



# LCMT Proposals on Latent Effort



American Lobster Management Board  
Spring 2018

# Overview



- At the 2017 Annual Meeting, the Lobster Board tasked all LCMTs with developing proposals to reduce latent effort
- Context:
  - In August, Board decided not to move forward with Addendum XXV for management use; established a Workgroup to discuss future management of the SNE stock
  - In October, Workgroup identified potential paths forward, including recommendation to reduce latent effort in LCMAs 4, 5, and 6
  - Board decided to task all LCMTs with assessing levels of latent effort and developing proposals to reduce latent effort in the fishery



# LCMT Proposals



- Proposals were received by:
  - LCMT 4 (NY and NJ)
  - LCMT 5
  - LCMT 6 (CT and NY)
- Some LCMTs have indicated initial discussions among state staff but no proposals have been developed
- As a reminder, LCMTs 2 and 3 are going through a series of trap allocation reductions aimed at scaling the size of the fishery to the size of the resource

	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Year 4</b>	<b>Year 5</b>	<b>Year 6</b>
<b>LCMA 2</b>	25%	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%
<b>LCMA 3</b>	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%	

# LCMT 4 – NY



- Proposal: reduce permit holders trap tag allocation by 50% if they haven't reported actively fishing 50 days during 2013-2017
  - 'Actively fishing' means the permit holder must have reported fishing for any species
  - Minimum allocation capped at 50 traps
  - Expected to decrease trap allocations by 19%
- Proposal notes considerations for federal waters
  - Reducing trap allocations for some permit holders (rather than a percent reduction across all LCMT 4 permits) would be akin to a new trap allocation program
  - State and federal decisions on revised allocations would have to match in order to avoid a disconnect on the number of traps a permit holder can fish



# LCMT 4 - NJ



- Consensus not reached at meeting
- Concern about validity of NJ permit info since federal permits are not required to report through VTRs and were only recently required to report to the state
- Two concepts put forward
  1. Status quo
    - NJ has had moratorium on permits since 2002
    - Number of permits has decreased (42 permits in 2008 to 32 permits in 2017)
  2. Latency by owner, not vessel
    - Several active harvesters possess multiple lobster permits but, due to poor stock status, have not utilized all permits in recent years
    - If a fisherman actively fished on one permit, then all lobster permits under their possession should be exempt from latency



# LCMT 5



- Proposal: status quo/natural attrition
  - Permit numbers have decreased from 28 permits in 2009 to 26 permits in 2017
  - Traps allocated to each fisherman are based off of historical allocations and cannot increase
  - DE, MD, and VA contribute less than 3% of landings in SNE and less than 0.1% of landings coastwide
  - Harvesters in region participate in multiple fisheries and their choice on which species to harvest depends on markets, quotas, availability, etc.



# LCMT 6 - CT



## 1. Status Quo (preferred)

- Substantial decrease in effort in LIS since 1999
- CT commercial fishery statutes were amended in 2015 and mandate yearly renewal of limited entry lobster licenses. In initial year, trap allocations fell 46.7%

## 2. Trigger Approach (non-preferred)

- Trap reductions required if there is an 80% increase in the number of lobster traps actively fished (baseline = 2016)
- Trap allocations of 50 traps or fewer cannot be reduce
- If triggered, would reduce state's trap allocation by another 41.8% from 2017 levels

Years Fished From 2013-2017	% Trap Allocation Reduction
5 years	0%
4 years	20%
3 years	40%
2 years	60%
1 years	80%

# LCMT 6 - NY



Consensus not reached at meeting

## 1. Status quo

- NY has moratorium on lobster licenses and there is no trap transferability
- Trap allocations have decreased, on average, by 4% each year since 2008

## 2. Trap Cap

- Some propose an 800 trap cap (~30% reduction in allocations)
- Increasing cost of trap tags to \$1 would limit purchases to the amount permittees intend to fish and funds could support research

## 3. Decrease Allocations on Non-Active Permits

- Others propose permit holders who haven't submitted at least 50 harvester reports (includes any type of fishing) in the last five years (2013-2017) would:
  - A) have their trap allocation reduced by 50% (~23% reduction); or
  - B) have trap allocations reduced to 800 (~15% reduction)





# Some Observations



- LCMTs are using different definitions of active permits
  - Permit associated with lobster landings
  - Permit associated with landings (of any species)
  - Permit that was renewed (but may not have landings)
  - Permit owned by fishermen that has at least 1 permit with landings
- There are a variety of response levels
  - Some propose action after a trigger is met
  - Others propose a reduction from current levels
  - Others recommend natural attrition in fishery
- In the future, it may be helpful to be more specific in the tasking of LCMTs (i.e. what is considered latent effort, is there a desired % reduction)



# Questions for Board Discussion



- Is the Board interested in reducing latent effort via the LCMT proposals?
- Thinking about the future management of lobster, what priority level would the Board give this potential action?
  - 2020 Stock Assessment (TC, SASC)
  - Addendum 27 (TC, PDT)
  - Whale discussions (staff and state personnel)
- An addendum would be required to address latent effort in the fishery
  - Is this action specific to LCMTs or a biological stock?
  - How does the Board want to define latent effort?
  - What is the goal/target of the addendum (i.e. percent reduction?)



# Questions?





# LEC Report on Enforceability of Ropeless Fishing



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# LEC Comments



- LEC met on May 1<sup>st</sup> to discuss the enforceability of ropeless fishing
- Outlined 5 primary concerns with enforcement of current technology
- Consensus statement: significant enforcement concerns about the technology as presented

# LEC Comments



## 1. Inability to enforce current lobster regulations

- a) Trap tag allocations and vent sizes are mgmt. measures which are verified on the trap and require gear retrieval
- b) If measures cannot be enforced, greater incentive for cheating and reduced conservation in the fishery
- c) Inability to enforce regulations is detrimental to a sustainable lobster fishery

## 2. Additional cost and time required to retrieve ropeless fishing gear

- a) Ropeless gear will require new retrieval technologies and the ability to re-set the gear
- b) These are higher cost technologies which require greater enforcement time
- c) Multiple technologies means enforcement vessels will need to have multiple retrieval methods

# LEC Comments



## 3. Security of Location Information

- a) Who is the 'gate-keeper' of the location information?
- b) How do we protect against fishermen 'stealing' acoustic frequencies?
- c) Limited ability to conduct covert operations if a fisherman is notified every time a trap come to the surface

## 4. Limitations of Enforcement Vessels

- a) Technologies require additional deck space to store spools, rope bags, etc.
- b) Results in limits on the amount of gear that enforcement can haul and inspect

## 5. Ropeless Technology Involves all Vessels

- a) Without buoys, no surface system to indicate where traps are located
- b) This means all vessels (including mobile gear) will be required to have acoustic modems to prevent gear conflicts



# Questions?

