

Island Ad-Vantages

THE VIEW FROM ATLANTIC AVENUE

April 16, 2020 – Last week in Washington DC, US District Court Judge James Boasberg ruled that the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) had violated the Endangered Species Act in 2014 when it authorized the lobster fishery without properly accounting for its potential impact on right whales. The ruling was in response to a lawsuit filed by four conservation organizations in 2018 (Conservation Law Foundation, the Center for Biological Diversity, Defenders of Wildlife, and the Humane Society). Judge Boasberg stated that the ESA violation occurred when NMFS failed to include an incidental take discussion in its biological opinion regarding the minimization of the lobster fishery's potential impact on the endangered North Atlantic Right Whale. The next step in the legal process is to determine a remedy, or decide what can be done to reduce the risk. The Maine Lobstermen's Association filed as an intervenor in 2018 and as such will be allowed to participate in this next phase; providing information about what the fishery has already done, and is considering doing, to reduce risk. Over the past year, DMR, MLA, and NMFS have convened many meetings with lobstermen to discuss options and to identify needs for additional scientific information on which to base a new biological opinion and to develop policy that reduces the risk of entanglement to Right Whales without unreasonable impact on the lobster fishery.

If you are interested in learning more about these programs, give us a call.

Do you have a question about our fisheries? Send it to info@coastalfisheries.org or call 367-2708. Learn more about MCCF by visiting us online at www.coastalfisheries.org.

FISHERIES LOG

Prices to Harvesters in Stonington

Lobsters: \$4.25/lb.

Bait (frozen Pogies): \$28/box

Fuel (diesel): \$2.75/gal.

Oceanographic Buoy I-01*

Surface Water Temperature: 41°F