



## The MLA Works for You!

The MLA has long believed that it is best to be at the table and part of the decision-making process than be blind-sided by the outcome. We try to keep the big picture in mind while working on the issues that are most important to our members. Resolving issues often involves making compromises. We realize the outcome will seldom please everyone, but we ensure that the voice of our members is heard. At times our success is very clear, but often we measure success by asking what would have happened had the MLA not been there? Would the lobster fishery be as healthy as it is today?

### **Management**

The MLA has been at the center of debate on lobster management issues for nearly 50 years. We have been instrumental in moving lobster management from the NEFMC (New England Fishery Management Council) to the ASMFC (Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission), advocating for practical whale rules, implementing dragger limits for lobster bycatch and other conservation measures.

Recently, the MLA has worked with the LCMT Area 1 (Lobster Conservation Management Team) in support of a management plan requiring lobstermen from Maine, New Hampshire and Massachusetts to v-notch all berried female lobsters and adopt Maine's strict zero tolerance definition of a v-notch. We continue to advocate for the Gulf of Maine to be managed as a single stock, to have the maximum gauge implemented as a core requirement of the lobster management plan and to more closely coordinate our science and management with Canada.

At the federal level we are continually working with our Congressional delegation to monitor the reauthorization of the Magnuson Act (SFA), the moratorium on ITOs, whale rules, and other issues.

### **State Issues**

The MLA carefully monitors all lobster and marine issues under consideration by the Maine Legislature by providing testimony at public hearings and monitoring work sessions. Generally we support legislation which has been discussed by the zone councils and then supported by the Lobster Advisory Council because this process ensures that the issue has been thoroughly considered by the industry. We support sound efforts to improve enforcement and close loopholes in the current laws and regulations. We are also investigating alternatives to the current system of fisheries management in Maine such as the possibility of transferring regulatory authority from the Maine Legislature to a newly created Maine Marine Resource Commission. The Commission would be an independent agency consisting of fisheries representatives and other interested and knowledgeable parties.

### **Lobster Zone Councils**

The MLA believes that fishermen deserve a seat at the table when it comes to making decisions about how the lobster resource is managed. For that reason, we were instrumental in establishing the zone councils and continue to support the zone council process. We rarely get involved in local issues as these are best resolved by zone councils. The MLA works on broad issues that affect the entire state while encouraging lobstermen to work for their own local interests through their zone and district representatives.

### **Where Are You Represented?**

*Congress:* The MLA maintains regular communication with our Senators and Representatives in Congress.

*Federal Management:* The MLA maintains regular contact with federal scientists and managers at the National Marine Fisheries Service and the New England Fishery Management Council.

*Interstate:* MLA's Chief Executive Officer Pat White serves as a Commissioner to the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission. MLA members serve on the ASMFC's Area 1 LCMT and Lobster Advisory Panel.

*State:* The MLA works closely with the Maine DMR and monitors the activities of the Maine Legislature's Marine Resource Committee.

*Local:* The MLA strongly supports the zone council process. Many MLA members currently serve as representatives on the zone councils and Lobster Advisory Council.

### **Right Whales**

The MLA continues to work for the survival of right whales AND the lobster industry. The MLA is a member of the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Team (ALWTRT) and supports Maine's Whale Plan. We have been working to limit the implementation of rules only to places where right whales are present, to support gear modifications that make sense to lobstermen, and to ensure that economic impacts on fishermen are considered for all proposed rules.

### **Pesticides**

The MLA has been an active member of the state's inter-agency West Nile Virus Task Force and has tirelessly advocated against the haphazard use of pesticides for mosquito and other pest control. The MLA has also worked closely with the Dept of Marine Resource and Dept of Conservation in monitoring the impacts of pesticide use to control brown tail moth populations around Casco Bay. We will continue to monitor these situations and provide information to fishermen and municipalities, and ensure that the lobster industry's view is clearly articulated in this debate.

### **Research**

The MLA strongly supports expanding the scope of research on lobster stocks and developing cooperative research projects involving fishermen and scientists. We also support improving information systems in order to keep the industry better informed of research findings. To this end, the MLA:

- conducts an annual v-notch survey (each year since 1982)
- established the Gulf of Maine Lobster Foundation which currently runs the eMOLT Temperature and Salinity Probe Project and the Ventless Trap Survey
- supports the implementation of the "Thistle box" to expand state's data on lobster
- supports the DMR's sea sampling program
- serves as advisor on a variety of past, current and future research projects

### **Representing Maine Lobstermen**

The MLA represents Maine lobstermen in many important arenas including:

- Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) Lobster Management Board
- ASMFC Lobster Conservation Management Team
- ASMFC Lobster Advisory Council
- Northwest Atlantic Marine Alliance (NAMA)
- Gulf of Maine Ocean Observing System (GoMOOS)
- Gulf of Maine Lobster Foundation
- Maine Fishermen's Forum
- Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Team
- Lobster Advisory Council
- Lobster Zone Councils
- Pew Oceans Commission
- Lobster Institute
- Sea Grant Policy Advisory Committee
- Northeast Consortium
- Maine Lobster Promotion Council

## **JOIN TODAY! BECOME PART OF THE SOLUTION!**

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