

Island  **THE WEEKLY  
Ad-Vantages PACKET**

**THE VIEW FROM ATLANTIC AVENUE**

By: Carla Guenther

March 28, 2024

**Spring Fling**

Just as many folks around the island were succumbing to the spreading spring fever, we were harshly reminded that it is still March. This past weekend we were reminded that the transition to spring remains unpredictable, with Mother Nature nearly always holding one wild card storm in her hand - to throw at us before spring truly leads us to warming days, blooming flowers, and greening trees.

Some islanders were already bringing out the deck and patio furniture as the snow fell on Friday morning. Lobstermen, seeing the high price lobster is currently fetching at the dock, had also gotten antsy to set out their gear. As you can see by the NERACOOS buoy data above, bottom water temperatures are about 2 degrees warmer than the long term average this spring. Is this a harbinger of an early season? A few trap trailers were loaded and brought down to the shore, but this storm prevented them from getting set. We learned a few weeks ago at the Maine Fishermen's Forum that lobster catches were down last year, and so were the number of trips made to catch them. Our communities are poised to weather the pace of natural attrition in the fleet, as they have done for centuries, as fisheries and industries waxed and waned. The current lobster price and robust lobster abundance continue to support the fleet that continues fishing.

There are a number of external forces that are increasingly challenging our long-standing history as a resilient coastal community, however. The storms and flooding that wracked working waterfront, roadways, and coastal habitats may not yet be over - as just a few weeks ago, we experienced sustained overtopping of the Deer Isle Causeway and surge battering our shores for a third time this year. Another reminder that Mother Nature is still holding storm cards in her hand. Rebuilding, and rebuilding stronger, is already underway on the Stonington waterfront in some places, and others are bracing for what might come next - not yet sure of what course of action makes the most sense. This is where the uncertainty of climate change intersects with individual business planning, community comprehensive planning, state and federal fisheries management, and national financial landscape. It is easy to get overwhelmed. It is overwhelming - yet as a community we are talking about it in forums like the Town of Stonington's Talk of the Towns hosted at the Opera House and the Maine Climate Council - where the Coastal and Marine Working Group is already crafting policy to support climate resilient Working Waterfront into the future so that we can always expect to have a place for commercial access to the sea to support marine based economies along Maine's coast.

Do you have a question about our fisheries? Send it to [info@coastalfisheries.org](mailto:info@coastalfisheries.org) or call 207.367.2708. Learn more about MCCF by visiting us at [www.coastalfisheries.org](http://www.coastalfisheries.org).

**FISHERIES LOG**

**Prices to Harvesters** (in Stonington on 3/25/2024)

Lobsters (select): \$12.50/lb.

Lobster (hard): \$11.50/lb.

Bait (herring): \$90/box

Fuel (diesel): \$3.82/gal

**Oceanographic Buoy I-01**

44°6'10"N 68°6'44"W - Frenchboro

Sea Surface Temperature: Not Available

Bottom Temperature (50 meters): 39.79°F (avg. for this date: 38.01°F)

Source: [www.neracoos.org](http://www.neracoos.org) (March 24, 2024)