



New England Fishermen's Stewardship Association
500 Southborough Dr. Suite 204
South Portland, ME 04106

April 23, 2024

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
Robert Beal, Executive Director
1050 N Highland St, Suite 200 A-N
Arlington, VA 22201

Dear Commissioner,

On behalf of the New England Fishermen's Stewardship Association (NEFSA), I am writing today to express great concern over Addendum 27 which passed ASMFC nearly one year ago. To the surprise of fishermen, dealers, and regulators—the trigger was reached shortly after the addendum passed. With this letter, NEFSA, along with several other New England fishing associations, harvesters, and dealers is asking for a one year delay in implementation to further study the serious market implications, the significant inequity and penalty placed on American lobstermen within the gray zone, and the scientific surveys used in the trigger index.

NEFSA was very grateful for the 7 month delay proposed by Commissioner Keliher last fall and understands the complexity surrounding another major request of the commission. However, we find it crucially important that the commission considers our ask in order to alleviate serious economic risks that will likely result in many harvesters, dealers, and processors going out of business. The American Lobster Fishery operates in lock step with its Canadian Counterparts and more time is needed to work out the changes as a result of an increase in the minimum gauge.

Unfortunately, NEFSA does not have comments on the record in opposition to Addendum 27. When the addendum passed ASMFC in May of 2023, NEFSA was just being formed. With over 900 active members, the New England Fishermen's Stewardship Association is the fastest growing fishing advocacy group in New England. Guided by fishermen at the helm, NEFSA is rooted in Maine and has a board of directors compiled of fishermen from all over New England. Our mission statement reads:

“NEFSA is an alliance of the wild harvesters of the waters off of New England, dedicated to educating the public about how best to manage our seafood resources through sound science and best practices at conservation used by fishermen, with a view toward economic well-being, ecosystem sustainability and US food security.”

Market Implications

According to many lobster dealers, the expected market implications as a result of the decrease in supply from a gauge increase will be catastrophic. Each and every dealer has a different focus and business model, however, all dealers rely on a steady supply. After the early shed and glut experienced in 2012,

expanding processing within the US became a priority and has increased on a large scale since then. Processors require a steady supply and high volume of lobsters to operate.

Beyond that, the “chick” lobster is of vital importance to many dealers and processors. Three to four ounce tails are one of the most sought after products from many processors which are distributed throughout the United States, to foreign countries, and heavily sought after by cruise lines. Within the live market, many consumers also prioritize a “chick” lobster when purchasing from seafood markets and restaurants in order to enjoy the sweet succulence of North Atlantic lobster at a reasonable price point. Addendum 27 has the real potential of removing many consumers from an already volatile market.

Gray Zone Inequity

One of the most unique fishing territories in all of New England is located off the Eastern Coast of Maine and is known as the *Gray zone*. It's within those waters that American and Canadian fishermen mix together with already difficult hurdles and inequities. Biologists have suggested that with each increase in the minimum gauge, a reduction of about 10% in landings can be expected, but should be made up in the following year. While it doesn't take an economist to realize that a 10% reduction in landings equates to a far greater reduction in the bottom line to harvesters who will still have the same amount of expenses, American lobstermen within the gray zone will suffer far more than lobstermen in other areas. American vessels will be required to throw back smaller lobsters and will not receive any benefit toward increased egg production because Canadian lobstermen will continue to catch and bring to market the smaller size lobster.

American Gray Zone lobstermen are expected to take two 10% hits to their landings as a result of the 1/8” gauge increase and they will not get that back as long as Canadian lobstermen continue to use a 3.25” gauge. Washington County in Eastern Maine is home to a majority of American gray zone lobstermen and overwhelmingly relies on the lobster fishery to be economically sustainable. Addendum 27 as written, will pose a serious threat that many Washington County residents may not be able to overcome.

Science

The New England Fishermen's Stewardship Association would also like to express concern with only two indices being used within the trigger index of Addendum 27. First off, for the last decade or more, lobstermen have been able to fish year around in deeper waters further off the coast. As a result of changing environmental conditions, it would appear to fishermen that lobsters have expanded beyond their traditional habitat into deeper waters. The ventless trap survey is a very important study used to record the number of juveniles within the population, however, the maximum depth for the survey is only 32 fathoms. Deeper water ventless surveys need to be prioritized in the future to get a better grasp on lobster resiliency in and expanded habitats in greater depths.

Secondly, (in Maine) the trawl survey is the only study to drop below the 35% trigger. Also in Maine, landings are still at astronomical levels which were never anticipated just over a decade ago with 2023 landings coming in at a whopping 94 million pounds of lobster landed. The record landings which exceeded 130 million pounds likely forced lobsters out of their preferred cobblestone and hard bottom habitat and onto mud bottom. As landings have moved to more sustainable levels, it's likely that lobsters are less prevalent in non-preferred habitat which could have caused an overdramatized reduction in numbers from the trawl survey which is conducted on the soft bottom.

It's also important to mention that peer-reviewed studies show egg production is currently at an all time high. Furthermore, 2023 lobster settlement surveys have shown record improvements and data from the

deepwater lobster settlement project off the coast of Maine with some of the largest settlement observed in the deepest depth strata. In 2023, many lobstermen expressed their observation of an increase in the amount of undersized lobsters in their traps, especially in deeper water.

The New England Fishermen's Stewardship Association would also like to urge the technical committee to present the 2023 survey data during the summer meeting. With the first minimum gauge change in LMA1 scheduled for January 1, 2025, it is imperative that commissioners are able to review the available survey data as soon as possible—especially if any major changes were observed.

Conclusion

The North Atlantic Lobster Fishery is one of the biggest fisheries in New England and has been articulately and successfully managed by fishermen, scientists, and regulators for decades. Addendum 27 was created to be a proactive approach at stabilizing the stock and continuing to enable the production of high landings for future years. While ASMFC is not required to consider economics within its management practices, in the case of a proactive rather than reactive approach, studying the economics is incredibly important and should be considered in situations of this magnitude. Michael Donihue, Ph.D. Professor of Economics and Director of the Laboratory for Economic Studies at Colby College conducted a very brief economic impact analysis of an increase in the minimum gauge on Maine's Economy. Donihue estimated that a ten percent decrease in the value of lobster landings in 2022 (for example) would have resulted in a loss of just over 680 jobs and nearly 60 million dollars to the economy in just Maine alone (see attached analysis). 2022 saw a drastic drop off in revenue from 2021 and applying the ten percent decrease to that particular year will show a very conservative number as a comparison.

Again, the New England Fishermen's Stewardship Association urges you to consider a one year pause on the implementation date for the minimum gauge increase in LMA1. Harvesters, dealers, and scientists need adequate time to iron out the complications that will arise from Addendum 27 and come up with a plan of how to address the serious and currently unknown market implications, the inequity to gray zone fishermen, and the data used in the scientific surveys.

Thank you,

Dustin W. Delano
Chief Operating Officer
New England Fishermen's Stewardship Association



Economic Impact Analysis of an Increase in the Lobster Minimum Gauge Size on Maine's Economy

by
Michael Donihue, Ph.D.
Professor of Economics and Director of the
[Laboratory for Economic Studies at Colby College](#)

April 2024

In May 2023, the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission ([ASMFC](#)) establishing a trigger protocol (Addendum XXVII) for the harvesting of lobsters in the Gulf of Maine and Georges Bank (GOM/GBK). The ASMFC regulation seeks to increase the harvestable lobster carapace gauge length and trap escape vent size with a goal of protecting the lobster spawning stock in these waters. The increased minimum gauge size was to go into effect on June 1, 2024. ASMFC's action was based on two key observations:¹

- ✓ Since the early 2000s, lobster harvests from the GOM/GBK waters have increased.
- ✓ Since 2012, surveys of the juvenile lobster population in the GOM suggest that the spawning stock has decreased.

There is considerable debate among harvesters and policy makers, particularly in Maine, as to the impact of the trigger protocol on the industry and the accuracy of the survey data on which the ASMFC Board's regulatory action was made. In October 2023, ASMFC delayed implementation of the trigger protocol until January 1, 2025 in response to concerns of harvesters and a request from Maine's DMR Commissioner Patrick Keliher. Of particular concern to Maine's lobster harvesters is the fact that the ASMFC regulations would not apply to Canadian harvesters.

Earlier this month, representatives from the New England Fishermen's Stewardship Association ([NEFSA](#)) and several Maine lobster dealers approached me about the feasibility of providing an update to my previous economic impact study of Maine's wholesale distribution network and an estimate of the potential impact of the ASMFC trigger protocol on the entire industry. My [Lobsters to Dollars](#) study was based on interviews and data from 2016 provided by a representative sample of lobster dealers across the state. I found that, at that time, the economic impacts of the lobster dealer wholesale distribution network in Maine totaled just under \$1 billion and supported approximately 5,600 jobs. My study was confined to just one segment of Maine's lobster industry supply chain and did not include the economic footprint of harvesters, nor the contributions attributable to 'downstream' enterprises in the value chain represented by processors, retailers, and restaurants.

A study of the State's entire commercial seafood industry prepared for the Seafood Economic Accelerator of Maine in January 2023² estimated the economic impact of Maine's lobster harvesters to be \$852.5 million in total value added while supporting more than 6,500 jobs. That study did not estimate impacts attributable to Maine's wholesale distribution network.

A comprehensive economic impact study of the ASMFC trigger protocol would require a careful assessment of the ways in which harvesters would react in terms of their fishing intensity, capital investments in traps and equipment, and how much of their harvest would be impacted by an increase

¹See: <http://www.asmfc.org/species/american-lobster>

²See: <https://www.seamaine.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/FINAL-SEAMaine-Economic-Impact-Analysis-Report-2.pdf>

in the legal carapace gauge length. Smaller lobsters may make up an important portion of total landings as one-pound “chicken lobsters” feature in the sales of many restaurants in Maine. Furthermore, there are more processors in the state than when I did my study and the impact of a significant reduction in this portion of the harvest is unknowable without conversations and field research that included these businesses.

Complicating the analysis, and presumably magnifying the negative externalities associated with the new regulation, is the fact that Canadian harvesters fish in the same waters as Maine lobstermen yet would not be subject to the ASMFC gauge length increase.

To get a sense for the multiplicative impact of a reduction in lobster landings that might result from ASMFC’s new trigger protocol I focused on just the ‘backward’ or ‘upstream’ linkages for harvesters along Maine’s lobster supply chain. I employed the same IMPLAN modeling environment that I used in my Lobsters to Dollars study and, coincidentally, also used for the January 2023 Maine commercial seafood industry impact report

The current minimum carapace gauge length for Maine lobsters is 83mm. Under the ASMFC trigger protocol, the minimum length would increase to 86mm (in two stages). Sampling data provided by Maine’s Department of Marine Resources for 2016-2021 indicate that just over 10 percent of the harvest measured 83mm over this period and would therefore be illegal with the gauge increase. More than a third of the sampled landings during this period had a carapace length measuring between 83mm and 86mm.

I estimate that a ten percent decrease in the value of lobster landings in 2022 would have resulted in a loss of just over 680 jobs and \$59.6 million to Maine’s economy. Again, these impacts apply just to the economic activity attributable to the harvesters and those upstream enterprises in the value chain. All of the negative impacts on the downstream portion of the supply chain – the wholesale distribution network, processors, retailers, and restaurants – would be *in addition* to my estimates.

The table below disaggregates the total impact of a 10 percent reduction in the value of landings in 2022 into the direct effect (10% of landings in 2022 equals \$39.2 million), indirect effects representing economic losses to upstream businesses from whom harvesters purchase equipment and services, and the induced effects of lost labor income on Maine’s economy.

**State-wide Economic Impacts of a
10% Reduction in the Value of Lobster Landings on Maine’s Economy**
(Millions of 2024 dollars)

Impact	Employment	Labor Income	Value Added	Output
Direct	-574	-\$22.7	-\$39.0	-\$39.2
Indirect	-1	-\$0.045	-\$0.085	-\$0.168
Induced	-112	-\$6.3	-\$12.1	-\$20.2
TOTAL	-686	-\$29.0	-\$51.2	-\$59.6





New England Fishermen's Stewardship Association

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April 23, 2024

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
Robert Beal, Executive Director
1050 N Highland St, Suite 200 A-N
Arlington, VA 22201

Dear Commissioner,

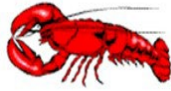
On behalf of the New England Fishermen's Stewardship Association (NEFSA), I am writing today to express our support for the Maine Lobstermen's Associations request that the American Lobster Board reconsider the "24/7" provision of the electronic tracker requirement for federal lobster vessels in Addendum XXIX.

Many of our members have expressed concern with the tracking devices in general, however, if industry must use them we request that they only be active when engaging in fishing activities. Many lobstermen use their vessels for pleasure, as a means of transportation to and from islands, for a family cruise to enjoy the coastal scenery on a beautiful summer day, and so on.

Like the Maine Lobstermen's Association, NEFSA remains opposed to a policy that invades individual privacy and encourages ASMFC to address this concern with a viable solution. NEFSA requests that the "24/7" provision be removed from the federal electronic tracker program.

Thank you,

Dustin W. Delano
Chief Operating Officer
New England Fishermen's Stewardship Association



Mortillaro Lobster Inc.

60 Commercial Street, Gloucester, MA 01930

PH: 978-281-0959 / FX: 978-281-0579

mortillarolobster@gmail.com

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
Robert Beal, Executive Director
1050 N Highland St, Suite 200 A-N
Arlington, VA 22201

April 23, 2024

Dear Commissioner,

On behalf of Mortillaro Lobster Inc., I am writing to you to express the severe unease that is felt amongst the waterfront all throughout Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Maine from both fishermen and dealers over the implementation of Addendum 27. I have a unique understanding of the potential harmful effect that could be felt on all sides of the industry. I own and operate a wholesale lobster company in Gloucester, Ma. We source product from surrounding local areas as well as Canada and Maine. I talk to stakeholders from all parts of the industry and there is one overall concern that both dealers and fishermen will not survive the implementation of Addendum 27.

I understand Addendum 27 was developed and passed to preserve the lobster stock when and if the trigger was hit. It came as a shock to most people in the industry when this trigger was hit so quickly after Addendum 27 was passed. I feel as though the science being used is not reflective of what is truly going on in areas of the ocean where no proper research is being done. I hear from fishermen who fish inshore, offshore, on hard bottom, mud, gravel, and sand and who fish from 5 fathoms to 90 fathoms, and they all say the same things. Where there used to be lobsters there is no longer as many and the biomass has shifted. The juvenile lobsters are no longer in shoal water and are now out in 100 fathoms or more. Since draggers have stopped fishing in certain areas due to closures, the lobsters go to where the gear is in the smooth bottom, similar to a bird feeder. Fishermen have been seeing this year after year. There are less predators such as cod in these deeper waters and more predators such as seals and bass inshore, so they simply do not behave as they used to. The trawl surveys and ventless trap surveys being used to study settlements and juveniles in Massachusetts as well as Maine are not reflective of the behavior change in lobsters seen in the past 10 years. I have a degree in Biology and understand how these surveys work. It is imperative the lobster industry takes the

next 1-2 years to collect proper data on what is truly going on with the North Atlantic Lobster and learns where and when they are reproducing because as it currently stands, I feel as though we do not truthfully know.

Addendum 27 would hurt the shoreside dealers like myself in a catastrophic way. The “Chix” lobster accounts for 20%+ of our current business. We have gained wholesale customers because of this size lobster. Shoreside dealer operations operate at extremely high fixed costs year round in seasonal fishery that has been regulated more and more in the past few years. There is a point for all of us where this economically will not make sense. If you cut our supply both as live dealers and processors by 30% there is no way any of us will be able to survive during the long winter months. We will also lose all our live markets to Canada and processor outlets who we need to survive during the summer, and they need the product to operate. The effects on all sides of the market will make it hard for any of us to rebound especially with less than a year to make a strategic plan.

Addendum 27 would also be devastating to many of the state water fishermen who rely on a short season close to shore in small boats to make a living. These fishermen rely on being able to catch a Chix lobster. If you cut 10-20% of what they are catching they simply will no longer be able to pay for bait and fuel and will be out of business overnight.

As the owner of Mortillaro Lobster Inc. I simply ask that the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission considers and passes a 1 year delay in the implementation date of the minimum gauge increase in LMA1. This will allow all stakeholders involved to come up with a plan both strategically and scientifically to allow the current North Atlantic Lobster population to continue to thrive as well as help support fishermen and dealers along the coast continue to operate in a profitable manner and support the thousands of families and communities this industry currently employees.

Thank you,

Vincent Mortillaro

Owner Mortillaro Lobster Inc.



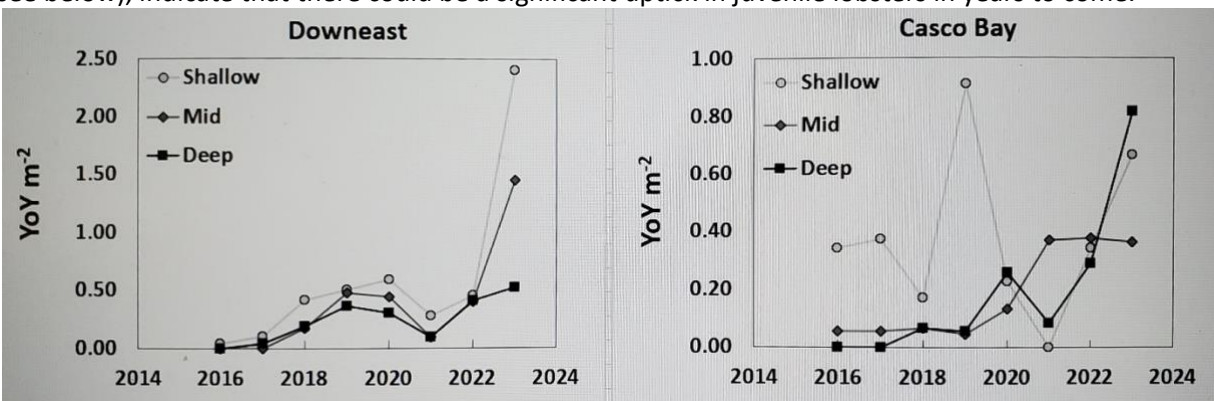
April 22, 2024

RE: Addendum 27

To Whom It May Concern:

As a lobsterman and a marine biologist at Ready Seafood, I am writing in support of a delay in the implementation of Addendum 27. The increase in minimum size for lobster is premature and will have drastic negative consequences for thousands of Maine residents. From a resource management perspective, there is no guarantee that increasing the gauge size will result in increased egg production, especially given that egg production is already at an all-time high. Also, while the 35% threshold was reached last year, it was only reached when the ventless trap survey was coupled with the trawl survey. The ventless trap survey alone did not reach the 35% threshold.

Additionally, in 2023, there were many promising signs for the future of Maine's lobster resource. Lobster settlement was up above historic averages for the first time in a decade according to Maine DMR's suction sampling survey. These results coupled with Ready Seafood's collaboration with the University of Maine's Deepwater Lobster Settlement Survey, which also showed strong settlement (see below), indicate that there could be a significant uptick in juvenile lobsters in years to come.



We have seen ups and downs in survey data in the past. If in fact we are seeing an upswing in the early life stages of Maine's lobster resource, let's take the time to document this before we take the drastic measure of increasing the gauge size. I understand that the Commission is tasked with managing the resource, but Addendum 27 will do significant economic harm to Maine's lobster industry and may not be necessary from a resource perspective. For this reason, let's pause, collect more data and follow the results where they lead us.

Sincerely,

Curtis Brown

Marine Biologist

Ready Seafood

cbrown@readyseafood.com



MAINE LOBSTERING UNION LOCAL 207



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
Robert Beal, Executive Director
1050 N Highland St, Suite 200 A-N
Arlington, VA 22201

Dear Commissioner,

The Maine Lobstering Union is writing today to voice our concerns about the upcoming gauge increase for lobsters in the state of Maine.

Last year, The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) Lobster Board passed Addendum 27, implementing a gauge increase in the minimum measure of lobster in the state of Maine. Largely due to a reported 35% decrease in juvenile lobsters. It was intended to be a proactive measure to improve lobster stock in the Gulf of Maine.

The Lobstermen of Maine consider themselves to be stewards of the sea, they pride themselves in protecting the sustainability of the waters that they fish. It is our belief that the groups that are charged with overseeing and regulating this industry are doing so while overlooking both the men/women who work in this industry as well as the communities that it serves.

When this gauge increase was proposed in 2017, it was halted due to the issues around the North Atlantic Right Whale. Restrictions were placed on lobstermen at that time, even though there was no scientific evidence to support that any NARW had been killed by Maine lobster gear at that time.

In 2021, the addendum was revised to add a trigger mechanism that would measure gauge and vent size. This was based on the increase of lobsters measuring 71-80mm. This information was obtained by using a trawl survey that stated the stock levels dropped below the 2014-2018 average.

Did this survey factor into the equation changes in climate over the last years? Recent years have brought storms with ocean surges unlike any ever recorded in the state. The most recent, which the President declared the state a disaster area, many communities have yet to rebuild from. Have these surveys considered that these changes and storms force the lobsters to settle in deeper waters?

Maine lobstermen are being forced to abide by this new measure while Canadian lobstermen will have no changes to face. This will, without a doubt, have catastrophic consequences for the lobstermen, the communities they serve, and the State of Maine.

The lobstermen will have no way to address the inequity of this measure. Maine lobstermen would face at least a 10% reduction in their catch. They would no longer have the ability service the lobster processors, as they would not only not have the quantity of lobsters, they also would no longer have the desired sized lobster (the Chick).

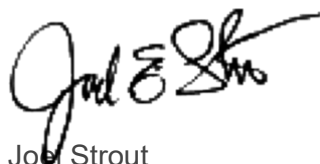
Canada will be in a position to service these processors and sell lobsters back to the US. They will have both the desired size, and the quantities, and in doing so keep the Maine lobster prices lower.

The Lobster Industry in Maine supports an average of 18,000 jobs and produces on average \$464 million of revenue each year. It supplies 90% of the country's lobster, and 80% of these lobsters comes from Knox, Washington, and Hancock counties. In some of Maine's coastal communities 85% of the household income comes directly from the lobstering industry. Was there a study that took this into consideration? Has it been considered how many people would become unemployed, with very little hope of finding a new job an industry that is all they have ever known?

In recent years the Lobster Industry has faced many challenges, many restrictions, and regulation changes. What has not been considered is the human element, and the consequences that these restrictions/regulations have on the men/women who are up at dawn, actually working in the waters you are restricting.

People all over the country are dealing with high fuels costs and inflated living costs. Lobstermen of Maine will have to navigate all of these now with (a minimum of) 10% reduction in their incomes. We ask that **all** of the factors are considered prior to imposing restrictions, and that **all** science is used to do so, not just the science that supports one part of the equation. We ask that the gauge increase please be paused until further studies or assessments are able to be conducted.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joe Strout". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending from the end.

Joe Strout
President, Maine Lobstering Union, Local 207

150 Bar Harbor Rd

Trenton, ME 04605

----- Original Message -----

Subject: [External] Lobster addendum

Date: 2024-04-25 11:55

From: John Tripp <skyannira@gmail.com>

To: cstarks@asmfc.org

Please distribute to the ASMFC Lobster Board.

I am writing to express my concerns on the lobster measure increase as well as the 24/7 tracker requirement. I fully support the Maine Lobsterman's Associations letters on both issues and echo their concerns, additionally I would like to add:

I personally feel that in order to keep the breeding stock of the lobster industry healthy that it is ludicrous to increase the minimum gauge size without taking into account the fact that area 1 state and federal fishermen have been V-Notching female egg bearing lobsters, as well as notches that are almost grown out while area 3 fishermen are allowed to harvest those. Wouldn't that be a great place to start, leave the v notched lobsters to breed?

I also have concerns based on the market as well as concerns for zone A fishermen having to fish alongside Canadian fishermen who aren't sharing the same concerns as ASMFC.

I echo the concerns on the vessel trackers that are put forth by the MLA as well.

Thanks, John Tripp

[External] Addendum 27

From [Rachel Brodeur](#) on 2024-04-25 15:00

[Details Headers](#)

Hello,

I am a member of a lobstering family. I believe we need more time before implementing such a harsh regulation on our already suffering fishing economy. Please reconsider this choice.

Thank You,

Rachel Brodeur

Sent from my iPhone

[External] Lobster guage increases

From [Michael Mello](#) on 2024-04-25 15:02

[Details](#) [Headers](#) [Plain text](#)

As a long time lobsterman going into my 58 year of fishing this increase will definitely be the end of my business. Please delay this increase so more study can be done on the impacts it will have on so many lobsterman Thank you. Michael A Mello sr

[External] Gauge increase

From [Brian Pennell](#) on 2024-04-25 15:08

[Details Headers](#)

As a third generation maine lobsterman I believe the gauge increase scheduled to take place in January of 2025 is wrong. I believe more time is needed to study the impacts this will have on our fishery.

Sent from my iPhone

[External] Gauge Change

From [Whit Chaplin](#) on 2024-04-25 15:09

[Details](#) [Headers](#) [Plain text](#)

Hello, I am a 19 year old lobstermen out of islesford maine. I am writing to express my concern for this upcoming gauge limit being changed in the next two years. I'm just starting out in this business but one thing I've quickly learned is how expensive it is to go fishing, and I worry greatly that this gauge change will destroy our industry as we know it. I know that if we lose the slot of lobsters that is being threatened to be taken away from us, that many young men and women like myself all across maine will be unable to afford to stay in this business and will be forced out, destroying a long standing legacy of this great state. So I hope that you understand this truth when deciding on the new measure change and before you make any rash decisions, you consider the young working population of our state which will drive our economy for the next 50 years.

Thank you for your time

[External] Addendum 27 - effective 1-1-25

From [Mary Smith](#) on 2024-04-25 15:17

[Details](#) [Headers](#) [Plain text](#)

Please delay the gauge change until a full analysis on the severe market implications, that are expected, can be done.

The January 1, 2025 effective date does not allow time for proper review.

We must support the requests of our hardworking fishermen.

Sincerely,

Mary
Mary L Smith
Brigantine NJ

[External] Addendum 27

From [Shane Carter](#) on 2024-04-25 15:20

[Details](#) [Headers](#) [Plain text](#)

Dear commissioner's,

As a life long lobsterman from bar harbor maine it has always been critical to me for a sustained lobster fishery. Addendum 27 and the proposed gauge increase need time to be fully vetted. For more than 50 years our fishery has relied on a maximum size and v notch as the tools of choice for sustaining our fishery. The idea that we would throw out all that has worked to such great success is maddening. Let's take another year and do some real research on what the implications of this law may be. Science has struggled at best to keep up with the ever changing gulf of maine. We as fisherman have never seen so many tiny lobsters but because of changing water temperatures the state is struggling with their model to understand this. Lobsters have worked slightly deeper and scientists can't keep up. To close if something must be done lets look at coming down on the maximum. It has worked for generations and can again.

Sincerely,
Shane Carter

[External] Lobster gauge increase -some deep thoughts

From [Heidi Budd](#) on 2024-04-25 15:29

[Details](#) [Headers](#)

I am an individual HEAVILY vested, for generations, in the Maine lobster fishing industry (it's SO much more than merely an industry that I hate to even call it that-it's Maine's iconic fishery, it's a tradition, it's a lifestyle, it's an IDENTITY, it is a sustainably harvested source of food..)

It is imperative that true, non-biased, statistically sound , reproducible studies be conducted and then VALIDATED by key stakeholders. Proof beyond doubt that changes are in the best interest of the fishery.

My father, my uncles, my brother, my nephews, my son, my daughter, and myself want nothing more than for the lobster population be bountiful for generations to come.

Listen to those on the water.....and trust me when I say lobstermen are keen stewards of the sea and will protect their livelihoods to the ends of the earth, and if lobster measure size changes were a wise intervention, don't think for one minute they would not be demanding it themselves. They would be the first to suggest it.

Respectfully, Heidi Yeaton Budd

[External] Delay Gauge Change!

From [Holly Kiidli](#) on 2024-04-25 15:32

[Details](#) [Headers](#) [Plain text](#)

Please delay gauge change long enough to conduct a full analysis on the severe market implications!!!!

Holly Kiidli
Winslow Maine Resident

[External] Leave the Lobsters Alone

From [Scoop Mason](#) on 2024-04-25 15:57

[Details](#) [Headers](#) [Plain text](#)

Leave the lobster business alone . Maine fishermen have successfully managed their industry for many many years . Likely longer than your organization has been in existence . Go " manage " something else .

We have enough trouble coming with the foolish windmills ...the bs with the whalesthe bait supply etc etc without you getting involved in making MORE rules and restrictions .

Just like the Maine Shrimp businessLETS SHUT IT DOWNso the Chinese / the Russians / and everybody else who fishes feet from the border with international waters

Tell us what kind of wood we can't burn to heat our homes in the winter ...what kind of motorized cars to drivewhere we can't grow vegetables anymore because of forever chemical contamination in our house

Maybe spend some time with all the chemicals people are spraying to cure the tick problemin ten years when the birds are gone and the bee pollinators have all died somebody will decide THAT was a bad idea too

Leave the lobsters alone .

[External] Lobster measure increases.

From [Nick Faulkingham](#) on 2024-04-25 16:02

[Details](#) [Headers](#) [Plain text](#)

To whom this may concern.

My name is Nick Faulkingham, I am a 6th generation commercial fisherman on the coast of Maine. I was four years old when I first stepped aboard a lobster boat, at the age of eight, I started helping my dad in the summer during school break. During this time I learned to respect the ocean and the Industry, my dad told me if you take care of the Industry, the industry will take care of you. Remembering his words I often take healthy legal select size females notch them and return them to the ocean instead of bringing them in for sale.

I read articles all the time about how things are in decline in all fishing industries. I have a hard time understanding how, When everything i see is just the opposite. The amount of juveniles and egg bearing lobsters we see in the traps is overwhelming most of the time. Some times we will have to move our gear from an area because they are so abundant. Every thing has its upside and downs.

With all of this being said the point is, I am afraid of the many ramifications the measure increases will have, Personally I do not see a need for it. It will disrupt marketing, deeply affect business and employers. Most of all it will impose a financial hardship on harvesters and families such as mine. Why try to disrupt a economy in a negative way? I feel we should be growing our economy in a positive way by implementing lobster hatcheries along the coast of Newengland and incorporating our coastal schools. This would create jobs and education. Let's not kill another Great American industry and import more dirty seafood from China or Indonesia. Keep hardworking, proud Americans in business.

[External] Gauge change

From [Lisa Graham](#) on 2024-04-25 16:34

[Details Headers](#)

Please delay this change long enough to conduct a full analysis on the severe market implications expected as a result of this trigger.

Thank you,

Lisa Graham- wife and mother of lobstermen

Sent from my iPhone

[External] Maine lobster gauge change

From [Dave Johnson](#) on 2024-04-25 17:01

[Details Headers](#)

Dear commissioners,

Please reconsider addendum 27. More time is needed to determine what appear to be severe market disruptions due to the gauge change. We don't have enough information to implement this change.

Respectfully

Dave Johnson
12 Skywatch Lane
Harpwell ME 04079

Sent from my iPhone

[External] Addendum 27

From [Meghan Painton](#) on 2024-04-26 10:00

[Details](#) [Headers](#) [Plain text](#)

To whom it may concern,

I would like to express concern about increasing the size of lobsters that can be kept and brought to market. Lobster is a very healthy and sustainable food that is part of the fabric of the Maine coast. I come from a long heritage of lobstermen and lobsterwomen. The changes that have occurred with warming waters have shifted lobsters further out. More current studies are needed to provide updated information to make informed decisions about size changes and the true impacts they will have on the future of the industry.

Thank you,

Meghan Painton

[External] Gauge change

From [Robert J Burke](#) on 2024-04-26 09:59

[Details](#) [Headers](#) [Plain text](#)

Changing the measure

Changing the measure very likely falls under the heading, established by the DC APPELLATE COURT'S JUNE 16, 2023 UNANIMOUS RULING, of "arbitrary and capricious" and "zealous but unintelligent" and thereby "no only wrong but EGREGIOUSLY WRONG and likely unlawful".

There is no credible, objective scientific data to support the measure change but rather the same old "guesstimation, surmise, manipulation, fabrication and/or falsification" of data practiced by NOAA in it's SARs 2007-2021. That "data" and any and all rules, regulations, and gear modifications where thereby deemed unlawful.

DO NOT CHANGE THE MEASURE UNTIL INDUSTRY INITIATED AND MONITORED SCIENTIFIC SURVEYS SUPPORT SUCH A MOVE.

Sent from my iPad

[External] Lobster measure gauge increase Maine

From [Alex Benner](#) on 2024-04-26 09:53

[Details](#) [Headers](#) [Plain text](#)

I'm from Maine and I have seen an excess of small lobsters the trap surveys are wrong, they were not placed in good spots where small lobsters would be. The measure increase would be detrimental to the Maine fishery and is completely uncalled for and would be detrimental to the fishery.

Alex benner Maine lobster fisherman

[External] Stop the increase

From [Clint Libby](#) on 2024-04-26 09:51

[Details](#) [Headers](#) [Plain text](#)

A measure increase would be great hardship for many family. It also would hurt my lobster buying station and the fishermen who sell to us.

Many of our fishermen fish the gray zone, and it's very frustrating that the Canadian fishermen can sell oversized lobsters and we have to toss them back to have them crawl into their traps to be sold in Canada.

They have a huge advantage already and with a measure increase it would strike us yet again causing a serious decrease for American fishermen in the future.

[External] Comments on Addendum 27

From [Tessa Browne](#) on 2024-04-26 09:51

[Details](#) [Headers](#) [Plain text](#)

- Rocky Neck Lobster Addendum 27 comments .pdf(~414 KB)

Good Morning,

Thank you for your time and please consider the attached letter during your next meeting. Any further questions please feel free to contact me.

Best,

Tessa Browne

Owner

Cape Ann Lobstermen

617-593-8354

[External] Stop the measure increase

From [P Libby](#) on 2024-04-26 09:47

[Details](#) [Headers](#) [Plain text](#)

A measure increase would be great hardship not only for my family but also for the 2 other families that depend on my husband's catch for a living.

He fishes the gray zone, and it's very frustrating that the Canadian fishermen can sell oversized lobsters and we have to toss them back to have them crawl into their traps to be sold in Canada.

They have a huge advantage already and with a measure increase it would strike us yet again causing a serious decrease for American fishermen in the future.

[External] Measure increase

From [Jeffrey Libby](#) on 2024-04-26 09:45

[Details](#) [Headers](#) [Plain text](#)

A measure increase would be great hardship not only for my family but also for the 2 other families that depend on my catch for a living.

I fish the gray zone, and it's very frustrating that the Canadian fishermen can sell oversized lobsters and we have to toss them back to have them crawl into their traps to be sold in Canada.

They have a huge advantage already and with a measure increase it would strike us yet again causing a serious decrease for American fishermen in the future.

Jeff Libby

Subject: [External] Two Great Concerns from DELA
Date: 2024-04-26 09:39
From: Sheila Dassatt <dassatt711@yahoo.com>
To: "rbeal@asmfc.org" <rbeal@asmfc.org>, "cstarks@asmfc.org" <cstarks@asmfc.org>

Dear Robert and Caitlin,

We are the Downeast Lobstermen's Association, established in Jonesport, Maine in 1991. This letter is in support of the two letters that MLA has sent to you concerning the trackers and asking if ASMFC will remove the provision. We are also asking for you to initiate a new addendum to make that change.

We are all representing our lobster industry and are supporting one another in this endeavor.

We are also asking for ASMFC to delay the implementation of the schedule of the gauge increases, and to run the updated trigger index for the summer meeting. This was scheduled to happen at the October meeting.

These are all very important to our lobster industry and we stand in support of one another with these issues. Please take these requests into your consideration. We stand together with MLA, NEFSA, MLU, MCFA, and our lobster dealers.

Thank you,
Sheila H. Dassatt
Executive Director
Downeast Lobstermen's Association
Stonington, ME 04681

dassatt711@yahoo.com
207 322-1924

Subject: [External] Gauge increase
Date: 2024-04-26 04:57
From: Herman Coombs <hlc7346@gmail.com>
To: cstarks@asmfc.org

I understand that the recruitment hit 39% but not using more than one year is doing a disservice to lobster fishermen. Everyone knows that populations ebb and flow with good times and not so good times. The recruitment from this year from what I read it up which would put us back up over the 39%. I don't agree using one year for a sky is falling approach. More than one year needs to be used before making a drastic change.

Herman Coombs
F/V Jocelyne K
Orrs Island Me

[External] Addendum 27

From [matt gilley](#) on 2024-04-26 09:27

[Details Headers](#)

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to you today to please oppose addendum 27. There has been zero studies done outside the 3 mile line in federal waters. We have no idea if the settlement or larvae have moved offshore. We are also basing this decline off of record highs not a rolling average. We are getting a measure increase because we can't maintain record landings. Furthermore the fact that states that don't even have a lobster fishery get a say is not right. Please oppose addendum 27 it will devastate the lobster industry.

Sincerely

Matt Gilley

Zone F council member

F/V Catherine G

[External] Lobster Gauge Increase

From [Jack](#) on 2024-04-26 09:24

[Details](#) [Headers](#) [Plain text](#)

Dear Sirs,

I am a Maine lobsterman with over 50 years of experience in the profession in the Mount Desert Island area. This past year-2023- I saw more small lobsters in my traps than I have seen in the past 10-12 years. The increase will also great effect the bottom line of just not me but the entire industry in a time of great financial stress. There is no current need for the increase and will only lead to hardship. Please refrain from implementing the increase for further stock studies.

Sincerely,

Jack Cunningham

Maine License #28

External] Addendum XXVII Reconsideration

From [Sheila Dassatt](#) on 2024-04-26 09:21

[Details](#) [Headers](#) [Plain text](#)

Dear Commissioner,

There is great concern over the implementation of Addendum XXVII, which will have an impact on our fishermen and our dealers. With this being said, we are asking you to take a look at all of the information that is based on the findings of our industry scientists and the fishermen themselves. At this point in time, we, Downeast Lobstermen's Association, are asking you to consider taking a little more time with the implementation of this bill. Please let the science prove itself before drastic measures are taken to change our gauge and vents due to a shortage in the amount of lobsters that are actually there.

We are joining with all of the others that are asking for the same consideration, NEFSA, MLA, MLU and ourselves, DELA, along with many of our lobster dealers in Maine.

This can be more devastation for our fishery if the science is inaccurate and the loss and expense for the lobstermen is more hardship. This will also be a big "hit" for our lobster dealers.

Please take all of the implications into consideration and work with us for a little bit longer.

Thank you,

Sheila H. Dassatt

Downeast Lobstermen's Association

Stonington, ME 04681

[External] My opinion

From [russell leach](#) on 2024-04-26 09:17

[Details](#) [Headers](#) [Plain text](#)

[Yahoo Mail: Search, Organize, Conquer](#) I feel we should leave the measure alone ..I oppose it and feel we should go to 600 trap limit..most everyone I talk to agree with the 600 trap limot

[External] Re: Maine lobster measure concerns

From [Cheryl Yeaton](#) on 2024-04-26 09:17

[Details](#) [Headers](#)

Sent from my iPad

On Apr 26, 2024, at 3:26AM, Cheryl Yeaton <cherylstarr.7@icloud.com> wrote:

Dear Commissioner,

The proposed change to lobster measure size is not based on facts supported by catch data or direct insight by the Maine men and women who honestly and proactively fully understand and protect the species and thus their livelihood. Lobstemen are the professionals in this industry and would be the best advocates to be on advisory committees to partner in further truth and understanding with lawmakers. Successful business people prioritizing excellent compliant resource protection of their work environment should not be penalized for doing so. Let's keep the industry functioning well in what Maine stands for in providing sustained employment in difficult times with an industry providing a dependable and favored food source and let's also refrain from docking the income from those whose ethics are represented by the Maine Lobstering families, their successful protecting of the species in our case for six generations of lobstering.

With Regards,
Cheryl Yeaton
Sent from my iPad

[External] Lobster Gauge Implementation

From [Valerie Caron](#) on 2024-04-26 09:06

[Details](#) [Headers](#)

Please delay the gauge change date of January 1, 2025 long enough to conduct a full analysis on the severe market implications expected as a result of the trigger.

Thank you,
Valerie Caron
Sent from Valerie Caron

[External] Lobster Gauge Implementation

From [Raymond Caron](#) on 2024-04-26 09:02

[Details](#) [Headers](#) [Plain text](#)

Please delay the gauge change date of January 1,2025 long enough to conduct a full analysis on the severe market implications expected as a result of the trigger.

Thank you,

Raymond Caron

[External] Lobster Gauge change

From [todd elder](#) on 2024-04-26 08:56

[Details](#) [Headers](#) [Plain text](#)

Good morning,

Please delay this gauge change until a full analysis had been done!

Todd Elder

[External] Maine Lobster

From [Thomas McLennan](#) on 2024-04-26 08:53

[Details](#) [Headers](#) [Plain text](#)

LEAVE THE MEASURE HOW IT IS, BEEN WORKING FOR 30 PLUS YEARS WIRH NO PROBLEMS....

Thomas McLennan, spruce head me

[External] Gauge increase

From [Tristan Ciomei](#) on 2024-04-26 08:44

[Details](#) [Headers](#)

My name is Tristan Ciomei I'm a sixteen year old fifth generation lobster fisherman from Stonington Maine. I believe that there needs to be further research and analysis done before we determine on a gauge increase. This decision if made without further research and assessments can hurt our industry. I believe that there needs to be a 6 month assessment or more of ventless traps to determine the amount of short lobsters. Lobsters may be there one day and gone the next they move around all the time the temperature changes and the weather can also affect what these lobsters do. It would be impossible to determine the stock of undersized lobsters in any less than that amount of time. There is another ongoing issue I would like to address which is that the Canadian lobster fishery is able to keep lobsters that in Maine would be considered oversized these lobsters are crucial to our industry. Maine has had this law put into place for some time now to protect these high producing lobsters without these lobsters we don't have an industry and I think it needs to be addressed.

Sincerely
Tristan Ciomei

[External] Addendum 27 comment

From [Elew Mompittseh](#) on 2024-04-26 08:30

[Details](#) [Headers](#) [Plain text](#)

Hello,

I'm writing you today to address Addendum 27.

We need to delay the gauge change long enough to conduct a full analysis on the severe market implications expected as a result of the trigger.

Hindsight is not an option when tampering with such a large part of local economy, food sources, and lives. We need short and long term full analysis before any changes are made.

I grew up on the lower Cape, when there was a 50 boat fishing fleet and an active ice house on the wharf in P-town. In the 80s Georges Banks was closed which left our fishermen traveling much further to fish. In Hindsight, this cost Lives. We lost family members on the Victory II, and they were not the only boat to go down directly related to having to go too far out, or into unfamiliar areas due to Georges Banks restrictions.

Our small commercial boats were never the cause of depleted fish in the banks, but all the while massive foreign fishing vessels were allowed to sweep the area.

In Hindsight, directly related to the closing of Georges Banks, there is no longer a fishing fleet on the lower Cape, instead of 50 boats and an active Ice House, we have 5-7 boats and flower pot benches on the wharf.

Now I live in Maine and see the same pattern starting again. Please listen to the fishermen this time, please please do a full analysis...because hindsight is deadly in too many ways.

Thank you,

Aurelia

[External] Measure increase

From [Jon Achorn](#) on 2024-04-26 08:31

[Details](#) [Headers](#) [Plain text](#)

To whom this my concern,

The measurement increase needs to be pushed back. I'm in all support to keep the lobster stalk strong and be around for generations to come, but a measure increase right now is not the answer. Lobstermen are fighting so many battles right now and last thing they need is another hoop to jump through. This measurement increase effects alot more then just the lobstermen. The data and science behind the measurement increase is not appropriate to what needs to be done to justify the increase. Lobster fishing is always changing and it's up to the fishermen to change there ways in order to keep being successful. Spots there was lobsters there is no more, and spots you couldn't catch any now you can. I personally have noticed alot more little lobsters further and further down, it's not the lobster stalk depleading as much as the lobster grounds moving. I urge you to move back the measurement increase until there is appropriate data, along with a better understanding of what the impact would be to the whole industry and those who are supported by it.

Jon Achorn

[External] Comment on Addendum 27

From [Maine Reset](#) on 2024-04-26 08:30

[Details](#) [Headers](#) [Plain text](#)

To the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission,

My name is Andrew Joyce. As the son of an eighth-generation Maine lobsterman and a former lobster license holder in Maine, I have many ties to the lobster fishery whose proper management has been a credit to the Commission. It is with this legacy of management excellence in view that I would like the record to show that I have enormous reservations about the minimum gauge increase forthcoming from Addendum 27.

The available scientific evidence for categorizing the lobster stock in the affected area as being in a state of decline is, at best, inconclusive. I have no doubt that others will point this out in greater detail. But I would implore you to consider delaying the implementation of this gauge increase until expanded research efforts can shed more light on this issue. I would also ask that the Commission consider the importance of allowing time for an economic impact study to be conducted, as the gauge increase would distribute enough financial setbacks throughout the lobster industry to further destabilize an industry that is already saddled with a variety of challenges.

I hope the Commission will be able to consider these factors when fine-tuning the management of the American Lobster Fishery to ensure that the thousands of businesses dependent upon it can continue to subsist off of this iconic and sustainable product.

With best regards,

Andrew Joyce

Palmer, Massachusetts

[External] Addendum 27

From [John Drouin](#) on 2024-04-26 08:24

[Details](#) [Headers](#) [Plain text](#)

We were told we had until 10:00 a.m. today, 4-26-2024, to submit a comment on Addendum 27.

My name is John Drouin and I am a lobster fisherman from Cutler Maine.

Cutler is the epicenter of the area called "the gray zone".

It seems to me that the commission passed Addendum 27 without proper thought to the "unintended consequences".

From the major implications in the gray zone to the market issues that the dealers are facing along with possible "science" issues and the strong economic strains that this will cause to the fishermen....it seems to me that the best action you could take is to delay the implementation of Addendum 27 for at least a year, and look at the issues that have surfaced.

I would love to take the time to dive into these issues more deeply, but in order to keep this short and to the point, a delay in implementing addendum 27 should be considered by the commission.

We have all complained about how NOAA seems to pass regulations without proper guidance, and it would be a shame for ASMFC to follow in their footsteps!

With proper time, all parties can explain the issues and then we can move forward from there.

The lobster stock will not suffer from a year delay for you to fully understand the implications that will happen once addendum 27 begins...I personally, would love to explain the gray zone issue to the commission and hopefully educate you to the size of the area, how fishing is conducted between the two countries, on more species than lobster, and the ramifications of any regulations that are passed without taking in what will happen to the fishermen in the gray zone.

But first, we must delay the implementation of addendum 27.

Thank you, I truly hope you take our concerns to heart and listen to all the recent comments.

John Drouin

[External] Gauge Size

From [Jennie Durkee](#) on 2024-04-26 08:16

[Details](#) [Headers](#) [Plain text](#)

The lobster fishing industry will be greatly impacted by a gauge size change. This change would likely be devastating economically, especially for inside, smaller fisherman and that economic impact would trickle down to all other businesses on the east coast and beyond. We have conservation methods in place already with size limits that insure oversize lobsters will mate and reproduce without fail. New England fisheries are not a problem. Canadian fisheries keeping oversized lobsters are not the fault of U.S. fishermen. A gauge change, especially without a lot of further research, could and likely will negatively impact our fishery and the economy for many years to come. This would in turn put more strain on other fisheries as well.

I highly suggest, as a five generation lobster fishing family member, you take more time to fully consider other options and put a stop to Addendum 27 before it destroys New England.

Best regards, Jennie Moraisey

[External] Lobster gauge increase

From [Matthew Huntley](#) on 2024-04-26 08:13

[Details Headers](#)

I've made my living the greyzone in zone A since 2003. I have seen many changes since then. The amount of shorts was on the rise for years along with personal landings. Now it's back on its cycle back the other way. And if you based your assessment on any of last years data, I found that lobsters were congregated abnormally in certain areas and stayed that way for months and months. While other areas usually plentiful eventually were barren most of the year. So I can see how if dmrs ventless traps weren't in the specific areas then the data would not show good numbers. Whereas if they were in these certain areas then the numbers would have been off the charts. Your data does not cover enough time nor does it cover enough area. I am also very worried that if you increase our measure and Canada does not do the same, both in the greyzone and any zones along the US line, it is likely to start a very expensive trap war between the US and Canada. We CANNOT throw back lobsters and have Canada taking those same lobster to market. That is not conservation. It will completely devastate ZONE A fishermen. Ive lived in machiasport for 40 years. I have 6 children to support ages 3 to 16. I will have to leave here to another zone if this happens or give up fishing all together. It WILL NOT be profitable at all to fish here anymore.
Sent from my iPhone

[External] I oppose the gauge increase

From [Arnold Francis](#) on 2024-04-26 07:57

[Details](#) [Headers](#) [Plain text](#)

I am a commercial lobsterman in Maine, and this gauge increase is going to hurt my business tremendously and it's gonna hurt a lot of dealers as well. If we can't sell the smaller lobsters they will just get them out of Canada. I hope we can delay the gauge increase until we all do a lot more research and can all get on the same page so Canada, Maine, Massachusetts and New Hampshire are all on the same size gauge.

Thanks,

Arnold Francis

Sent from my iPhone

[External] Lobster gauge increase

From [KIM KMS](#) on 2024-04-26 07:51

[Details](#) [Headers](#) [Plain text](#)

We strongly oppose the flawed assessment. We have never seen so many juvenile lobsters in the water and there is absolutely no reason for the gauge increases.

This will be detrimental to our business. and all based on more flawed assumptions.

Andrew & Kimberly Smith

Frenchboro ME

[External] Gauge increase comments

From popclemons@icloud.com on 2024-04-26 07:41

[Details](#) [Headers](#)

Hi , My name is James Clemons . Have been a full time lobsterman captain since 1975 and student lobsterman since 1963. I have both inshore and offshore experience . I definitely believe that a gauge increase is the WRONG approach to increase the brood stock in the lobster fishery . You must take action to save the older -larger brood stock , from foreign fishing fleets , instead of trying to increase the young juvenile brood stock . A increase in the lobster measure will only HURT the Maine lobster industry ,with loss of product and loss of THE EXISTING Large brood stock to Canada! . Definitely DO NOT increase the min . lobster measure . Thank you .

James Clemons
23 Windsor Ln
Harpwell, ME 04079
207-504-7896

[External] Addendum 27

From [D'anna Beal](#) on 2024-04-26 07:27

[Details](#) [Headers](#) [Plain text](#)

To Whom it May Concern;

This email is to address the Addendum 27. Forty-three years in the lobster industry and the changes have been astronomical to this industry especially in the last fifteen years. Addendum 27 has issues that need to be addressed. I hope this Addendum could be delayed for at least another year to allow further work with Canadian fishermen and any other flaws to be addressed.

Thanks,

Mitchell Beal

[External] Addendum 27 Lobster Industry

From ty1ash2@aol.com on 2024-04-26 07:09

[Details](#) [Headers](#) [Plain text](#)

Dear Commissioners,

Please delay the gauge change long enough to conduct a full analysis on the severe market implications expected as a result of the trigger.

Thank you,

Regina Littwin

[External] Stop lobster gauge increase

From [Nancy Carter](#) on 2024-04-26 07:01

[Details](#) [Headers](#) [Plain text](#)

As a wife, mother and grandmother to lobster fisherman please don't make it harder for them to make a living.

Nancy Carter

Dear Commissioners,

This email is in reference to Addendum 27 passed ASMFC in 2023 and the implementation date for a gauge increase for January 1, 2025.

We need to delay the gauge change long enough to conduct a full analysis on the severe market implications expected as a result of the trigger.

Please see attached letter (see first attachment in supplemental 2).

Craig Seeley

Portsmouth, NH

craigseeley@comcast.net

(603) 236-6511

[External] Lobster gauge!!

From [Jessica Pooley](#) on 2024-04-26 06:48

[Details](#) [Headers](#) [Plain text](#)

Please delay the gauge change long enough to conduct a full analysis on the severe market implications expected as a result of the trigger.

Thank you,

Jessica Pooley

[External] NO NEED FOR LOBSTER MEASURE INCREASE

From [Ben Oakes Boynton](#) on 2024-04-26 06:44

[Details](#) [Headers](#) [Plain text](#)

Hello my name is Ben Oakes and I'm a lobster fisherman from owls head, Maine. As your aware there is a planned lobster measure increase that is going to affect a lot of different things. First and most important is the fact that the lobster population is thriving and I have never seen more small and female lobsters. We get multiple runs a year where there are 10 females in every trap we own. One thing super bothersome is a lot of this info is collected from land? Go out there and look with your own eyes! Second thing is people don't even want to eat large lobsters! The size they are is perfect for the meat consistency! No one wants chewy big lobsters. Please let the fisherman just fish. This is out of hand at this point! I'm not trying to be mean or sound aggressive! I just love lobstering and am very aware this will only end up hurting lobster fishing as a whole. Thank you if you've got this far I appreciate it a lot! Have a great day - Ben

[External]

From [Erik HANSEN](#) on 2024-04-26 06:37

[Details](#) [Headers](#) [Plain text](#)

I've been lobstering since age 12 I'm now 49. The science that says there is a decline in small lobster is false, especially in my area, I've never seen so many. Please don't increase the measure it will just box out Maine from the Canadian market. We boarder Canadian fisherman that can catch the lobster that we release. Makes no sense, it's the oversized lobster that are the big breeders. Thanks Erik

[External] LobsterGauge increase.

From [Rex Benner](#) on 2024-04-26 06:24

[Details Headers](#)

As a full time year round lobster fisherman from Maine I'd like to strongly suggest not doing a gauge increase until further studies are done. I've been doing this for 35 yrs and we are seeing more little ones now than ever!! They are just in different places and the test are done in the wrong spots!!I strongly suggest more research is done before this decision is final as it will be a major hit to this industry ,as if we need anything else to be working against us right now, take a step back and do it right and do more research!!!!

Sent from my iPhone

[External] Gauge increase

From [Shane Hatch](#) on 2024-04-26 05:55

[Details](#) [Headers](#)

Goodmorning,

I am in opposition of the gauge increase for Maine Lobster until there has been better analysis of the implications to the markets involved. This ruling will have huge impacts on the industry as it would lose the "chick" market entirely. This would allow Canada to fulfill that obligation and leave more hardship for the American people involved. Along with the market situation, fisherman would have far less product to fit into the smaller slot size. Putting more pressure on the small families of Maine and their generational way of life.

Please take my comments into consideration

Thank you,
Shane Hatch

Sent from my iPhone

[External] Guage increase comments

From [knowlton.matt3](#) on 2024-04-26 05:52

[Details](#) [Headers](#) [Plain text](#)

I am writing to oppose any increase in the lobster measure. There is no logical reason to take this action. There are many factors involved in lobster population you have not taken into account.

1 The natural cycles that occur in the ocean and the effects they have on lobsters.

2. A new invasive species is taking over the bottom where lobsters hide when they shed, causing them to have to find deeper areas to shed and leaving them less protected from predators. "Squirts" have choked out whole areas, leaving once productive shedding grounds completely unproductive. This is the major concern that should be addressed.

3 Other areas are showing a dramatic increase in tiny lobsters coming up in traps.

We are already taking less lobsters and all of our expenses have gone way up.

More regulation means lobstering will no longer be a viable living.

Matthew Knowlton

Deer Isle ME

license number 7453

[External] Guage increase

From [taborhorton](#) on 2024-04-26 05:39

[Details](#) [Headers](#) [Plain text](#)

My name is Tabor horton I fish out of south blue hill maine. I believe we need to delay the measure increase. For the last 2 seasons me and the people I fish around have reported seeing more juvenile lobsters then they have seen in a long time. We need more time to research the effects of the measure increase. The lobster industry if facing so many hurdles at this time this will have a negative effect on the industry and put us at a disadvantage.

[External] Lobstering

From [Dirt bikes And wheelers](#) on 2024-04-26 05:27

[Details Headers](#)

We need to not have a measure gauge change

[External]

From [Chris Wood](#) on 2024-04-26 04:42

[Details](#) [Headers](#) [Plain text](#)

To whom it may concern.

My name is Chris wood. I have worked on boats since I was 10 years old. At the age of 30 2020 I decided to buy my first boat just befor covid. Since then I have seen a record number in my eyes of under the measure lobster. Especially in the past 3 years. I got numerous pictures that back this information. Traps half full trap after trap to measure them all some obviously way under to get 1 maybe 2 keepers. With the was costs of fishing have risen so much over the past few years I fear many in this lively hood including myself will not be able to make a living or keep going with a measure increase. I feel like befor you make this decision for the entire industry you should think of the repercussions this will have on everyone that is tied into the industry not just the fisherman. Possibly maybe do a survey in the summer or speak to fisherman from the different zones on when the lobsters are in fact in the area and survey then not in the fall when they hardly move or in the middle of the slump that occurs at different times up and down the coast. I feel as if your numbers and science on this topic are far from right as do many others. Maybe listen to the fisherman for once and take the input of us whom are out there daily that there is absolutely no need for a increase there is more undersized lobsters now then I've seen in my life.

Thank you for the opportunity to give my incite on this topic.

[External] any comment to you is a waste

From [Brandon Wyman](#) on 2024-04-26 00:03

[Details](#) [Headers](#) [Plain text](#)

All of you should be ashamed of yourself. People died for this country and some of your relatives they are rolling over. None of any of you that sit on asmfc have ever been commercial fishing for a living. How would you like to be stalked everyday? You all need a reality check, you litetally know nothing about any fishery. You are paid off, money is everything to you people, money will not buy you life. My greats, and my grandfathers and uncles faught for this so called free country, im a 6th generation fishermen. Not only lobster, shrimp, herring, pogies, groundfish you name it. Your commision is useless and has ruined every fishery, last on the list is the lobster fishery, congratulations you have regulated yourself out of a job. One of my good friends worked for NOAA on the bigalow, i know all your crooked shit to fit any agenda you get funded for. You morons dont even know how to tow a net or to find fish, it takes decades of experience and dedicated and sacrificing your family to understand the cylces of fish. Someday your whole commision will run out of funding, and you will get whats coming to you.

A gauge increase? Im really glad you all sleep well at night, come fishing for a day with me or other fishermen that go hard to provide, you have never talked to the actual fishermen because you wont find them, theyre fishing.

Sincerely,

Thanks for killing the american dream.

Brandon

[External] Opposition to New Lobster Gauge Increase

From [Lindsey Alley](#) on 2024-04-25 23:16

[Details](#) [Headers](#) [Plain text](#)

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to express my opposition to the implementation of the new gauge increase for Maine lobster. As you may have noticed, we are experiencing record high inflation which has created financial hardship for lobstermen, and the crew members & the families this industry supports. Inflation not only affects the everyday cost of living, but also bait & fuel prices are higher than ever, while the pay for our product is low as a result of the increased cost of getting our lobsters to market. The cost of boat maintenance, repairs, insurance, traps, rope, buoys, etc. has also drastically increased due to inflation. After all of these expenses, our take-home pay is getting smaller. This gauge increase could have a devastating affect on our industry and have severe consequences for fishing families. It could also pose a safety risk if this gauge change causes catch to decline enough that captains have to lay off crew, costing jobs, and making an already dangerous job even more risky for short-staffed boats.

I'm 49 years old and have owned my own boat for 27 years. Previous to that I was a deckhand since my teen years. I fish year-round in state & federal waters, anywhere from in the shallows out to 12 miles depending on the time of year. Contradictory to your data claiming juvenile numbers are down, I am seeing an abundance of juvenile, egg baring, and v-notched female lobsters. Judging by my observations and those of other fishermen I've talked with, the future looks far more promising than your data indicates. It's my belief that your ventless trawl survey data that triggered the gauge increase is flawed and grossly inadequate. Any lobsterman will tell you that no two years are exactly alike. There are many different factors that determine a lobster's habits, i.e. water temperature, the time of year, type of bottom, bait type & bait quality. Some years they're in the shallows, other years they're deeper especially if it's been a rainy spring, and depending on water temperature. Sometimes we find them on hard bottom, other times they're on the muddy bottom. You can't conduct your trawl survey the same way in the same spots every year and expect to get an accurate stock assessment. There are too many variables. Those of us who fish for a living put a lot of effort into finding & chasing the lobsters. We have to adapt to different conditions as the lobsters do. If ASMFC is going to have regulatory authority over our fishery and our livelihoods, then you really should make more of an effort to conduct more exploratory, thorough and accurate stock assessments. There's far too much at stake to be half assing your stock assessments. Thousands of Maine lobstermen, crews, families, and the entire coastal economy depend on the accuracy of your data.

The current gauge measure, vent sizes and v-notch laws have been highly effective for many years, proven successful by record landings several years running. ASMFC needs to give credit where it's due...to the fishermen who have been excellent stewards of our ocean resources, and have made it a sustainable fishery for future generations.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey S. Alley, Lobsterman

Jonesport, Maine

Zone A District 3

[External] Gage Increase

From [Samuel Joy](#) on 2024-04-25 23:09

[Details Headers](#)

To whom it may concern,

My name is Samuel Joy. I live off the coast of Maine on Swan's Island. Lobstering is my Life. Lobstering is what gives my Island community life. For years my family has been supported by lobster fishing. With all that said I say this. To make Maine increase the lobster measurer would be devastating to me my family, and my town.

There is soo much more science to discover. The DMR is naïve to think that the lobster population is declining. They are solely basing their data that they generate. The methods that they use to collect that data is sporadic and unreliable. The ventless program is a joke. To assume that a computer will find a lobster by picking a random place in ocean is ridiculous. The DMR needs to out source the data collecting process, so that we can say we did everything we could do before we make this decision. There are tons of lobsters out there they just need to know where to look.

I also propose that we do everything we can to protect the bigger lobsters. Especially the females. If there was a way to decrease the bigger measure I think you would have way more support. Have a male/female gage. We need to protect the breeders.

This decision will cause a huge decrease in wages and will hurt the lobster fishing industry for years to come. I pray you reconsider and wait till you have explored every possibility.

Respectfully yours - Samuel Joy

[External] Please reconsider the proposed Area 1 minimum guage increase

From [Jason Joyce](#) on 2024-04-25 22:55

[Details](#) [Headers](#) [Plain text](#)

DEAR COMMISSIONERS,

My name is Jason Joyce. I am an 8th generation lobsterman from the unbridged Island fishing community of Swan's Island on the edge of downeast Maine.

The proposed minimum guage increase in area 1 to be implemented in 2025 will harm my fishing community, my business and the lobster markets and dealers here in Maine. The primary resource concern targeted by this trigger mechanism is actually in abundance in our traps and the traps of fishermen in our neighboring fishing communities.

The negative effects of enacting this guage increase will be felt throughout Maine's coastal communities and we collectively ask that you reconsider the measure increase slated for 2025 until you have more reliable data to justify it's enactment.

We applaud measures within Addendum 27 which protect the strongest and most effective contributors to the health of the lobster resource, the oversized lobster. We also encourage your focus on protecting the large lobsters which produce a stronger and more resilient settlement and resource.

Maine's sustainability example of protecting oversized lobsters with a zero tolerance for all v-notched females has proven to be a winning combination. Maine's conservation measures have sustained the entire gulf of Maine fishery, inshore and offshore.

Thank you for your time and service to marine resources,

Jason Joyce

Capt. Jason Joyce
20 Grindle Road
Swan's Island, ME. 04685
207-479-6490

[External] Opposition to the measuring increase.

From [Joshua Joyce](#) on 2024-04-25 22:16

[Details](#) [Headers](#)

As a participant in the ventless trap survey from 2009 to 2012. And then again in 2020 to 2022. I'm seeing that this program has not evolved the way the fishery has. So ventless is archaic and out of date when it comes to catching lobsters. The ventless program pays participants to haul traps, not catch lobsters.

I think a gauge increase is unnecessary and would have a negative effect on the fishery. Please consider postponing this.

Thank You Joshua Joyce Swans Island.

[External] No increase lobster gauge

From [Mary de Poutiloff](#) on 2024-04-25 21:40

[Details](#) [Headers](#)

No increase to lobster gauge. Follow unbiased science. The lobster fishermen are seeing tons of juveniles.

Mary Beth de Poutiloff

[External]

From [Jesse Bagley](#) on 2024-04-25 21:25

[Details](#) [Headers](#) [Plain text](#)

I oppose the gauge increase. There is no shortage of short lobsters up and down this coast. You ask any fisherman out there we've all discussed online on how many short lobsters and Eggers everyone was seeing 2023 fall fishing season. This is completely unnecessary and your data is wrong. Ask people that spend everyday out there whats going on. And then the economic impact this will cause on already a piss poor economy will be devastating. -Jesse Bagley

[External] Measure increase

From [Rebecca Russell Spear](#) on 2024-04-25 21:21

[Details Headers](#)

Hello.

My name is Marshall Spear and I've been commercial fishing for the last 25 years. I have held a commercial license since 1987. I fish in the southern part of Maine out of Casco Bay in the summer and fall. I fish offshore in area 1 in the winters months. I fish and one fathom to 150 fathom I've seen lobster populations rise and fall in the last two decades.

For us to increase the lobster measure and thinking that it's going to help the population is not only absurd is ridiculous. They want us to change the measure, but keep the same vent size in the same year. This is going to create fighting cages for the lobsters to kill each other . If we want to do something for the resource, we should take the gear out of the water and let the lobsters do their thing without human intervention. The measuring increases is only going to continue with more handing and more mortality. No wild animal can take human pressure year-round decade after decade. We we have one of the best resources in the country and and we have no mechanism in place to protect it or stop fishing at anytime. We have no back up plan . If we truly want to do something for the resource and help leave the Lobster alone and has seasonal closures. It will take nothing for us to have a better quality lobster and have less an impact on environment. I strongly disagree with raising the measure increase thinking that it's going to do something for enhancing our brood stock. ASM.

Marshall spear
Fv jacalwa
Fv bay drifter
Portland me

[External] Measure increase

From [Todd Pinkham](#) on 2024-04-25 21:21

[Details Headers](#)

Measure increase is a terrible idea , drop back to 600 traps instead. We are being not so slowly squeezed out of this industry. 600 would reduce endlines ,open up more fishing ground , less bait , less fuel , less time on the water. But that would make too much sense right ?

[External] Opposition to Lobster Gauge Increase

From [Lindsey Alley](#) on 2024-04-25 21:18

[Details](#) [Headers](#) [Plain text](#)

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to express my opposition to the implementation of the new gauge increase for Maine lobster. As you must already know, record high inflation has created financial hardship for lobstermen, and the crew members & families this industry supports. Bait & fuel prices are higher than ever, while the pay for our product is low as a result of the increased cost of getting our lobsters to market. The cost of boat maintenance, repairs, insurance, traps, rope, buoys, etc. has also drastically increased due to inflation. After all of these expenses our take-home pay is getting smaller. This gauge increase could have a devastating affect on our industry and have severe consequences for fishing families.

I have worked on boats for 30 years and am entering my 3rd year as a licensed captain of my own boat. I fish inside of 3 miles from May til November. In the area I fish during those months, my traps come up full of lobsters, the majority of which are shorts, juveniles, egged & v-notched females. I have to be extra careful of the babies, about the size of my pinky finger, that fall through the trap meshes onto the washboard and floor, to be sure we aren't stepping on them and to get them safely back overboard. We saw more of these last summer than I had ever seen in previous years. This contradicts your data claiming juvenile numbers are down. Judging by my observations and those of other fishermen I've talked with, the future looks far more promising than your data indicates. It's my belief that your ventless trawl survey data that triggered the gauge increase is flawed and grossly inadequate. Any lobsterman will tell you that no two seasons are exactly alike. There are many different factors that determine a lobster's habits, i.e. water temperature, the time of year, type of bottom, bait type & bait quality. Hard shell lobsters like fresh bait, shedders like old greasy bait. Some years they're in the shallows, other years they're deeper especially if it's been a rainy spring, and depending on water temperature. Some years we find them on hard bottom, other years they're on the muddy bottom. You can't conduct your trawl survey the same way in the same spots every year and expect to get an accurate stock assessment. Those of us who fish for a living put a lot of effort into finding & chasing the lobsters. If ASMFC is going to have regulatory authority over our fishery and our livelihoods, then perhaps you should make more of an effort to conduct more exploratory, thorough and accurate stock assessments. There's far too much at stake to be half-assing your stock assessments. Thousands of Maine lobstermen, crews, families, and the entire coastal economy depend on the accuracy of your data.

The current gauge measure, vent sizes and v-notch laws have been highly effective for many years, proven successful by record landings several years running. ASMFC needs to give credit where it's due...to the fishermen who have been excellent stewards of our ocean resources, and have made it a sustainable fishery for future generations.

Sincerely,

Lindsey Alley, Lobsterman
Jonesport, Maine
Zone A District 3

[External] Addendum 27

From [Kelsey Fenwick](#) on 2024-04-25 21:08

[Details](#) [Headers](#) [Plain text](#)

Addendum 27

As someone whose income is based solely on catching lobsters, I oppose the measure increase. This measure increase will cause unnecessary and unjust hardship for the entire fishery. In my experience as a stern man fishing in several different zones in the state of Maine (from Harpswell to Boothbay to Port Clyde), the juvenile lobster population is strong and not facing a decline. In fact, many fishermen have noted increased numbers of juvenile lobsters in their traps this past year (2023). The Maine lobster fishery has been sustainable and productive for generations, please do not cause undue harm with this Addendum.

Thank you for your consideration,

Kelsey Fenwick

Port Clyde, Maine

(207)701-1765

[External] Stop measure increase

From [Glenda Beal](#) on 2024-04-25 21:04

[Details](#) [Headers](#) [Plain text](#)

To ASMFC:

I am the chairman of the selectboard of the Downeast island community of Beals, Maine. I am also the wife of, mother of (2), daughter of, and niece of current lobstermen. For generations, our island people have lobsterfished to support our families, all the while protecting our resource for future lobstermen.

Currently, the planned increase of the small lobster measure is not only going to hurt our families and our town economically, but we will also be forced into unfair competition with our neighboring country's lobster industry. Canada already keeps our best breeders, our "oversize" large lobsters, which Maine fishermen have chosen to protect. They are selling our breeders, which cannot be compared in egg bearing capacity, to the smaller lobsters you are telling us must remain on bottom now for "breeding purposes." The larger lobsters are the MOST important to keep on bottom for egg production, not those small lobsters. If you're truly interested in preserving our industry's future by protecting breeder lobsters, it's time to pressure Canadian rule makers to adhere to OUR CURRENT large lobster measures, not force a lower gauge increase on our Maine fishermen.

Furthermore, data that you gathered in your sampling is not a true picture of juvenile lobster population, as lobster settlement numbers have shown. One year of your sampling should never be used to make drastic rule changes like a measure increase. All types of data should be considered, including what fishermen are actually seeing, as well as the scientific samplings of outside sources. Many variables could effect the data and should be considered, such as water temperature or recent storms. Fishermen will tell you that just when it looks like nothing is on bottom, suddenly the lobsters all begin crawling and trapping in large numbers. If your sampling is taken before lobsters move and trap, of course you could be convinced there's a tremendous decline in population. We believe this is what may have happened this past season's sampling. By postponing the gauge increase, and considering all data collected, I believe you may indeed see there is no need to change the measure at all. Please postpone the measure change.

Sincerely,

Glenda Beal

[External] Maine measure increase

From [Comcast](#) on 2024-04-25 20:58

[Details Headers](#)

Tom Cloutier, Harpswell Lobsterman for nearly 30 years. I am against the measure increase for next year 2025, I feel that it is unnecessary and one more law/ regulation to put lobsterman out of business with so much going on these days. I have seen large numbers of small lobsters in some bays and not in others, most likely caused by new predators, oyster farms and new to the area aquatic foreign plant species. Thanks for reading.

Sent from my iPhone

[External]

From [John Crane](#) on 2024-04-25 20:58

[Details](#) [Headers](#) [Plain text](#)

Hi, my name is John Crane V, I am a fifth generation fisherman out of Port Clyde. I started lobstering when I was 10 years old with a student license and worked my way up to be a full time commercial lobsterman fishing 800 traps. From my experience spending 150+ days at sea each year. I see a very healthy and growing lobster population. I think increasing the measure is an unjust act against a problem we don't. The measure increase will create a hardship across the whole lobster industry and will not protect the lobsters. Please consider stopping this change.

Thank you for your time,

John Crane V

F/v Sylvia C., Port Clyde, ME

207-691-1816

[External] American Lobster Gauge Increase

From [Doug.Laura McLennan](#) on 2024-04-25 20:58

[Details](#) [Headers](#)

To the members of ASMFC,

My name is Douglas McLennan.

I am a 12 generation fisherman from Maine, and have been a lobster zone council member for over 20 years, representing Zone D, district 7, Spruce Head, South Thomaston Maine. I feel as a group of fisherman, along with the 6 zones, that we were not heard or taken under consideration with the measure increase that has been implemented on the American Lobster fishery. I feel the science used by the state is flawed, and the state didn't listen to the people who live the industry. If the state is worried about the settlement of lobster, they should be using the large lobsters to produce more settlement, than trying to do so with the small measure. Using the juvenile stock to rebuild settlement isn't the scientific method, when a larger lobster will produce 5 times the reproduction than a juvenile lobster. We have area 3 boats from out of state fishing on the area 1 and 3 line all the way up the coast in the winter, taking big females that migrate off the coast for the winter. This practice has become more popular over the last 15 years. We as a zone council have made this clear to the DMR of Maine. Our Maine lobster industry lands 90% of the lobster on the East Coast. Maine has the most restrictive rules for conservation, as you are aware of. As fishermen, we are not represented well at the Atlantic States Commission. We rely on our Commissioner, Pat Keliher, and a member of the Marine Resources Committee for our voice. I feel that voice is not what the industry is saying. There is a huge disconnect between industry and regulators at a state and federal level. Maine has been using the same lobster measure since 1989. The industry has seen 2 huge spikes in landings, and we have had a good, strong industry. The problem is not the resource, it is regulation from NOAA, and ASMFC. By having our Commissioner present the measure increase to ASMFC as a problem facing the resource is truly a false situation of our resource. By doing so, and having the trigger met, setting off a double increase, we have now created a secondary problem with the international market with Canada, involving the Mitchell Act, of Mugnuson Stevens. There is no way to determine what Canada will do either way with the trade if the Mitchell is up held or repealed. Either decision could cause a huge problem for trade. If we do not allow them to export smaller than our gauge lobsters into the USA, they may refuse our lobster for trade during our peak production. If we do allow the change, and Canada can fill the void in market caused by the measure increase, it will put USA dealers, and harvesters at a huge disadvantage on the global lobster market. All this trouble caused by flawed science from Maines DMR. Did anyone do an economic study of the results caused by this measure increase? Is there not a law a study must be conducted before any major rule changes are implemented? What about a social impact study? This could cause a huge economic hardship in our industry, which is already at a tipping point in today's economy, forever changing the coastal towns in Maine,

where lobstering is the economic driver for many people, and supporting businesses. There were many meetings held with fishermen over the last 18 months about the measure increase, and all 7 zones showed ZERO support for the DMR regulation change. The entire industry feels that we have no say in regulation, and that our Commissioner is using ASMFC to implement regulation that couldnt be accomplished at a state level. The collapse of Southern New England is being used as a driving point behind this regulation. Fishermen were paid off settlements from pesticide spraying in Long Island Sound, and the collapse wasn't caused by the lobster industry. If it is climate change that is a concern, the measure increase isn't going to stop that any more than installing wind turbines in the ocean will. This measure increase needs to be revisited, using better science, on more than just the resource, but the economic and social results considered. 35 years under the same measure is a solid record to dispute as being a problem in the industry. The lobster dealers, and harvesters will feel the economic hardship this will create, by losing the small "chick" market. The impending hardship on the 2028 horizon with whale regulations is coming fast, and will surely be a effort reduction. There is no pause button in the current regulation. People start to lose their boats and houses and fall into economic hardships over bad science would be devastation to the coastal communities.

Than

k You , Douglas McLennan

[External] Lobster Gauge Increase

From [Shawn Baumgartner](#) on 2024-04-25 20:49

[Details](#) [Headers](#) [Plain text](#)

A gauge increase on the Maine lobster fishery will not benefit the fishery in anyway. Present or future. In the 30 mile range I fish I've seen more small lobsters in the past few years than ever before. We need better testing methods in different areas.

Shawn Baumgartner Casco Bay

[External] Gauge Increase

From [Renee Jordan-Chandler](#) on 2024-04-25 20:22

[Details](#) [Headers](#) [Plain text](#)

ASMF Commission,

As the wife of a lobster fisherman and woman whose entire family are lobster fishermen, I ask and urge you to delay and reassess the gauge increase. The science behind why this would not be beneficial is overwhelmingly substantial and must be taken into consideration when you are making your final decision. I won't re-submit those details that I am more than certain you have received multiple times. You would be doing the lobster fishing industry and those who have worked so hard to create and protect it, a great disservice by putting this gauge increase into effect. There is a time and a place for change and this is not the most effective use of those resources. Please, use this as a time given to you to do what is right.

Thank you for your time,

Sincerely,

Renee Jordan-Chandler

[External] Lobster gauge increase

From [Dwight Chandler](#) on 2024-04-25 20:06

[Details](#) [Headers](#)

I urge the commission to delay and reconsider the gauge increase.
Sent from my iPhone

[External] Lobster gauge

From [alex hutchins](#) on 2024-04-25 19:58

[Details](#) [Headers](#) [Plain text](#)

The gauge increases need's to be stopped ! We have more shorts and v tail lobsters than ever before! Baby lobsters are up and have been for several years we had one bad year that could have been a combination of many things such as high bait prices so guys fished fewer days or more guys getting out of the business or all the rain and storm water run off full of chemicals but non of it is from lack of lobsters of any size

Alex hutchins

[External] no gauge increase

From [DOUG MAXFIELD](#) on 2024-04-25 19:24

[Details](#) [Headers](#) [Plain text](#)

once again over-reaching management, who's main concern is self-preservation, is creating a problem where there is none. Find another way to justify you existence and leave the gauge alone.

[External] Comment of Maine Lobster gauge increase

From [Ericka Jeffers](#) on 2024-04-25 19:15

[Details](#) [Headers](#) [Plain text](#)

My name is Jim Hanscom, I'm the Vice-chairman of the Zone B Lobster Counsel and the Vice President of the Maine Lobster Union (MLU). I am 52 years old and have been going lobstering since I was 15, I urgently oppose the measure increase and the escape vent increase! I have personally never seen the amount of juvenile lobsters along with the amount of female lobsters eggging out. Maine has a long standing sustainable fishery practices in place dating back to the 1940 & 50's. We know for a fact that the chick lobster represents upwards of 25% of our catch which equals market share with Canadians. The Canadians can already keep a larger and smaller lobster then Americans. By imposing these regulations, it will only create economic harm for American Fishermen and economic gain for Canadian Fishermen. If ASMFC is truly concerned about the lobster stock in the Northeast Atlantic they would put there efforts into convincing/requiring our Canadian fishery to the North and the Southern New England Lobster Fishery to adapt Maine's lobster gauge both on the small and large side.

Thank you for your consideration.

Jim Hanscom
Bar Harbor

[External] Lobster gauge comment

From [Hayden Jones](#) on 2024-04-25 19:15

[Details](#) [Headers](#) [Plain text](#)

Hello,

My name is Hayden Jones, I am a lobster fisherman from Vinalhaven Maine I would like to comment that a gauge increase would be detrimental to all lobster fishermen. We can't afford to go up on the measure it will bring our catch down for years to come until the population is able to be harvested at the new size. The way the economy is we will be hurting very bad financially. I think that the testing of how lobsters are counted needs to be changed. I've lobstered since 2010 and can see a difference that lobsters are in deeper waters now on way different types of bottoms that I didn't fish when I started. There should be more research in this before we make a decision to go up. Maybe like a different type of test to gather data would help a lot. I think if that is done you will find that there are a lot more lobsters that what is being recorded now. What ever happened to lobster seeding in Stonington? Stuff like that should be done again. We had some of the biggest hauls that I've ever seen on the east side of Vinalhaven when that was being done. Things like that could really create a big boom for even more lobsters even though there is plenty around. Also if we went up on our measure and Massachusetts and Canada didn't, they would catch the lobsters that we let by. Lobsters move all the time, those lobsters would be caught right up. It wouldn't make sense for us to do that because our buyers would be buying Canadian lobsters smaller than what we could keep? Is that correct or am I wrong?

Thank you

Very respectfully,

Hayden Jones

[External] Gauge increase

From [Randy Shepard](#) on 2024-04-25 18:49

[Details](#) [Headers](#)

Sent from my iPhone. I completely oppose the increase of our lobster gauge! I've been a lobsterman for 40 years and an increase will be unneeded, unwanted and a heavy financial blow to an already over regulated industry. I can understand wanting to help the fishery but this isn't the answer! If this regulation is implemented it will put a lot of lobstermen out of business and be a horrible toll on families as well as all the businesses and communities that rely on this industry. I recommend putting it on the shelf and going after more data before implementing such a crippling rule change.

External] I OPPOSE THE GAUGE INCREASE

From [collin lamprey](#) on 2024-04-25 18:34

[Details](#) [Headers](#)

The gauge should stay at 3 1/4!!!

[External] GAUGE DISPUTE

From [Dakota Dunphy](#) on 2024-04-25 18:27

[Details](#) [Headers](#)

Good evening, to whom it may concern.

My name is Dakota Dunphy, and I am emailing this comment in regards to the Lobster gauge raise. This gauge raise is fueled by misinformation and needs much much more concentration before something This drastic is decided for our industry. It is no surprise that a raise in our measure is being considered, due to the recent wins in our battle against the north Atlantic, right whale conservation. Our industry is under a steady fire. We need a break, we need for the people we voted for to battle for us in this decision. we are extremely over regulated on every piece of equipment we operate with. We are a massive influence on New England's economy. This measure is simply another ploy, to dismantle our way of life.
Sent from the sea

[External] Measure and vent increase

From [Jed Miller](#) on 2024-04-25 18:11

[Details](#) [Headers](#) [Plain text](#)

My names is Jed Miller, I lobster out of Tenants Harbor. I believe the vent and measure increase is unwarranted and not based on factual science. I've even spoken to some samplers about this and they said the data they collect and submit is not being accurately represented, is being overlooked, and bluntly changed and falsified. The fact is we are seeing as many egg bearing females as ever, if not more. Seeing more hatchling lobsters definitely than ever before, and plenty of sub legal lobsters. I think the measure and gage increase would significantly harm the industry, to a point of being unsustainable financially, and effectively bankrupting the industry at a time where many many lobstermen are on the brink already. We suffered enough, from dealers colluding and price fixing to the downward to the point of collapse, to whale regulations for whales that rarely come into our areas, to offshore wind threatening to take over our bottom and destroy the habitat around them, along with killing whales while doing so only to have the blame placed on us. What's the objective here? What's the ultimate goal? These increases will not save the industry any more than status quo, just delay legal size and let more out of the traps. That is my opinion, thank you-Jed Miller

[External] Measure increase

From [Khristi Sinford](#) on 2024-04-25 18:10

[Details](#) [Headers](#)

Dear Commissioner & team,

With the measure increase pending for January 2025. I write to you today to take a step back and look at all your information first before action is taken. To my knowledge, a full analysis has yet to be conducted. Also an analysis of the impact of the market needs to be conducted too. The seafood market brings A LOT of money into the state so people like YOU get paid. With a measure increase, it will hinder your pay and our pay. My young family consists of myself working 40 plus hours a week, my husband who fishes during the fishing months, and our 2 year old daughter. This increase will hurt us tremendously and leave me having to work overtime in order to keep us afloat which will lead to me missing out even more on my daughter's life because of the decisions made by you. Most of the people involved in the measure increase do not understand what it's like to have to work hard for their pay as no threat hangs over your head everyday. I'm pleading that this decision is reconsidered until a FULL analysis can be completed and all things are taken into consideration.

Thank you.

All my best,
Khristi M.

[External]

From [Shaun McLennan](#) on 2024-04-25 18:10

[Details](#) [Headers](#) [Plain text](#)

I strongly oppose Addendum 27

At minimum, Addendum 27 needs to be postponed to study the impact.

And to have a law changed to allow Canadian product allowed into the USA to fill the chick market is completely unacceptable.

I think something to consider is the massive amounts of larger and oversize lobsters that are brought to market from neighboring states and Canada. That is our breeding stock that has been protected in Maine for generations. These lobsters are caught in the GOM and then sold. That, to me, is a much bigger issue than trying to alter our measure, which has proven its sustainability for several decades.

[External] MAINE LOBSTER MEASURE INCREASE

From [Joseph McDonald](#) on 2024-04-25 18:07

[Details](#) [Headers](#)

To whom it may concern, As a full time second generation fisherman from Jonesport I do not support this measure increase. This was dropped on us in less than a year when the commissioner brought it up at zone meetings. There needs to be more studies done on sub legal lobsters. Towing over the 100 fathom edge in June is not going to tell you there's any snappers because they aren't out there in June. All lobster fisherman could do 5 trap survey to support what we're all seeing more small lobsters with eggs than ever. We cannot let the Canadians keep taking our lobsters. This increase will hurt every fisherman on the coast for more years than we can afford. SUSPEND THE MEASURE INCREASE!!!

-Joseph McDonald zone A second generation and god willing my daughter can be third generation if we can keep politics out of Maine lobster fishing.

[External] GUAGE CHANGE

From [B A](#) on 2024-04-25 18:06

[Details](#) [Headers](#) [Plain text](#)

To whom this may concern, I am writing today urging the commissioners to delay the guage change. While this change may seem necessary to your agenda's timeline, keep in mind it is also necessary for our industry that a full analysis be conducted prior to any changes. A change such as this potentially has severe and likely negative outcomes for our industries market.

As you are well aware, the lobster industry has been under increasingly strict regulations for many years and we have remained in compliance.

Lobster fishermen deserve a break and a fair chance to work the job we know best. Lobsterfishing is not a an easy job but it's the job we all grew up learning how to do!

Please consider this request, as our future depends on critical thinking on all levels.

Thanks for your time,

Bridgette Alley 🦞

[External] Addendum 27

From [Myles](#) on 2024-04-25 18:02

[Details](#) [Headers](#) [Plain text](#)

I am writing in opposition to the guage increase.

I fish inshore on my own boat and offshore as my dad's sterman. I see an abundance of small lobsters at all times of the year in both areas.

The survey does not make sense to me since it did not take the entire area and a range of years into consideration.

Please conduct a fair and accurate survey before making these drastic decisions.

Thank you for your time.

Myles Wotton

F/V OLDSCHOOL

New Harbor, ME

[External] Addendum 27

From [Donald Wotton](#) on 2024-04-25 18:01

[Details](#) [Headers](#) [Plain text](#)

I am writing in opposition to the guage increase.

I have been lobstering for over 50 years and do not agree with how the surveys are conducted. It is impossible to get a fair and accurate assessment when Lobsters are spread out from 0 to 80 fathom at the same time.

The current measure puts brute stock back in the water and the brute stock is the best its ever been.

Donald Wotton

F/V REDLADY

New Harbor, ME

[External] Gauge increase

From [James Hardison](#) on 2024-04-25 17:42

[Details](#) [Headers](#) [Plain text](#)

We absolutely need to take more time to see what is happening before this gauge increase happens , I've seen more small lobsters than ever before the last season, please let the natural reproduction of these lobsters take effect before you up end something that's not broken or needs help, thank you

[External] Comments on gauge change . To start with the State of Maine should never be part of an organization that can out vote us and we catch close to 90 % of the lobsters that are caught in the US . Secondly I am a 40 year fishermen in Maine and there's no problem with the amount of small Lobsters there is plenty and there's plenty of Eggers also .So no need for a measure change. Also if there's a change Maine loses a year to catch lobsters that we never get back because we are capped on the big side so we only have 4 to 5 years to catch a lobster before it's to big so upping the small side without adding g the same amount to the big will shorten the amount of time we have to catch em therefore it's an unnecessary and bad idea for the Coast of Maine

From [Charlie Smith](#) on 2024-04-25 17:33

[External] Lobster Industry need you guys to hold off on the guage increase. We have to much unknow stuff coming at us .There are so many juvenile lobsters out there.You guys need to listen to the fisherman and women.Please pause the measure increase to give us a little hope and closure.

From [John Harvey](#) on 2024-04-25 17:31

[External] Lobster gauge increase delay

From [Tom C](#) on 2024-04-25 17:28

[Details](#) [Headers](#)

Please delay the lobster gauge increase. The families lives could be deeply impacted. Fishing for 10 plus years the amount of short lobster that are released and female breeders notched and released is huge. I would suggest more study from my first hand experience.

Thanks for your time,

Tom Coughlin
Ellsworth, Maine

[External]

From [Dicky Wallace](#) on 2024-04-25 17:26

[Details](#) [Headers](#) [Plain text](#)

This measurement increase is not going to work because we don't catch many big lobsters that being said it wouldn't be worth me fishing anymore