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DMR announces research grants worth \$284,000

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AUGUSTA — The Department of Marine Resources recently announced four grant awards from the DMR Research, Education and Development fund totaling \$284,139.

The four organizations receiving funding include the Penobscot East Resource Center, the Maine Lobstermen's Community Alliance, the University of Maine System and Colby College. Each responded to a request for proposal issued last December.

The Penobscot East Resource Center (PERC) will receive \$37,500 to develop four lobster curriculum units for the Eastern Maine Skippers Program, an educational initiative for high school students planning a career in Maine's lobster fishing industry. Two units will cover lobster fisheries management and two will target science and life history.

The Deer Isle-based nonprofit, PERC will engage industry experts including fishermen, dealers, conservation advocates, fisheries managers and scientists in the development and implementation of the curriculum units.

The Maine Lobstermen's Community Alliance has been awarded \$37,500 to build on the success of its Maine Lobstermen's Leadership Institute (MLLI). Begun in 2014, the MLLI provides education for members of Maine's lobster industry. Participants in the MLLI program will complete three training modules. They will include a workshop on industry issues such as management, science, market and supply chain dynamics and product quality. There will also be modules that provide opportunities for experiential learning and information exchange with fisheries participants outside of Maine.

The University of Maine will receive \$127,482 to develop a research project titled "A Proactive Approach to Addressing Lobster Health in the Context of a Changing Ecosystem." The focus of the project will be on the changing ocean ecosystem and how these changes can affect lobster reproductive development and susceptibility to disease. An objective of the project is to develop the ability to respond rapidly to reports of shell disease in lobsters.

Colby College will receive \$81,657 to conduct an analysis of economic impacts at each point along the supply chain in Maine's lobster industry. The analysis will not only quantify the direct and indirect economic impacts of the industry throughout the supply chain, but also the induced effects on Maine's economy of spending by industry workers.

The project research will involve confidential surveys of Maine's lobster dealers and processors as well as analysis of existing DMR and Department of Labor data.

engaged fishermen, by improving our understanding of the complex marine environment, and by refining our ability to measure the impacts of the lobster industry on Maine's economy," Maine Department of Marine Resources Commissioner Patrick Keliher said in a statement announcing the grants.

The Research, Education and Development Board provides funding for projects that support Maine's lobster industry using revenue from the sale of Maine lobster license plates for automobiles.

SUPPORT LOCAL

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West End Drug

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(207) 992-4600