

CONTRIBUTE TO THE MLA LEGAL DEFENSE FUND

A ban on floating groundline is a one-size fits all approach that would be devastating for Maine's lobster fishery. It just won't work and must be stopped.

MLA LEGAL DEFENSE FUND

YES! I want to make a contribution to the MLA Legal Defense Fund to help the MLA pay the legal fees needed to fight for rules that will make sense for whales AND the Maine lobster industry.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Please specify amount _____
(All money donated to the MLA Legal Defense Fund will be used for the sole purpose of paying legal fees.)

MLA MEMBERSHIP

I'm not yet an MLA member and would like to join to help the MLA meet costs other than legal fees to help with this fight to keep floating rope in Maine.

- | | |
|---|-------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Highliner | \$175 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Regular | \$100 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Over 65/Under 18 | \$50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Friend of the MLA | \$100 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business | \$125 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business Highliner | \$250 |

Mail to: MLA Legal Defense Fund
1 High Street Suite 5
Kennebunk, ME 04043

WHAT YOU CAN DO TODAY

DONATE TO THE MLA DEFENSE FUND

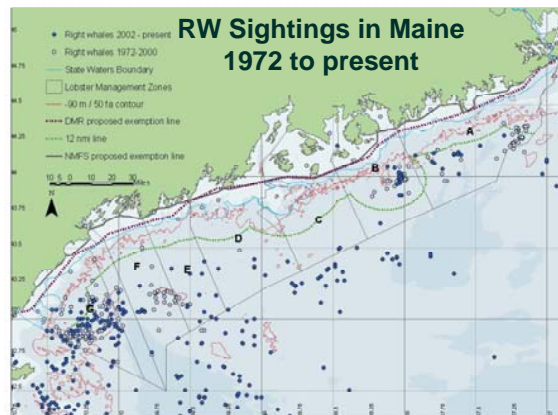
Be responsible, it's your future.

JOIN THE MLA

You will be joining an organization that has worked to support all Maine lobstermen for more than 50 years.

SPEAK OUT AGAINST THESE RULES

We must work together to let people know that Maine lobstermen won't survive a ban on floating groundline.



C. Kudach, 09/02, CMR Maine Whale Plan

MAINE LOBSTERMEN'S ASSOCIATION



MLA LEGAL DEFENSE FUND

207-985-4544

THE LEGAL DEFENSE FUND

WHAT IS IT?

The MLA is fighting to keep floating groundline in Maine's lobster fishery. New federal whale rules and a pending court case filed by the environmental community could result in a ban on floating groundlines in Maine.

A ban on floating groundline is a one size fits all approach that would be devastating for Maine's lobster fishery. It just won't work and the MLA needs your help to stop it.

GET THE FACTS

MYTH A ban on floating groundlines will reduce the endangered Right Whale's risk of becoming entangled in lobster gear.



FACT The proposed rules are not based on hard scientific data. Sightings of right whales are extremely rare. In fact, only a handful of Maine lobstermen have ever even seen a right whale, despite many years experience on the water.

Sightings data show fewer than 10 right whales in state waters over the last 35 years.

There is no scientific evidence that whales feed in Maine state waters or that the organisms that right whales eat (copepods) even exist in sufficient numbers here.

MAINE IS UNIQUE

MYTH Massachusetts lobstermen are already using sinking groundline so Maine lobstermen can easily convert as well.

FACT A complete switch to sinking groundline will impose severe economic and operational hardships on the Maine lobster industry. How?

Sinking line is unworkable for most Maine lobstermen, because of the rocky bottom and strong tides and currents in Maine. This is in sharp contrast to the flat soft bottom fished in Massachusetts. The further east you are in Maine, the more difficult it gets.

Sinking line is also significantly more expensive than float rope, it needs to be replaced far more often and it will take a significant amount of time and resources to convert gear over and replace it year after year. Fishing sinking groundline will also result in:

Unsafe fishing conditions due to gear hang downs.

Significant gear loss due to hang downs, chaffing and part offs.

MAINE'S LOBSTER INDUSTRY IS PART OF THE SOLUTION

Maine needs a solution that works. Maine lobstermen are known as excellent stewards of the ocean environment. They have been volunteering their time over the past several years to test a variety of experimental "whale safe" ropes including neutrally buoyant and low profile lines as well as other experimental groundlines and endlines.

HOW DID WE GET HERE

The National Marine Fisheries Service has been working on the Final Whale Rule since 2003. NMFS held "scoping" meetings with the industry in 2003, and released the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) and Proposed Rule in 2005. The Proposed Rule favors a ban on the use of floating groundlines in most Maine waters.

The Final Rule was scheduled to be released in late 2006. Instead, a review by the President's Office of Management and Budget (OMB) resulted in it being sent back to NMFS to be reworked. In response to the delay, the Humane Society of America and the Oceans Conservancy filed suit against NMFS for failing to release the Final Rule.

MLA ENTERS SUIT

In March 2007, the MLA entered the lawsuit in order to protect the interests of the Maine lobster industry, specifically to fight to keep float rope in Maine state waters.

The MLA cannot do this alone - we need support from all Maine lobstermen! Please help us preserve your future by supporting the Maine Lobstermen's Association and the MLA Legal Defense Fund.

FUNDRAISING GOAL

PHASE I – INTERVENTION \$40,000

PHASE II – FIGHT FOR FLOATING LINE \$125,000

PHASE III – FULL BLOWN LAWSUIT , UNKNOWN AMOUNT