



## THE VIEW FROM ATLANTIC AVENUE

By: Tate Yoder

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### Learning Life Lessons from a Research Symposium

On Jan. 9th, MCCF, with our partners from Manomet and Downeast Salmon Federation, hosted the first ever “Gulf of Maine River Herring Network Research Symposium.” It was a frigid, windy day, but that didn’t deter over 50 folks from Maine’s border with Canada to Norwich Connecticut, to make the trek to Augusta for a full day of presentations, discussions, and connecting on a common fish of interest: river herring. I was on the periphery documenting the day, and I wanted to share some observations that I thought were exemplary of the kind of engagement needed to help improve the research, monitoring, managing, harvesting, conservation, and outreach of this keystone species - and just so happen to be good life lessons as well.

**First listen, then speak.** With attendees coming to this meeting with such a wide range of roles in the fishery (from local fishermen to fishery managers and researchers at the state, Federal and Tribal levels) and because local knowledge is so important with river herring, there’s a lot to learn from each other. Before broader conversations, presentations were shared on research projects, restoration efforts, outreach and engagement happening in the Gulf of Maine. With enough time to first understand each other before any discussion, there was a level of respect for each other's perspective that enabled deeper, more effective conversations later.

**It takes a long time to build trust, but the effort is worth it.** Building trust is way easier said than done, and I couldn’t help but reflect on the first meeting of this group that took place on Zoom back in 2020. After 5 years of meeting periodically almost entirely online, there was enough trust amongst each other to commit to an in-person event and sharing space to discuss (admittedly sometimes challenging and contentious) topics. I also saw a certain level of vulnerability that was refreshing - sharing both the successes and failures, where help is needed and could be given.

**It’s not just a coincidence.** It’s easy to take things for granted, especially when one hasn’t experienced anything different. I joined MCCF in 2020, so to me this network was just a given part of how those who mutually care for, study, harvest, and work on this species connected with each other. But it’s clearly not just a coincidence. It takes deliberate, meaningful effort to create and maintain these types of collaborations, and commitment from all. And it's certainly not without its challenges. But I believe it speaks to the kind of stewardship that is vital for these fisheries to exist, and truthfully, how we should think about our own relationships and community connections. Deep, meaningful engagement, built on trust, mutual respect, and understanding of our individual incentives provides a framework for long lasting partnership and cooperation, lessening the impact of inevitable change and challenges, while furthering the mutual goals and efforts by all.

Interested in learning more about the Gulf of Maine River Herring Network? Visit their website at [gomriverherringnetwork.org](http://gomriverherringnetwork.org). Do you have a question about 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 as of 1/17/2025**

Lobster (hard): \$7.00/lb.

Lobster (shedder) \$7.40/lb.

Bait (pogies): \$90/box

Fuel (diesel): \$3.10/gal

### **Oceanographic Buoy I-01 (These have been changed as of 1/17/2025)**

44°6'10"N 68°6'44"W – Frenchboro

Top Temperature (1 meter): 42.57°F 5.87°C

Bottom Temperature (50 meters): 42.58°F 5.88°C

Source: [www.neracoos.org](http://www.neracoos.org)