Massachusetts Lobstermen’s Association & IFAW Working Hard to Preserve Right Whales

Dave Casoni, Secretary/Treasurer, Massachusetts Lobstermen’s Association est. 1963

CT Harry, US Marine Campaigner, International Fund for Animal Welfare
Who we are & What we do

One of the leading commercial fishing industry Associations in New England
1,800 members from Maine to Cape May

The MLA is a self-funded member-driven organization that accepts and supports the interdependence of species conservation and the members’ collective economic interests.

The MLA collaborates with IFAW and other ENGOs on conservation projects, hosts an Annual Weekend & Trade Show and is committed to conservation of the ecosystem collectively.
There are <1,090 MA permits of which <800 are active.

NO new Federal permits are issued.

NO new MA State permits are issued.

There are <420 Active/Inactive Federal lobster trap permits in MA.

Massachusetts covers 4 Lobster Management Areas & 3 Lobster Stocks.

NO new Federal permits are issued.
Massachusetts Lobster Permits are Declining EVERY year!

<table>
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<th>LMA</th>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>PERMITS</th>
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Massachusetts Fisheries Conservation Efforts

1996 Gear restrictions (Winter/Spring) Cape Cod Bay Critical Habitat
   a. Sinking Groundline
   b. Single Traps Banned (4-pot trawl or doubles allowed)
   c. Gillnets Banned
   d. Buoy lines composed of not more than 1/3 poly at bottom

1998 Winter-time marking established to ID abandoned gear in CCB CH
Fixed gear features “Technology List”: 7/16” line, sinking line,
600 lbs. breakaway

1999 Technology List gear features applied to Rec. lobster fishery.

2000 Ban on abandoning or storing fixed gear in CCB CH

2003 Year-round ban on floating groundline
Extend the CCB CH gillnet closure to include western shore of CCB

2007 Year-round state-wide ban on floating groundline

2009 Widespread ban of floating groundline by NMFS beyond MA
   * (MA was implemented in 2004 – 5 years before NMFS mandate)
2014 MA Restricted Area Closure is enacted Feb 1- April 30 3073 sq miles
Conservation Efforts for Right Whales in Massachusetts

Effective February 1 to April 30
3,073 sq miles

The MA Restricted Area negatively affects approximately 250 lobstermen

Historic North Atlantic Right Whale sightings in Cape Cod Bay
2018 IFAW Funds Field Testing of “Buoyless” Traps in Cape Cod Bay

- July 16-21
  (Sandwich Marina & Cape Cod Bay). Temporary LOA permit from MA DMF

- Day one: familiarize with current lobster trap deployment and retrieval

- Days two-five: involved customizing acoustic release rope bag, trap recovery, and deck space to allow for deployments. Acoustic release system tested inside marina

- Day six: true field test in CCB. Acoustic release rope bag deployment on four trap trawl (w/ one end line as backup)
2018 IFAW Funds Field Testing of “Buoyless” Traps in Cape Cod Bay

Safety concerns
Technical challenges
Economic challenges
Unintended consequences
Law Enforcement concerns

This will be a process. Innovation and field testing requires time. Industry can’t change tomorrow.
THANK YOU