

My name is Phil Harrington; For the past 25 years I have been a marine worm wholesaler. Before that, I was, among other things, a wormdigger for 25 or so years. I also worked on shrimp draggers, and groundfish draggers, both here, and in the gulf of Alaska, but for the past 50 years my primary livelihood has been marine worms. If the DMR landings reports are correct, then I handle over half the worms that are harvested in Maine. I was quite surprised to learn this, and I am still not sure that this is correct, but that is another story.

First of all let us address the so called drastic decline in the shellfish stocks. If you look at the landings report from 2009 to 2013 you will see an increase in landings every year with a slight decrease in lbs for 2012 and 2013, but a substantial increase in dollar value. I don't think any further discussion is needed for that.

Next let us examine the effects of leasing. Mr Devereaux has stated that under current state statutes municipalities can lease up to 25% of their flats, which leaves 75% open for wild harvesting. What he does not mention, perhaps because he is not aware of it, is that when bloodworms set in to an area, they rarely set in to anymore than 25% of the flat, and many times even less than that, especially in Casco bay. More than that the worms set back into the same places time after time. No one really knows why they do this. Possibly someone could research this. At any rate, most of the oldtime diggers know where these places are, and I do not differentiate between clamdiggers and wormdiggers. What is to stop them from leasing this 25% of worm producing mud, and effectively shutting wormdiggers out of their town?

About a study of the Georges river estuary; This study was already done in Maquoit bay in 1996, and I quote Dr Brian Beal who conducted the study; Unless clam managers actively take steps to deter predators by using netting or other means, bloodwormers should continue to harvest commercially from areas closed to shellfishing without reprisal or fear that they are causing damage to populations of juvenile clams.

If you recall, last year, or possibly two years ago, a bill was introduced to give towns control over wormdiggers. It was effectively shot down, and should have been discarded, but instead it was reworded to become a green crab bill. Mother nature stepped in and gave us a cold winter, which slowed the green crabs down, and I believe this winter will put the final touches on them until the next warming trend. The legislative process has little to do with it. I have noticed that Mr Devereaux has placed the clam landings in Casco bay

at \$4,500⁰⁰ and worm landings at \$31k. This is the same year that hundreds of wormdiggers were digging the flats repetitively. One mediocre bloodworm digger would dig that many in a year, or on a different note, I buy more than that every day in the summer time. In all fairness to Mr Deveraux I will say that when I file my reports, I do not report where these worms came from. No worm digger will tell you honestly where he is digging, and my daughter chose not to put lies on her reports. Even so, outside of my diggers there was only \$31k in bloodworms produced from Casco bay? Why do they need control over wormdiggers?

When I started digging worms it seemed like a good way for an uneducated man to earn a decent living. I am not saying wormdiggers are uneducated, many have college degrees, but up until now they weren't necessary to dig worms. Now it seems one must be a lawyer, and a politician. All of you around this table are being paid to be here. Those of us representing the worm industry are taking time off from much needed work, and being paid nothing to be here.

In conclusion there has been some mention of rising water temperatures. I submit that the ocean temperature is colder than it has been in 50 years.

This whole thing is an attempt by municipalities to take control of the worm industry, which they know little about, and the certain ruination of it if they do. Mr Devereaux has stated that this is a social problem. It is not. It is an economic problem, and families are going to go hungry if things go down the way he wants.

One other thing I should mention is that 99.9% of all of the worms I sell go out of state, and out of the country, so I am bringing in outside money except for what the Federal Govt takes in export fees and health certificates. We have operated the same way for many years. We have asked for nothing except to be left alone to do our job. The only times we have appeared here is to defend ourselves.

I have said my piece, and I want to thank everyone for listening

2009-2013* Commercial Maine Landings						
Species		2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
alewife						
	Pounds	1,383,130	1,342,285	1,151,395	1,606,535	1,423,773
	Value	\$298,719	\$290,377	\$290,046	\$426,320	\$350,433
Atlantic herring						
	Pounds	64,605,734	57,500,777	97,053,021	92,505,533	98,281,507
	Value	\$7,850,007	\$8,572,391	\$14,372,011	\$14,479,570	\$15,391,192
bloodworms						
	Pounds	574,300	534,228	525,827	457,037	468,931
	Value	\$6,196,083	\$5,893,249	\$5,846,963	\$5,190,554	\$5,627,577
blue mussel						
	Pounds	15,503,462	14,628,931	15,831,725	13,786,473	13,332,292
	Value	\$2,191,711	\$2,064,427	\$1,969,379	\$1,918,524	\$2,340,965
crab						
	Pounds	3,289,739	3,230,798	2,477,546	1,725,700	1,469,970
	Value	\$1,174,027	\$1,113,591	\$944,156	\$709,868	\$672,373
elver						
	Pounds	5,199	3,158	8,585	20,764	18,076
	Value	\$519,569	\$584,851	\$7,653,332	\$38,760,491	\$32,926,991
groundfish						
	Pounds	6,692,556	4,052,092	5,048,466	7,151,670	5,703,877
	Value	\$6,261,362	\$4,965,101	\$5,783,874	\$8,293,377	\$7,626,795
hard clam						
	Pounds	681,243	1,812,798	454,106	419,792	515,955
	Value	\$468,741	\$1,248,492	\$414,921	\$395,657	\$502,004
lobster						
	Pounds	81,174,638	96,208,976	104,896,767	127,225,275	125,953,877
	Value	\$237,536,890	\$318,892,485	\$334,438,740	\$341,792,804	\$364,518,516
	*Value with Bonus					\$378,736,030
mahogany quahog						
	Pounds	4,591,348	4,659,006	5,324,163	5,760,725	4,599,180
	Value	\$1,820,965	\$1,787,292	\$2,116,816	\$1,736,987	\$1,378,491
other species						
	Pounds	20,306,384	29,451,882	11,090,305	29,972,182	22,314,706
	Value	\$38,346,239	\$78,504,220	\$23,765,495	\$80,354,189	\$66,452,616
oysters						
	Pounds	803,048	1,098,314	603,415	700,807	965,339
	Value	\$1,735,406	\$2,092,682	\$1,259,399	\$1,652,380	\$2,415,764
periwinkle						
	Pounds	1,086,689	1,105,981	940,969	917,261	942,120
	Value	\$889,458	\$1,054,250	\$862,556	\$829,528	\$869,083
sandworms						
	Pounds	299,082	269,473	246,718	243,839	255,628
	Value	\$1,596,916	\$1,444,510	\$1,282,544	\$1,363,971	\$1,372,283
scallop						
	Live Pounds	665,758	1,613,959	1,458,715	2,385,807	3,536,477
	Meat Pounds	79,923	193,753	175,116	286,411	424,547
	Value	\$592,386	\$1,547,293	\$1,747,931	\$3,191,147	\$5,194,553
seaweed						
	Pounds	11,621,922	12,963,556	15,164,508	15,109,944	9,755,646
	Value	\$379,355	\$328,880	\$437,991	\$426,434	\$211,095
shrimp						
	Pounds	4,792,021	12,272,114	10,132,077	4,817,110	563,313
	Value	\$1,926,048	\$6,660,005	\$7,627,447	\$4,597,633	\$1,008,766
soft clam						
	Pounds	9,306,958	10,210,953	11,586,849	11,055,129	10,676,041
	Value	\$11,686,086	\$13,044,689	\$15,850,616	\$15,655,105	\$16,915,005
tuna						
	Pounds	101,647	166,685	197,298	218,891	12,626
	Value	\$610,604	\$1,282,894	\$1,782,108	\$2,173,734	\$67,805
urchins						
	Pounds	3,486,741	2,591,516	2,407,074	1,903,780	1,813,977
	Value	\$5,866,376	\$5,489,826	\$5,113,355	\$5,024,131	\$5,291,790
yellow eel						
	Pounds	2,525	3,038	4,065	11,275	4,472
	Value	\$8,080	\$9,720	\$13,008	\$36,078	\$14,309
Total Pounds		230,974,122	255,720,520	286,603,593	317,995,529	302,607,782
Total Value		\$327,955,027	\$456,871,226	\$433,572,688	\$529,008,480	\$531,148,405
*Total Value with Bonus						\$545,365,919

*Total Value with bonus includes bonus paid from Co-Ops to lobster harvesters.

*2013 data are preliminary

Updated 2/18/14