

Island  **Ad-Vantages**  **THE WEEKLY
PACKET**

THE VIEW FROM ATLANTIC AVENUE

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“Be Calm - Times they are a’changing,” (Churchill, Dylan)

Recently I have had the opportunity to witness the resilience, hope and grit of what some see as the beleaguered fishing industry. In a recent Zone Council meeting, where the challenges of an increased lobster measure, bad news on the right whale front, 100-year storm damage, and the uneasiness of having “big brother” constantly knowing when and where you apply your hard earned knowledge, people could understandably become overwhelmed. But, after the customary chest beating on each topic and how debilitating any one could be to individuals, there comes a hopeful and unique relationship between the fellowship of fishermen and the individuals who are charged with upholding the law of the commons.

Listening to Commissioner Keliher explain (DMR’s) efforts to support this state and the time honored institution of owner operated fishermen, it struck me as a lesson in diplomacy, duty and overall commitment to the Maine fishing industry and the communities that survive on these traditions. And, despite the frustration, generally people understood the Department and that the Commissioner were doing the best they could to bring some realistic and rational approaches to the legal and regulatory processes. It felt that at the core, Maine would continue to be stalwart in the values and approaches that have supported coastal communities since fishing began on these shores.

Shortly after the zone meeting, the Eastern Maine Skippers Program partnered with Rural Aspirations Program and Healthy Acadia to sponsor a “Leadership Academy” for interested high school students, post grads and career fishermen to look in to how to get involved, what are the pressing concerns, and what outcomes are reasonable in these challenging times for the fishing industry. An overwhelming sense of hope, commitment, and gratefulness dominated the conversations. The veteran fishermen in the room were so emphatic about the next generation being supported to uphold and continue the lifestyle that they had experienced (good, bad, and the ugly) that voices cracked with emotion as they offered their insight and support. It was a powerful message, backed up by a selfless commitment and genuine passion to give back to the next generation and to help problem solve whatever comes in terms of change.

While I realize that these observations seem a bit romantic and simple, my experience is at its foundation, fishing on the coast of Maine is made from a recipe of drive, innovation, comradery, community, and not the least of which, an inextricable connection to all things in, on, or around the ocean. It is no wonder that fishing families and communities are anxious and uncertain, but they have always met change with innovation, adaptation and appropriately fierce devotion. Though gear, access, regulation, and scale may look different into the future, the core of what makes Maine fishing communities unique and successful is alive and well.

There is much to contemplate in the saying “Encourage - don’t discourage” in the times ahead. Do you have a question about our fisheries? Send it to info@coastalfisheries.org or call 207.367.2708. Learn more about MCCF by visiting us at www.coastalfisheries.org.

FISHERIES LOG

Prices to Harvesters

Lobsters (select): \$9.75/lb.

Lobster (hard): \$8.75/lb.

Bait (herring): \$90/box

Fuel (diesel): \$3.82/gal

Oceanographic Buoy I-01

44°6'10"N 68°6'44"W – Frenchboro

Top Temperature (1 meter): 38.41°F 3.56°C

Bottom Temperature (50 meters): 39.09 °F 3.94°C

Source: www.neracoos.org