

# Maine Lobstermen's Association January 2021

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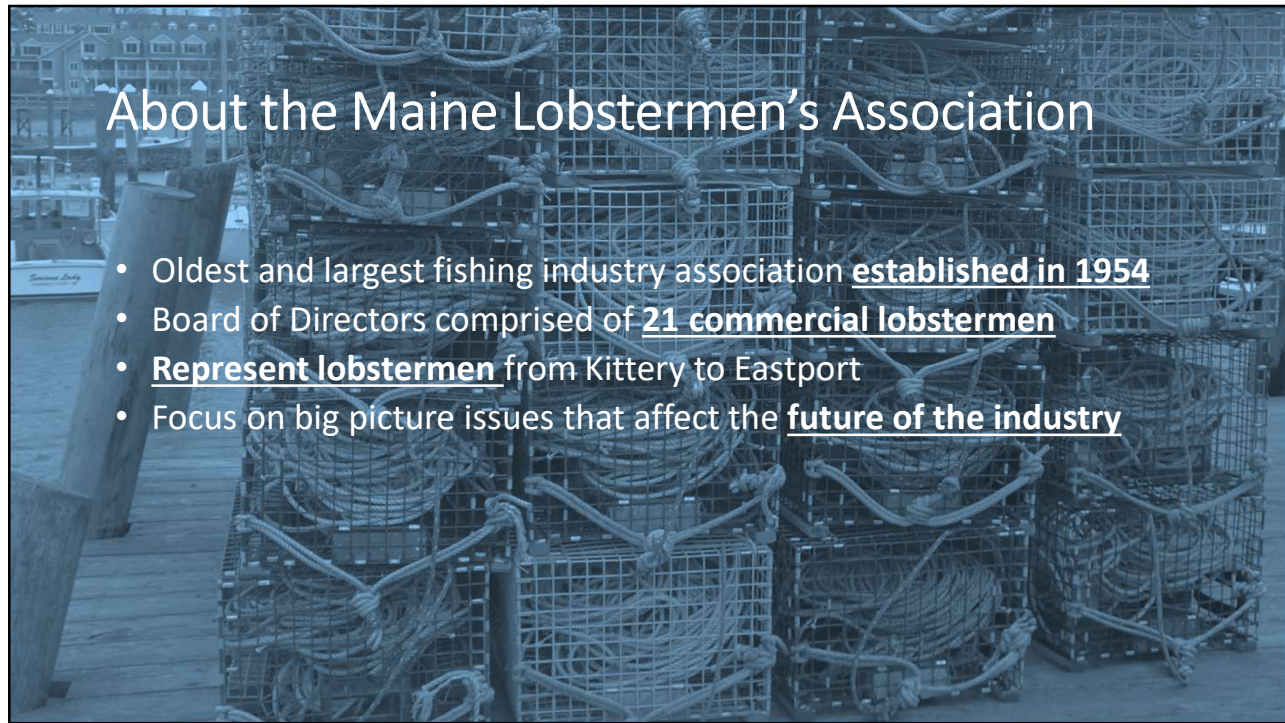


## Maine Lobstermen's Association

### Mission

The MLA advocates for a sustainable lobster resource and the fishermen and communities that depend on it.

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## About the Maine Lobstermen's Association

- Oldest and largest fishing industry association **established in 1954**
- Board of Directors comprised of **21 commercial lobstermen**
- **Represent lobstermen** from Kittery to Eastport
- Focus on big picture issues that affect the **future of the industry**

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## MLA Board of Directors

								
Bob Baines Spruce Head	Sonny Beal Beals	Laurin Brooks Kennebunk	Herman Coombs Orrs Island	Gerry Cushman Port Clyde	Jim Dow Bass Harbor	Jamien Hollowell South Bristol	Bobby Ingalls Bucks Harbor	
								
Mark Jones Boothbay	Jason Joyce Swans Island	Jack Merrill Islesford / NE Harbor	Tad Miller Matinicus	Mike Sargent Steuben	Craig Stewart Long Island	John Tripp South Thomaston	Chris Welch Kennebunk	Thomas Werner Yarmouth
								
President Kristan Porter Cutler	Vice President John Williams Stonington		Sec'y/Treasurer Dustin Delano Friendship		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Directors elected by members for a 3-year term</li> <li>• Officers elected annually</li> </ul>			

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## Since 1954 - Independent & Involved for over 60 years!

### 1950s & 1960s: The Beginning

- MLA is convicted by a federal judge for lobster price fixing. Six lobster dealers plead no contest.
- MLA pressures the Maine Legislature to make lobster a trap-only fishery.

### 1970s: Taxes in the Forefront

- MLA retains lawyer Clayton Howard to help Maine lobstermen with IRS tax audits.
- MLA works with Sen. Muskie and Rep. Cohen to designate sternmen as self-employed contractors through the Sternmen's Act of 1976.
- MLA lobbies Maine Legislature for sales tax exemption for fishing equipment and machinery.

### 1980s: Lobster Management Begins

- MLA pushes NEFMC to include Maine's lobster conservation measures in first management plan.
- The Council prohibits possession of V-notched lobsters, but increases lobster gauge to 3-5/16 inches.
- MLA persuades the feds to halt gauge increase at 3-1/4 inches.
- MLA begins annual V-notch survey to document its conservation value.
- MLA convinces Maine Legislature to maintain maximum gauge.

### 1990s: Maine Lobstermen Expand their Voice

- MLA effectively argues that lobsters are best managed as a coastal species by the states through ASMFC, not NEFMC.
- MLA pushes for Area 1 boundary to extend 40 miles offshore and include Mass & NH, expanding Maine's conservation measures beyond state waters.
- MLA works with Sen. Snow to address unfettered dragging for lobster in federal waters resulting in a 100 per day or 500 per trip limit outside of Maine.
- MLA supports establishment of Maine lobster zones to give lobstermen a greater voice in lobster management.

### 2000s: Whales and Bait

- The MLA represents lobstermen in whale protection efforts and secures pro bono legal representation from prestigious law firm to ramp up its fight.
- MLA and state successfully negotiate exemption of 70% of Maine state waters from sinking groundline rule.
- MLA supports ban of herring midwater trawlers from summer fishing to protect herring stocks.
- MLA pushes for a new herring stock assessment & research on inshore stock.

### 2010s: Complexity at Every Level

- MLA fights to keep dragger-caught lobster from being landed in Maine.
- MLA produces newsletter for all lobstermen.
- MLA provides business training for lobstermen, addresses lobster quality and lobbies to increase industry investment in marketing.
- MLA aids research to keep lobstermen fishing in the face of whale rules; MLA pushes for an area based approach for new whale rules and to keep 70% of Maine state waters exempt from these rules.
- MLA recruits new industry leaders and fosters relationships with other lobster fisheries through international exchanges in Maine and in Canada.

1954: MLA is convicted for lobster price fixing. 1956: MLA retains lawyer Clayton Howard. 1958: Maine gauge 3-5/16". 1960: Maine gauge 3". 1967: Maine gauge 3". 1974: Maine gauge 3-1/4". 1981: Maine gauge 3-1/4". 1983: Maine gauge 3-1/4". 1989: Maine gauge 3-1/4". 1991: Maine gauge 3-1/4". 1992: Maine gauge 3-1/4". 1995: Maine gauge 3-1/4". 1997: Maine gauge 3-1/4". 2000: Maine gauge 3-1/4". 2002: Maine gauge 3-1/4". 2007: Maine gauge 3-1/4". 2008: Maine gauge 3-1/4". 2010: Maine gauge 3-1/4". 2014: Maine gauge 3-1/4". 2016: Maine gauge 3-1/4".

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## MLA's Work

### Policy & Advocacy

- Whales, Wind, Aquaculture, etc
- Lobster Management (interstate)
- Legislature

### Programs

- Education – MLA pages, Boston Seafood show trip, Maine Fishermen's Forum seminars, Business discounts
- Health insurance enrollment assistance

**MAINE Lobstermen's Association**  
www.maine lobstermen.org

## Maine Lobstermen's Community Alliance (MLA sister organization)

- Landings, monthly newspaper
- Maine Lobster Leadership Institute
- Lobster Quality program

**LANDINGS**  
News & Views from Maine's Lobstering Community  
January 2021 | Vol. 28, No. 1

**GOVERNOR'S OFFSHORE WIND PLAN FRUSTRATES FISHERMEN**

*By Melissa Waterman*

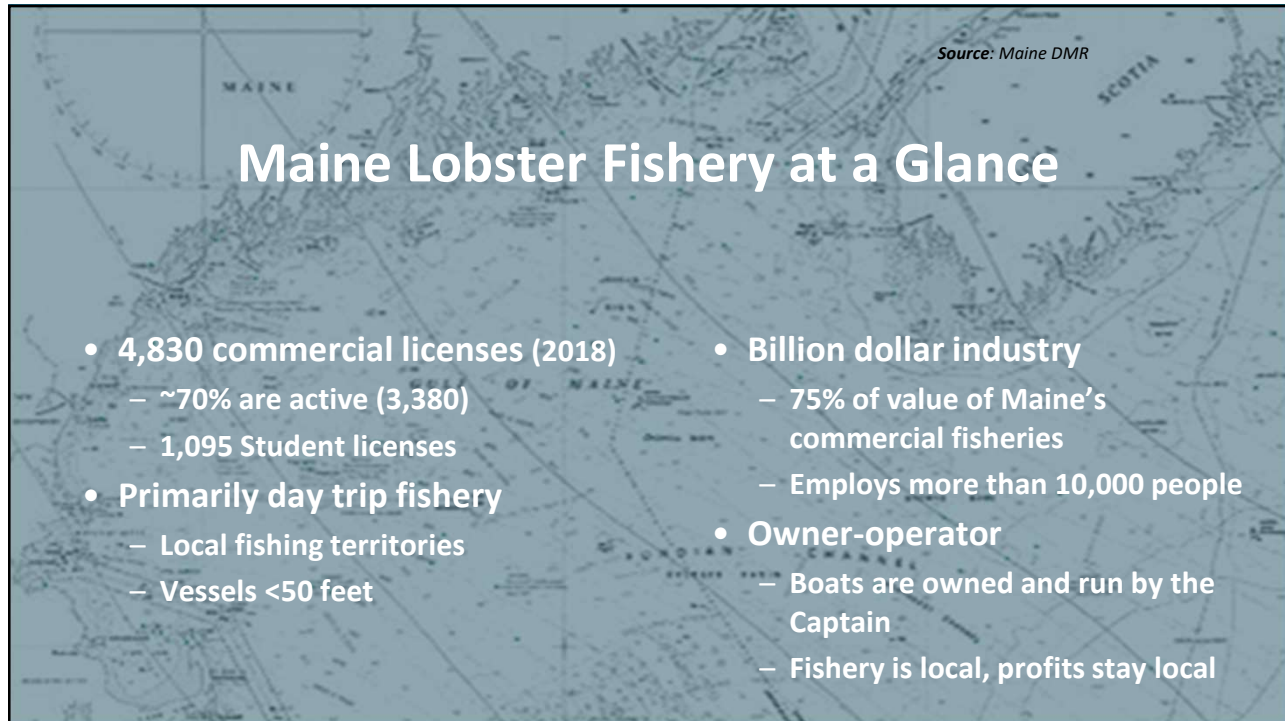
Governor Janet Mills surprised many in Maine's fishing community when she announced on November 20 her administration's intent to apply to the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) for a lease to construct an offshore wind research array in federal waters off southern Maine. The lease, if granted, would be the first in the Gulf of Maine, according to the state press release. "The development of offshore wind represents a significant opportunity for Maine's energy future and economic recovery from COVID-19."

The exact location of the array is yet to be determined, but would be between 20 and 40 miles offshore and occupy up to 16 square miles of the ocean. According to the Governor's Energy Office (GEO), the state is working with offshore wind developer, Diamond Energy, to design and build the array which would generate and sell commercial power for at least 20 years. GEO plans to submit its application to BOEM for the research array lease in early 2021.

The announcement came a few weeks after the GEO received a \$21 million grant from the U.S. Economic Development Agency (EDA) to create a "road map" for offshore wind energy development in the state. The EDA project will be independent of the research array and begin in 2021 to focus on the policies and actions necessary to grow the industry within Maine.

"There is a lot of talk about potential for offshore wind to strengthen Maine's economy," said Patrick McCarron, executive director of the Maine Lobstermen's Association, in a public statement. "I certainly hope no one believes that jobs in the renewable energy sector can replace the livelihoods of fishermen in quantity or character. Keep in mind that Maine's fishing industry has successfully supported thousands of quality jobs, produced healthy food for our nation, and sustained Maine's coastal communities, large and small, for hundreds of years." GEO continues to assure the fishing community that no decisions have been finalized on many aspects of the wind research array, including its final location, though GEO has determined that it will connect to the grid in Portland or Wiscasset. GEO plans to work with commercial fishermen, the Department of Marine Resources (DMR) and other interested parties before making that decision, as well as many others. As its first step, the state held four webinars in December to provide information about the proposed project and to hear the perspectives of fishermen and the public. Fisheries organizations expressed skepticism and concern about the proposal.

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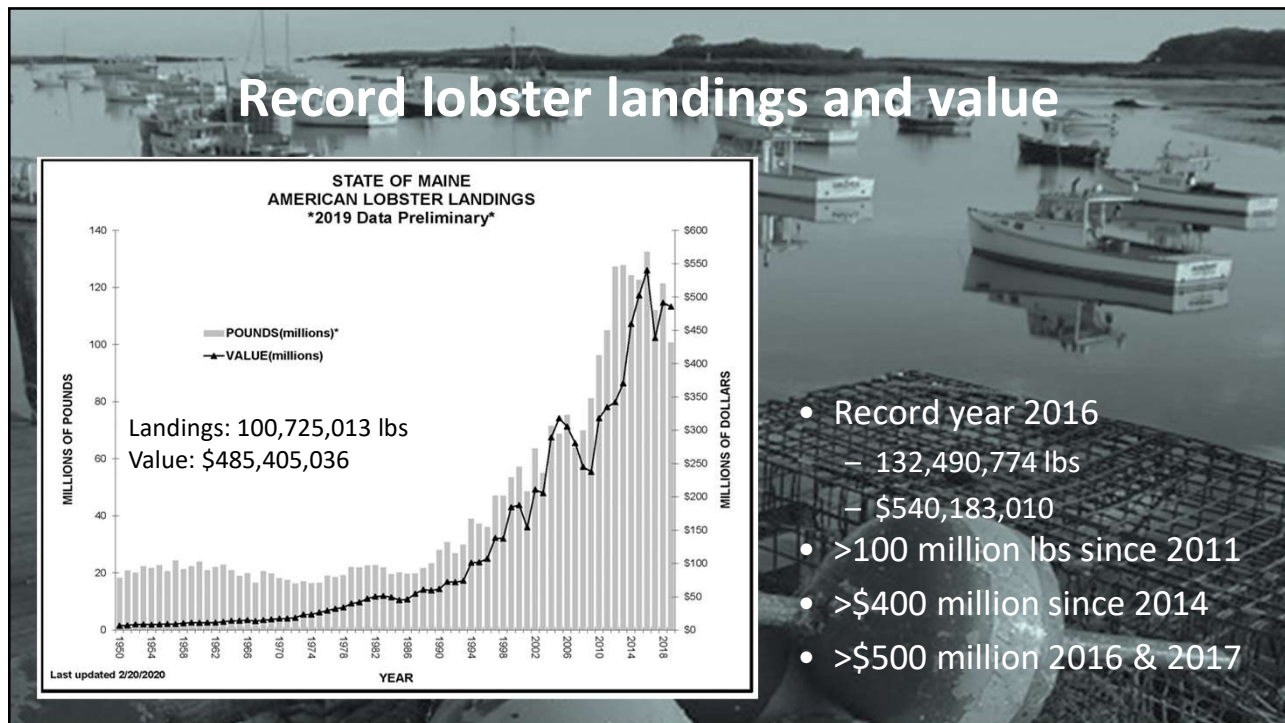


*Source: Maine DMR*

## Maine Lobster Fishery at a Glance

- 4,830 commercial licenses (2018)
  - ~70% are active (3,380)
  - 1,095 Student licenses
- Primarily day trip fishery
  - Local fishing territories
  - Vessels <50 feet
- Billion dollar industry
  - 75% of value of Maine’s commercial fisheries
  - Employs more than 10,000 people
- Owner-operator
  - Boats are owned and run by the Captain
  - Fishery is local, profits stay local

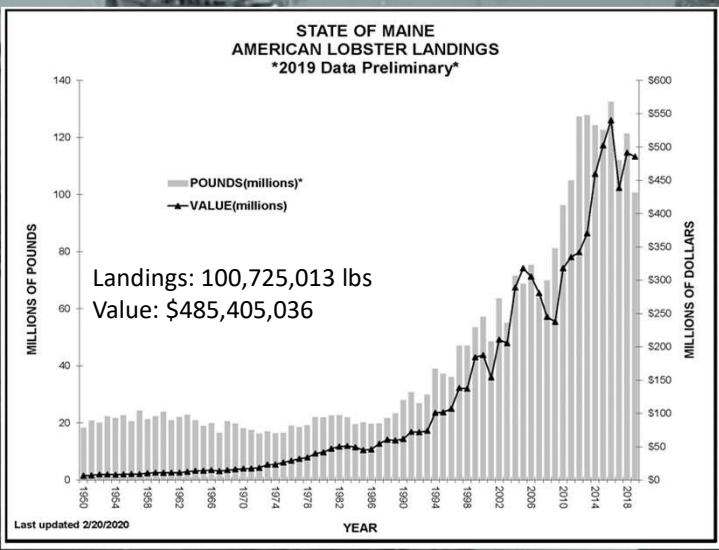
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## Record lobster landings and value

**STATE OF MAINE  
AMERICAN LOBSTER LANDINGS  
\*2019 Data Preliminary\***

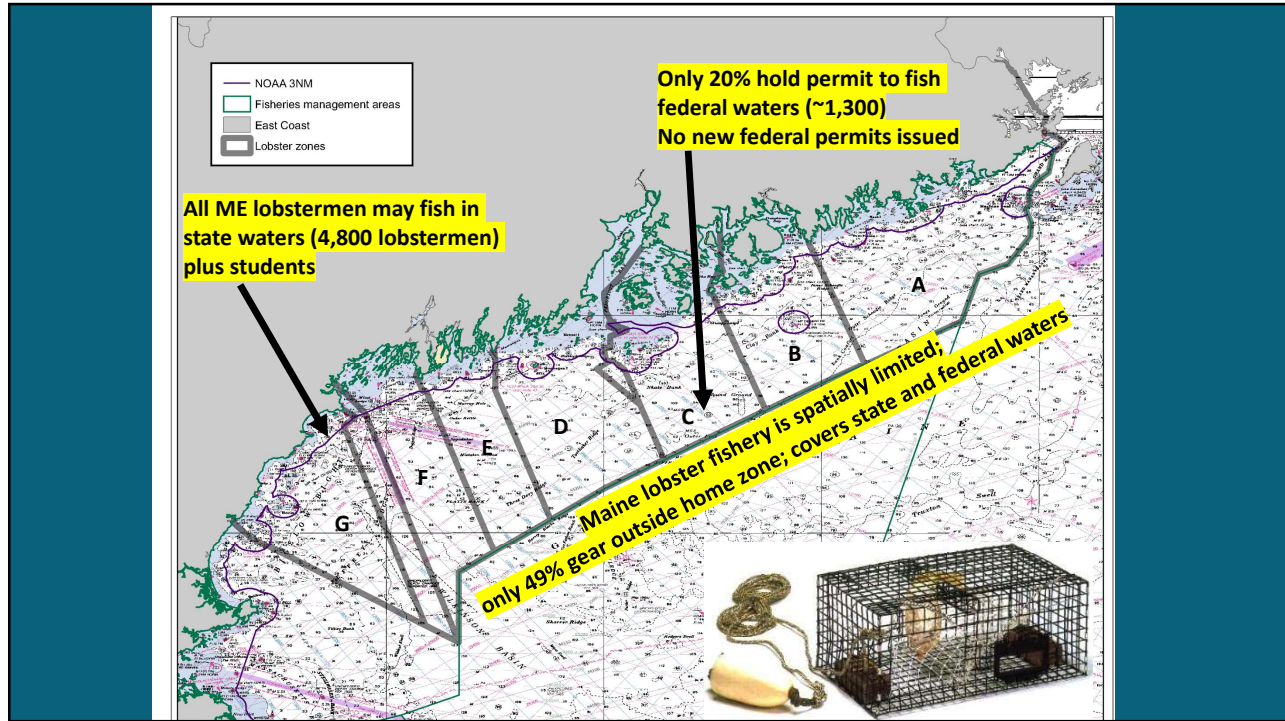
Landings: 100,725,013 lbs  
Value: \$485,405,036



Last updated 2/20/2020

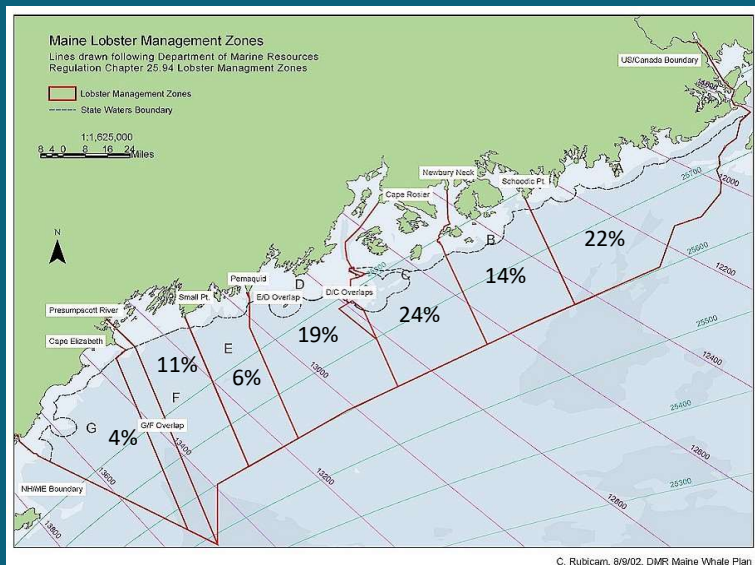
- Record year 2016
  - 132,490,774 lbs
  - \$540,183,010
- >100 million lbs since 2011
- >\$400 million since 2014
- >\$500 million 2016 & 2017

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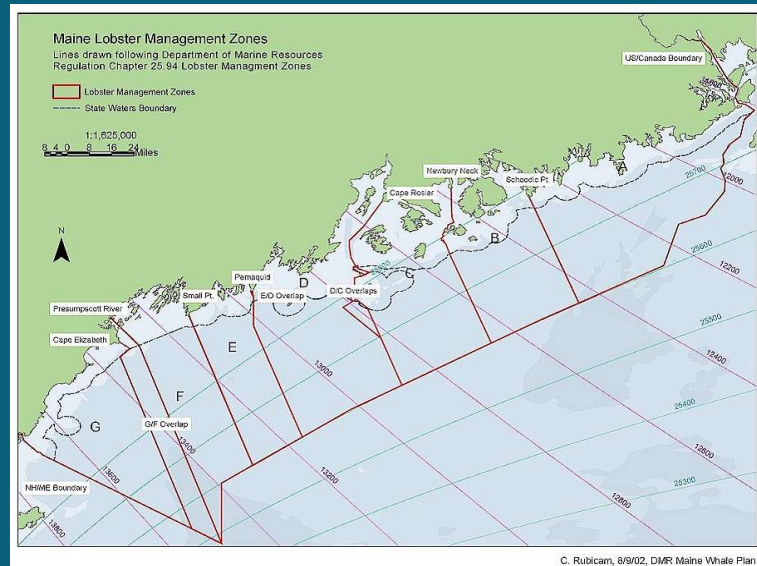
## Maine Lobster Landings by Zone



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## Maine Lobster Co-Management

- 7 Zone Councils
- Majority of gear must be fished in home zone
- 2/3 approval of license holders for rule change
  - limited entry
  - trap limits
  - time of day
  - trawl limits
- Limited entry creates waiting lists
- Students may enter if complete requirements



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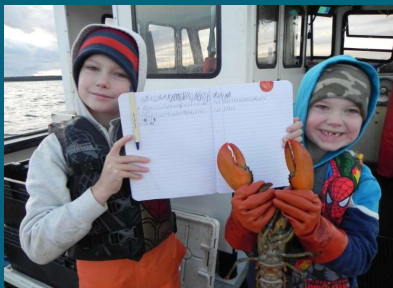
## Maine Lobster Industry

### Owner Operator Fishery

- Lobster license and tags assigned to an individual and vessel
- No corporate ownership; revenue stays local

### No sale or transfer of licenses or tags

- Cost to access the fishery is license and tags
- Boat and gear




### Apprentice Program

- 2-year training program with a licensed Captain
- Complete 1,000 hours; min 2 years
- Signed by Marine Patrol Officer
- Students can obtain a license if complete by age 18, and up to age 23




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## Maine's Lobster Conservation Measures




Return V-notch Females




Zero Tolerance




Return <3.25" carapace




Escape Vents for undersize




Return >5" carapace




Trap Limits (800 max)



Return Berried Females



Trap Only Fishery  
No Sundays June-Aug; Daytime only June-Oct



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## MLA's Priorities for 2021

- Right Whale Protections
  - Whale rules (MMPA)
  - BiOp (ESA)
  - RW stock assessment
  - List of Fisheries
- Court cases related to whale rules
  - 2 pending cases (DC & ME)
  - 1 NOI (DC)
  - 1 in Mass
- Legal Defense Fund

- Offshore wind development
  - Maine research array
  - Review of Maine OSW statutes and regulations
  - Collaborating through coalition of Maine fishing groups
- COVID Impacts
  - Market stability
  - Maine Lobster Marketing Collaborative
  - Education and advocacy on COVID relief













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Thank you!

Maine Lobstermen's Association  
[www.maine lobstermen.org](http://www.maine lobstermen.org)

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