

Sea Urchin Zone Council Meeting June 18, 2015 in Bangor, ME

DMR staff: Trisha Cheney, Margaret Hunter, Rob Watts, David Libby and Troy Dow.

SUZC members: Larry Harris, Teresa Johnson, Joe Leask, Clint Richardson, Tracey Sawtelle, Jason Leighton, Duane Carver, Mark Nickerson, Atchan Tamaki, Steve Eddy and Chuon Muth.

SUZC members not present: Jeff Edwards and Dean Norris.

Public: Paul Cox, Aaron Gilpatrick, Chenda Doeur, Keith Evans and Schuyler Belle.

Sea Urchin Zone Council Research Subcommittee Meeting

Meeting commenced at 3:30pm

L. Harris reviews the Cat Ledge's Pilot Restoration Project current status and next steps (Appendix A). Clint and Mark put out the recruitment panels on June 3, 2015. They remarked that there is lots of kelp at the site. DMR will need to close the area to harvest.

T. Cheney: We can run a separate rule for Chapter 26 [Urchins] at the same time as we are doing our Chapter 11 [Scallop] rulemaking later this summer. It should be finalized by late October. I have drawn up the area in a chart (Appendix B) with a line drawn from the southern tip of David Island in Cozy Harbor to Red Daymarker "2", then west to Red Nun "6", then south to Red Gong "4CL", then southeast to Red Nun "2", then northeast to the southwestern tip of Cape Newagen.

L. Harris: I have colored bricks to delineate the area. There will be three sites with three separate treatments, one being a control with no transferred urchins, then a treatment with transplanted urchins and another with transplanted urchins and hatchery seed.

S. Eddy: We will transplant hatchery seed following year in the fall of 2016.

J. Leask: I like the idea of nine separate sites. We will need a lot of transplanted urchins, 18 totes so there are three totes per treatment.

C. Richardson: We want to have a mixture of sizes.

J. Leask: When we move eggs we do take a larger run as they needed to be legal in years past. Bill Sutter expressed an interest in this and said there where urchins in the immediate area, mind you it would be by drag and not dive that they are collected.

S. Eddy: Do you think they will survive?

L. Harris: If you drag them up slowly.

J. Leask: I would rather dive and move them. If there are 18 trays worth of urchins in that river, I would rather leave them there.

L. Harris: If you can do the quick and dirty with drags, great. I did it with Leo Murray a few years ago, but they were on mud and there was 100% survival. But it wasn't deep.

J. Leask: It is a deep hole in the Sheepscot River that they would be coming from.

M. Hunter: I have read that there is some sort of issue with barotrauma and urchins.

J. Leask: I just wanted to mention it as an option. I would prefer to dive for them. Maybe that is a part of the experiment; to see what is there, and move another portion.

M. Nickerson: Could you have another site that would compare the dive urchins and the drag urchins?

C. Richardson: I would rather leave it. I don't think we will have any problem getting the urchins that we need.

J. Leask: I just wanted to add that opportunity is available and possibly see what is there. Larry – three sites with three different treatments?

L. Harris: What I am getting at from the actual work end of it is the quantifying. It takes a fair bit of time to look at 30 urchin panels. Takes time to go through all those images. Collecting the samples and taking back to lab is only step one. You get the GoPro out there and end up with 100s of images that need to be quantified.

J. Leask: Once nine spots are there, what are you guys going to want for information from those sites? Are the panels going to be processed?

L. Harris: We want to get a handle on what the pattern of natural recruitment is. If done every year, we could get a pattern on how that is changing. You can leave the frame in place and just bring back the AstroTurf panels. Once you have it all set up then you monitor the populations and the algal cover and looking to see what you are finding in terms of urchins, both transplanted and control to see if you get differences in areas where you have added urchins in terms of recruitment. Because disturbed areas tend to end up with higher survival of the settling juveniles than the straight kelp beds. This is based on studies that have gone way back in Nova Scotia with Ken Mann and we have found a similar pattern at the Isle of Shoals. Similar recruitment, but no little urchins survive in areas with kelp beds, while many survived in barren areas.

J. Leask: So, we will intend to continue to monitor in future years.

S. Eddy: And the last survey you are going to collect the urchins, at the end of year two, and take those to look for the tag in lab.

L. Harris: This will tell us percentages of natural recruits vs. seeded animals. You put the panels out in the end of May/beginning of June. You could pick panels up in July or August. Twice a year you will survey what the populations are doing.

C. Richardson: With the GoPro.

L. Harris: After transplant it would be interesting from a curiosity point to see how things are going. You should be able to tell after just a few months if you had a die off or not. Then you can get into a periodic sampling scheme.

J. Leask: Some of the site selection is tide, what is on bottom for feed. You want similar bottom types for each of the treatments.

L. Harris: For each station you want some reasonably similar habitat for transplants and controls.

J. Leask: Each of the three sites would contribute to natural spawn. In ledges did you use where it pools?

M. Nickerson: We tried to put them where it breaks, one where it was eddying.

[Fishermen review the site locations of the panels, photos in Appendix C]

L. Harris: We will work with what you choose as this is a fisherman initiated project.

C. Muth: How big are you talking?

J. Leask: We are talking about 18 totes. So not a problem if we decide to move to areas that are more conducive to urchins?

L. Harris: Not at all. You are familiar with that area. We just want to document and facilitate this process, rather than use telling you where to go.

J. Leask: Steve - has there been anyone fishing the Sullivan River recently?

A. Gilpatrick: We went up there last year, but not enough to keep us there.

J. Leask: Wondering about doing a second project up there maybe, in Zone 2.

L. Harris: I would like to come back up in late July to do the surveys and collect the settlement plates.

C. Richardson: Third to the fourth week to pick up panels and do survey with GoPro works for me.

S. Eddy: I had it backwards. At each site location, **one of the treatments gets transplants + hatchery seed, another treatment is hatchery seed only and the third is the control [no urchins]**. So it would require less overall totes. Want to look at the effect of whether adult urchins provide some benefit to those hatchery seed urchins. So, we only would require nine totes, not 18.

J. Leask: I think you would be hard pressed to get nine totes out of that river. May still have to go to Tenants Harbor for them. Skip Foster dives that area and may know if there are urchins around there. We should talk to him to see what he thinks. When you were diving there Clint and Mark, did you see much sign of recruitment?

C. Richardson: We saw two urchins.

M. Nickerson: Just small ones, but I had a sinus infection and couldn't dive very long. Lots of kelp; it is 4-5 feet tall. In the muscle shells you could see where there were urchins at one point. I wasn't able to get to 25 feet, only 19 feet because my head hurt.

C. Richardson: We can go right out of Bath. It will take about 15 minutes by boat to get there. July 22 or 23 we can do it. Joe should be done ground fishing around that time and we can use that boat.

L. Harris: The transplanting will take place after thanksgiving. You want the water cold enough so the crabs won't get to them.

M. Nickerson: Can go on any non-fishing day.

S. Eddy: We will need a special license.

T. Cheney: Yes, it will name all of you guys on it and can have Maggie, Robert or I on it as a sponsor so the fee will be waived and we won't have to go through the DMR Advisory council for approval.

J. Leask: Could do that on the November Gail. Need to get the eggs early in the morning as it is five hours of steaming. Then need to take them down in the totes and put them right where we know they have the best chance of surviving. We have moved a lot of urchins over the years. The key is to minimize the amount of air that gets to them, the amount of stress. Would like to do it earlier, now is the time as the conditions are right and that is why I was thinking of the Sullivan River.

L. Harris: Any time after the air and water is cold will work.

J. Leask: As long as the water is circulated through them, they are active and will attach to the side of a tote. If we are going to move these things, the sooner the better. Conditions wise, December is good, November too. October we get rolling. I wouldn't mind doing it in the later part of October.

M. Nickerson: Then we have longer days to work with.

L. Harris: You guys decide.

T. Sawtelle: October the sea water is the same temperature as air. South Bay used to be full of green crabs. This year my boy and I each found one.

J. Leask: We didn't see any when we were diving. Whatever month we decide to go.

C. Richardson: How long to get our special license?

T. Cheney: It takes about 30 days to process.

M. Hunter: I wanted to mention that when you are steaming with the urchins, it would be really great to measure the urchins to get an idea of the size range of those being transplanted. Whatever you get, it would be good to document that. You could then look at how much they grow. Also, what if they die – are they the big ones or small ones?

L. Harris: Not too long after they are on the bottom we should go through and photograph and document if they are surviving. If you put a marker in the photograph you can size them. So you can see if they grow and survive. We have a couple of GoPros with lights on it so we can do color and identify the algae at the site. When you put them down, or not too long afterwards, it would be good to go out and say yes indeed they did survive and this is the population structure.

C. Richardson: So, Steve's hatchery product will go in the following fall [2016]?

S. Eddy: Yes, and they will be tagged. In the hatchery we will put them in a dye that fluoresces under the microscope.

L. Harris: It is tetracycline. It's an antibiotic and they will incorporate into their hard parts. There are different color dyes.

S. Eddy: Going to rear one batch in hatchery, half of that will go to Schuyler's Limited Purpose Aquaculture (LPA) lease site in Boothbay Harbor and the other half will stay at CCAR.

S. Belle: The LPA is right near the shipyard.

S. Eddy: And then they will both get put out at the same time in the fall of 2016. If they have been raised at sea in a cage near where they are being planted, we want to see if there is a difference in survival. It also could be cheaper to raise them at sea.

C. Richardson: So, an experiment within an experiment.

J. Leask: How will you transport them from Franklin?

S. Eddy: Have them in small, two pound bags in a cooler in water and then take out in a boat to the site.

J. Leask: The small ones are pretty resilient.

S. Eddy: It was a two hour drive to Rockland, and then it took about half hour to get to the site when we did it last time.

J. Leask: I had urchins in a trap for about two years and we fed them kelp. They will live, but won't thrive as urchins outside had better roe than the ones inside the trap.

Chuon: How many urchins can you rear?

S. Eddy: 60-100,000 is our target. We are deliberately keeping it modest.

J. Leask: If they all survive, that is a substantial amount.

Chuon: Per year?

S. Eddy: Yes, if there was demand, we could do 100-250,000, but we would need to have larger tanks and a full time technician.

J. Leask: What about you Larry?

L. Harris: We could get a couple million per run and those are the pin heads, much smaller. You may be able to set it out in the winter, but they really need to be grown out and you need the space to do that.

S. Eddy: The challenge is getting them to the 10-20 mm size range, which is a good release size.

J. Leask: Really, we want to know if it is commercially viable. But we have Japan to contend with which is subsidized.

S. Eddy: This pilot project is a good sized scale.

J. Leask: This is one option we have to get the biomass up.

S. Eddy: There is the cost too, as it takes a couple of months to rear them to that size. The land based facility has high energy cost and would require a technician. If done at sea, it could be cheaper.

M. Nickerson: Need to figure out why they can't get bigger. For the clams they have the nets to keep the predators off. I know it works, an amazing the difference.

J. Leask: We may be able to skip that point as there are some places that are doing well. Let the urchins do what they do naturally and we are on a good cycle. Our intent is to increase biomass. If Steve could help us out and Larry get his hatchery going again, we could have a fishery going again.

C. Muth: When they are spawned, are the babies soft?

S. Eddy: They are microscopic, soft and bell-shaped.

L. Harris: They look like rocket ships and have eight arms.

DRAFT

Sea Urchin Zone Council Meeting

Meeting commenced at 5:06pm

Welcome and Introductions

J. Leask asked that everyone around the table and room introduce themselves.

Approval of Meeting Minutes ([May 7, 2015](#))

Approval of March May minutes unanimous.

Discussion: Pilot Restoration Project

J. Leask: We will skip over DMR Update until Rob Watts gets here and will continue our conversation on the Pilot Project. I would like to see the Sullivan River as a site to do a similar project. Aaron was up there this year and mentioned there is no effort up there. Historically it has been a good area.

A. Gilpatrick: A couple of years ago there were some shore land owners that had moorings there and had some issue with draggers and were able to get it so they couldn't drag there. Hasn't been much going on there since.

T. Cheney: Tea Tinker may be fishing area, or used to Tracey said.

C. Muth: Jim Carr as well.

J. Leask: Would be good to talk to those guys.

M. Hunter: What is the timeline for closing the area?

T. Cheney: I can run the rule along with the scallop season rule. It should be approved by late October.

M. Hunter: Will anyone object?

M. Nickerson: No, I don't think so.

S. Eddy: How long will it be closed?

T. Cheney: You could put it for five years.

P. Cox: In Cobscook that was too long.

T. Cheney: We could do three years and extend it, if needed.

DMR Update – 2014-15 Preliminary Landings

M. Hunter: I have pulled together the preliminary landings information (Appendix D). In 2013-14 the fishery landed 1,923,708 lbs. which was valued at \$5.1million with a \$2.63/lb price. In 2014-15, landings were up at 1,988,785 lbs. which was valued at \$5.5million with an average price per pound of \$2.75. The Zone 1 landings were down a little bit which could be due to the tote limit that went in last year there.

DMR Update – Swipe Card Presentation (slides in Appendix E)

R. Watts: I oversee Commercial Landings Program and am going to give an overview of the swipe card program. I'm going to give you a bit of a background first. What data do we collect? The dealers collect information on grade, market and price. The harvesters are required to tell us effort information along with location such as the number of crew, average length of the tow,

average depth you fished in, area you fished, which is a general area – where you spent most of your day, not tow by tow - sea time and then set number. Both dealers and harvesters report the harvester, vessel, the date they went, the type of gear, the species, the amount, the port landed, the disposition or what happened to that product – was it sold to a dealer or kept for food - and what dealer you sold to. The benefits of landings data is the value of that fishery to the state, it can be used for business planning, world trade, and whether there was a natural or man-made disaster to say what the value of the fishery was in case relief or aid is given. We can also look at what is the value of this fishery, or what is the best time to purchase certain species, and we can look at trends on this and could add value to your product.

So, why swipe cards? We tested this system the past two years in the elver fishery. We had to have a way to account for the landings in a near instantaneous way in order to not have that lucrative fishery shut down. It is a way for a dealer to verify whether a harvester is licensed or not. One of our biggest audits is for unlicensed fishermen. In theory, if a dealer has bought product from an unlicensed fishermen, they could have that product seized. More accurate and timely data – if you sell your product today, in theory we will see that data tomorrow and it would allow our scientists and fishery managers to have the most up to date information. It is the same information we are currently collecting, nothing new, we are just getting it faster. It would be the same information as is collected in the elver fishery; we are just adding the vessel's name to the data collected. You would have one card for all fisheries – elvers, scallops or urchins. If you have multiple licenses in one fishery, it is still one card. It looks like a credit card and you keep it from year to year. It would also remove the need for dealers to do paper reporting, which we always have trouble with in the urchin fishery. The elver season ended May 31 and we had every record in by June 3. Once the season ends, Maggie has all the data.

C. Muth: Elvers and lobster are purchased differently than sea urchins. The way we purchase is different. We are in the truck.

R. Watts: This was the first year we had fixed buying stations for elvers. This system will work on a mobile device.

C. Muth: In a truck?

R. Watts: Yes. The first year in elvers they purchased out of the truck.

M. Nickerson: Do you have to have an internet connection?

R. Watts: No. You just have to hook up to the internet at the end of the day so the data can be uploaded to DMR.

C. Muth: What if there is no signal?

R. Watts: It doesn't need an internet connection or a network. It stores that information. We set it up for a two or three day time frame.

Chuon: What if more than that?

R. Watts: That is a regulatory issue.

J. Leask: Chuon - it will store the information until you get back into Lubec or Machias when you can send the data.

R. Watts: When you get back to your place of business or you can go into a McDonalds and it will upload. Then your reporting is all done.

C. Muth: What if one of the buyers is not familiar with electronics?

R. Watts: We would come and train them and help them to learn how to use it.

Chuon: Can you talk to a guy who can't speak English? Do I have to send him to school? He doesn't know any English.

R. Watts: We will be there to help.

J. Leask: He is talking about his uncle who doesn't speak English but knows roe percentages.

J. Leighton: Are the tribal licenses going to have to have a swipe card? They turned in their cards last year.

T. Dow: The ones that turned them in were sustenance fishing and there are no sustenance licenses in urchins, so it shouldn't be a problem.

J. Leighton: I just want all of us to be held to the same requirements.

J. Leask: Will this replace the harvester's paper reporting?

R. Watts: I don't want to say no. I am a big proponent for electronic reporting. If someone could fill out their report on their way home, that would be ideal.

C. Muth: How about a guy who doesn't know how to work a smart phone? He just has a normal phone.

R. Watts: We will figure something out.

T. Sawtelle: Who is going to buy them?

R. Watts: We are going to hand out units that are compatible with either Android phones or window's operating systems. If they need an Apple/Mac compatible system or another one after the first, then they will need to purchase it.

T. Sawtelle: How much do they cost?

R. Watts: They are about \$350 each.

C. Muth: I used to buy elvers. I know how this works. But I have four trucks.

J. Leask: What is his uncle going to have to do? He swipes the card and he has to enter some information, correct?

R. Watts: When the card is swiped, your information would be auto populated into many of the fields. But he will have to enter in price, pounds and port – everything else is auto populated. It is thermal paper, so no ink. In the past two years we have had 15,000 card swipes and only one failure. The receipt gives a copy to the dealer and the harvester and it names the dealer and all your information so you can verify right there what is being reported for your license. They are small and if used in a blue tooth mode you could keep it in the truck and keep it warm.

J. Leighton: What if someone loses their card in the middle of the season?

R. Watts: They will need to contact us immediately and we will send you a new one and turn that one off. Marine Patrol will have cards that work and they can swipe their card to facilitate the transaction and they will let me know so those landings will be attributed to you.

T. Dow: There is going to be no problem. I understand your skepticism because when we were trained two years ago, I was skeptical. But we have had no problems and this has worked very smoothly.

C. Muth: What about the cold?

R. Watts: Haven't had an issue in elvers, which are in March. They are so basic. There is no ink. But if you drop it in water, yes, it will freeze.

C. Doeur: Some iPhones are faster than others and sometimes it takes a lot of time to get reception or there is no service at all.

R. Watts: You don't need a connection. Once you go somewhere with a connection then you click send and your reporting is done.

C. Muth: It might not be bad because fishermen are lying to you all the time and giving you the wrong name.

J. Leask: I am worried about piracy. What if someone has two swipe cards? Last year we had guys go out and get 14 trays of urchins and sell them at two different locations. What is to prevent someone from using someone else's swipe card?

T. Dow: So that guy was theoretically selling under his name and then selling a second set of seven trays to a different dealer? This card would illuminate that.

J. Leask: Guys with nothing to lose will do this. There was also a tribal license holder diving both zones, which is not right.

T. Dow: There are two things you need to have in your possession when selling: one is the swipe card and the other is the license.

C. Muth: A guy has seven totes and wants to split his catch. Does he swipe and sell to both?

R. Watts: Yes. There is no limit from the swipe card point of view that limits a person to seven totes because the dealers sell on pound.

J. Leask: Were pointing out the flaws with the card and the discrepancies that the card doesn't address.

T. Dow: These issues are not related to the swipe cards.

M. Nickerson: What are the benefits?

M. Hunter: Just trying to pull the landings update sheet together for you today took me hours as the way that the data is reported is a mess, in terms of the quality anyways. Also, I still don't have the final data from last season. It is June and the fishery was done in March. If I had swipe cards, then I would have all that data now.

T. Sawtelle: I see a downside. This fishery is driven by the roe. With these new swipe cards the percentage of roe will not be reported. We won't know that information now and that is the main thing we are selling. Why? Because the price of that urchin is more important than the roe.

M. Hunter: I believe the roe is something we could add back in the future. We will still have port samplers out to collect that information.

T. Sawtelle: On all these charts you have the roe percentages.

M. Hunter: We are hoping we could add it back in future years.

R. Watts: It has to do with storage and how the data is stored.

M. Hunter: I think price is more important, knowing the value of the fishery. I was upset that the roe wasn't going to be collected.

J. Leask: How can we collect that information? How do you provide that information Chuon?

C. Muth: It is just a guess anyways.

J. Leask: Is it worth providing that information to the DMR Chuon?

C. Muth: When we buy urchins, we are competing for what we think is the percentage. But it is not 100% all of the time. When the woman does the paperwork and reports it to Maggie, she is just guessing.

J. Leask: We want to keep the dataset intact, how can we get that information?

R. Watts: Price is dictated by the percent. So you can look at the prices and potentially get a ballpark idea of what the percentage was.

M. Nickerson: It can fluctuate.

T. Sawtelle: What bothers me is this is all supposed to be for conservation, but this is not doing that.

J. Leask: Doesn't mean we can't collect it. Swipe card can't do it, but I don't mind submitting my information day by day. I would think if the buyers were not busy the buyers could submit month by month that information.

T. Sawtelle: I just can't image that quality is not going to be reported. It sound like the scientific data isn't as important as price.

M. Hunter: Scientifically, I could care less about the price. That is why our port samplers will continue to collect that information.

T. Sawtelle: How many days did you sample last year?

M. Hunter: We sample once every two weeks.

M. Nickerson: You really want this information to make sure we are paying our taxes.

R. Watts: We are just here to collect your data. There are still harvesters that won't report until they try to go get their license at the end of the year and they can't remember what they did eight or nine months ago. This will give us the data instantaneously.

C. Doeur: I thought you had to get it in by the 10th of the following month?

R. Watts: On the dealer side of it, yes. If you are more than 45 days out of compliance, we send a license suspension letter out. This swipe card program would take that right out of contention. With elvers, if they didn't report within two days, there license was suspended. Of the 29 buying stations out there last season, we didn't suspend anyone. As I said, it won't replace harvester reporting. Dealers don't report any effort information.

C. Doeur: Could this work so that a guy could sell me two days' worth of product?

R. Watts: That would be carred product.

T. Cheney: You can't be in possession of more than the daily limit, so you can't hold that product over. That is a regulatory requirement.

C. Muth: We need to move to quota.

J. Leask: This is going to stop the helpers from being able to transport the product. It would be better for me to be able to tag my totes and then take two days' worth of product to sell. Now I am the only one that can sell my urchins, so someone else can't take my urchins to sell for me. The swipe card has some serious drawbacks, but also benefits. Immediately, it won't be the best thing.

M. Nickerson: A lot of the time I get out from diving and have somewhere to go, and my tender would take my urchins for me to sell. Lots of time we have to take them to Portland. It is a three hour turn around.

T. Sawtelle: Would eliminate the ability for my boy to sell them for me.

R. Watts: These are the screen shots from the card reader. You swipe the card and it will have all the harvester information on the screen, you can set all your favorites up, so we can help you Chuon to set up the favorites, like if you are buying form only a few ports. We can help you set all that information up.

C. Muth: You are going to have a lot of problems with this.

R. Watts: That is what they said with elvers and we really didn't. These screen shots are on an android phone.

J. Leask: So there is no place to store the roe information?

R. Watts: There is no place in the database itself. We would have to add a whole other field.

M. Hunter: How about the disposition? Could you put roe in there?

R. Watts: No.

J. Leask: In your research, could you look into having the roe collected?

R. Watts: Absolutely. If there is a way to get it in there, we will. Once you complete that report, it prints a receipt and then you are done. The data uploads either right there if connected to the network; otherwise, it will upload once they are connected to the network.

M. Hunter: Can only the harvester be in possession of the card?

T. Dow: That is how the elver regulations were set up.

T. Cheney: We took that same language, so yes – only the harvester can be in possession of the swipe card and sell his own urchins.

R. Watts: If you have any questions, call me anytime. Leave me a voicemail if needed.

D. Carver: Thank you for coming. I see your point in the first thing you talked about. In 1954, I saw one of the biggest natural disasters hit the Maine coast with hurricanes and it devastated the lobsters and urchins fisheries. If we ever had something like that and didn't have the data, we would be in trouble. Look at Louisiana and the oil spill. Like with the red tide and the clams. My main concern for being here is about the safety of the fisherman. I was under the understanding that swipe cards could help that situation. I have been out in 50-60 mph weather and we had people die. I would like to prevent that from ever happening again.

J. Leask: We are actually at a point for open discussion. What you're talking about there is picking your days. You mentioned this at the last meeting.

D. Carver: I am impressed with this group around the table. We have some good data coming in at every meeting. I don't know if it is to make up that day that week, or if we add additional time on the season.

R. Watts: That is more what Trish is trying to do, from the regulatory side of things.

D. Carver: I can imagine looking at this data next year. Many of the draggers went scalloping last year, so they are ok. We are losing a lot of divers. At one time we had 550 and now we have 50, and maybe only 40 real divers and some just holding on the license. These are some of the issues we need to deal with.

R. Watts: The biggest thing I want dealers and harvesters to know is this is a way to give Maggie the most accurate and timely data. She won't have to come to these meetings and tell you she doesn't know where the fishery is at that point. If her job is easier, then your lives will be better. She can suggest with her experience this is what is happening. It will help us as we won't need to run as many audits – who the harvester was, vessel was, port – that information is often missing. It takes a lot of time to run those audits and this would help that.

D. Carver: I think a lot of guys don't have a problem with the data. Some people are worried about the taxes. The quota system is what scares people. In elvers because they were dipping, it can concentrate a lot of effort in one area and they are down to small quota. People are worried that if they had a bad year, for medical reasons say, they won't get a good quota.

R. Watts: I hear that, I am just here to collect the data. I will get you my card Chun. We have a team of people to work on this, it is not just me.

T. Cheney: We will be mailing cards and easing into the season with Zone 1 early dive using the swipe card first.

J. Leask: What fall on our shoulders as a council are the issues that are not being addressed by the swipe card. It seems very evident to me we are going to have swipe cards.

R. Watts: Swipe cards are not the end all be all. The swipe card is the golden ticket that allows you to access the fishery. People who don't have one can't sell.

J. Leighton: They just go anyways.

T. Johnson: How long will it take to change the database, to include roe?

R. Watts: The data is stored in SAFIS and there are committees that vote on this. So it could take several months to a year. There are 13 states that have a say on the building onto the database, the structure of the database where we send all of our data to.

J. Leask: The State of Maine and National Marine Fisheries Service [NMFS] have some data sharing agreements. For something as simple as percentages, you could go in front of the committee to ask for that. When is the next opportunity?

R. Watts: Usually they are bi-annually or quarterly meetings. So, for this season it is not likely. But, we may be able to have it in place for next season. We may be able to explore other alternatives for collecting that roe data in the meantime as well.

M. Nickerson: So as far as picking days, we are not concerned with that now?

J. Leask: One thing about picking your days and I agree about safety, in event we start picking days that is more effort into the fishery. By picking days we have all 15 or all 38 days. If we are putting more effort into the industry, and Robert comes back with a less than glowing assessment, we are looking at more reductions. Since Commissioner Keliher came into office we have seen reductions and it was up to us to determine what those were. We are finally at a place that is stable. So, we can pick our days, but we may have fewer days. Brian said years ago that we are all professionals and we need to make that decision to fish on bad days or not. The swipe card does open up the question of allocation as right now you basically have either 7 totes times 38 days, or 12 trays and 15 days. So you have to start thinking about whether this is going the way of ground fishing. How are we going to handle our licenses? We are all getting older and it ties into the Fishery Management Plan (FMP). Right now we are dealing with the issues of the day – swipe card and pilot program. But we have a chance to restore this fishery.

Chunon: You are trying to get the TAC [Total Allowable Catch]?

J. Leask: Well, to talk about what is on the table right now. This card is going to be put in place and there are serious issues that are strapping us. We can't hold urchins over right now. I believe that harvesters in both zones need to have the ability to hold over urchins or have someone to sell on their behalf. Right now we can only have urchins on an open day and we can't hold several days in a row.

D. Carver: I think it is interesting that they had a lot more urchins this past winter than the year before because the weather was so bad. If we could get those statistics up, we could give more guys work. Scalloping is strong, so draggers won't be going as hard. Mainly, the divers have been shut down for a long time; they gave away dragger licenses at the Fishermen's Forum a few years back. We could put a lot of people to work. What a shame it is what they did to the quahog industry. NMFS turned it over to two people and it used to be a lot of draggers making a lot of money. That was taken right away and all the pressure put on the other industries. I would love to see more people working, a safe industry. When the Commissioner decrees there is no clamming because of rain, everything stops temporarily. Why couldn't you do the same if there was a hurricane coming up the coast? Why couldn't you shut down a few times in the winter and extend the season two weeks when it is warmer?

T. Sawtelle: If you pick your days, you might get 30 days, not 38. You're going to lose 25% of your days.

D. Carver: You might be able to go diving, but you can't go to your best spot a lot of times.

J. Leask: For guys in Corea it is always bad and they only get out to the good spots on good days on the offshore ledges. I am glad to hear that urchins are doing better in your area. It is interesting, your idea of working together – our Commissioner, he is very hands on. He has the authority to make emergency decisions.

M. Nickerson: If you're going to pick your days, you are going to lose at least 10% because the weather is factored in. They really only want to give you 30 days, so you have 8 days to take off. We get to go 15 days and we get 12 trays. We have gotten used to making that amount of money. We are not going to want to go back to 10 days.

J. Leask: Yes, a couple of years ago the Commissioner gave 5 more days.

C. Richardson: He really only wanted to give us 2 more days.

J. Leask: Right, he compromised and gave us 5 more so we could get our 10 days in. I think Zone 2 is fairly healthy with the seven trays and license attrition. In Zone 1 they have 12 trays and 15 days, I see Zone 1 being the critical issue and needing to bring more biomass. This is just an experiment at Cat Ledges; this is not going to restore Zone 1. But the darn things are reproducing in the places they are at right now.

D. Carver: I think it takes longer that I thought it would.

J. Leask: I was going island by island doing my survey. Found nice beds of urchins in a tidal line, lined right up. Clear evidence of the urchins spreading along the tidal line, on the north and south ends of ledges and you could see the evidence of where they settled, how they grew and where they were not. One diver who straight rakes could go through and kill that ledge.

D. Carver: In Stonington it is sandy bottom and they would leave eggs on bottom and not strip it, but then a second diver would come through and strip it. The minimum and maximum size law has helped.

J. Leask: I have seen that in groundfish.

D. Carver: In lobsters too. Back in turn of century, they could fill their dory with lobsters and they depleted the resource. And they put the minimum size on and our fishery exploded while Massachusetts depleted their fishery without any size limits.

J. Leask: Scallops as well.

D. Carver: Are scallops multiplying in western Maine?

J. Leask: It is spotty. A good fisherman knows. But the further Downeast you get the more plentiful they are. The areas I drag never had scallops – the eighties and doggies. I am catching little scallops now every time I tow. Paul could tell you about Cobscook Bay. 90 pounds – how long to get those two, three hours?

P. Cox: Five tows.

D. Carver: This year they came back on the lobster traps.

J. Leask: There are numerous areas showing pinky sized urchins. The measuring stick is when those urchins transition to being viable. This pilot project we have, I am curious to see how this goes in two years. This may give us more insight on how these things work, eat and reproduce. Our coastline has the ability to hold higher biomass.

Sea Urchin Export Issues

J. Leask: Atchan – can you give us an update on the US Fisheries and Wildlife Service (FWS) issues?

A Tamaki: The Fish and Wildlife Service 40 years ago started to control the import and export of products, not for human consumption, but more for endangered species. They have now started to control and inspect import and export of urchins. We have to notify the agency 48 hours prior to urchins coming to Maine and prior to exporting. Right now I buy from Chile four or five times a week and we are getting urchins through New York. Three years ago it was 90F and we could not even touch the urchins. I argued with them that they needed to hurry up. And it has caused some serious problems. Sea urchins are not for human consumption - that is what they are saying. We need to have this identified. Of course, the fines are great revenue for them.

J. Leask: I spoke to two FWS officials about it in Rockland and they knew of the two inspectors that we deal with in Portland and New York.

A Tamaki: Usually there is one in Calais on the boarder with Canada and also one in New York for the product that is going overseas and imported in from Chile.

M. Nickerson: So you are having problems with whole urchins or processed roe?

A Tamaki: Both.

M. Nickerson: Who justifies that?

J. Leask: It is in court right now.

M. Nickerson: What can we do?

T. Cheney: At this time, the delegation is aware of the issue. I have brought Deputy Commissioner Mendelson up to speed on the issue after we discussed this at the last SUZC meeting as Senator King's staff reached out to us to gather some information two weeks ago.

J. Leask: I would like us to take a vote to get Trish to write a letter on our behalf that states that these urchins are for human consumptions and this issue affects our industry as a whole.

MOTION (J. Leask, seconded by M. Nickerson) For Trish to draft a letter of support on behalf of the SUZC that sea urchins are for human consumption and submit letter to the FWS so they can recognize it as human food. UNANIMOUS. MOTION PASSED.

Chuon: We are not only paying the costs for the imports and exports of this product, but also the legal fees.

S. Eddy: Should it be addressed to the head of the FWS.

Chuon: The shippers, freight forwarding.

A Tamaki: It is not only the fees, it is the 48 hour advance notice and the hours that they work are limited on weekends and holidays.

J. Leask: Share the initial letter to the lawyer with Trish.

A. Tamaki: Ok.

T. Cheney: I will draft something up on behalf of the council and consult with the deputy commissioner on who exactly is the best person it should go to.

Fishery Management Plan Discussion

T. Cheney: I have updated the document to incorporate edits in the Life History sections and also updated a graph on landings and value in the document. The most recent version is dated June 2015. While this has been on the back burner for a while, I would like to bring this back to the forefront so we can continue to develop the document.

Other Business

C. Doeur: Why do we have to have calendar days in January? I strongly urge the council to take those days and move them into December or March. No fishing for draggers for the January 1 through 13 period. They [Asian markets] don't want the product. After the holiday season everybody's money is out.

M. Nickerson: What about the divers in January? You can't move those diver days into December because there are all those days already scheduled in December. You had everyone making them up at the meeting to do this when it should have been taken care of.

J. Leask: Were you at the season setting meeting?

C. Doeur: No.

M. Nickerson: You are trying to move 11 days. There were two groups of guys that made these calendars up.

C. Muth: I have the same argument as you do, and it is not going to work. This is the second year that it is not going to work.

M. Nickerson: There were a lot of people at the season setting meeting.

C. Muth: It is the fishermen picking the days.

J. Leask: I want to remind people that we made a concession on moving to a four day work week from five and not everyone got what they wanted. We have been doing it this way for years. Which week is the bad week?

C. Doeur: The first two weeks of January.

J. Leask: We could definitely address that next year.

T. Cheney: Yes, we spoke about this at the end of the public hearing in Augusta, but it wasn't put in as a formal comment. We can address this next year though.

C. Doeur: You said you would bring it up at the next meeting and you didn't.

T. Cheney: You are right; I should have told Joe and should have raised the issue so the council was aware. I apologize.

C. Doeur: Why can't we set the season on a Saturday?

J. Leask: The meetings are usually hosted mid-week. I can ask folks if they want to meet on a weekend.

T. Cheney: I can meet on a weekend if folks want to.

M. Hunter: After years of observing these meetings, I think that the processors voice is not always heard at that season setting meeting as it is outweighed by the harvesters.

J. Leask: I would disagree as I weigh Atchan's opinions pretty heavily.

C. Muth: In the last few years I have never had a say. The first time I didn't get what I wanted, the second year I wasn't there and we got five days which I didn't want and this year I got into a good argument with Atchan and we got the four day work week.

A. Tamaki: Our market is totally different as it is domestic, their [Chuon & Chenda] market is Japan.

C. Muth: We are struggling!

C. Doeur: We are struggling really bad!

C. Muth: The fisherman is not struggling as bad as we are.

J. Leask: Some more and some less. American business does work like that.

C. Muth: A few years ago we just asked that you just give us a chance.

J. Leask: There were times that there were no processors at those meetings. Hats off to Atchan and Chuon because you show up and many don't.

C. Muth: We have to work three ways – fishermen, processors and markets in Japan – to keep this business going. The market tells us when they want it, so we tell you when we want to buy the product. I had a guy tell me “you can't tell me when to fish!”

C. Doeur: When they don't want the product, they give us a really bad price. You guys risk your life to go get the product. We have to take your product because we are selling to us every day, but Japan does not want our product at that time.

C. Richardson: You should warn the fishermen that these two weeks you will get a really bad price then.

M. Nickerson: Before the season setting meeting, tell us which days not to pick.

T. Cheney: We can set the season next year in two meetings. We can have a pre-season setting meeting to hash this all out and come up with a draft, and then a follow up meeting to actually set the meeting.

M. Nickerson: Especially, if you can't be there. You can tell one of us what you want ahead of time.

J. Leask: We have this season set up so you get product over a long period of time. It's been this way for 20 years.

C. Muth: In the last five years, we only make money in December.

C. Doeur: The price of the market is what it is.

C. Muth: We might make a bit of money at the end of the year in [Tadoussac](#) (watch video [here](#)).

J. Leask: In the past you have said that in September you can't make big prices.

C. Muth: Five years ago the exchange rate was different.

A Tamaki: Every processor has a different market. Every December I lose money. June, July and August I make money on the Chilean urchins

J. Leask: We can continue this conversation at the next meeting.

C. Muth: Can we talk about our license and that it is too expensive? The lobster processor licenses are much cheaper.

J. Leask: We can put that on the list for the next meeting.

T. Cheney: Next meeting will be in mid-July. Once I have a date set up, I will follow up with all the council members. Thanks!

Meeting adjourned at 8:15pm.

Appendix A

Larry Harris's Cat Ledge's Project Outline

CAT'S LEDGES – NEXT STEPS

18 JUNE 2015

PRESENT – Recruitment panels deployed at three sites.

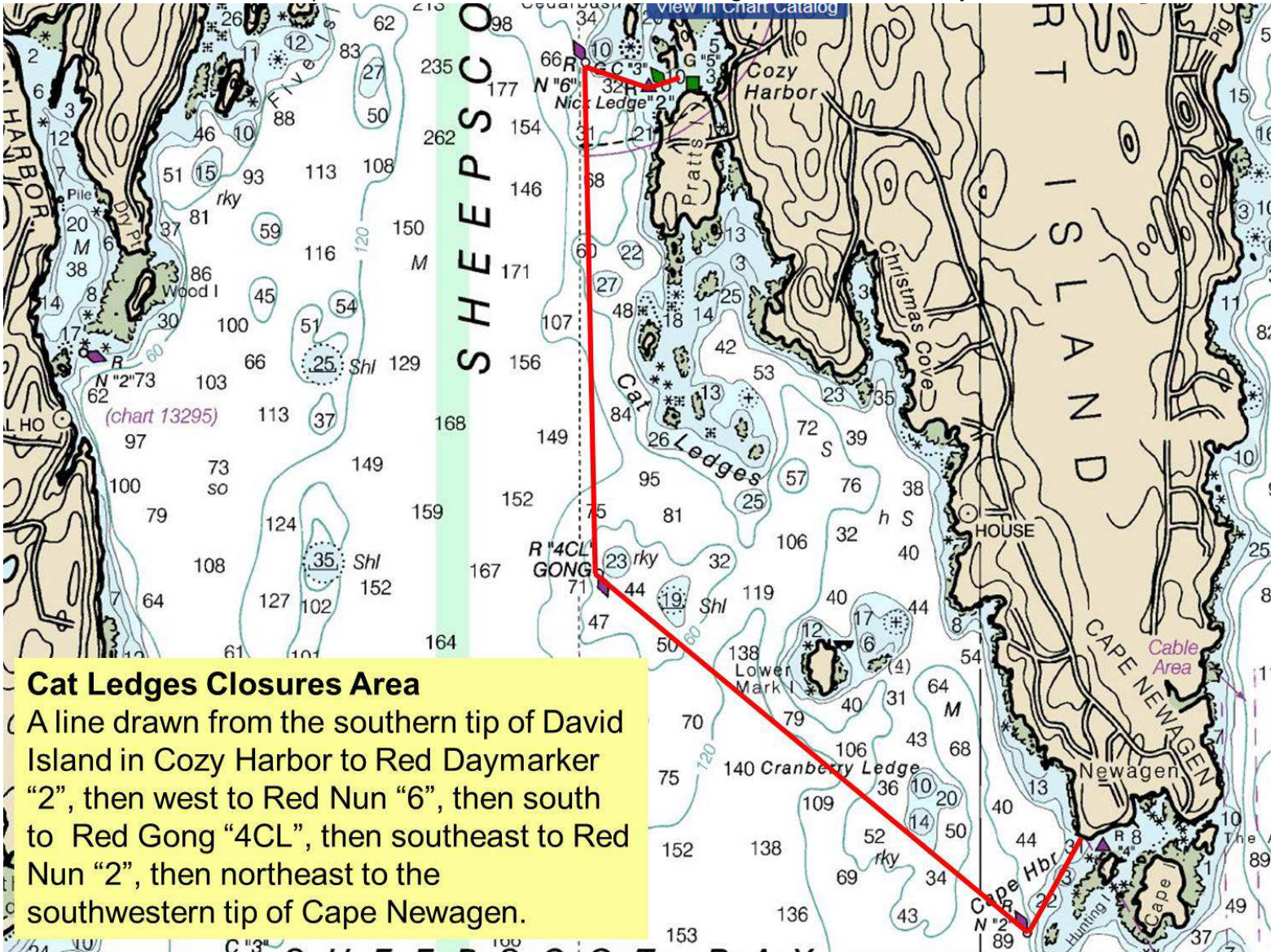
NEXT STEPS –

- 1. REQUEST TO DMR FOR RESTRICTED USE OF THE LEDGES AREA**
- 2. DEPLOYMENT OF COLORED BRICKS TO DEMARK SITES – HARRIS WILL DELIVER BEGINNING OF JULY**
- 3. SURVEY OF BENTHIC COMMUNITIES – RUSSELL AND HARRIS WITH STUDENT HELP - _____ JULY.**
- 4. COLLECTION OF RECRUITMENT PANELS (SAME TIME AS SURVEY?)**
- 5. TRANSPLANTING OF URCHINS AFTER THANKSGIVING.**
- 6. SURVEY OF SITES IN SPRING.**
- 7. BEGIN CYCLE OF SURVEYS AND RECRUITMENT MONITORING.**
- 8. STOCKING OF HATCHERY REARED JUVENILES (TIMING _____).**
- 9. BEGIN REPORTING TO SUZC AND DMR.**

DRAFT

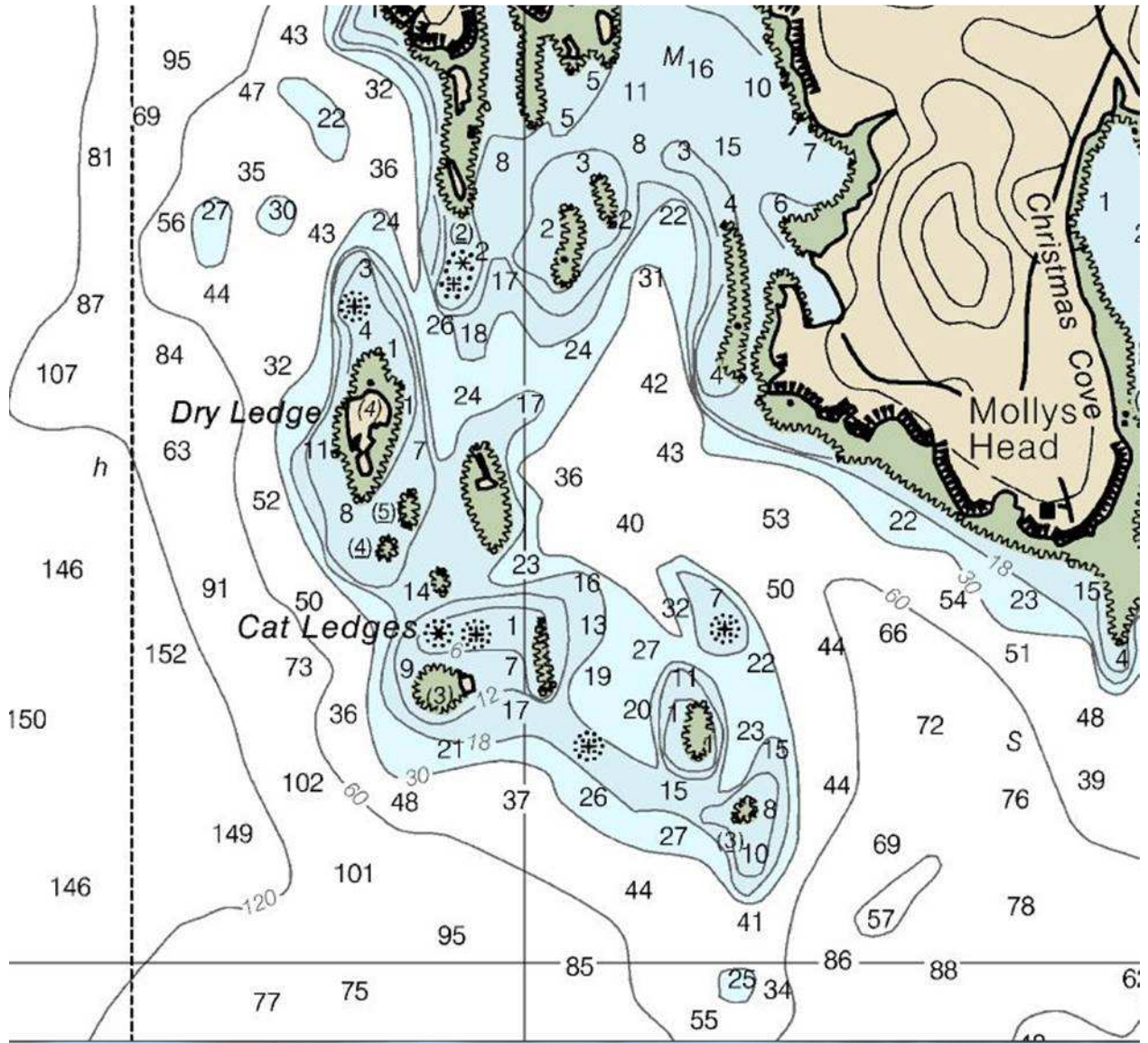
Appendix B, part 1

Proposed Conservation Closure for the Cat Ledge Pilot Restoration Project



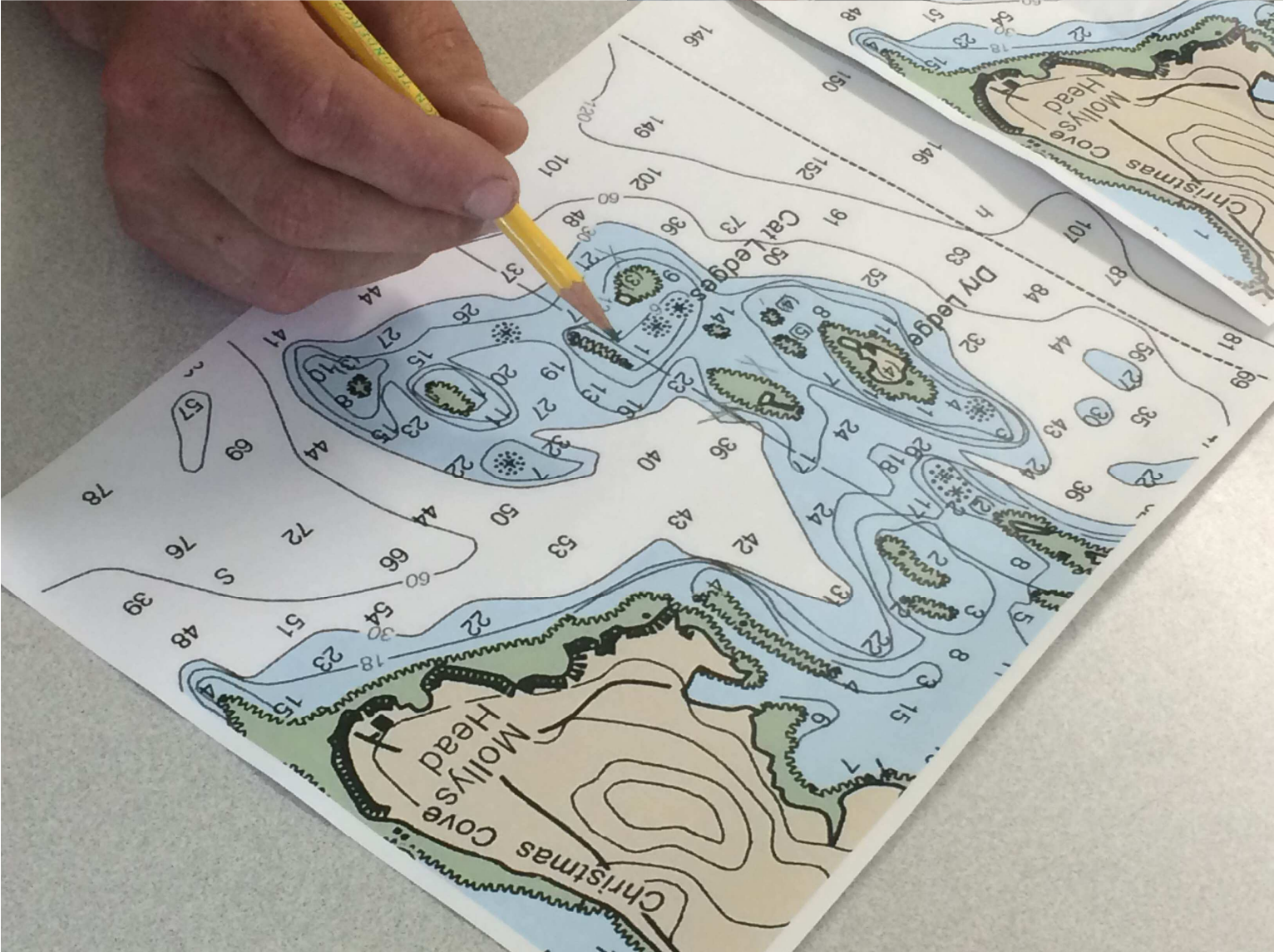
Appendix B, Part 2

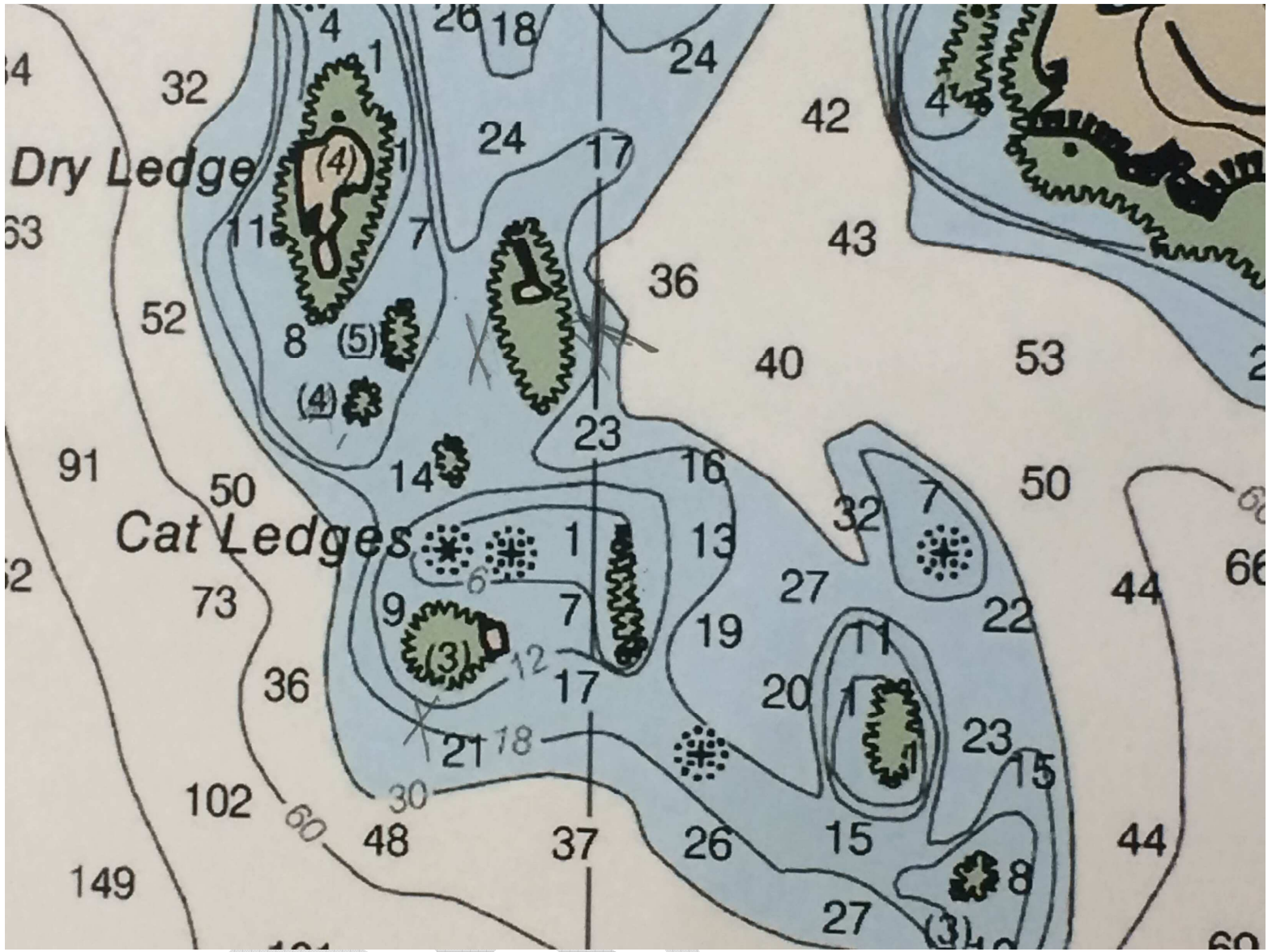
Study area for the Cat Ledge Pilot Restoration Project



Appendix C

Project leaders Joe Leask, Clint Richardson and Mark Nickerson reviewing site selection for Cat Ledges Pilot Restoration Project





Appendix D

M. Hunter's Preliminary Landings and Value Report

Total Value of the 2013-14 fishery was \$5.1 million and average Price/Lb was \$2.63 (preliminary)

Preliminary 2013-2014 Maine Sea Urchin Landings (lbs) by Zone, Gear, and Month

	Zone 1			Zone 2			State Total
	Dive	Drag	Total	Dive&Rake	Drag	Total	
Sep	182,023	0	182,023	0	0	0	182,023
Oct	15,747	0	15,747	112,467	200,038	312,505	328,252
Nov	0	0	0	86,184	109,143	195,327	195,327
Dec	106,899	79,474	186,373	213,186	236,978	450,164	636,537
Jan	0	*	*	111,248	15,982	127,230	127,230
Feb	0	0	0	154,548	70,101	224,649	224,649
Mar	0	0	0	172,219	57,471	229,690	229,690
Total	304,669	79,474	384,143	849,852	689,713	1,539,565	1,923,708

Total Value of the 2014-15 fishery was \$5.5 million and average Price/Lb was \$2.75 (preliminary)

Preliminary 2014-2015 Maine Sea Urchin Landings (lbs) by Zone, Gear, and Month

	Zone 1			Zone 2			State Total
	Dive	Drag	Total	Dive&Rake	Drag	Total	
Sep	176,136	0	176,136	22,819	0	22,819	198,955
Oct	41,162	0	41,162	138,619	195,133	333,752	374,914
Nov	0	0	0	80,505	84,386	164,891	164,891
Dec	94,821	70,269	165,090	333,332	191,603	524,935	690,025
Jan	0	*	*	101,170	9,059	110,229	110,229
Feb	0	*	*	37,142	57,802	94,944	94,944
Mar	0	*	*	193,988	160,839	354,827	354,827
Total	312,119	70,269	382,388	907,575	698,822	1,606,397	1,988,785

Preliminary 2014-2015 Maine Sea Urchin Mean Price/lb (\$) by Zone, Gear, Month

	Zone 1			Zone 2			State Avg.
	Dive	Drag	All	Dive&Rake	Drag	All	
Sep	\$1.96		\$1.96	\$3.01		\$3.01	\$2.08
Oct	\$1.84		\$1.84	\$2.72	\$2.72	\$2.72	\$2.63
Nov				\$2.96	\$3.18	\$3.08	\$3.08
Dec	\$2.51	\$2.08	\$2.32	\$3.17	\$3.01	\$3.11	\$2.92
Jan		*	*	\$2.54	\$2.31	\$2.52	\$2.52
Feb		*	*	\$2.75	\$2.82	\$2.79	\$2.79
Mar		*	*	\$3.04	\$2.59	\$2.84	\$2.84
Season	\$2.11	\$2.08	\$2.10	\$2.96	\$2.83	\$2.90	\$2.75

*January-March Zone 1 Dragger data combined with December to preserve confidentiality.

Zone 2 Raker data combined with Divers to preserve confidentiality.

Appendix D

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

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.

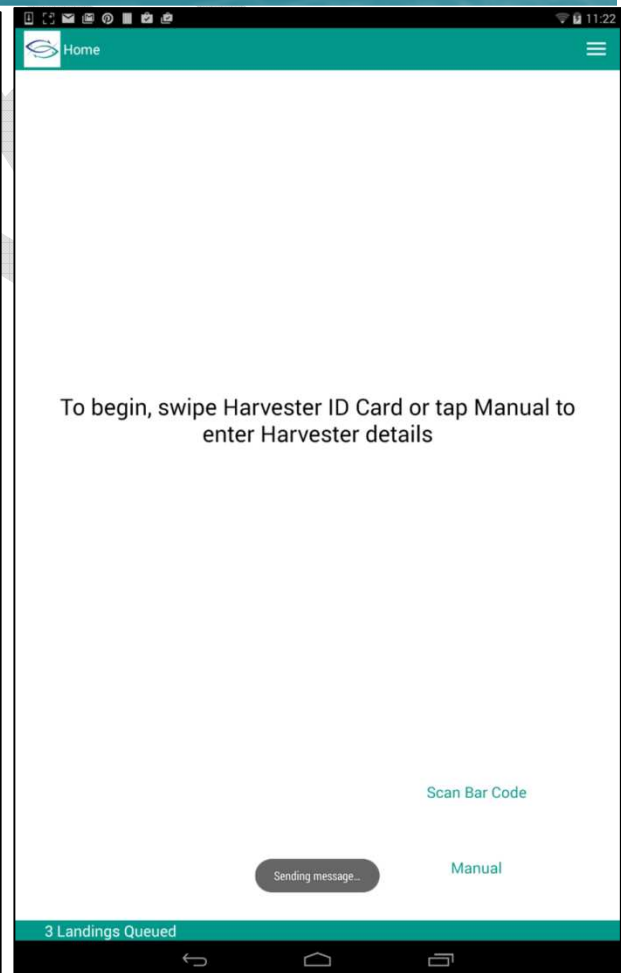
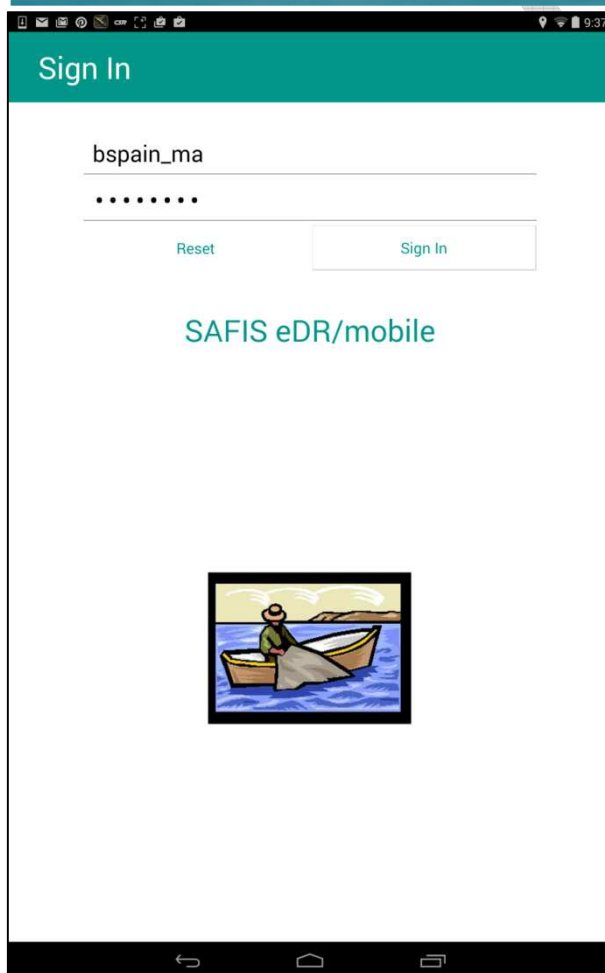
Proposed New Swipe Card System

- 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 than what has been reported in the past.
- Data are submitted daily allowing fisheries managers access to the most timely data possible.



Landing

TRIP CATCHES

Port Landed
Newport (Newport), RI

Trip Start Date
Fri 5/29/15

Landing Date
Fri 5/29/15

Purchase Date
Fri 5/29/15

VTR Number
4thh

Add Catch

Submit

the thh thy

q w e r t y u i o p

a s d f g h j k l Done

z x c v b n m ! ?

?123 , .

Catch Details

Species + Market + Grade (Unit Of Measure)
SCALLOP.BAY: UNCLASSIFIED - LIVE (MOLLUSCS SHELL ON) (BU)

Catch Quantity
0 Bushels or baskets

Disposition
Food

Gear Type
RAKES

Gear Quantity
0

Price (\$)
\$0.00

Harvest Area
RI 539 - 285- NARRAGANSETT BAY-EAST PASSAGE

Catch Source
Standard

Cancel Save