

Scallop Advisory Council Meeting June 4, 2015 in Ellsworth

DMR staff: Trisha Cheney, Kevin Kelly, Rob Watts, David Libby, Tom Reardon and Carl Wilson.

SAC members: Paul Cox, James Wotton, Tad Miller, Alex Todd, Andy Mays, Randy Ramsdell, Erin Owen, Carla Guenther, Curtis Haycock, Justin Boyce, Marcus Jones and Ray Swenton.

SAC members not present: George Freeman.

Public: Bill Anderson, Tony Wood, Ben Crocker Jr. , Travis Fogg, James West, William Soupkup, Alfred Haycock, Russell Leech, David Leech, Mike Murphy Sr., Mike Murphy II, Ron "T" Trundy.

Meeting commenced at 6:05pm.

Minutes [04/16/15] approved.

DMR Updates - Local Meeting Summaries (See Appendix A for full summary)

T. Cheney: We hosted a round of local scallop meetings to continue the discussions held at the last [SAC meeting](#) as well as to discuss changes for next season. The Dennysville meeting highlights included strong support by most attendees for an endorsement so vessels fishing Zone 3 are restricted to area measures statewide, support owner-operator with no grandfathering in of business arrangements, more access to Whiting & Denny's Bays and St. Croix River, no split season for next year, trying to keep product on market as long as possible and many folks would prefer for there to be a standardized 5 gallon bucket. After the meeting, I passed along information so that attendees could get their own buckets certified by sending them to Bradford Bachelder who works at the Department of Agriculture; his number is 287-3841.

C. Wilson: Paul [Cox] – how was the St. Croix River this year?

P. Cox: There were quite a few boats up there, all the way up to Little Dosiers. They found quite a bit; caught them pretty good.

At the Machias meeting, highlights included broad support for not opening up entry at this time, however, there was support for an apprenticeship program for future entrants, and broad support for owner-operator, however, the question came up about how this would work for divers. Support for increasing license fees as a means to deter latency & support research. In regards to the Rotational Management Plan, harvesters would like all rotations/areas to open up in Feb/Mar to keep guys from going down to Cobscook. Finally, there was a lot of discussion surrounding penalties and that all the fishermen associated with the offending vessel should be suspended and vessel out of fishery.

Meeting highlights from the Blue Hill area included an in-depth discussion around a Pilot Vessel Monitoring or Tracker Program as fishermen in the area would like to be able to pick their days and only have a two year rotation with larger areas. Fishermen in area are willing to use a tracking system that would support the 2 year rotations, pick days, as well as be notified when crossing into a closed area. This system could assist with quota monitoring and quantify impacts/activity to inform in-season closures. Area fishermen met with PoleStar to explore the use of Vessel Monitoring Systems. Any potential participants should have no violations within the past 7 years and participants could be chosen by raffles and be historical participants in the fishery. There was also a proposal to exchange December fishing for a two year rotation (54 day season). As for allowing entry into the fishery, harvesters felt that a certain number of licenses in the area per year should be allowed in, as a community allocation or ensuring that access remains available in the community and that new entrants would need to own a boat and could require than an application be submitted to a local community and endorsed by 4 or 5 members of the local fleet. There was support for opening up the [Frenchboro Cable Area](#) to "low impact" (no more than 30" wide) drags. Finally, harvesters felt that the DMR Survey should be

done earlier or within the season as there is a lot of lobster gear in the water right now and they would like to see results comparing one year closures vs. multiyear closures and would like the state to extend its jurisdiction from 3 to 12 miles. .

C. Guenther: The only thing I would add from this meeting was that Ben Heansler pointed out that the offshore federal habitat closures will soon be implemented will be a de facto closed scallop conservation area. Gary Hatch spoke to the importance of areas just past the three mile line to scallops.

T. Cheney: Yes, that is a good point.

Overall, harvesters at the Augusta meeting felt that either the fishing season was not that great or just OK. Really back to "normal" level before the larger, three year closures were implemented in 2009 as a large influx of latent effort has negated any gains in biomass and only have larger scallops, no small scallops or signs of recruitment. Resource is very different from Downeast, in that it is very spotty in its distribution. Divers would prefer to have no fishing days in January and February (December, March and April fishing only) and no Saturday Limited Access Area days. Divers also feel that draggers have "altered" the bottom and felt that the state should be doing dive surveys. Also, the survey timing too late and that there should be in season surveys in mid-January and that the Muscle Ridge "large tow" outlier should be thrown out as overall area is really down. Finally, after 3 hours of discussion, harvesters recommended keeping the Limited Access Areas the same configuration with the same number of days, closing Muscongus Bay Limited Access Area, as well as Sheepscot and Damariscotta Rivers and delay the start date of the season to December 15th.

C. Haycock: Why the delayed December 15th start date? Won't that hurt the markets?

T. Brawn: It would not be good for me.

R. Swenton: If it is only for Zone 1, not that many people going anyways as they are still fishing for lobster.

The last local meeting was hosted in Ellsworth and there was much discussion amongst harvesters about having different fishing measures for inshore and offshore areas, such as small vessel sizes, smaller drag sizes and longer term, targeted seed closures inshore (i.e. Gouldsboro). Overall, all harvesters supported an owner-operator requirement for the fishery; however, they also acknowledged that there may need to be some sort grandfathering of current business relationships. There was a comment regarding the consideration of joint management of the St. Croix River with Canadians as it would make an ideal seed closure area. One harvester expressed concern over a new invasive tunicate or "sea squirt" in Somes Sound area that is possibly smothering scallops. Finally, some believed that it is not prudent to release information on catch in the press releases regarding violations in-season as may drive fleet to those areas; the same holds true with the release of detailed survey data.

J. West: Gouldsboro Bay was closed for how many years and was only fished for 11 days, then closed again. It was the best I ever saw it, but there is nothing outside of that area. You can't keep it closed; they don't really come out of there.

C. Haycock: Nothing outside of Gouldsboro.

J. West: Six years later and there are no scallops outside. The area outside used to hold scallops.

M. Jones: Used to hold scallops out there.

R. Swenton: What are the currents like there?

M. Jones: There is a lot of current, so there should be lots of spat travelling out there, just bad bottom outside of there.

J. Boyce: Should be shelling out there.

T. Cheney: Could create habitat for spat to settle on.

DMR Updates – Vessel Monitoring System (VMS; Trackers. See Appendix B for slides)

C. Wilson: I was hoping to come here with a proposal for some preliminary work, but unfortunately the proposal did not get funded. So, this is preliminary discussion on a concept. Things have ratcheted up in recent years in terms of monitoring the resource. We need transparent data, not Trish having to call around and port samplers talking to you at end of day. We would like to move towards using technology to help inform our management decisions. Last year in addition to doing the Cobscook bay pre-season survey, we undertook several in-season surveys for the first time. We had both fishery dependent data on how many scallops were estimated to have been removed and fishery independent data from the in-season survey to compare it to. We had the ability to see how different the methods for evaluating the fishery were working. They matched up and seemed to work well, Paul [Cox] was a bit happier this year compared to last. At the same time, once you leave Cobscook Bay, the ability to have precise information on what is going on gets diluted as the area is larger and people are not selling in concentrated locations. One idea is that we could use trackers to help with this. Not going to bring the enforcement side, big brother side, as that is not the point from the science perspective – it is really looking at the aggregate data of removals from the resource, not interested in the data at the individual level.

The DMR scallop response, the routine we are now using, I do not see this going backwards on this effort. We have more support from any administration to use information in a timely manner to make hard decisions. This is new territory for us. The response has been to go all in from the science group and we are putting more effort in scallops than lobsters. We have changed the pre-season survey, bumped up in-season sampling, at- sea and port and now the in-season survey that we want to expanded along the coast. We have Marine Patrol Officers running around and industry providing boat counts so get can get estimated removals from areas. Our staff meets once a week to discuss all of this information and determine if any actions are necessary. This is pretty unprecedented for the DMR. I don't see this intensity backing off.

In the case of scallops, the consensus is that we are in a rebuilding phase. It is a balanced approach to rebuilding. These are our in-season measure for closures and sometimes we get it right and sometimes we get it wrong, it depends on how good our data is. Is there a way to reliably quantify fishing activity? I believe we can do this with trackers. In 2013, we did a pilot with the cellular system, which is not as reliable as satellite technology. It is invasive in terms of people knowing where you fish, but from the science perspective, it is aggregate fishing activity that we are looking for.

How does this work? There is a GPS device on the boat, which speaks to the satellite technology above earth. This is Rockfleet, however there are many providers. It utilizes the Iridium satellite network system, using the GPS to get the vessels location and then pinging that information up to satellites. Information can be analyzed within satellites. This picture is of our survey vessel pinging minute by minute his tow – showing steaming speeds and tows where the pings are closer together. You can simply quantify the fishing activity by the ping rates.

The proposal we put in for would have worked towards relating the removals, to look at the fleet's fishing activity and then relate that how many scallops are removed off bottom. With the scale of the coast, we are under sampling areas on the survey, partially because we cannot allocate our limited resources to all over the coast. Boats go out and fish, generating track lines that have location, time and speed, and you can aggregate that information to then calculate how much time they are spending in areas at certain speeds. This will allow you to calculate average aggregate fishing intensities. This would then feed us right back into weekly conversations about what resource was there before the season and could help to calculate removals. There is the possibility of a tremendous amount of information.

M. Jones: You're finding out where the fleet is and what to conserve then?

C. Wilson: Yes, right now we are getting that information on broad areas and number of boats. We compare it to our survey data and could allow us to close a smaller, more targeted area instead of a larger, broader area because we don't have good resolution of data and need to be precautious. This would theoretically allow you to also upload your landings. This is technology that is being used around the world, every single day. It is a combination of identifying where you resource is and the removals. We would be out in front of the pack in terms of how removals would go.

J. Boyce: What is the cost?

C. Wilson: About a couple hundred bucks and then a fee during the season. It is based on the number of pings you send up to the satellite. All these things are negotiable, depending on what the needs are. If you start putting landings information with it, text/

emails – every bit of information that gets transmitted across the satellite networks counts and will cost. There are a ton of different companies out there, but it would probably cost about \$1000 for a season.

R. Swenton: Is this technology already being used elsewhere already?

C. Wilson: yes, they analyze the data after fishing occurs. What we want to do would be in season.

R. Swenton: I know the Norwegians require it in their fishery.

C. Wilson: Think of the opportunity it might provide like picking days, and more discrete and targeted closures.

M. Jones: So about \$450 for unit and a monthly fee?

C. Wilson: About \$100/mo and you can turn it off when you're not using it. This could help us with objective decision making, collecting timely data, and could help to maximize opportunity for the fleet. Also, it represents a wealth of information for enforcement.

J. Boyce: This could work towards picking your days.

C. Wilson: Yes. We would be able to define where our survey actually goes, where scallops actually are based on this as well. Also all units have a safety feature, so it works as a second EPIRB [Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon].

R. Swenton: Most cell phones have a radio chip in them.

C. Wilson: The problem is the cell phone coverage. They can do it and do it cheaper, but the coverage is not as good. Iridium is all over the world all the time. The company we were planning on working with rents these units out to offshore sailing fleets. It can be a hand held device the size of a cell phone. But if this became a mandatory thing, it would have to be fixed. Without a proposal that is funded, we are still searching. It was a surreal experience to have a conversation with Stonington guys being very supportive of utilizing tracking units.

J. Boyce: If we were willing to pay for this, could we pick our days? It would be a deterrent for guys that just fish for a month. A lot of guys won't want to deal with it. Also, older guys don't like technology and don't want to learn.

C. Wilson: The more widgets we add to it, like harvester reporting, the more complex and the more expensive it will be. It can be as simple as a ping. Having the fleet information of where the activity is, that is valuable.

J. Boyce: I don't like the idea of you guys knowing, it takes away from fishery.

R. Swenton: Why?

J. Boyce: It is because it will be shared. Like what happened with survey last year, that completely pissed me off.

C. Wilson: From the science perspective of this, the trees get lots in forest. If you have a sweet spot off an island, that will get lost when all activity is in an aggregated in greater are.

T. Woods: Wouldn't that drive more effort if they can pick their days?

C. Wilson: We would move the conversation away from how many days and to how many scallops are there and how many were removed. In the past we have been trying to control removals with set days, daily limits, etc.

D. Leech: This seems like research on the fishery. This for 135 lbs. a day? This is ridiculous!

C. Wilson: We are doing all this in Cobscook now, but once we get out of Cobscook we can't manage as well.

D. Leech: The point of this is not coming across for me.

C. Wilson: I would say that this could allow us to provide more opportunity.

D. Leech: Cobscook got closed at 30% last year, when it was fished at 80% year before. That's not more opportunity.

R. Leech: What about boat tracks that federal guys have? Do you have to go on your boat and log in and tell them when you have to go fishing?

C. Wilson: No. It is on all the time and automatically pings. The more widgets you have, add-ons like reporting, will bog it down. Really just want to know where you're fishing and the removals.

M. Jones: This would allow you to make a more objective decision with better information.

C. Guenther: Would you use the fishing intensity data to alter or improve the survey?

C. Wilson: When I first got involved with scallops, I asked Kevin for the survey areas. Then I looked at your information from your interviews, and it was different. So we have already evolved and will evolve it more.

T. Brawn: You gave this presentation with the thought of having funding to test it. So, you would have to test this before implementing it?

C. Wilson: Yes.

T. Brawn: One of the main reasons you want to do this is because DMR puts a lot of time into trying to collect data to make decisions in season. This would help get you better information. Do you want permission or feedback?

C. Wilson: Without it we would have to err on the side of caution. We have an administration that would like to be permissive, but allow in season cuts.

B. Anderson: I already have a federal permit and have a boat track unit on my boat. I spoke with NMFS and they said they work with other states to provide this information. I already have fees I am paying every month. I don't want to have to have another system and pay more fees, put more holes in my boat.

C. Wilson: For boats that already have a tracker on board, that is a great question. We could get an agreement from feds for that data. I believe their ping rate is once every half hour, however, which is a lower frequency than we would need.

D. Leech: I don't want to be watched all the time, I am independent. I have rights. I remember getting a VMS box and I was short a few pounds once and they took it. All the changes that have happened over the last six years in this fishery are insane!

M. Murphy Sr.: Is the technology available now? Can you implement it right now?

C. Wilson: Yes, but there would need a change to statute.

R. Leech: You're really going to have someone looking at this information all the time?

C. Wilson: Once you look at a track once, it is easy. You can have aggregate data all calculated for you.

M. Murphy Sr.: Would this be used with swipe card or instead of it.

C. Wilson: Both.

M. Murphy Sr.: What would you choose?

C. Wilson: The tracker.

D. Leech: This is right out of control!

T. Brawn: This is an idea that would give DMR better data.

D. Leech: 60 guys leaving the dock is your data!

M. Jones: This would help with survey.

T. Miller: Would there be some sort of budgetary savings in this system?

C. Wilson: In my new position [Director, Marine Science], I am seeing how much is spent on currently monitoring the fishery. If we had a tracker system, it would dramatically change how we monitor it. The in-season survey allowed us to put our resource there which is better.

T. Miller: How are you putting more money to monitoring this resource? How is the funding derived for that?

C. Wilson: We are robbing Peter to pay Paul – the general fund and lobster fund sometimes if we have to.

B. Crocker Jr.: Will these tracks be available to everyone?

C. Wilson: No. They would be confidential and only DMR staff could see them and you.

B. Crocker Jr.: For the federal unit you get a pin number that allows you to see your own track.

C. Wilson: Only you could see your track. If there is support to try to continue moving forward, to seek funding to develop the concept more, that would be positive. If it's so hideous that you don't want us to pursue this idea, then ok.

C. Haycock: I don't know how this would work with trigger, picking your days?

J. Boyce: There are a lot of days I shouldn't have been out there.

M. Jones: The next step would be a Total Allowable Catch (TAC) for the fishery.

R. Leech: I am going to go on bad days and fish hard.

B. Anderson: If it allowed me to pick my days, you could say only take 3 days in any week, not 7 days. So it would spread the days out.

R. Swenton: A lot of guys complain that DMR doesn't know where scallops are, that the science is not accurate. This would help, correct?

C. Wilson: Yes, it would allow us to be more objective.

R. Swenton: Right now, if something happened to Trish, god forbid, we couldn't continue the way we are.

C. Wilson: Correct, what we currently have set up is unsustainable.

DMR Updates - Swipe cards (See Appendix C for slides)

R. Watts: So I will start with a little background information on why we are collecting landings information. Basically, it is to monitor the health of Maine's marine resources, to obtain information for use in fisheries management, and to demonstrate the social and economic important of the fishing industry. For instance, we have had some bad red tide issues and we were able to use the landings information reflecting the value of fishery and harvesters were able to get low interest loans and disaster relief benefits.

So, I want to clarify the differences between landings and catch and what is collected? Landings are the amount of marine species captured, brought to shore, and sold or transferred to another person or party. Organisms that are release or discarded are not included. For catch, it is a measure of marine species removed from the environment, including bycatch, fish release, at sea discards and species not sold or transferred. Both dealers and harvester report similar information, but dealers reports grade, market, price, while harvester reports the number crew, amount of gear, time gear was fished, depth, area fished, sea time, and set numbers.

J. Boyce: You have your Lat & Lon on the reports for only one area. For a lot of the day, I cover a larger amount of area, but can only report one location. I think if you reporting port would be better.

R. Watts: Would you want to report tow by tow? I doubt it. So, it should be an average. You know where you fished all day.

J. Boyce: Some people put same information every day.

R. Watts: We go by data you supply. If people provide bad information, we make decisions off of that data. We can collect Catch Per Unit Effort (CPUE) for management and assessment decisions, the number of active harvesters and to what extent they are active or latent, we can look at where regulations impact the fishery, we can provide information on how different fisheries overlap and affect each other. It also gives us a value of the fishery. Preliminarily Maine is the number one ranked money maker for 2014 on east coast for in regards to fisheries value, and this information is important for consideration in natural disasters, trade, etc. Our data is being used much more in real time than it has ever been.

So, why swipe cards? Back in 2013 we implemented swipe cards in elver fishery. The swipe cards allowed us to keep that lucrative fishery open. The dealers were able to verify if a harvester is license or not. One of the biggest issues we deal with is whether or not the harvester is verified as only they can have the swipe card. It could be a booker keeper entering info and they are not on dock when the transaction happens. It also provides us with more accurate and timely data. So, with the new system we are building, we would be able to do all those things and more. We could do all the different fisheries on one card – elvers, urchins and scallops. It would also eliminate the need for a state dealer to report on paper. Right now we require reports the 10th of every month, so 40 days after that first transaction, then it would be a month or two before it is entered. This would be much more timely.

R. Ramsdell: Will this eliminate my need to report to feds?

R. Watts: If you are state only dealer, yes. We are in negotiations with the feds for the federally permitted dealers.

Public: Will I still be able to sell directly to a restaurant?

R. Watts: Yes, the restaurant will need to get the swipe card unit. A few years ago they closed the loophole that scallops did not have to be reported by certain businesses. Any business that purchases directly from a harvester, any product, is required to have a dealer license along with the Primary Buyer Permit. That restaurant needs to have a retail license and will have to have a swipe card to purchase scallops directly from you. This system would also allow harvesters to verify what dealers have submitted on their behalf.

R. Ramsdell: Can people buying off trucks negate this?

R. Watts: This is only for licensed dealers. If you do a private sale, you still have to fill out harvester reports. The only obligation the harvester has is to carry card.

D. Leech: You're trying to eliminate cash!

R. Watts: No, we just want timely and accurate data.

D. Leech: Then your gonna require a \$450 tracker unit!

R. Ramsdell: As a wholesale dealer, what about my truck? It won't have a swipe card unit.

R. Watts: Yes, it can. They are portable swipe card readers that are compatible with android and apple phones.

T. Brawn: What is the cost?

R. Watts: The most expensive reader is \$400, but we are looking at a cheaper unit for this fishery.

C. Haycock: Do you need cell service?

R. Watts: No, you don't need internet service while buying in the field; you just need to hook up to the internet each night. Dealers won't be reporting any more information than they currently are. They are currently reporting all of this information by paper. The card would be swiped, and if there is an active internet connection, then you are done. If not, when you are back to an active internet connection, then you are done. We have had 14-15,000 transaction with elvers and had only one failure.

A. Mayes: Where do the cards come from?

R. Watts: We would print them and mail them to you.

M. Jones: Did the federal government pressure DMR to do this to better account for the value of the fishery?

R. Watts: It started with elvers to keep that fishery open.

M. Jones: That information is confidential to whom?

R. Watts: DMR employees will be able to access it.

M. Jones: Which could then be available to IRS.

R. Leech: So we would be required to put the price?

R. Ramsdell: We are already required to put that in.

M. Jones: So, you are just taking the information and getting it in a more timely way.

M. Murphy II: It is still going to be a year before you get the harvester information.

C. Guenther: Timely information for managers - this is the sensitivity of the fleet right now. This data could be used to make decisions. Because it would not be capturing full landings (not peddled product), because it is instantaneous, guys are worried about showing landings at the limit when they sell to a dealer and then showing little to none on days they peddle and a closure being triggered because it may be interpreted as not reaching the limit.

T. Cheney: I can understand that. This would certainly be a new in-season data stream and for the first year of using it, it would have to be taken with a grain of salt. However, we would still be looking at all our other in-season data such as harvester reports, marine patrol observations, port/sea sampling information as well as the pre-season survey along with this new data stream. As you all know, before a decision is made to close an area in-season, I do a lot of outreach with industry to make sure it is warranted. We have been operating that way the past four seasons and would continue to do so in this upcoming season as well.

J. Boyce: What happens when you lose your card?

R. Watts: You just need to call licensing and we will ship a new one the next day. Also, Marine Patrol will be there and can use their card to swipe for the transaction, and we can flag the data to be edited afterwards to make sure it get attributed to you.

J. Boyce: So, there is no way to get around it?

R. Watts: Right, we don't want a system that is easily manipulated.

T. Fogg: So we are going to still have to do reports?

R. Watts: Yes, we will still need to continue to have the harvesters report. This would only replace the dealer's reporting.

C. Guenther: That is why we want the tracker system.

R. Watts: I am just going to review the screen shots of what this will look like from the dealer's point of view. You swipe the card and enter the following information: port, date, time, federal VTR id, species, pounds (entered manually), markets, etc. All of these items can be populated as a default automatically so you really only have to manually enter the poundage and price.

Haycock: As a fisherman, how long will this take from our point of view?

R. Watts: About a minute. It really saves the time on the data entry end of things on the dealer and DMRs side of things.

R. Ramsdell: How susceptible are these to weather?

R. Watts: Many of the cell phones and tablets have waterproof cases. In elvers we had one card failure. I tested it hard and even took a key to the card and scratched the back of the magnetic stripe and it still worked. It is a blank credit card that we print [showed room the credit card]. You won't need to get a new card every year. We designed it to work year to year. If it starts to deteriorate you can request a new one. Dealers in the elver fishery liked it. Harvesters liked it because they knew dealers were not throwing illegal eels in with them. The system really helped to increase trust. And, it protects your fishery so that if you are not licensed, you can't sell.

R. Ramsdell: That is a big issue for dealers, especially with shellfish and guys saying they forgot their card.

R. Watts: If that happened, Marine Patrol can verify and swipe their card.

M. Murphy Sr.: Will marine patrol be using this for enforcement?

R. Watts: There is the potential.

P. Cox: How will my card work with two licenses?

R. Watts: It will be one card. Don't necessarily care which license you are using from our point of view, just that it is you landing those scallops.

M. Jones: This became mandatory for urchins; do you see this expanding for all fisheries?

R. Watts: We are taking baby steps. Elvers was the cleanest fishery to start with because there are no vessels, one market grade, etc. With scallops there are a bunch of different market grades. So, this is the next baby steps. We are building a program that if there are other needs for it, we are not having to rebuild the program.

M. Jones: I don't like big brother. They want tax money and this is a way to get it. Will this mean there will be a TAC?

R. I am just here to collect data. The swipe cards were needed as a mechanism to ensure that that we didn't go over the TAC in elvers. I can't say that we would or wouldn't move towards a TAC for this fishery.

T. Brawn: We had an out of state agency that could have shut us down. That is not the case in this fishery.

A. Mayes: We are already on a quota - 70 days times 135 pounds.

M. Jones: When it comes to data, and helping DMR to manage fishery, I am OK with this.

R. Leech: Make it mandatory to report with logbooks once a week then.

DMR Update – Spring Survey (See Appendix D for slides)

K. Kelly: We just completed the survey. About 2 years ago we started doing a spring survey that focused on rotational areas in Zone 2. You can see in the first slide it is a picture of the whole coast with black dots showing each survey stations. It is the first time we have done a survey in Zone 1 since 2011, and we only surveyed previously closed areas which became the Limited Access Areas. In Casco Bay Area we did 29 tows, then next was Damariscotta-Sheepscot river area and we did 29 tows. Then we moved to the inner Muscongus Bay and Muscle Ridge areas where we did 35 stations. Then in Zone 2 we surveyed the rotational areas that are scheduled to be open for fishing next season. In the western side of Vinalhaven and Matinicus area we surveyed 24 stations. Then we moved to the Blue Hill/Union River area where we did 30 stations – the last time we surveyed here was in 2013. We then moved down to survey the Eggemoggin Reach and Jericho Bay areas where we did 30 stations. Moving east to Gouldsboro Bay and Western Bay, we did 41 stations combined. We focused some more stations in Dyers Bay, did more intensive sampling here this time around. Finally we ended in Machias Bay and did 34 stations. I don't really have any results yet. I am still doing quality control/checks on the data.

A. Mayes: Are there any generalities that you can share with us?

K. Kelly: We really need to start crunching the numbers before you can get into things. I am still seeing recruitment Downeast – especially in Gouldsboro Bay. That area is starting to come back again, but really needs a few more years to let those recruiting scallops move up into the fishery.

A. Mayes: In Bass Harbor there were small scallops everywhere, recruitment everywhere!

K. Kelly: I am going to have to do projections on this as time that fishery starts some of that stuff may grow up to fishery. I saw recruitment in Casco Bay as well. Gouldsboro Bay looked like it improved in 2013, but it did get fished heavily. Not sure what will be there for this season. Everything is really spotty. Even Cobscook Bay is like that.

T. Cheney: Tony, as the new captain of the industry vessel doing this survey, what was your impression?

T. Wood: It was my first year doing it, it didn't look too bad. It isn't going to be a good as it was a few years ago.

R. Leech: Think we can make more improvements with the drag?

T. Wood: Not sure.

M. Murphy Sr.: You're already on the payroll!

C. Guenther: Are the new drags same size?

K. Kelly: We don't have the new drags yet. We are using the same ones, but the new ones will be the same size.

D. Leech: What about the tows Tony?

T. Wood: Some were a little too high up on the bottom, others we spot on.

C. Wilson: Your boat got rave reviews from our staff.

[Break]

Discussion: 2015-16 Season

A. Todd: So, do we want to hash over the swipe cards and trackers or move to the season discussion for next year?

C. Haycock: How can we set the season without having the spring survey results?

T. Cheney: We won't have the results finalized in time; however, we will be able to look at the preliminary results prior to the rule going out the door to put in any necessary targeted closures before season starts. Basically, I see the season being status quo for next year, save for maybe a reduction in Zone 1, as being reasonable as we can make in season adjustment when necessary.

A. Todd: what about the swipe cards?

A. Mayes: I used to hate it, but now I don't care that much. We are already under a TAC, so I don't see it being any more invasive.

J. Boyce: Like Carla says, I don't mind to help the dealers report. But I don't sell all of my scallops to a dealer. It just helps DMR to clean up there paperwork mess. I don't want to have a card. Should be our license itself.

A. Todd: Do we know how the swipe card information would work? Could you tell how much they fish?

[Further Swipe card discussion]

MOTION: C. Guenther would like to make a motion to move to enact swipe cards and electronic logbooks at the same time. Marcus seconded it. Discussion.

J. Wotton: What is the difference between paper or electronic? I see swipe cards as a tool to help monitor the fishery. It is a piece of the puzzle. It takes two minutes to do it, and it doesn't cost us anything.

T. Miller: I am not that worried what they glean from it. It is a weighted tool, you're not giving her any more information.

A. Mayes: I thought you were going to make a motion for setting the season.

C. Guenther: I will withdraw the motion. Marucs: I second it.

MOTION WITHDRAWN

D. Leech: I think this is for quotas.

P. Cox: They put quotas in for elvers without swipe cards.

A. Todd: They are getting the same information, just costs less DMR hours, less money. Why are you against it?

D. Leech: We gotta be good stewards, I agree with that. I have seen so much change in the past five years – its Ludacris!

R. Leech: My problem is I can't sell to who I want. I can't sell to a restaurant.

R. Swenton: You can't do that now without it being reported. If you do, it is illegal.

M. Murphy II: You want to make it illegal to eat a pound of scallops for yourself. If you're going to get 100% of the landings, your going to have to swipe in and swipe out.

A. Todd: Let's talk about next season. With the federal tracking devise you gotta fill it out before you even land anyways.

M. Murphy Sr.: I would gladly spend \$1500-200 to pick my days, get rid of log sheets - I can't find anything wrong with it. That way Trish can come up with the missing 40% [peddler product] before she makes us crooks.

MOTION: M. Jones makes a motion to discuss season and the days. C. Guenther seconded it. All in favor: unanimous. MOTION PASSES.

T. Cheney: From the local meetings I had, I think a December 15 start in Zone 1 with targeted closures in the Sheepscot River, Damariscotta River and Muscongus Bay Limited Access Area is reasonable. For Zone 2 status quo of 70 days and 15 gallons and Zone 3 status quo of 50 days and 10 gallons, expect that they do not want a split season next season.

P. Cox: I like the three days/week; it makes the season go longer.

D. Leech: they closed it earlier last season.

P. Cox: I think that next year will be better.

C. Haycock: They shut down early last year.

R. Swenton: Don't you see they issue here. DMR has to do emergencies because they don't have accurate information.

D. Leech: I can catch 90 pounds with a fishing pole down there!

R. Swenton: What about the same number of days as last year for Zone 2. Some guys would like to have less days in February.

C. Haycock: Basically a split season [no February]?

A. Todd: I would like to see it go straight through.

A. Mayes: We did that a few years ago and said we would never do it again.

J. Boyce: I will withdraw my second for the motion. Zone 1 guys will be fishing over in Zone 2 the first two weeks.

C. Haycock: As far as Cobscook, we won't go there until we have to if we can stay at home and get 135 lbs. for 4 days a week.

R. Ramsdell: I found that it splits a lot of the boats. Bucks Harbor is 50/50 [as to who goes to Cobscook].

C. Haycock: Do you think Cobscook will be a big difference 3 or 4 days a week? I don't see why we can't have 4 days a week.

P. Cox: Because we are all done in February.

C. Haycock: 50 days is 50 days.

P. Cox: It won't get more beaten down here.

C. Haycock: If you get an extra day a week in per month before we come down here, that will be more for you. I don't know why you want to stretch the season out longer if it is going to get fished by us later on.

M. Jones: Didn't you want an endorsement?

P. Cox: I don't support that, but others down there do.

D. Leech: What is that?

M. Jones: If you choose to fish there, you are held to those more restrictive measures like 3 day week, meat count, smaller drag, etc. everywhere and when it closes you're done.

R. Swenton: Let's do the same season as last year; most folks were happy with that.

A. Todd: Why don't you want 4 days in December?

P. Cox: They want to stretch it out. You keep your sternman eating all winter. I like it 3 day a week.

R. Swenton: The simplest thing to do is keep it the way it was last year, some people are satisfied, others aren't. Keep it the same is the easiest.

J. Boyce: Just no split season.

M. Jones: Zone 1 wanted December 15 start, so we can't go to status quo.

A. Todd: There needs to be a reduction in Zone 1.

M. Jones: You want to take it off the front of the season instead of the end?

A. Todd: Yes, that is what the guys came up with.

T. Miller: There won't be a lot of pressure over there because most of the guys are still lobstering.

MOTION made by R. Swenton: Zone 1 60 days, December 15th start with appropriate targeted closures. Zone 2 & 3 to remain the same as last year minus the split season in Zone 3 [Zone 2 70 days/15 gallons & Zone 3 50 days/10 gallons]. J. Wotton seconded. Discussion.

M. Murphy II: Why the reduction in Zone 1?

R. Swenton: That is what they agreed on for a reduction.

K. Kelly: Do you think a 10 day reduction is enough? Did you think of any other things?

J. Wotton: We thought about going up with the limit.

R. Swenton: It is a start.

VOTE: unanimous. MOTION PASSED.

Motion to adjourn 9:20pm

Appendix A

Trish Cheney's Local Meeting Summaries

Dennysville, May 4

Attendees: Earl Small, Chris Bartlett, Barry Huckins, James Ackley, Mike Kilby, Norman Small, Deb Bridges, David Sweeney, Mike Murphy II, Chris Leighton, Lisa Leighton, Stephen Calder, Sheila Huckins, Tim Sheehan, Tom Pottle, Russell Wright, Brian Brodie, Paul Cox, and Randy Newcomb.

Meeting Highlights:

- Support an endorsement so vessels fishing Zone 3 are restricted to area measures statewide.
- Support owner-operator with no grandfathering in of business arrangements.
- More access to Whiting & Denny's Bays and St. Croix River.
- No split season.
- Keep product on market as long as possible.
- Prefer a standardized 5 gallon bucket.

Machias, May 5

Attendees: James Ackley, Mike Murphy II, Ben Crocker Jr., Curtis Haycock, Ron T. Trundy, Chris Chu, James Ackley, Tracey Sawtelle, Billy Moore, Mark Murray and Jason Leavitt.

Meeting Highlights:

- Limited Entry— cannot let anyone else into this fishery at this point. Support apprenticeship for entry.
- Need owner-operator. How does this work for divers?
- Increase license fees to deter latency & support research.
- Rotational Management: would like all areas to open up in Feb/Mar to keep guys from going down to Cobscook.
- Penalties: all associated with the offending vessel should be suspended and vessel out of fishery.

Blue Hill, May 6

Attendees: Josh Stoll, Ben Heansler, James West, Rustin Ames, Frank Jones, Carla Guenther, Marianne Ferguson, and Rustin Ames.

Meeting Highlights:

- Pilot VMS Program Proposal: Pick days & 2 year rotations.
 - o Fishermen willing to use a tracking system that would support the 2 year rotations, pick days, be notified when crossing into a closed area. This system could assist with quota monitoring and quantify impacts/activity to inform in-season closures.
 - o Area fishermen met with PoleStar to explore the use of Vessel Monitoring Systems.
 - o Participants should have no violations within the past 7 years and participants chosen by raffles and be historical participants.
 - o Two year rotation in exchange for January start/54 day season (Frank Jones proposal).
- Limited Entry: Allow a certain number of licenses in the area per year, a community allocation. Need to own a boat and could require than an application be submitted to a local community and endorsed by 4 or 5 members of the local fleet.
- Would like the Frenchboro Cable Area opened up to "low impact" drags.
- Survey should be done earlier or within the season as there is a lot of lobster gear in the water right now. Would like to see results comparing one year closures vs. multiyear closures.
- State needs to expand its offshore jurisdiction from 3 out to 12 miles.

Augusta, May 11

Attendees: Alex Todd, Craig Stewart, Jeremy Ames, Marianne Ferguson, Marissa Hammond, Sarah Madronal, Ray Swenton, Tad Miller, Bob Baines, Togue Brawn, Jim Wotton, Dan Miller, Brian Preney, Brian Soper, Travis Fogg, Dan Miller

Meeting Highlights:

- Overall, harvesters felt that either the fishing season was not that great or just OK. Really back to “normal” level before the larger, three year closures were implemented in 2009. Large influx of latent effort negated any gains in biomass and only have larger scallops, no small scallops or signs of recruitment. Resource is very different from Downeast, spotty.
- Divers would prefer no days in January and February (December, March and April only). No Saturday Limited Access Area days. Divers feel that draggers have “altered” the bottom.
- Muscongus Bay LAA & Sheepscot River destroyed and should be closed next year. Also, Damariscotta River to stay closed and only opened when the shrimp fishery re-opens.
- Should be doing dive surveys. Survey timing too late. Should do in season surveys in mid-January. Muscle Ridge “large tow” outlier should be thrown out as overall area is really down.
- Support a December 15th start with a 60 day season for entire Zone 1.
- Keep Limited Access Areas the same with same days.

Ellsworth, May 27

Attendees: Sarah Madronal, William Soukup, Brian Gordius, Jeff Turcotte, Justin David, Shirley Soukup, Bill Anderson, Gary Hatch, Erin Owen and Carla Guenther.

Meeting Highlights:

- Boat length limit inshore as larger vessels tow heavier gear with greater impact; inshore/offshore line for vessel & drag size. Dredge size limit in Dyer Bay similar to Gouldsboro.
- Support owner-operator; acknowledged may need grandfathering of current business relationships.
- Protect smaller, targeted seed areas with longer term closures. Close the bays, open up outside.
 - o Federal science shows that what comes out of closed areas in terms of spat production/spawning far outweighs what is harvested in regards to fishery benefits.
 - o Scallops in Union River should have been protected as could have seeded surrounding areas. Consider reseeded scallops from Cobscook to help recovery. If Gouldsboro Bay was protected, could seed outside areas – should restrict harvest in this area to protect/maintain stock.
 - o Possible that eastern Maine and around Machias Seal Island could reseed all of Gulf of Maine. Maine fishery also benefitting from Canadian stocks
- Should consider joint management of the St. Croix River with Canadians; ideal seed area.
- Concern over a new invasive tunicate or “sea squirt” in Somes Sound area that is smothering scallops.
- Should not release information on catch in press releases regarding violations in-season as may drive fleet to those areas. Same with release of survey data.

Appendix B

Carl Wilson's Vessel Monitoring System (VMS; trackers) Slide Presentation



DMR Scallop Response

Pre-Season Survey

In Season Sampling

Port

At-Sea

Survey

Boat Counts

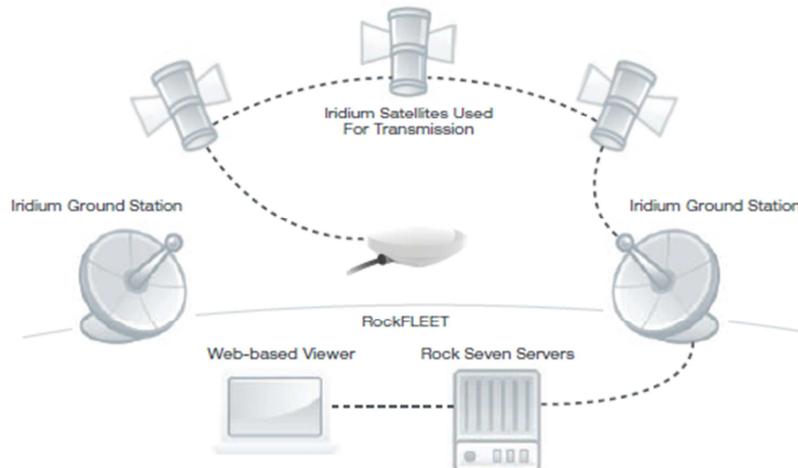
Daily check-ins

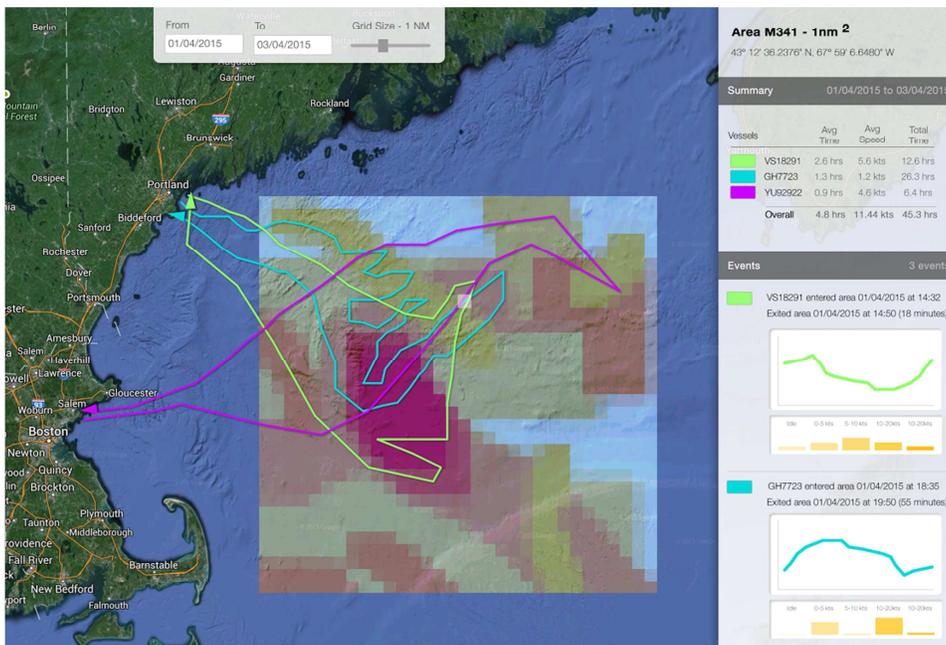
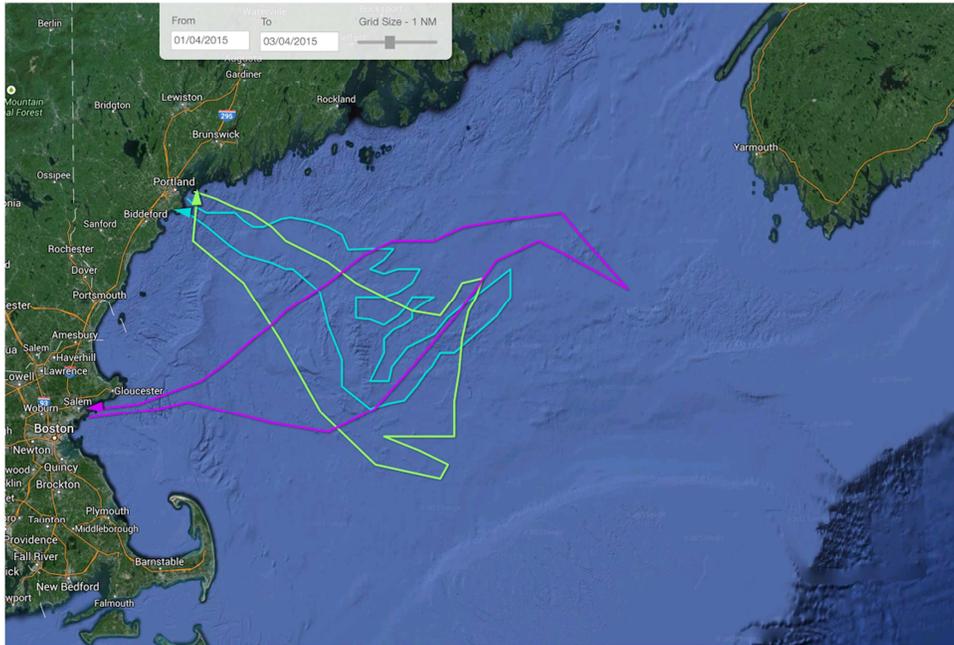
Weekly meeting

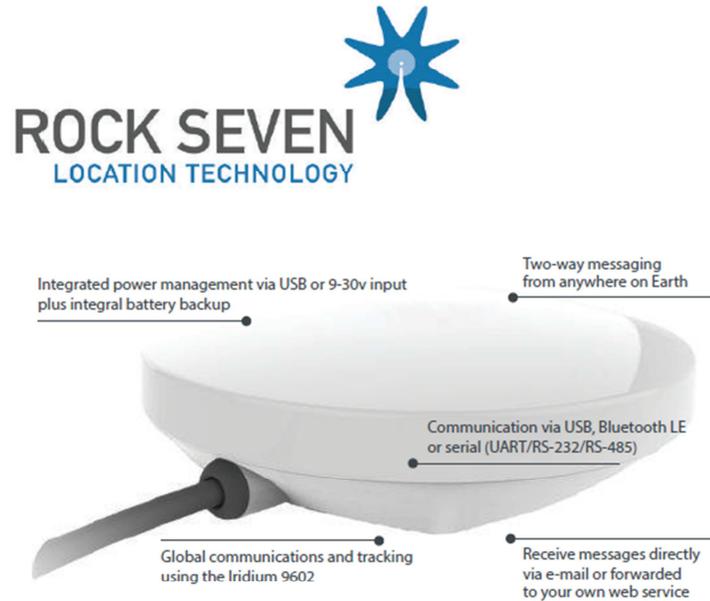
Balance to Rebuilding

- Matching removals to the resource
- Effectiveness of in-season closures
 - We get it right
 - We get it wrong
- Is there a way to quantify fishing activity in an area reliably?
- Trackers

How does the RockFLEET work?







Could this work?

Objective decisions

Timely

Maximize fishing opportunity

Enforcement

Define pre-season survey area

Inform in-season surveys

Safety at sea

Appendix C

Rob Watts Swipe Card Slide Presentation

Why collect landings and catch data?

- **To monitor the health of Maine's marine resources**
- **To obtain information for use in fisheries management**
- **To demonstrate the social and economic importance of the fishing industry**

Landings vs. Catch

- **Landings = Amount of marine species captured, brought to shore, and sold (or transferred) to another person or party. Organisms that are released/discarded not included.**
- **Catch = A measure of marine species removed from the environment, including bycatch, fish released, at sea discards and species not sold (transferred, etc.).**

What is collected?

Dealer	Both	Harvester
grade (ns/os)	harvester/boat	no. of crew
market (size)	date	amount of gear
price	gear	time gear fished
	species	depth
	amount	area fished
	port landed	sea time
	disposition	set number
	dealer	

How are data used in management?

- **CPUE for management decisions/assessments**
- **Number of active harvesters can be determined and to what extent vs. licenses sold**
- **Helps measure impact of regulations or marine activities on fisheries and communities**
- **Provide information to better understand how fisheries impact one another**

Why Swipe Cards?

Current Elver System

- Allowed the DMR to keep a very lucrative fishery open.
- Dealers are able to verify if a harvester is licensed or not.
- More accurate and timely data were available.

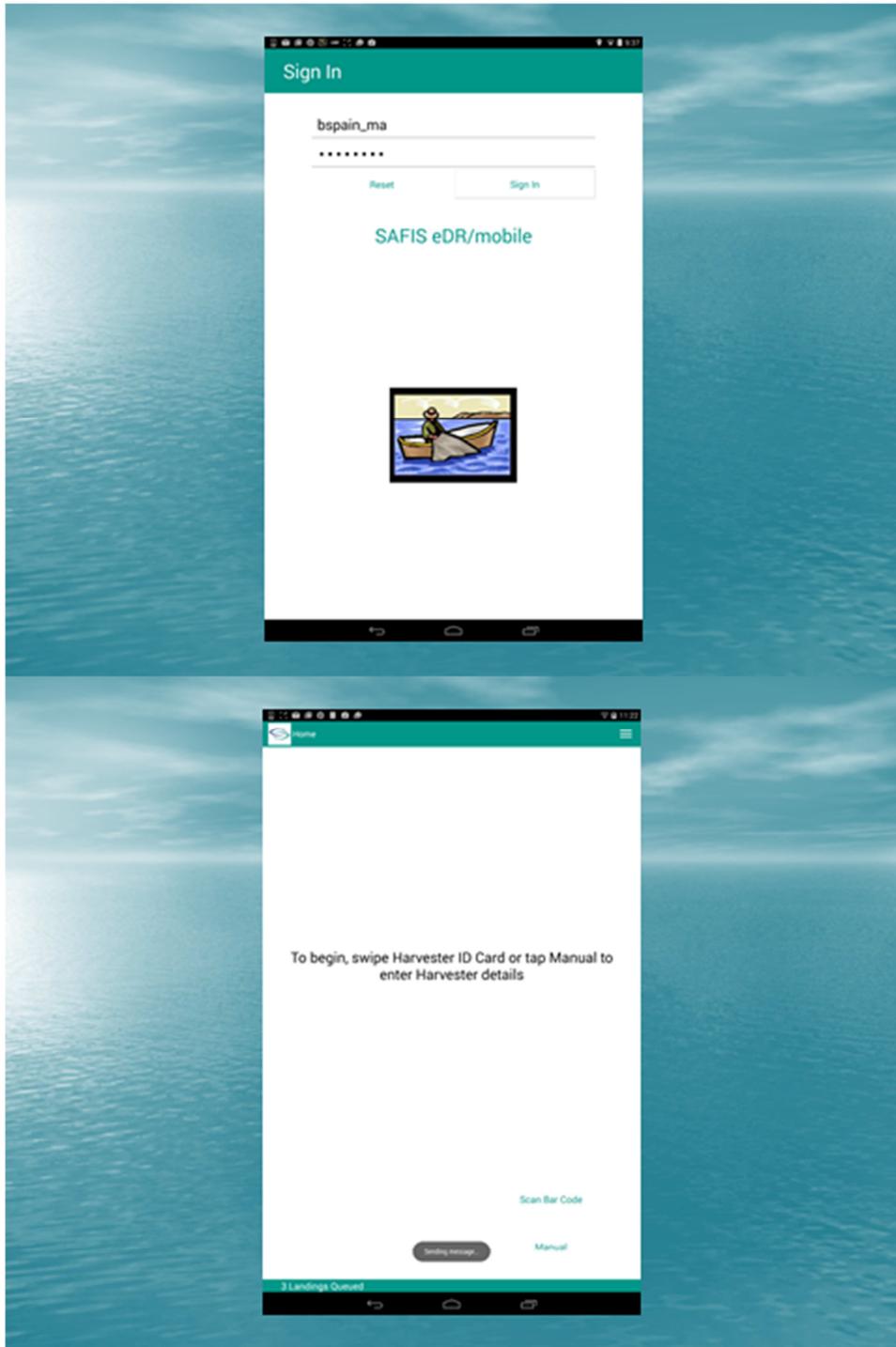
Proposed New Swipe Card System

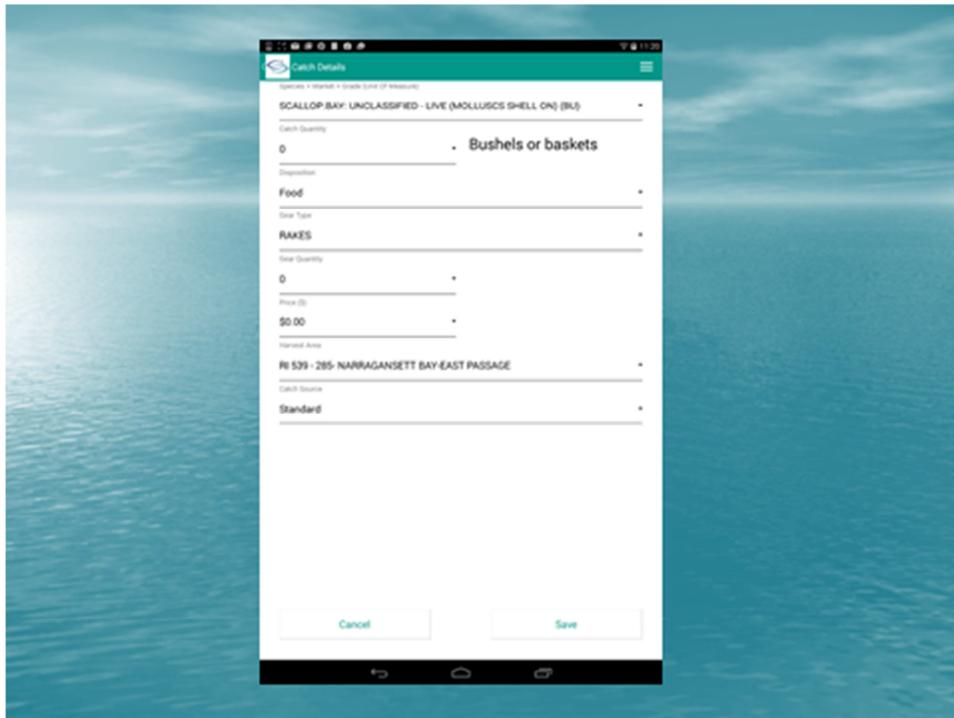
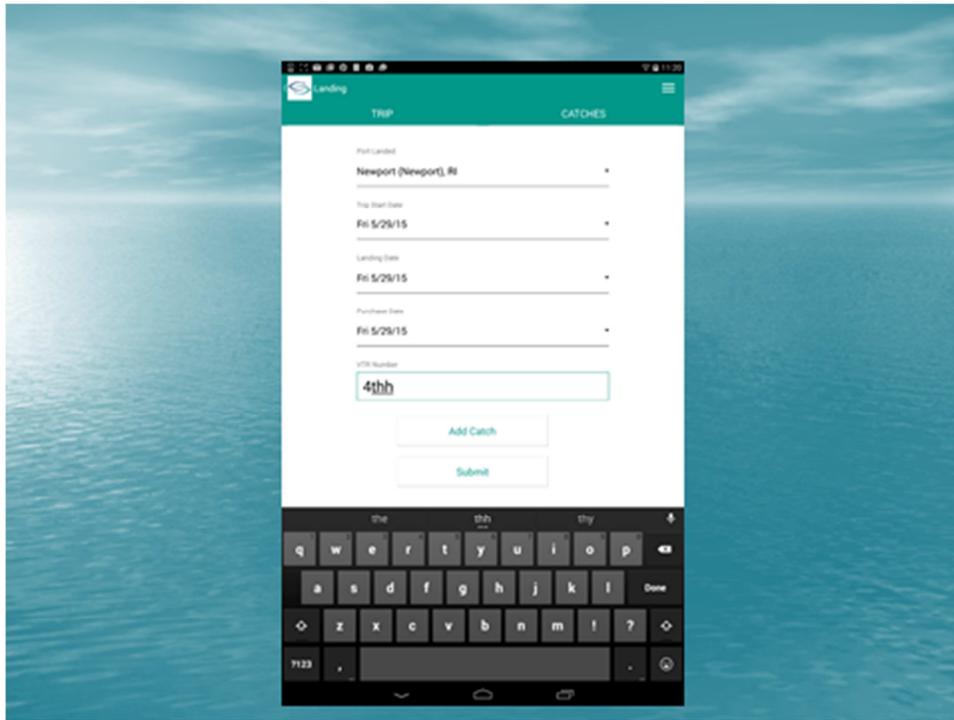
- Same as above plus:
 - Able to verify harvesters vessels (if listed on license).
 - Harvester would have one card for all licenses that would require swipe card (elver, sea urchin and scallop).
 - Remove need for paper dealer reporting in two more fisheries that have a management need for more timely data.

Why Swipe Cards? (continued)

Proposed New Swipe Card System

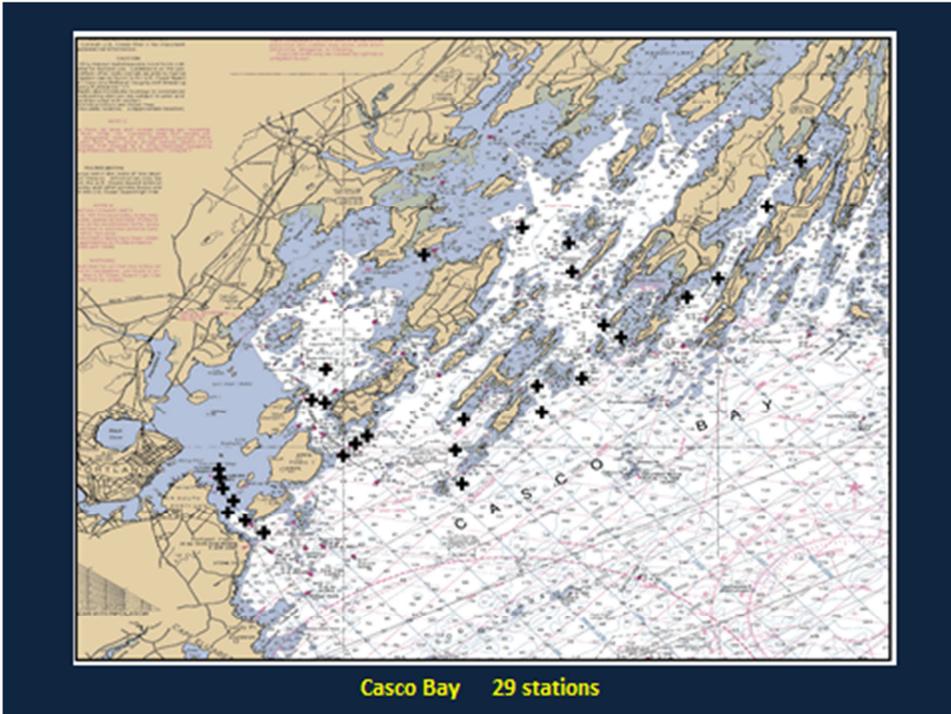
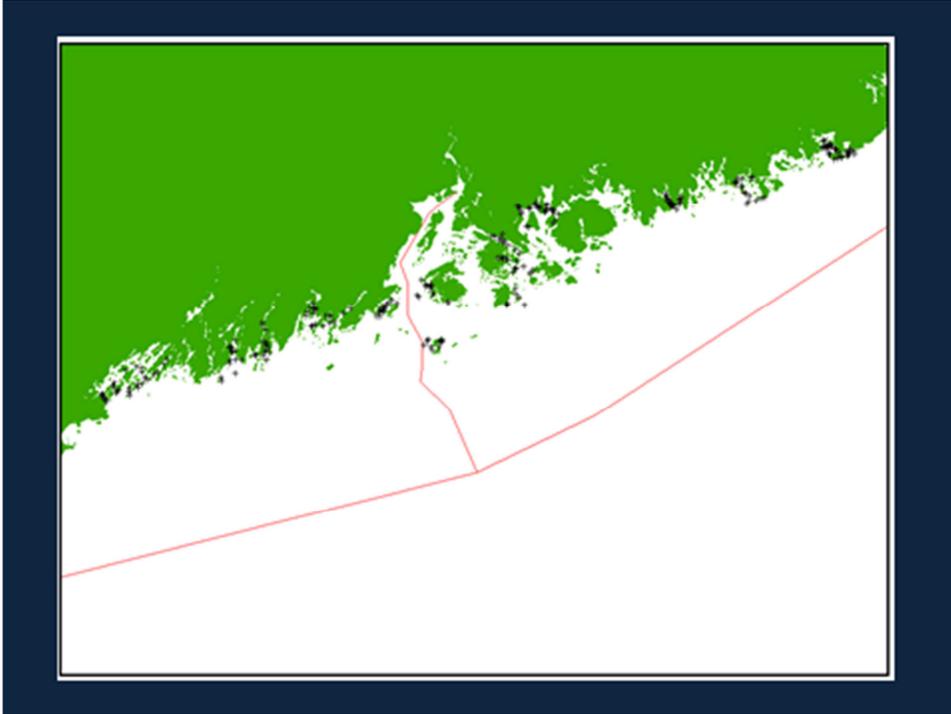
- Allows harvester to verify what dealers have submitted purchasing at time of sale.
- Does not replace harvester reporting.
 - Dealers do not report any effort or harvest location information.
- Dealers are not reporting any more information that what has been reported in the past.
- Data are submitted daily allowing fisheries managers access to the most timely data possible.



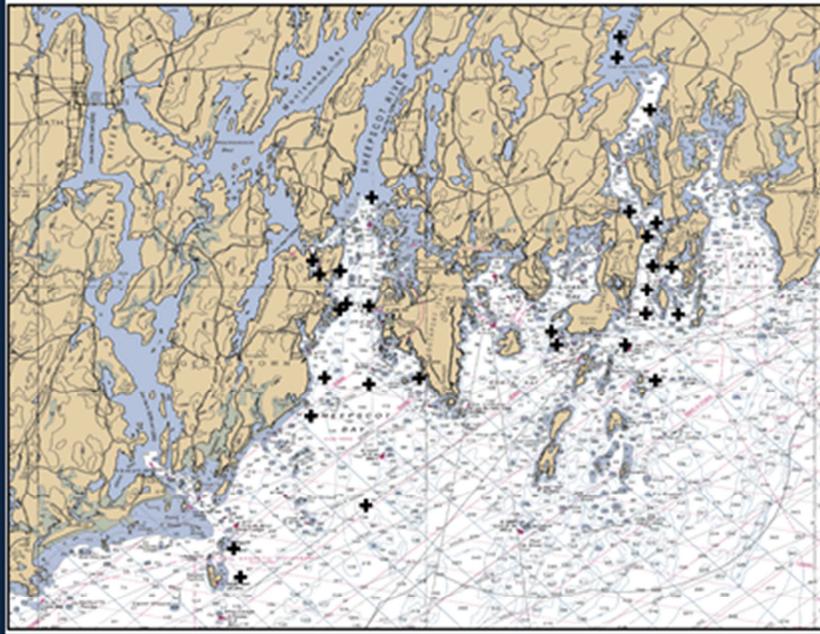


Appendix D

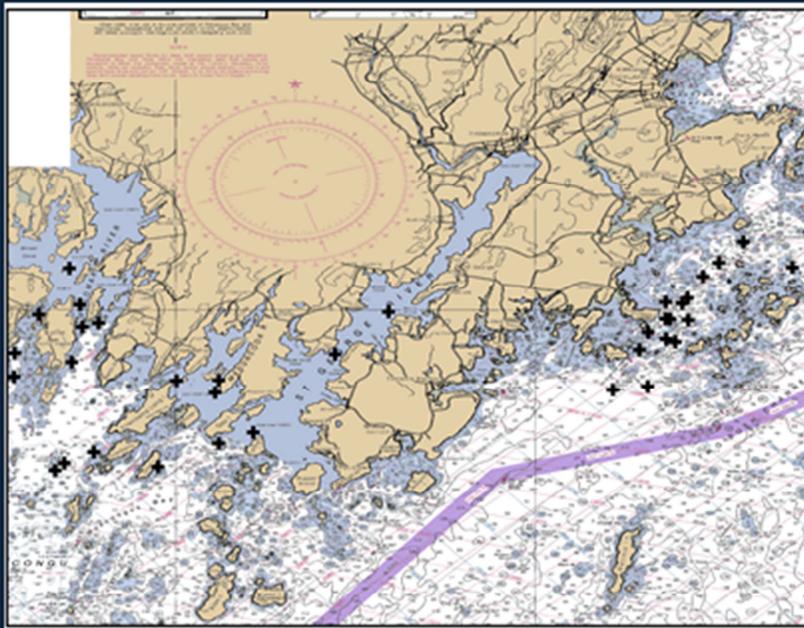
Kevin Kelly's Spring Survey Slide Presentation



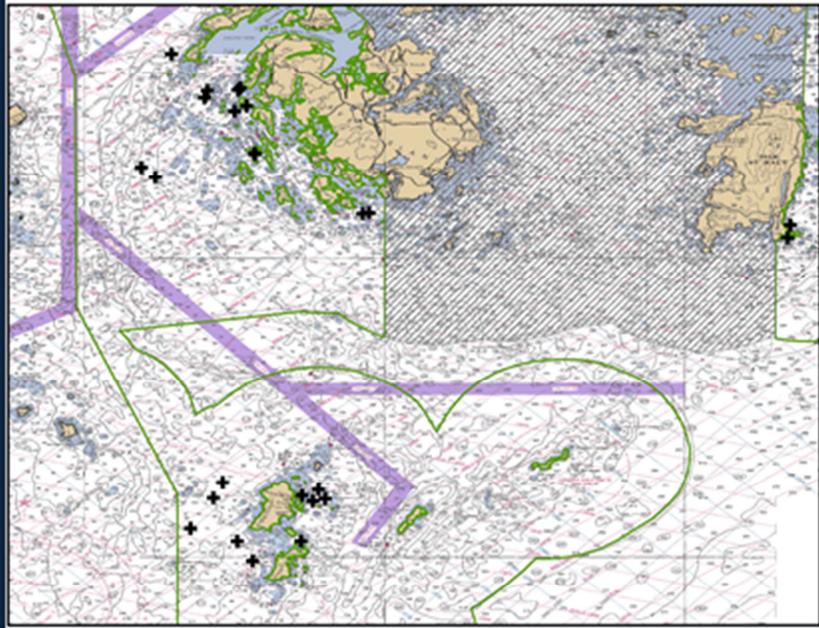
Casco Bay 29 stations



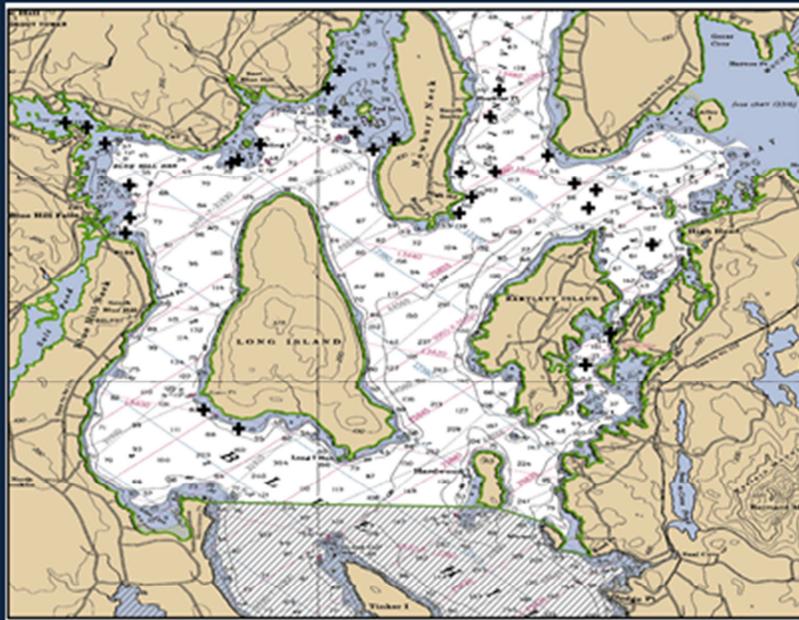
Damariscotta/Sheepscoot 29 stations



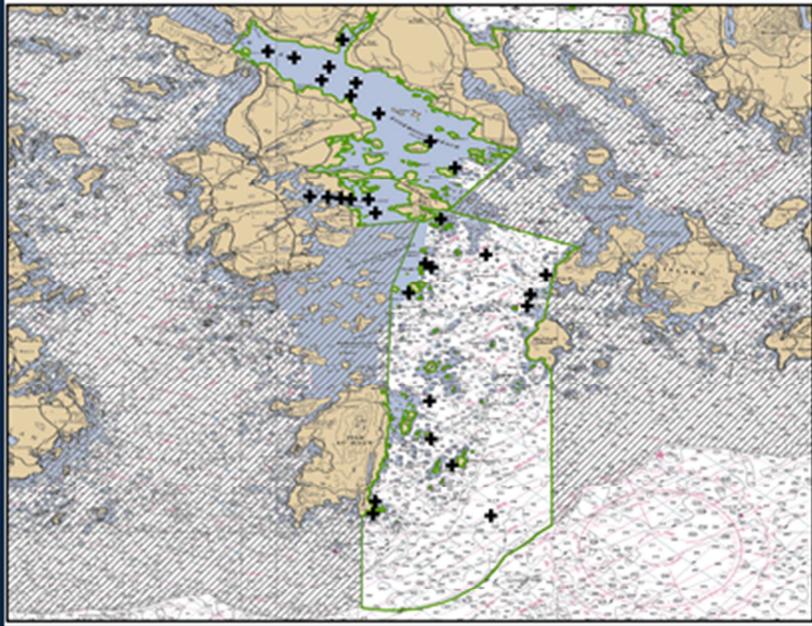
Muscongus/Muscle Ridge 35 stations



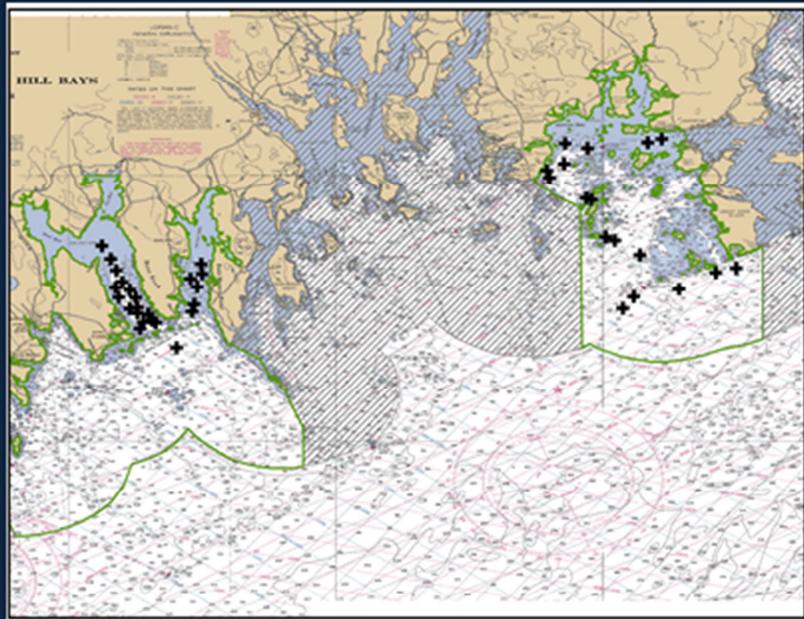
W. Vinalhaven/Matinicus 24 stations



Blue Hill/Union River 30 stations



Eggmoggin/Jericho 30 stations



Gouldsboro/Western 41 stations

