.

If the fisherman owns the boat free and clear, the value is exempt from creditors.

In bankruptcies there is a 90-day "look back" period. Transactions occurring within the 90 days before filing can, generally, be unwound. For insider transactions the look-back period is a year and sometimes more. So if in anticipation of bankruptcy you quitclaim your share in the house to your wife, let some time pass before you file – and talk to a lawyer, please.

A final word. In working with a bankruptcy attorney it is really important to be forthcoming and truthful. If you forget to list a debt in the bankruptcy petition the debt may not be discharged. And every year people try to hide assets from the bankruptcy court and every year people do hard time in federal prison for the crime. The temptation to hide assets representing years of labor is powerful, but it's a mistake.

Nicholas Walsh is an attorney practicing in Portland. He may be reached at (207) 772-2191, or at nwalsh@zwi.net.

Vertical Lines—Whale Rules Comment Deadline

NOTICE OF AGENCY RULE-MAKING PROPOSAL

AGENCY: Department of Marine Resources

CHAPTER NUMBER AND TITLE: Chapter 75. Protected Resources. Proposed Rulemaking.

CONCISE SUMMARY:

This proposed rule making addresses the federal vertical line regulations (otherwise known as the "whale rules"), which were published by National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) on June 27, 2014, and which go into effect in Maine on June 1, 2015. This rule making is necessary for consistency and compliance with the federal requirements of the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan (ALWTRP) Final Rule in accordance with the Marine Mammal Protection Act and the Endangered Species Act. With the new whale rules, there will be a minimum number of lobster traps per trawl based on the different lobster zones and distance from shore to reduce the number of buoy lines in the water column. The various changes apply to areas of Maine's Pocket Waters, inside the Maine Sliver Area and Federal Waters. The Department is seeking to adopt additional gear marking, a new 6 mile line, minimum trawl lengths and some island buffers in regulation for compliance and consistency with the federal whale rules.

THIS RULE WILL NOT HAVE A FISCAL IMPACT ON MUNICIPALITIES.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY: 12 M.R.S. §6171

PUBLIC HEARING: April 6, 2015. Natural Resource Service Center, 6 Beech Street, Room 106, Hallowell. 6:00 pm.

DEADLINE FOR COMMENTS: April 16, 2015

To ensure consideration, comments must include your name and the organization you represent, if any. Please be aware that any risk of non-delivery associated with submissions by fax or email is on the sender.

AGENCY CONTACT PERSON: Sarah Cotnoir (207) 624-6596

Mail Written Comments to: Department of Marine Resources, attn: K. Rousseau, 21 State House Station, Augusta, Maine 04333-0021.

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Right Whale Habitat Protection Proposed for Entire Gulf of Maine

By Laurie Schreiber

ROCKPORT—For the past eight months, Maine's lobster industry has been in a respite from the past 20 years of dealing with the process of making whale-protection rules.

The respite recently ended.

In June 2014, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) decided on a requirement to increase the minimum number of traps per trawl, based on area fished and miles fished from shore, with some exceptions. The goal is to reduce the number of vertical lines, thereby lowering the risk of entangling adult whales, which frequent the Gulf of Maine to feed.

NMFS is also requiring a seasonal closure for trap/pot fisheries in Cape Cod Bay and the Outer Cape from Jan. 1 to April 30; increasing the size and frequency of required gear-marks for both trap/pot and gillnet fisheries, intended to make identification of the type of fishing gear involved in an entanglement easier.

The measures become effective June 1, 2015.

Maine's lobster industry was closely involved in the development of the vertical line rule, with industry leaders instrumental in obtaining certain exemptions from the trawling-up requirements. Inside a coastwide exemption line drawn up with industry input, Maine's lobster fishermen are exempt from the federal rule. A secondary line was drawn that created a so-called "sliver" area, where fishermen must fish pairs. There are a number of "pocket" and buffer areas around islands

that, although they're located in federal waters, fall under the state exemption.

"That was huge," Maine Lobstermen's Association executive director Patrice McCarron told folks at the Maine Fishermen's Forum in early March. For example, Mount Desert Rock is in an area of federal water that is designated for trawls of five traps. But the industry was able to get pairs there.

The changes by Zones

In general, Zones A, B, and C, along the eastern half of the coast, must fish pairs in state waters that are outside the exemption line, triples at 3-6 miles, 5s at 6-12 miles, and 15s at 12-plus miles.

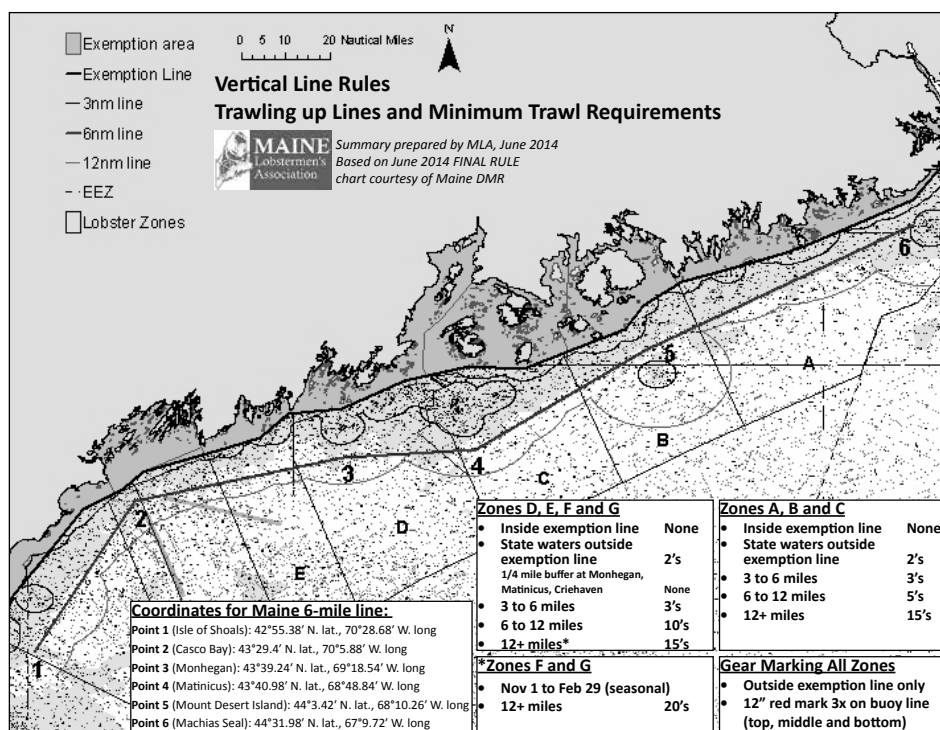
The proposed expanded whale habitat area comprises the entire Gulf of Maine.

Zones D, E, F, and G must fish pairs in state waters outside the exemption line, with quarter-mile buffers at Monhegan, Matinicus, and Cribhaven islands; triple at 3-6 miles, 10s at 6-12 miles, and 15s at 12-plus miles. Zones F and G are further required to fish 20s at 12-plus miles from Nov. 1 to Feb. 29.

McCarron said the industry has safety concerns about fishing 15- and 20-trap trawls.

The process of developing the vertical line rule came on the heels of implementation of the 2009 sinking groundline rule.

Now, NMFS is proposing to ex-



This chart shows the minimum trawling-up requirements under the vertical line rule implemented in 2014. Chart courtesy of Maine Lobstermen's Association.

pand critical habitat for endangered North Atlantic right whales, "which was a holy smokes, Batman, take your crayon and color everything in," as McCarron put it. The proposed expanded area comprises the entire Gulf of Maine.

NMFS announced the proposed rule on Feb. 13.

"The rule, issued pursuant to a court-approved settlement agreement, would expand the critical habitat to roughly 29,945 square nautical miles, and include northeast feeding areas in the Gulf of Maine/Georges Bank region and calving grounds from southern North Carolina to northern Flor-

ida," NMFS said. The proposed northern critical habitat areas include foraging areas. A proposed southern habitat area includes supports calving and nursing. North Atlantic right whales are critically endangered, numbering about 450 individuals.

McCarron said the MLA has reached out to the Department of Marine Resources and will be talking with NMFS.

"This is a problem," she said. "They say it won't affect fishing. I don't believe them. We'll try to coordinate a singular voice coming from Maine saying, 'This is not okay.'" ↓

Lobstermen's Town Meeting Covers Ocean Health

By Mike Crowe

Among the topics at the annual Lobstermen's Town Meeting in St. John's, New Brunswick, were finding ways to solve labor problems for large-volume lobster processors, ocean health, product quality and marketing. The meetings, organized by the Maine Lobster Institute and held in alternating years in Maine and New Brunswick, bring together the U.S. and Canadian lobster industries to focus on key contemporary issues.

Seasonal demands for labor creates a need for lobster processors to juggle and innovate in order to keep as many employees through slow seasons, which means they have enough help during the surge in lobster harvests. Canadian processors close for one month and the Fair Trade Lobster Company in Gouldsboro closes for three months. The company is working to develop new products that will extend the season. Fair Trade Lobster's labor problem has been in finding enough local housing for its 125 employees.

The town had sought for a few years to get a new business to reopen on the property that had housed a sardine cannery for a century. Lobster dealer and longtime Gouldsboro selectman Dana Rice said available housing in the area



The Lobstermen's Town Meeting had about 80 attendees from Canada and the U.S. Most fishermen were from Canada. Many could not travel on Friday because of snowy weather. Both countries had scientists, marketing managers, politicians and lobstermen in attendance.

is very tight. "It's a positive problem to have 125 desperately needed jobs, but not enough housing for these new employees. Many of the former Stinson Cannery employees have retired and still live in the area. New employees either drive long distances to their new job or deal with inadequate or expensive housing."

Spiros Tourkakis, an owner at Fair Trade Lobster, said housing is a major problem for the company and they had considered building some housing for employees.

In New Brunswick, Tourkakis said, his problem is finding labor

and a stable payscale. Canada has labor laws that address seasonal industries demands for temporary employees. The temporary labor pool is supported by immigration laws. The Canadian lobster processing industry is attempting to change regulations that will more effectively enable these companies to tap that labor resource. Minimum wages can also vary from one area to the next.

The participants were asked to give their definition of a healthy ocean and those responses covered a wide range. One audience participant, after hearing descriptions

of the problems carbon loading and climate change had on the oceans, likened it to a human who has eaten poorly, getting inadequate sleep and abusing alcohol and drugs for a long time.

One way to bring ocean acidity back to a normal level would be with a 4-billion-pound Alka Seltzer tablet.

Maine Senator Chris Johnson outlined the presentation on ocean health he submitted to the governor and Maine legislature. Johnson said it is important to get policy makers involved. "There are others pumping carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, but the U.S. is the bad guys in this and needs to do better with energy policy. We need to be more serious about alternative energy development and working with farmers to control runoff," said Johnson. (to see all of Senator Johnson's Ocean Health presentation go to: www.maine.gov/legis/opla/Oceana-cidificationreport.pdf OR link to it from fishermensvoice.com)

After the Ocean Health presentation, lobsterman David Cousens

See MEETING on page 21

REMEMBER from page 1

ephone bills, placed there to pay for the costs of the war, was abolished.

And as much as people remember Teddy Roosevelt and his Rough Riders, it is the sinking of the Battleship Maine in Havana Harbor on February 15, 1898, that resounds the loudest. But what was the Maine doing there, and what caused its destruction? The former is easily answered, the latter requires more discussion.

It was always a matter of course for United States warships to make friendly visits to ports of all the countries of the world. Up until the outbreak of the Cuban Revolution early in 1895, U.S. ships of war were frequent visitors to Cuban ports. But when the revolution broke out, prompted by Spain's mistreatment of Cuban nationals, President Cleveland suspended these goodwill visits for fear that Spain would view it as threatening to their authority.

Cleveland's successor, President McKinley, however, reversed his predecessor's policy and contacted Spanish authorities, telling them of his decision. McKinley wanted U.S. ships to once again visit Cuban ports as a gesture of good will. Spain agreed and even offered to send Spanish ships to U.S. ports as a sign of their wish for continuing peace.

And so it was that the battleship Maine entered the harbor at Havana on January 24, 1898. Spanish authorities were aware of the Maine's mission and greeted her with salutes and ceremonial visits.

Not everyone viewed the Maine's visit to Havana as a simple courtesy call, though. It was plain to everyone in America, Cuba and Spain that United States interests, including not only commercial interests but also American citizens, were imperiled because of the ongoing insurrection and the steadily-eroding attitude of Spain toward America.

The Maine's presence in Cuba signaled different things to different people. The Cubans saw it as evidence of American sympathy for their cause. American citizens believed that the Maine's visit to Havana was a sign of a changing attitude of the national government toward Spain's growing threat to American lives and property and

the Spanish people regarded the Maine's presence as a real threat to Spain and a sign of America aligning with the Cuban insurgents.

Virginius Massacre

Tension between the United States and Spain was nothing new. Twenty-five years prior to the Maine coming to Havana, the Spanish gunboat Toledo, after an eight-hour chase, captured the United States-registered sidewheel steamer Virginius. Originally put in service as a Confederate blockade-runner during the U. S. Civil War, the Virgin was captured by a U.S. vessel. In 1870 she was sold to an agent of the Cuban junta (this was during an earlier Cuban revolution, 1868 through 1878), her name changed to Virginius and put to use as a "filibuster," a term then used for speedy, blockade runners.

The Virginius was the most daring of her class and made numerous landings in Cuba, delivering arms and supplies to the insurgents. But she had seen the last of her filibustering upon being taken by Spain.

*Officially, nobody knows
for sure what caused the
explosion.*

The Virginius was, despite her never being berthed in United States waters, a vessel of U.S. registry, with an American captain and a crew composed of a mixture of American and Cuban citizens. Despite showing her American papers and American colors, the Virginius' captain was told that his ship was a pirate ship and her flag was torn down and replaced with a Spanish flag.

Immediately upon reaching Santiago de Cuba, all 155 men from the Virginius were thrown in prison and a court martial was immediately convened. Most of the prisoners were condemned to death by firing squad and the first executions took place on November 4. The four victims included a British citizen. The men were shot, beheaded, their heads displayed on pikes and their torsos trampled by horses.

More executions took place on November 8, followed by 37 more being executed on November 13. Among the 37 were the officers and crew of Virginius, along with

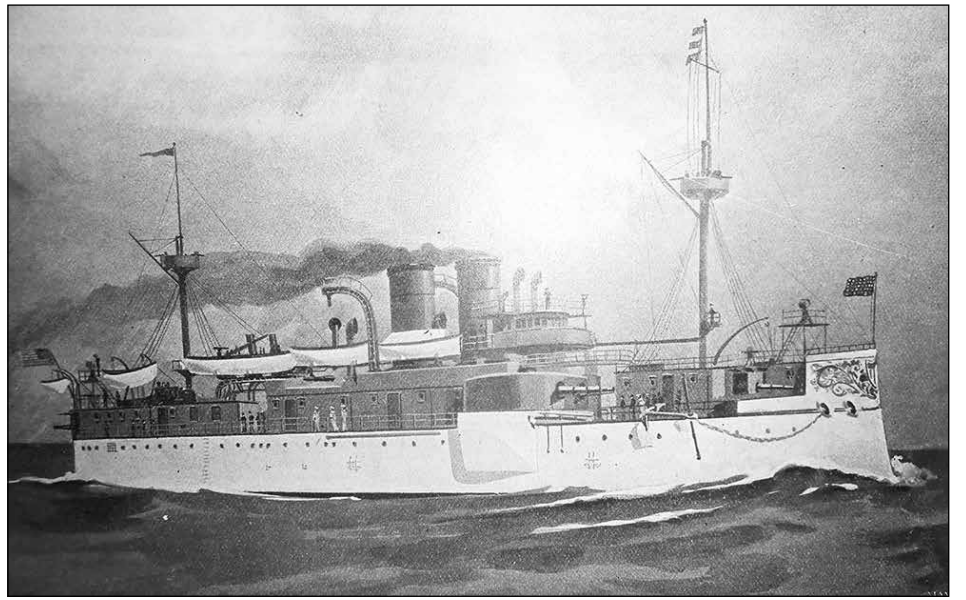


Illustration of the US Battleship Maine. When an explosion sank the Maine in Havana Harbor in 1898, 266 lives were lost, 200 were recovered and 76 were identified. A confirmed cause of the explosion has not been established. Laid down by New York Naval Ship Yard on October 17, 1888. (More Maine specs at fishermensvoice.com)

American citizens. The outcome of this was a near-war situation, with actual hostilities being averted only by extreme diplomacy. And yet, Americans never forgot the Virginius incident. With this background in mind, we return to the Maine's visit to harbor at Havana.

Tremendous Explosion

The Maine entered Havana Harbor at sunrise on January 25, 1898, and met the harbor master, who directed her to a specified anchoring place. Three weeks later, at 9:40 p.m. on February 15, the battleship was rocked by a terrific explosion which destroyed the entire forward portion of the ship. This had the effect of killing 264 crew members and 2 officers. Those who were not immediately killed as a result of the blast were trapped in the twisted wreckage and drowned when the hull immediately sank.

Spanish authorities reacted by opening all area hospitals to survivors. Neighboring vessels as well as ship's boats of the Spanish cruiser Alphonse XII rendered immediate aid. The Spanish offered tributes and great sympathy for the victims of the disaster.

Not forgetting the tragedy of the Virginius, the American people immediately blamed Spain for the Maine's destruction. However, the American government laid no responsibility on anyone and instead, proceeded with caution, launching a Naval Court of Inquiry. This also allowed for a similar course of

investigation by the Spanish. The Spanish investigation, to no one's surprise, did not blame Spain for the Maine's sinking.

The American Court of Inquiry released its findings on March 21. One of its conclusions, duly transmitted to President McKinley read: "The state of discipline on board and the condition of her magazines, boilers, coal bunkers and storage compartments are passed in review, with the conclusion that excellent order prevailed and that no indication of cause for an internal explosion existed in any quarter."

The court also concluded that: "The loss of the Maine was not in any respect due to fault or negligence on the part of any of the officers or members of her crew; That the ship was destroyed by the explosion of a submarine mine, which caused the partial explosion of her forward magazines; and that no evidence has been obtainable fixing the responsibility for the destruction of the Maine upon any person or persons."

On March 21, the House passed a bill for the relief of survivors and victims of the Maine tragedy. Surviving officers and men were awarded an amount not to exceed one year's sea pay and a sum equal to one year's pay was awarded to legal heirs of dead victims.

Spain Blamed

So while the Naval Court of Inquiry did not assign blame for sinking the Maine on Spain or any other

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entity, the American people were not of a similar train of thought. In the minds of the average citizen, the responsibility for the brutal and unprovoked explosion that sunk the Maine lay squarely upon the shoulders of the Spanish government.

The April 14 issue of the popular magazine *Leslie's Weekly* contained strong language blaming Spain. "The Maine was in a Spanish harbor on a peaceful errand. Its location was fixed by the Spanish authorities, and if a mine was planted in the harbor, it could have only have been planted by the Spaniards."

The Spanish government, however, was conciliatory and told President McKinley that it would, "do all that the highest honor and justice required in the matter of the Maine." Spain also consented to arbitration by an impartial body, the result of which Spain would accept in advance.

Despite all this, feelings ran high and war began with Congress authorizing the President of the United States to call the United States Army and Navy into service.

Maine Revisited

The Naval Board of Inquiry's findings did not put a rest to speculation as to the cause behind the Maine's destruction. Indeed, it only marked the starting point of what would continue, unabated, until the present time.

Immediately upon learning the official government stance on the cause, various groups and individuals began offering their own opinion. Speculation ran rampant, and for good reason. There were numerous possibilities and these weren't mentioned in the official report.

Might the mine that caused the external explosion have been planned by Spain? The Maine's mooring might have had a submerged mine floating just for that purpose. It took three weeks for the ship and the mine to connect.

Or, was a mine planted by a saboteur? There were many reasons why an individual or group would wish to destroy an American ship. Even the Cuban rebels themselves were viewed with a jaundiced eye. After all, there was no doubt that



The Battleship Maine crest and shield in Davenport Park. Davenport Park is at the corner of Main and Cedar Streets in downtown Bangor, Maine.

an attack on the Maine would inflame America's ire against Spain and thus bring America into the conflict. On and on it went.

And there were those who were firmly planted in the internal explosion camp. Although the official investigation declared that this was not a possibility, it was known that coal-burning ships were at risk of fire from spontaneous combustion of the bituminous coal used as fuel. And this coal was often stored close to the magazines of steam-powered battleships.

A slew of other internal causes were bantered about. Fire in the magazine itself, fire from flammable liquids and actual sabotage by someone aboard.

Those in the external explosion camp were upheld in their stance by reports from those aboard at the time who affirmed that they definitely heard two explosions. This would make sense, the outside explosion from the mine being the trigger to set off a secondary, larger explosion.

Second Investigation

In 1910, Congress authorized the raising of the Maine. This was in response to citizens calling for the victim's remains being brought back home to America. Also, the Maine's wreck posed a hazard to shipping and Cuba wanted it removed. So the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers tackled the project. They built a cofferdam around the Maine, which allowed them to pump out water, leaving the Maine exposed to the air and in a much better position for further investigation into the cause of the explosion.

The remains of the dead heroes were removed from the Maine for burial in Arlington National Cemetery. Water was then let into the cofferdam, the Maine refloated and, towed out to sea where with much ceremony, she was scuttled.

The Vreeland Board of 1911, after thorough perusal of the Maine's remains, concluded, as did the first board of inquiry, that the Maine was the victim of an external blast. But that still didn't explain who

was responsible for the blast.

The idea that Spain was directly responsible for sinking the Maine was accepted by most of the world, including the Cuban people. Cubans, until Fidel Castro came to power in 1959, believed that Spain was responsible for the explosion and that Cuban independence was a result of United States intervention in the cause of Cuban freedom. But Castro changed the plan and rewrote history, declaring that the United States deliberately blew up its own war ship, placing blame on Spain in order to justify its actions in Cuba.

Then in 1974, Admiral Hyman G. Rickover initiated a private investigation into the cause of the sinking of the Maine. His investigation, using records and information from previous investigations, concluded that spontaneous combustion of coal very close to the magazine was the culprit.

Private investigations continued. In 1998, National Geographic Magazine launched its own investigation. This time, investigators used computer models. The models indicated that a depression on the sea floor beneath the Maine's hull was indicative of a mine explosion. Others, including experts from Admiral Rickover's team, disagreed.

Finally, in 2002, the History Channel got into the act, presenting a documentary called "Death of the U.S.S. Maine." This used photos, history and naval experts and original information from the archives. The History Channel concluded that the explosion was caused by a fire in the coal bunker.

Given the continuing interest in what actually brought down the Maine, it seems likely that other investigations into the cause of the explosion will be forthcoming. Officially, nobody knows for sure what caused the explosion. And so the sinking of the Maine goes into the realm of folklore and conspiracy theories, right along with the Lincoln and Kennedy assassinations.

Maine Specifications

The Maine was 324 feet, 4 inches long, had a beam of 57 feet, a maximum draft of 22 feet, 6 inches and a displacement of 6,682 tons. ⚓

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Wear and Tear on Fishermen

By Sandra Dinsmore

Years of wear and tear from standing on a constantly moving platform and from lifting and moving heavy traps and cars eventually leave most lobster fishermen with aches, pains, and joints that need replacing. Vinalhaven fisherman Walter Day, 64, spoke for many when he said, "Constant pain wears you down; it wears you down terribly."

Fisherman after fisherman interviewed said that, when they were young and strong, they never considered their body's position in relation to the weight they were handling. Rockport, Mass., fisherman Bob Morris, 57, spoke for just about all when he recalled, "I just let fly because I was a testosterone-loaded kid who thought he was tougher than the world." Although Morris was quick to say that not all fishermen fall victim to the rigors of work at sea, he said, "I have watched friends get to the point where they crawl out of a skiff at the end of a day or slowly climb over the rocks to get back up on the wharf."

Point Judith, R.I., fisherman Peter Brodeur, 68, agreed, saying, "As they get older, you can tell the guys who have been on the boats the longest. It's like a bunch of cripples walking down the block. You use your body like a tool, and just like any tool, it will wear out."

Brodeur mentioned wear and tear to knees and hips from moving platforms, to backs from bending over from the waist trying to pull on things, to shoulders from repetitive action, and to wrists from banding lobster. He said a doctor once told him the banding tool is one of the worst tools ever designed, and that damage results from the action of closing the tool and from twisting the hand when pulling it off the lobster's claw. Fishermen have a term for the pain from using the banding tool—Bander's Cramp.

Day has had five hernia operations to correct damage from years of lifting traps and has trouble with his lower back from the repetitious action of pulling traps over the rail. Although his chiropractor

has suggested rigging the boat on both sides so Day could haul on one side one day and on the other side the next, Day doesn't think that would work, so when his back gets stiff and before real pain sets in, he takes the ferry to the mainland for a chiropractic adjustment.

"A boat that rolls a lot or pounds when going over the seas will really be hard on the hips and knees."

— John Drouin

For six years, Cutler fisherman John Drouin, 50, suffered constant pain from basal joint arthritis in his thumb due to overuse of the joint. This past December, Drouin had complex surgery to remove the offending bone and replace it with a tendon graft. Ten weeks later, he was still recovering.

Drouin has also had three surgeries for plantar fasciitis on each of his sore, aching feet and said the surgeries have helped tremendously. He thinks his foot problem could have developed from standing all day long.

He credits pain-free hips and knees to fishing in a good boat and advised, "A boat that rolls a lot or pounds when going over the seas will really be hard on the hips and knees."

Drouin blames his lower back problems on years of lifting heavy traps and said he is trying to teach his sons that, if they work together, the job will get done more quickly and with less effort.

Morris said most fishermen, when they hit their 50s, find themselves with at least one heart stent. He and Scituate, Mass., fisherman Fred Dauphinee, 73, have both had multiple heart surgeries and have stents.

Miranda J. Rogers, a medical student at Tufts University, in Boston, mentioned as a cause of heart problems, among other contributing factors, lack of exercise. Morris agrees and said he was taught in cardiovascular rehab that fishermen get stamina exercise—build-

ing strong muscles and working for long periods—but not enough or any valuable cardiovascular exercise. To strengthen his heart, Morris said that, along with a healthy diet, he must walk and raise his heart rate for no less than 30 minutes three times a week. He does not remember any of the fishermen with stents that he knows ever walking or getting any cardio exercise.

Lack of sleep hurts fishermen's health, too. "The way we have evolved in the Canadian lobster fishery," said Yarmouth, Nova Scotia, fisherman Ashton Spinney, 71, "the technology and the equipment that has come into being is light years ahead of where it was when I started." (Spinney has a big, wide boat, the stability of which he compares to riding in a Cadillac.) But along with the technology has come a big change in the industry: that of fishermen spending what Spinney calls an astronomical amount of hours on the water. Instead of going out at dawn and returning that afternoon as Canadian lobstermen used to do, he said, "It's nothing for them to stay out two or three days."

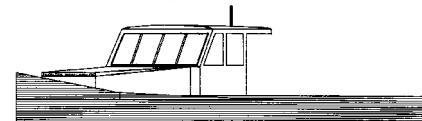
Fishermen are spending an astronomical amount of hours on the water.

— Ashton Spinney

If fishermen are on the water for that amount of time, Spinney said, they're only going to be able to sleep X number of hours. This means they have to have others aboard to take the wheel and give those fishermen down time. (A year ago, a Southwest Nova Scotia Lobster Fishing Area (LFA) 34 captain bragged that his crew had been ashore only seven hours during the entire month of December.) Fishermen were starting to have accidents from getting overtired. Spinney said, "They were falling asleep at the wheel. They were just pushing too hard." The Canadian government now requires that if a fisherman is out a certain number of hours, he must have a qualified person onboard to take over.

Every fisherman interviewed suggested hiring other fishermen to help spread out the work. "Many hands make the workload lighter," said Drouin. "To me, that is key. Doing this job with help will minimize work-related injuries."

The main risks associated with developing injuries from two-handed lifting, according to the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health [NIOSH] include bending, twisting, and repetitive motions such as frequent reaching and carrying. Other risks include leaning against hard surfaces or those with sharp edges, maintaining fixed positions for a long time, and lifting more than 50 pounds at a time over a period of eight hours.



Other suggestions from the fishermen interviewed include:

- Before strenuous activity, warm up: Do some slow stretches and move about. "When you don't warm up," Morris said he learned in heart rehab, muscles fragment and fray in minute amounts, adding up in time to cumulative damage.
- Carry traps parallel, not at 90 degrees, to your body. Carrying traps the wrong way puts the fulcrum on your lower back.
- Set up hauling stations so you do not reach too far outboard and you don't have to jerk in an unnatural position with every trap.
- If your knee hits the rail and grinds every time a trap comes over it, mount a padded section to that section of the rail. Near the hauling station some fishermen fiberglass a step into the chine of the boat.
- Consider using spinners; they will remove all twisted gangions, making hauling much easier.
- Instead of charging at jobs that propose difficulty, consider building a tool that might help make the work easier.
- Wear sunglasses when it's bright out. Sunburnt eyes speed up eye failure.
- Keep hands as warm and dry as possible. ↓



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Maine Lobster Boat Racing Association Meeting



Fishermen's Voice photo

The annual Maine Lobster Boat Racing Association meeting at the Fishermen's Forum slipped over the finish line in under 10 minutes in March. There will be races in 2015, but no dates were set. Gone are the days of standing room only high octane growling fest meetings over allowing blowers, aircraft fuel and token ornamental haulers. There was more comment down at the Samoset bar than at the meeting, where the voluble Stevie Johnson's response to queries about what he might be concocting under cover of darkness at his shop. All he had to say was "My lips are sealed." Stevie Johnson's lips are sealed?? It is either a

first or a coded preview of coming racing attractions of interest. The back story at the MLBRA meeting is that since Chris Byers has taken some time off to spend more time with his family, Scott Young of Winter Harbor will be organizing the Winter Harbor races this year. Now that the construction project on the Searsport waterfront is complete there will races in Searsport again this season.

Andy Gove's big Volvo repower will likely be turning a few heads on the circuit.

Watch the *Fishermen's Voice* hardcopies and online edition (fishermensvoice.com) for race schedules and evolving racing news updates. ♪

Capt. Mark East's Advice to the Careworn, Confused, Lovelorn and Other Outdoor People

Dear Mr. East,

Well, Christmas is over for another year and my husband in his inevitable, focused way gave me a new pair of waders...my last pair from 3 yrs. ago are still in the original box, unworn. He also put some kind of a fancy pistol with 3 boxes of ammo and another net of which I have 4 under the tree with my name. He did remember to give me a bottle of perfume, the wrong one!! I hate fishing and hunting and am happy he gets out from under my feet to go. I don't even like cooking the game. How do I get it through his thick skull.

Signed, Christmas Discouraged

Dear Christmas Discouraged,

Next Christmas wrap up about four frilly aprons, a few fry pans, some vegetable oil and a few feminine sprays in frilly paper for him.



Write: capmarke@gmail.com

Dear Capt,

I'm from Ohio and my husband is a deer hunter, an avid deer hunter and will drive great distances to hunt in new places. This year he was invited by a friend of a friend to hunt deer on land owned by a hunting club in Virginia. I was appalled to learn when he got back that they use dogs to chase the deer to hunters at particular stations. Why is this legal?

Signed, Poor Deer Feelings

Dear Poor Deer Feelings,

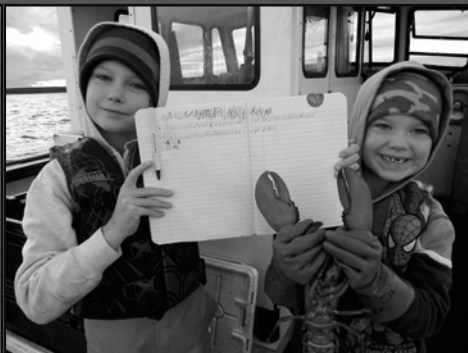
At first glance I can understand your feelings; however, if you could have seen where I imagine your "unfeeling" husband hunted, you could understand why dogs are used. Man can hardly crawl in much of that country with the brambles and honeysuckle so thick.

Secondly, if the deer population isn't kept in check, farmers pay the price.

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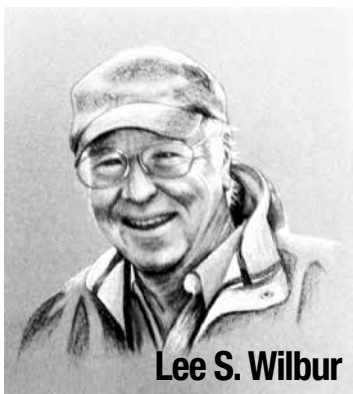
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Well-Thumbbed Cards

Quarter-century younger, when alarm clock would ring me from a warm bed and signal time to tie on the jeezless running clogs, step out in what memory seems was always freezing temps, at very least cold no matter the season, I'd wonder if reaching the big 7-0 was in my deck of cards. Already'd lost some twenty percent of classmates from High School. Time of life when health supplements of every description, prescription, and price jammed that set-aside kitchen cupboard, when most were tried for few weeks or months, then realized really weren't the panaceas TV ads, cocktail party friend's recommendations, and well-meaning doctors cracked them up to be. Still occasionally find a bottle tucked away, tablets lost color, kind of all melted together, marvel at expense and what they must surely cost now. Only one I take of the myriad has survived and I sometimes wonder if that's just a head thing.

This month, before Mike has perpetrated another issue of this now venerable publication upon a suspecting public, I will have recorded two extra years in the initial proposition replete with medical records of knee replacement, sciatica back operation, cancerous body part, usual aches, pains, loss of hair, loss of hearing (replaced with ringing titled by an innocuous name Tinnitus), muscle spasms in the night, spine requiring semi-annual alignment, few



Lee S. Wilbur

replaced teeth sculptured from which we built boat parts, all accompanied by friendly reminders of how I need to walk at least 50 miles a week to remain healthy (?).

Now, to be perfectly upfront, I'm not too overly burdened with belief in all this walking and gym stuff. I look at my uncle, "Skip" Parsons. Flirting with ninety, that's "90." Every time I see him, and never often enough with his significant other, Shirley, who's in mid 80s and you'd swear just left 60s, he tells me he's having to slow down a bit. Meaning, in his parlance, he'll take a break on the front porch perhaps twice a day from tending their quarter-acre garden, the raspberry patch, keeping the property looking like a spread in "House Beautiful," taking vegetables around to friends and neighbors, or collecting road kill for an indigenous bird they've befriended. Skip never stops. Always seems to have another project in mind. Something to look forward to. Friday nights, if the roads clear, they drive the fifty-odd miles to Brewer, dance at the singles club till coming on eleven, then drive home. He's been dealt a good hand. However, I've got to believe he played those the cards well.

Some ten years ago, when suspicion arose I just might turn the corner of 70, I decided I just might need a workshop. Then, thought occurred, needed place to put my

more-than-several-volume library. Oh, and a place of quietude where more unread articles could be devised would need consideration. Where paint would be daubed on canvas. Certainly not in AJ's living room, and the project began to take on a direction of its own. With tape measure in hand, drafting board in full swing, and reali-

I've got to believe he played those the cards well.

zation this was a one-man project (with occasional help when four hands were needed). Project was set in motion. Summers and falls, and then only few days a week were time available. More after retirement. Many several were 10- and 12-hour days. Nights inclusive, figuring next step or how to maneuver timbers into place alone. Always something to look forward to. Get done at the end of a day, probably used most muscles I owned and some I didn't recall. Felt great. Each step was an accomplishment. Stop. Look back. Enjoy the pride. Began to realize, perhaps this was what good aging, good health was about. Remaining active with body and the mind.

Every deck of cards, thankfully, is different. Several spend their days in intense exercise. Treadmill, biking 30 miles, swimming oceans. Others chart a course from chair to chair or chair to bed wherever the desired television resides. Exercise being a trip to Wal-Mart or the dining table. And, the beauty of it all. It's our choice. Longevity perhaps, and only perhaps, bows in the direction of the exercised. And, as a good friend and breakfast companion has mentioned several times, "I exercise not for trying to live longer,

but for the quality of life while I'm living." Yet, we all know or have heard of neighbors or the famous in terrific physical condition canceled out in prime of life. Pair of Aces, Full House, Dead Hand. Playing the dealt hand to the fullest, in my humble opinion, is really about all a human can expect to do and have some fun in the meantime.

And, along that rhumb line, for those with a few well-worn cards matching mine, I'm happy to report my latest martini recipe is gaining ground, been named "Lee-boy," and at least two bartenders have remembered the ingredients.....2 ozs. Good Vodka, Half cap of good Pinot Grigio, "Shaken, not Stirred" (Vigorously), with a rub around the rim of a cold martini glass and twisted, a peel (green only) of a fresh lime.

And, keeping the intake of good food in mind, we've been trying a few new directions in the rattled pans area, including this one with Italian simple in mind.

RECIPE

Find and keep a good olive oil on hand. Go to one of the new shops where you can sample and buy the one you like the taste of best. Use for special recipes.

Boil off some yellow or redskin potatoes and allow to cool. Slice desired number into approx. 3/16 slices. Mix in 2 tablespoons of the good oil, a tablespoon of rice vinegar (more if needed), and sprinkle with a few tablespoons of rather finely chopped basil, or chives, or green of spring onion. One only... experiment. And coming from a Maine boy who still loves Maine potatoes, this is not a travesty. They're delicious. ♪

Fair Winds and Good Roads
— Lee Wilbur

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MEETING from page 15

said, "Based on the presentation, it looks like we are at a tipping point. My fear is, we are going to reach a point of no return. We need to do a better job of educating fishermen and the public. When I was a kid, science was king. Now, if you don't like the science, you can pay someone to say that science isn't right."

Scientists pointed out that the northwest Atlantic is warming and becoming more acidic more quickly than any other place on earth. Ocean monitoring and establishing baselines were seen as high priorities.

Scientist Tim Bowden said one of the most troubling facts is the increased rate of climate change in the last 10 years. Bowden said, "One way to bring ocean acidity back to a normal level would be with a 4-billion-pound Alka Seltzer tablet. But even that would not address the other half of the carbon which is in the atmosphere." Bowden said that taking action now to mitigate climate change could result in noticeable progress. However, even ceasing use of coal and oil would not address the backlog of atmospheric carbon dioxide, he said.

Acidification is effecting the rate that lobster larvae pass through the early stages of development, which leaves them as prey for a longer period. The acidic saturation point is known for clams and corals, but not for lobster. Twenty-five years of settlement data showed both a surge lobster and a recent retraction was seen as an "early warning system" marker. This was just one unknown discussed in the context of market growth and development.

New strategies in marketing and handling lobster were factors

in developing industry strength through image and value. Marketing efforts by the Maine Lobster Marketing Collaborative include focusing efforts on changing the image of early-season lobster by referring to it as "new-shell lobster." Holden's company, Luke's Lobster, of Saco, Maine, has 13 higher-end restaurants on the East Coast and a lobster processing plant. Holden said terms such as "soft-shell," "shedders" and "bugs" diminish the image of the product. They are contrary to an image of a quality, desirable product that this grade of lobster needs in order to compete in the international marketplace.

Presenters said that leading seafood markets are in Europe, United States and Asia. They said that seafood consumer habits are changing. The trend in China is for people to order dinner online and pick it up on the way home from work. While there remains a large market for hard-shell live lobster in Asia, as markets there expand lobster product types are becoming more varied to serve wider market demands. The Boston Seafood Show in March was an indication that there are large foreign markets that are willing to pay for higher quality, presenters said.

"My fear is, we are going to reach a point of no return."

— David Cousens, lobsterman

Discussion also centered on the question of handling lobster, with the aim of ensuring the product's condition. This raised the question of boat price. Careful handling, presenters said, must occur throughout the lobster's transit. Transit points include the time the lobster



Grand Manan lobsterman Lawrence Cooke. "Show me the money," said Cooke to the call for better lobster handling practices. He said he would see none of the money from the effort. Maine lobsterman David Cousens said his co-op instituted better handling practices and realized higher profits. "It was not a lot of money, but enough to make it worth doing," said Cousens.

is taken from the trap, measured, put in a tank, then a tote, off-loaded to a wharf, stored, then loaded on a truck that may not be refrigerated for what may be a long, rough ride. Careful handling throughout these and any other hazards in the supply chain can reduce stress on an animal that had spent its life before being caught in cold water on the ocean floor, presenters said.

"Show me the money," was Grand Manan lobsterman Lawrence Cooke's response. Cooke said to take on additional tasks related to specialized handling would add time and labor to a fishing schedule with none to spare. He said he believed fishermen would get no financial reward for their effort. Cooke said dealers and processors would reap the benefits of fishermen's efforts in this area.

Spiros Toukakis, said he understood the concerns of lobstermen regarding the demands of additional

efforts for financial rewards that they would not soon see. However, he said he was confident that, in time, this effort to create overall better value would result in higher prices for lobstermen. This was a tough sell as the topic resurfaced throughout discussions of improved handling. Speakers noted that stress is a cause of die-off in caught lobster. In addition, they said, poor handling that results in the loss of a leg or claw, or in a cracked shell, can immediately convert a top-grade hard-shell lobster to a bottom-grade product that will go to a processor, not a dinner plate in Hong Kong.


Other threats to lobster health led to a discussion by Lobster Institute Executive Director and marine biologist Bob Bayer, describing current research on the effects of modern, high-speed haulers on lobster survival. Bayer said high-speed ascent through the water column has detectable impacts on lobster. He suggested evidence of this could be seen by hauling lobster at slower and higher speeds, placing them in separate crates and checking on them a week later. Mortality is significantly higher for lobster that came up through the water at high speed, he said.

Bayer said scientists detected a fatal bacteria in some of the lobsters that were dying. Eventually, biopsies discovered a condition they named "jelly heart" in lobster hauled at high speed. The bacteria enters the heart effectively collapsing it. The result is a smaller gelatinous, low functioning heart. He explained that high-speed travel up through the changing pressure in the water column makes the lobster's gut permeable and the bacteria enters their system eventually killing them. ⚡

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BOAT BUILDING from page 13



While one crew member forces down the hot rib from the inside (above), Jeff Hanley clamps the rib to a ribband.



Ribs bent into a tight radius are split for half their upper length. The difference between the inner and outer radius is visible in the the ends of the two halves being clamped to a ribband. This technique avoids stress cracks in the rib later.



Several floors (dark red), each a unique shape based on the shape of the hull section, are attached to the keel. Here Sam Jones is drilling holes for driving metal drift pins that fasten the floor to the keel. Later planks will be fastened to the lower edges of the floors. The shaft passes through the floor being drilled. The two floors under Sam, the two in front of him with cutouts for the engine and the one behind him will carry the two parallel 14' x 4-1/2" x 7" white oak engine beds.



Andy Dickens, left and Jeff Hanley in the final stages of getting the molds, ribbands and ribs in place before planking begins.



At this angle the only part of the keel visible now is the stem in the background. The molds, ribbands, ribs and red floors are all in position. Note the stabilizer braces nailed to the molds and the walls left and right.

P.S. The boat yard dog at John's Bay Boat Company noted that her name was misquoted in Part I. It is Phoebe, not Fifi !!

**NEXT MONTH PART III,
PLANKING THE HULL**

Maine Boatbuilders Show at Portland

The 3-day boatbuilders show in Portland, Maine drew crowds in spite of and maybe because of the weather on the third weekend in March. Boat owners and enthusiasts, anticipating the possibility of spring weather that will enable the launch of or purchase of a boat, wove their way through the options at the show. Those who didn't leave with a boat



Heavy aluminum one off.



would have found plenty of the stuff boats always seem to need. The show is unique in its range of vendors – small wooden skiffs and big wooden sailboats, fiberglass power boats and yachts, fishing boats, tool and engine dealers, antique tools, navigation charts, aluminum boats, maritime books, maritime crafts, videos, marine suppliers and of course, surf boards.



When is a table a boat?



Glass over cold molded with power to spare – Middleton Boatworks.



Hot Tuna.



All kinds of woodworking hand tools – Jeff Pearson Antique Tools.

BACK THEN

River Driver

A river driver, peavey in hands, on the East Branch of the Penobscot, about 1901. Fred Sewall, a woodsman of the era, looked at this photo and declared that the driver's woolen shirt was scarlet, his hat a Stetson. Dry socks nest in the back pockets of his heavy woolen pants; pant cuffs are gatered to keep them from catching on his sharp boot caulks. A generation earlier, C.W. Willis had already described this fellow perfectly:

The other day I fell in with one of those sunburnt, flannel-shirted young fellows who are so familiar to Bangorians—a river driver—and had a short chat with him. He was of a muscular build and carried with him that hearty manner peculiar to the Penobscot rivermen, and he talked quite intelligently, if unduly loud, as he punched the floor full of little holes with his caulked shoes. To one unused to such things a river driver's costume looks very uncomfortable—the heavy trousers and shirt, woolen socks, and ponderous shoes or boots. He is always wet, apparently, even after he has been off the logs for days. It is his natural condition. "Oh, that's to let the water out and keep my feet from scalding," he replied. River driving he thought was a pretty tough job until one got used to it, but after initiation it was not so bad, and a man who had driven logs for a little while wants to do nothing else. The [Bangor] Industrial Journal, Aug. 7. 1885.

Gerald Averill's description of drivers on the Penobscot a generation later took a different slant:

The younger men who followed the camps and rivers had just two thoughts in mind and just two topics of conversation—rum and women. You might hunt the world over and fail to find a breed to compare with them in sheer blasphemy, profanity, lechery and drunkenness

It was generally believed at this time that a youth could not rightly call himself a man until he had contracted a good case of gonorrhea, and there was no question as to the manly status of most of them. They were strong and they were tough and they had to be. A man must be practically indestructible in order to work up to his waist in icy water while suffering

from an active venereal disease. They wrapped themselves in dirty rags and worked in the cold water all day, slept in their wet clothes all night on a thin padding of brush, and swore to God they would rather have it than a bad cold. They rolled her high wide and handsome until their late thirties when they would feel the first twinge of rheumatism. Their kidneys would begin to give difficulty, stomach trouble would make itself known and they would curse the cooks for putting saltpeter in the food.

In the early 1900s, Fred Sewall, a tall and strapping young woodsman from Island Falls, was returning home from Bangor when he mistakenly boarded one of two cars that had been reserved for drivers bound for Norcross. On the platform, standing in their stockings with their sharp-caulked boots slung around their necks, they looked as sweet as lambs. As soon as all were aboard, however, the wise old conductor locked the doors and the "river hogs" began to fight, destroying the interior of the car in the process. They battled the entire journey, swinging their caulked shoes like medieval maces. Blood flowed copiously from scalp wounds. Fred snagged a heavy bottle as it was sailing past his ear, backed into a corner, and held the fort. There was no way he could get out at Island Falls. At Norcross, when the doors were finally unlocked and the bloodied company tallied, one man was missing, having either exited or been ejected through a window of the moving train.

Certain rules of conduct were observed. While property—like railroad cars—might suffer incidentally from the rowdiness, there was no vandalism, per se. Butting, eye-gouging, kicking and stomping with caulks—the results of a caulking were termed a case of "loggers' small pox"—were permitted, even encouraged. The use of knives was not. Although some injuries were indeed serious, most just looked that way. No fighting was allowed once the drive began.

William Sewall, Fred Sewall's father and long a boss river driver on the Aroostook, recalled that among the best drivers he ever had were



a crew of Indians from the Tobique River, New Brunswick. He was growing elderly at the time, and he recalled that "they looked out for me and favored me as my own sons would have done."

Text by William H. Bunting from A Days Work, Part 1, A Sampler of Historic Maine Photographs, 1860–1920, Part II. Published by Tilbury House Publishers, 12 Starr St., Thomaston, Maine. 800-582-1899. ↴

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