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Commercial Fisheries Commission

Meeting 2 | June 27, 2025 | 12:30 – 3:30 PM

Department of Fish and Wildlife Field Headquarters | 1 Rabbit Hill Road, Westborough, MA

Agenda

12:30	Welcome & Introductions
1:00	Commission Business <ul style="list-style-type: none">• CFC Focus Group progress• Letters of support process• ResilientCoasts draft plan virtual meeting• Survey responses• Charter and work plan
2:10	Derelict Gear Initiative and Marine Debris – <i>Bob Glenn, DMF</i>
2:40	Public Comment
2:55	Next steps & Closing
3:10 PM	Adjourn

COMMERCIAL FISHERIES COMMISSION

Draft Business Meeting Minutes

April 8, 2025

100 Cambridge St, Boston, MA

In attendance:

Commercial Fisheries Commission: Dan McKiernan, co-chair, Director of Division of Marine Fisheries; Alison Brizius, co-chair, Director of Coastal Zone Management; Hollie Emery; Katie Almeida; Ed Barrett; Roger Berkowitz; Tim Brady; Gordon Carr; Beth Casoni; Aubrey Church; Al Cottone; Eric Hansen; Jackie Odell; Kevin Stokesbury. Absent: Vito Giacalone; Pamela LaFreniere; Angela Sanfilippo

Consensus Building Institute (Facilitators): Pat Field and Abby Fullem

Division of Marine Fisheries Staff: Brad Schondelmeier, Bradlie Morgan, Jared Silva, Story Reed, and Bob Glenn

Department of Fish and Game Staff: Sefatia Romeo-Theken, Deputy Commissioner

Coastal Zone Management Staff: Todd Callaghan and Tyler Soleau

Members of the Public: Senator Bruce Tarr, Julia Logan, Lisa Engler, and John Regan

Legislators or Their Proxies: Savannah Roth, Steve T., Matt McCormick, Chris, and Will

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Dan McKiernan and Alison Brizius—the Director of the Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF) and the Director of the Office of Coastal Zone Management (CZM) and co-chairs of the Commercial Fisheries Commission (CFC)—welcomed the group and expressed excitement for the potential work to be done. Dan emphasized the value of bringing this diverse group of stakeholders and state agencies. He anticipated interesting future meetings, visions for addressing commercial fishery concerns, and developing pathways for the administration and state legislature to support commercial fishing and the seafood industry.

Dan then introduced Abby Fullem and Pat Field of the Consensus Building Institute (CBI) who have been retained under state contract to facilitate CFC meetings. Abby outlined today's meeting's agenda, and invited each Commission member, DMF staff member, and members of the public to introduce themselves.

Senator Bruce Tarr provided some introductory remarks regarding how this public body came to be and his hopes that it would provide a unified voice to support the commercial fishing and seafood industry.

Commission members introduced themselves and shared their hopes for the CFC. Goals included: creating a unified voice for the industry, identifying and addressing issues proactively, creating a platform for economic support, connecting with legislature and state agencies, developing vision for fisheries to coexist with offshore wind energy development, and addressing critical infrastructure needs.

PURPOSE AND INTENT OF THE COMMISSION AND INITIAL INTERVIEW FINDINGS

Pat Field provided an overview of the legislation relevant to the CFC's work and expressed hope to develop and recommend tools to address sustainability of the fishing industry, responsible development of fisheries, and infrastructure. He then reviewed his findings from scoping interviews with individual Commission members. These findings included how to coordinate responses to and influence outcomes across a diversity of fishery related issues. He reflected on the potential scope of the CFC, including synthesizing issues across the industry to bring a clear focus to issues of critical concern and acting as a liaison to bring a variety of adjacent stakeholders to the table. Potential projects included economic development, infrastructure, large scale offshore wind considerations, representing fishing interests in regulation, sustainable gear and technology, science of fisheries management, and adaptive management. However, he noted that the CFC's purpose was not to address specific regulatory and management issues, and the CFC needed to be cognizant of its relation to other existing groups whose purview it is to weigh in on these matters.

Jackie Odell asked about the role of the Massachusetts Seaport Economic Council. Director Brizius noted that this would be discussed during the meeting.

STATUS OF RELATED EFFORTS

Abby then introduced the speakers who would share statuses of various relevant efforts.

Designated Port Area (DPA) Assessment

Tyler Soleau of CZM presented on the Designated Port Area (DPA) Assessment. The project was meant to promote the use and development of ports and prevent loss of key characteristics such as navigable waterways, industrial operation areas, and land-based infrastructure. CZM, along with the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), initiated the DPA Assessment in 2023 and are expected to complete the work this summer. The DPA development process included stakeholder outreach, geospatial economic analysis, and a review of existing data. The project focuses on key categories, including infrastructure and land use, funding, regulations, community engagement, coastal resilience, and criteria of Mass Leads Act. Ed Barrett and Beth Casoni asked about the purpose and scope of DPAs. Tyler noted that DPAs create areas dedicated to specific uses to protect and preserve industries and water access. Senator Tarr added that DPAs help protect working waterfronts and fishing industry, but relevant funding is

limited to the scope of the DPA's purpose. Alison noted that part of the DPA Assessment aimed at addressing these issues. A discussion between Aubrey Church, Tyler Soleau, Eric Hansen, and Senator Tarr followed about the number and location of DPAs. Tyler and Director Brizius noted that although there are currently 10 DPAs in the state, these can be modified through an existing boundary review process and ports can apply to become a DPA.

Alison explained that DPAs were initially created in 1978 to protect heavy waterfront industry areas like Boston and New Bedford and do not encompass all valuable working waterfronts in the state.

Katie Almeida suggested long-term leases from the state could help protect working waterfronts, similar to what is being attempted in Rhode Island. Senator Tarr and Gordon Carr discussed the challenges of mixed uses in ports and how DPAs can protect relevant heavy industries.

Director McKiernan and Senator Tarr then discussed the role of municipalities in port management and infrastructure. From this discussion, the CFC supported contacting the Massachusetts Municipal Association to attend a future meeting to discuss the municipalities' role in supporting port infrastructure needs.

Jackie Odell then asked about impact on transmission lines from offshore wind projects. Gordon Carr noted that DPAs have been used to protect energy transmission in New Bedford and were repurposed for offshore wind needs.

Ed Barrett then asked about the interface between DPAs and DEP's authority under Chapter 91. Director Brizius suggested coordinating with DEP present on Chapter 91 at a future meeting.

Lisa Engler of Massachusetts Clean Energy Center and Beth Casoni discussed sharing previous port assessment work with the CFC.

Massachusetts Ocean Advisory Commission

Todd Callaghan of CZM introduced the Massachusetts Ocean Advisory Commission, which was created alongside the Science Advisory Council through the Oceans Act to better understand resource prevalence and conflicts. The Oceans Act of 2008 required an Ocean Management Plan to be developed. The purpose of the Ocean Management Plan is to protect critical marine habitat and water-dependent uses through management frameworks for ocean-based projects. It considers 12 sensitive habitats, including important fish resource areas identified by DMF, and six water-dependent uses, such as commercial fishing and vessel paths, to inform developers. He noted that the ocean planning area begins three-tenths of a mile from shore.

Todd then introduced the Ocean Development Mitigation Fee Structure. Fees are placed in a trust fund — authorized by the Oceans Act and funded by developers — to support management, protection, restoration or enhancement of marine habitats, resources, and specified uses. The Fee Structure is managed by CZM and the Secretary of the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EOEEA).

Katie Almeida asked if any funds are used to study habitat changes after a cable is installed. Todd explained that this is the responsibility of the developers. A discussion followed between Jackie Odell, Al Cottone, and Todd about requirements governing the depth at which cables are to be buried. Todd noted that, under state law, developers must bury their cables and are required to monitor to ensure that their cables remain buried.

Todd then described some relevant future developments and applications of the Ocean Plan, such as potential offshore sand resource identification, biodiversity initiatives, and adjusting fishery resources maps to consider vulnerability of species.

Kevin Stokesbury asked about offshore sand as a free resource. Todd noted that in addition to state and federal permit fees, sand extraction for beach nourishment may include an Ocean Development Mitigation Fee. Beth and Ed discussed challenges associated with beach nourishment projects.

Seaport Economic Council

Director Alison Brizius discussed the Seaport Economic Council (SEC). SEC invests in coastal communities and working waterfronts through grants focused on innovation, marine economic development, public education, coastal infrastructure, and dredging.

Barrett and Carr expressed support for these grants and called for expanded resources.

Sefatia Romeo-Theken, Deputy Commissioner of DFG, voiced support and shared the use of SEC grants to promote fisheries and pursue harbor infrastructure development projects. Sefatia then noted that compliance with Section 3A of the MBTA Communities Act is required to qualify for SEC grants, which creates a unique set of challenges.

Director McKiernan asked if CFC could pursue SEC grants or similar grants. Pat Field noted that there may be limitations, including the small size of SEC grants and restrictions on private entities. Alison added that these grants can be used alongside federal grants to leverage them and may be appropriate for small communities.

Sefatia called for MassDevelopment to be part of this conversation.

ResilientCoasts Initiative

Director Brizius introduced CZM's *ResilientCoasts* initiative. The project's goal is to develop a comprehensive statewide strategy for coastal resilience to create consistency and provide greater support. Stakeholder engagement informed a draft of analyses this spring. This will create 15 districts across the state and provide strategies and best practices for coastal resilience projects. A draft of this report is being released this spring for public comment. Brizius noted its relevance to the CFC with specific strategies necessary for working waterfronts. She highlighted key features of the plan, including its consideration of areas of housing or economic development, areas of industry at risk, and opportunities for investment. These considerations will inform recommendations for state action.

Aubrey Church voiced support for the program and wished there had been more engagement with fishery stakeholders in its development. Beth Casoni noted she was part of the development process. Alison agreed that more voices can always be involved.

As part of the draft public scoping comment, CZM committed to presenting the initiative to the CFC later this spring.

Seafood Marketing Commission

DMF Deputy Director Story Reed presented on DMF's Seafood Marketing Steering Committee and Seafood Marketing Program. The program was initiated through legislation about 10 years ago with a \$250,000 annual budget. It is advised by a 19-member steering committee made up of diverse industry members and chaired by Director McKiernan. The steering committee meets twice annually. The program's mission is to increase consumer demand for local seafood products and support local fisheries through education and awareness.

In 2024, the program placed an advertisement on Steamship Authority ferries in response to anti-lobster industry advertisements by PETA. Story described the programs' strategies. Strategic partnerships are crucial for the program and are developed through meetings at events like the Boston Seafood Expo. The program also funds social media posts like culinary recipes and mini documentaries on local seafood industry, as well as small grant programs focused on education, video, and outreach. The Program also published a comprehensive a Port Infrastructure Report in 2021.

Dan and Story noted how Wendy Mainardi of DMF has taken on a role with Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR) to support seafood industry opportunities to apply for grants, such as Food Security Grants. She also attends the Food Policy Council meetings to advocate for seafood member inclusion. Al Cottone added that seafood traceability would be beneficial to advertise to increase transparency and awareness. Story agreed and voiced interest in DMF pursuing this. Beth thanked the Seafood Marketing Program for supporting the MLA in education and outreach grants.

Jackie Odell praised the DMF for their work to promote commercial fishers and the seafood industry during the pandemic.

Ed Barrett advocated for fishery and seafood industry representation at the Food Policy Council.

Marine Fisheries Advisory Commission

Dan McKiernan introduced the Marine Fisheries Advisory Commission (MFAC). The MFAC was originally established as a public body in 1961 to inform the legislature of marine fishery issues. Later in the 1960s, it would be permanently codified as a nine-member body with regulatory oversight body of DMF.

Dan noted that while there may be some overlap between MFAC and CFC interests his intention is to keep these bodies separate and distinct but informed of the others work.

Ed Barrett asked about the body's composition. Dan noted that the legislature only specifies that it contain exactly nine members that are knowledgeable about fisheries and individual members are appointed by the Governor on staggered three-year terms with no term limits.

IDENTIFICATION OF TOPICS FOR DELIBERATIONS BY COMMISSION AT A FUTURE MEETING

Pat Field introduced a real-time Mentimeter poll to identify priority topics for the CFC. Polling responses presented the following priorities:

1. Fishery Economics
 - a. Economic development and stability and port infrastructure were highest priority.
 - b. Seafood marketing issues were identified as the next priority.
 - c. Shoreside processing was the lowest priority.
2. Offshore Wind
 - a. Enhanced input in wind energy policy was the highest priority.
 - b. Developing best practices for mitigation (including DMF-managed funds) and improved communication on wind energy policy and mitigation were identified as the next most important priorities.
3. State Management
 - a. Supporting and involving the fishing and seafood industry in the development of state-wide plans and management programs was identified as the highest priority.
 - b. Other priorities included supporting improved and innovative fisheries management and science programs.

Pat then led the discussion to determine which projects could be pursued by the CFC under each topic of interest.

Director McKiernan identified potential overlap among some of these priorities with other public bodies. This included the Seafood Marketing Steering Committee, the Massachusetts Fisheries Innovation Fund Panel, the Marine Fisheries Advisory Commission, and the New England Fishery Management Council.

Carr and Barrett supported approaching the legislature to increase funding for seafood marketing. Carr and Berkowitz then discussed using marketing to support sales of less popular species.

Field suggested asking MDAR to discuss expanding markets for local sustainable seafood with the CFC. Abby Fullem asked about involving seafood representation on the Food Policy Council. Story noted that this may be possible through coordination with MDAR. In response to this, and Barret's earlier comment, there was consensus support among the CFC to draft a letter to MDAR requesting this action. Port infrastructure was discussed next. Pat suggested the SEC as a source of grants for small ports and asked about additional projects of interest.

Aubrey Church suggested working with federal efforts to develop working waterfront infrastructure bills and wondered if a similar approach could be taken at the state level. Dan asked if there would be interest in bringing the Harbor Masters Association and CZM working waterfront personnel to brainstorm potential solutions. Aubrey and Dan discussed the importance of informing harbormasters on the Port Profile Project. Ed, Beth, and Dan noted the differences in capacity and potential involvement of harbormasters. Aubrey added that communities should be included in these conversations to create support and foster collaboration. Al, Aubrey, and Beth then discussed how to share these ideas with coastal communities. Dan noted that community polls have been a helpful part of Port Profile Project.

Pat, Dan, and Story discussed creating a CFC focus group to review the last Port Profile Project and make recommendations for renewing the project. In response, Carr, Church, Casoni, and Barrett volunteered to work on a focus group with DMF-staff on this issue.

Pat noted that the CFC should monitor groups that support port and waterfront infrastructure for future potential projects. Gordon Carr then asked about the Ports Strategic Plan that was led by Mass DOT in 2016. Field committed to sharing this report with the CFC.

Fishermen's training programs were discussed next. Dan suggested planning training programs in community colleges and vocational schools and noted the collaboration currently occurring between the Cape Cod Fishermen's Alliance and Cape Cod Community College.

Jackie Odell and Ed Barrett expressed support for the idea but also concern for the obstacles facing young people as they enter the industry. They suggested waiting to push for training programs until the uncertainty and instability in the field can be addressed. Kevin Stokesbury added that cuts to federal fisheries staff may produce further uncertainty for the industry in the immediate future but may open doors for alternative and collaborative research projects as NOAA Fisheries is likely going to be challenged to do more with less.

Sefatia added that people with technical skills like mechanics, welders, and SCUBA divers can be a valuable part of the fishing industry.

Aubrey advocated for fisherman training. Pat asked if there was an exhaustive list of offered trainings for fishermen. Tim Brady said he would investigate this through the Maritime Academy where he teaches. Ed Barrett reiterated his concern about the value of bringing young people into the industry with no guarantee of success.

Pat and Beth discussed sending the Mentimeter poll questions shared today to Commission members and their constituents to be discussed in the future. CBI and DMF staff would collaborate to accomplish this.

Pat then introduced the topic of offshore wind energy development. Field noted there was substantial uncertainty regarding how projects would proceed under the new administration given their various development statuses.

Pat then discussed the polling results for CFC interest in offshore wind issues.

Katie Almeida asked about the DMF-managed funds. Pat noted that these funds were already negotiated. The Regional Plan Administrator is continuing its state-led effort funded by offshore wind developers, states, and foundations with design oversight committee. Dan McKiernan noted that the CZM Federal Consistency documents, which allow MA to ensure that projects in adjacent federal waters meet state standards and provide mitigation when an impact is anticipated, lacked fishing industry representation, and this could have helped with some of the details of the mitigation.

Ed noted that the fishing industry feels powerless in the offshore wind mitigation process and suggested that mitigation should be the primary focus. He voiced a need for political support for fishery mitigation. Potential mitigation strategies were discussed.

Roger Berkowitz suggested placing responsibility on developers to expand mitigation to the dismantling process. Beth Casoni agreed, noting that mitigation should be considered during both the construction and decommissioning timeline. She suggested the CFC provide guidelines to help fishermen file claims to prove losses due to offshore wind development.

Kevin Stokesbury then noted the immense ecological and environmental impacts due to offshore wind energy that are not yet fully understood.

Eric Hansen added that long-term effects could provide ample mitigation opportunities and suggested using this pause in development to better understand potential impacts and for the state to address these impacts through mitigation.

Beth then added that she is meeting with lobstermen in the next few weeks regarding training on the use of electronic logbooks, allowing fishermen to provide more clear reporting on real time catch data. Ed Barrett called for state legislature to push back on wind energy companies to honor power purchase agreements under the Green Communities Act.

A discussion followed regarding how this group can most effectively address these concerns. Dan suggested developing CFC focus group to discuss how to address offshore wind impact mitigation and minimization and distinguish the role of the CFC from the work being done by the Fisheries and Habitat Working Groups for Offshore Wind. Casoni and Carr suggested this group could bring issues up from the Fisheries Working Group for Offshore Wind and follow up on them for the full CFC. In response, Carr, Barrett, Odell, and Almeida volunteered to form a CFC focus group to work with CZM and DMF on relevant issues.

Carr also piggybacked on Hansen's earlier remark and expressed the need to use the pause in development to better understand various impacts and how best to involve the fishing and seafood industry in the process if and when offshore wind projects move forward.

Ed Barrett expressed his interest in the CFC inviting the Joint Chairs of the Legislature's Utilities Commission to a future meeting to better learn about the fishing and seafood industry's concerns, which could be a powerful tool in future negotiations. Jackie Odell echoed support for focusing on larger offshore wind policy issues related to fisheries rather than technical issues like boulder relocation.

Dan noted that the Fisheries Working Group for Offshore Wind has made great progress on technical issues like boulder relocation. That said, McKiernan and Field both felt there was a role for the CFC in determining if there are consensus positions among industry on this issue.

Odell asked who was responsible for boulder relocation and Field replied that it is managed under the Bureau of Offshore Energy Management's (BOEM) Boulder Relocation Plan and Massachusetts stepped into the issue recently because the state felt the guidelines were insufficient.

There was a discussion on the purpose of the Fisheries Working Group for Offshore Wind. John Regan from the New Bedford Port Authority suggested bringing together all the groups for a meeting to discuss expectations for each group. Pat said he can work with staff to distinguish these groups.

The next topic concerned consulting and engaging with the fishing and seafood industry on state-wide plans. Pat asked about the various plans produced under EEA. Director Brizius stated that CZM could bring plans, like *Resilient Coasts* and the Massachusetts Ocean Plan, to the CFC for discussion and feedback during the development phases.

Pat asked about the Ocean Plan timeline, and Todd and Alison responded that they're beginning outreach and hope to have a draft review later this year. Pat remarked that the CFC can have a role in reviewing plans for development elsewhere, as well, and while the Biodiversity Report is close to finish, there will be additional reports.

Todd and Aubrey discussed how to best include the fishing community in Ocean Plan feedback. Director Brizius indicated that DMF biologist Micah Dean will lead the Ocean Plan's Fisheries Work Group and will update Ocean Plan maps to incorporate more detailed fishing data. Alison suggested involving the CFC in that process. Barrett supported this suggestion.

The last topic dealt with improving fisheries science of fisheries management. Kevin Stokesbury said that with federal changes, data collection will be slower, which will increase uncertainty, and cause management delays. He noted that a potential way to triage this challenge would be through the identification of Habitat Areas of Particular Concern (HAPC) and using alternative approaches to management and science.

Roger Berkowitz noted innovative solutions point towards applications like eDNA and unmanned surface vehicles and added this will require additional collaboration between academics and state and federal researchers.

Aubrey Church added that there are opportunities to pursue more collaborative research with offshore wind during this pause. Todd added that the state recently passed a bill that requires research exploring eDNA as part of ocean management, which could be useful for the fishing industry.

Dan McKiernan suggested a strategy for the CFC may be to submit letters to Congress and the Administration to push for the federal government to prioritize more innovative and collaborative research.

Jackie Odell added that substantial uncertainty has come from aging fish in assessments as federal portside sampling was substantially cutback. She praised DMF for their efforts to supplement this critical loss but advocated for additional support for improving fisheries science. Barrett and Odell also noted Stokesbury's innovative research on open cod end surveys for groundfish. Casoni asked Stokesbury to present on this work in the future.

Jared Silva then reviewed various administrative issues related to finalizing CFC appointments and Conflict of Interest Law and Open Meeting Law training for public body members.

Field explained that CBI and state agency staff would work to develop a charter and workplan for the CFC to review. Fullem then reviewed the various entities the CFC identified as wanting to engage with at future meetings and other deliverables for state agency staff for future meetings.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

MEETING DOCUMENTS

- Commercial Fisheries Commission April 8, 2025 Meeting Agenda
- Primer of the Commercial Fisheries Commission and Procedures
- Commercial Fisheries Commission Interview Findings
- Enabling Legislation for Commercial Fisheries Commission
- Open Meeting Law Guidelines
- Open Meeting Law Certificate of Receipt
- Conflict of Interest Law Certificate of Receipt

UPCOMING MEETINGS

12:30 PM

June 27, 2025

Division of Fisheries and Wildlife Headquarters

1 Rabbit Hill Rd, Westborough, MA 01581

COMMERCIAL FISHERIES COMMISSION

Draft ResilientCoasts Meeting Minutes

June 4, 2025

Via Zoom

In attendance:

Commercial Fisheries Commission: Dan McKiernan, co-chair, Director of Division of Marine Fisheries; Alison Brizius, co-chair, Director of the Office of Coastal Zone Management; Pamela LaFreniere; Hollie Emery; Katie Almeida; Ed Barrett; Roger Berkowitz; Gordon Carr; Beth Casoni; Aubrey Church; Eric Hansen; Jackie Odell; Kevin Stokesbury. Absent: Vito Giacalone; Angela Sanfilippo; Tim Brady; Al Cottone

Consensus Building Institute (Facilitators): Meira Downie, Pat Field

Division of Marine Fisheries Staff: Brad Schondelmeier, Bradlie Morgan, Story Reed, Melanie Griffin, Kelly Whitmore

Office of Coastal Zone Management Staff: Deanna Moran

WELCOME AND AGENDA REVIEW

Pat Field of Consensus Building Institute (CBI) started the meeting. Bradlie Morgan of the Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF) conducted roll call attendance of the Commercial Fisheries Commission (CFC). Alison Brizius, Director of the Office of Coastal Zone Management (CZM) and CFC co-chair, described the *ResilientCoasts* project and emphasized the coastal focus of this plan, whereas the Massachusetts Ocean Plan — a separate CZM initiative — will consider environments at least three tenths of a mile offshore.

RESILIENTCOASTS DRAFT PLAN

Deanna Moran presented on CZM's *ResilientCoasts* Draft Plan. She provided an overview of the Plan, including its visions and goals, the process of determining geographic zones to consider, evaluating current strategies, and understanding how they can be applied to different regions. The geographic scope of the Plan considers 78 communities in Massachusetts' coastal zone, with an anticipated addition of 20 communities as climate change progresses over the next 50 years. The Plan's goals are to: improve human health and safety; protect and enhance the value of natural and cultural resources; increase resilience of built infrastructure; strengthen coastal economy; advance equity and environmental justice; and support the capacity of coastal communities. Deanna explained that the initiative was launched in 2023, planned in 2024, and the draft plan was released in May and is open to public comment through June 12. Planning was heavily front-loaded with stakeholder engagement.

Deanna then described the details of the draft Plan's contents. The Plan provides information and guidance to local and regional efforts through identification of near-term adaptation areas (e.g.,

areas with coastal flood risk in the 2030's) to help prioritize action while considering the needs of seven different coastal typologies, including ports and working waterfronts. To track progress and help understand data needs, clear state goals, indicators, and metrics would be included. The 15 proposed districts are grouped based on similar geomorphology and social needs. While these districts encompass coastal areas, they end where Ocean Management Plan areas begin.

She then outlined an example of a district summary. This highlighted characteristics of a district, risks, timeframes, and coastal typologies. Near-term adaptation areas consider the intersection of people and housing, public facilities and infrastructure, and economic needs to determine overall vulnerability. Coastal resilience measures can be used to address different coastal hazards and include ports and working waterfronts. She then described at a high level how state leadership will help implement and support different strategies at various timescales.

Director McKiernan suggested highlighting the reassessment of the Port Profile Project in relation to the *ResilientCoasts* Plan.

Pat Field asked about considerations of fish nursery ground vulnerability. Deanna noted that though natural resources were not included in these analyses, the plan considered salt marshes and dune systems, and next steps could consider nursery grounds.

Ed Barrett asked about beach nourishment projects. Deanna said that these are determined in the plan through comprehensive cost and priority.

Pat Field wondered how the plan prioritized short-term vs. long-term projects. Deanna responded that long-term impact in risk reduction is prioritized.

Eric Hansen asked what action steps would be taken by the state to implement the plan in the future. Deanna noted that the Plan is the roadmap for implementation, and future actions are proposed in both the short and long-terms. These actions would include guidance for districts and training modules, as well.

Roger Berkowitz asked how these plans were developed and if best practices across states were considered. Deanna said that resilience measures and best practices were inspired by successful interventions in other states but also require an understanding of what will work in Massachusetts. She added that the Climate Plan Assessment was heavily considered to understand district-level risks.

Director McKiernan asked about the potential impact of changes in Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) wetland protection on coastal systems. Deanna noted that DEP has been an important working group member and stakeholder throughout this process. The plan considers both strategies to continue on-going practices and shift regulatory programs in the future.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

OTHER BUSINESS AND CLOSING

Pat Field reminded the CFC of its upcoming business meetings in June and September.

Gordon Carr suggested that the CFC present to the Executive Office of Economic Development at a future meeting, which was embraced by the Chairs and facilitators.

Dan noted that the CFC should continue use this format to host topic specific meetings and to engage other entities in a dialogue on issues of concern and then use the more formal meetings for the business of the public body.

**Massachusetts Commercial Fisheries Commission
Draft Work Plan 2025**

MONTH	KIND	TOPICS
April	Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductions • Learning about related efforts • Scoping work
April - June	Focus Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Port Profiles and Infrastructure meets virtually • OSW meets virtually
May	Webinar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resilient Coasts Initiative Draft Plan presentation and discussion
June	Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus group progress • Letter of support process, and discuss any immediate letters of support to send • Charter review • Members' constituents survey responses • State of Maine OSW Site Visit to the UK • DMF: derelict gear initiative • EOED: Mass Office of Business Development (tentative)
July	Focus Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ports and OSW focus groups advance their work based on Commission feedback • Refine letters of support and send
August	OFF	
September	Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus group progress • Discuss any immediate letters of support to send • DEP/CZM: Chapter 91, DPAs, and enforcement • MDAR: food council, grants, and role of seafood/fishing • Maine: Working Waterfront Initiative • Needs and innovations in seafood processing • Collaborative research / alternative studies to inform science management groups • Discuss data used in determining mitigation (?)
October/ November	Focus Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subgroup works with organizers to start drafting 2025 Report to the Legislature
December	Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss, review, and revise draft Report from the Commission to the Legislature • Discuss any immediate letters of support to send
December 31	Submittal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit Commission report to the Legislature



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts Commercial Fisheries Commission

<https://www.mass.gov/orgs/commercial-fisheries-commission>

MAURA T. HEALEY

Governor

KIMBERLEY DRISCOLL

Lt. Governor

REBECCA L. TEPPER

Secretary

ALLISON BRIZIUS

CZM Director

THOMAS K. O'SHEA

DFG Commissioner

DANIEL J. MCKIERNAN

DMF Director

Commercial Fisheries Commission Charter

The Commercial Fisheries Commission is a public body that was established to build industry-wide consensus positions to facilitate the development of broadscale strategies and tools to promote the seafood and commercial fishing industry in the Commonwealth. Its mission is to ensure the needs and interests of the commercial fishing and seafood industries are properly considered in projects addressing ocean planning, offshore energy, and marine conservation; economic development; port and harbor use, access, and infrastructure; and food systems and security. To achieve this mission, the CFC will meet at least four times per year and provide an annual report to the Massachusetts legislature. Additionally, the CFC will advocate across state and federal entities on behalf of the seafood and commercial fishing industries and develop strategic partnerships to advance the industries' interests. In order to achieve this mission in an orderly and cohesive manner, the CFC will actively avoid redundancies and conflicts between its work and work that is within the domain of other established public entities.

Katie Almeida

Responsible Offshore
Development Alliance

Ed Barrett

MA Fishing Partnership

Roger Berkowitz

MA Seafood Collaborative

Tim Brady

Stellwagen Bank Charter Boat
Association

Gordon Carr

New Bedford Port Authority

Beth Casoni

MA Lobstermen's Association

Aubrey Church

Cape Cod Commercial
Fishermen's Alliance

Al Cottone

Gloucester Fisheries Commission

Vito Giacalone

Gloucester Fishing Community
Preservation Fund

Eric Hansen

Fisheries Survival Fund

Pamela LaFreniere

Center for Sustainable Fisheries

Jackie Odell

Northeast Seafood Coalition

Angela Sanfillipo

Gloucester Fishermen's Wives Association

Kevin Stokesbury

UMass Dartmouth School for Marine Science and Technology

Massachusetts Commercial Fishing Commission
Meeting 1 | April 8, 2025
In-person | 100 Cambridge Street, Boston, MA

Overview

Fourteen Commercial Fishing Commission members and co-chairs met for the inaugural Commission meeting on April 8, 2025. Fifteen elected officials and their staff, state agency staff, and members of the public attended the meeting as well. Members introduced themselves, discussed the purpose and intent of the Commission, learned about related efforts happening in the Commonwealth, and discussed and identified topics for the Commission to work on in its first year. The following document identifies key takeaways and actions from the meeting.

Key Actions

- Commission members:
 - All: Submit conflict of interest and open meeting law forms
 - All: Once shared by DMF, share survey with constituents
 - Kevin Stokesbury: Share cod videos
 - Tim Brady: Research if a list exists of trainings open to fishermen
- Small groups to convene on:
 - Offshore wind: Jackie Odell, Katie Almeida, Gordon Carr, Ed Barret, Todd Callaghan, Hollie Emery, Brad Schondelmeier
 - Port profile and infrastructure: Beth Casoni, Aubrey Church, Ed Barret, Gordon Carr, Story Reed, Tyler Soleau
- **State:**
 - Schedule and hold webinar on the Resilience Coasts draft
 - Draft Commission Charter
- Next Commission meeting: June 27 following the Fisheries Working Group meeting.

Key Takeaways

- Members introduced themselves and shared their hopes for the Commission, summarized here:
 - Speak as a unified voice for the diverse fishing industry.
 - Represent the fishing industry and keep it prioritized in State decision-making, planning, and policy efforts.
 - Increase awareness about other members' organizations, fisheries, and ports, and increase awareness about and by State agencies.
 - Focus on topics such as economic development, port infrastructure, and the sustainability of the industry.
- The Consensus Building Institute (CBI) shared findings from initial interviews with members, including potential topics the Commission could work on. These can be found in the meeting materials posted to the Commission [webpage](#).

- Representatives of the following initiatives shared an overview of the effort and current focus areas: MA Oceans Advisory Commission / Ocean Science Advisory Council, Resilient Coasts Initiative, MA Seafood Marketing Steering Committee, MA Seaport Economic Council, MA Marine Fisheries Advisory Commission, and Designated Ports Area Review.
- Members expressed their interest in working on specific topics via an online poll and then discussed potential actions the Commission could take. A summary is below:
 - **Economic development**
 - Increase and improve seafood marketing
 - **Potential action (PA):** advocate to the legislature for additional funds for seafood marketing.
 - Grow markets for local and sustainable seafood
 - **PA:** Invite MA Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR) to Commission meetings.
 - **PA:** Draft a letter of support for existing bill requesting a fishing industry representative to sit on the Food Policy Council.
 - Promote fishing industry training programs
 - **PA:** Develop list of training programs available.
 - Improve port infrastructure / working waterfront
 - **PA:** Track legislation on working waterfront programs
 - **PA:** Work on Port Profile Project 2.0 – ways to improve the scope, focus and presentation of the report. Develop survey questions for harbor masters and the fishing industry
 - **PA:** Meet with Massport and the Ports Compact.
 - **Offshore wind**
 - Affect economic analyses and mitigation
 - **PA:** Investigate potential for developing guidelines to inform proving eligibility for mitigation funds. Potential to be required by the State in PPAs.
 - **PA:** Investigate potential for developing guidelines to improve economic analyses commissioned by developers
 - Develop a strategic relationship with MA Fisheries Working Group (FWG)
 - **PA:** Discuss how the FWG and Commission intersect and what makes sense for each group to discuss and work on. One example shared: issues could be raised at an FWG and the Commission could discuss how to make changes and advocate for them.
 - Affect OSW policy
 - **PA:** Create space for the Commission to share viewpoints about offshore wind with policy decision-makers. One idea shared was to invite State representative Jeffrey Roy, chairperson of the Joint Committee on Telecommunications, Utilities and Energy to a Commission meeting.
 - **Regulatory / state policies**

- Engage the Commission on state plans and policies to ensure that fishing industry perspectives are incorporated. Some ideas shared to accomplish this included: Developing a list serv for members of related plans and policies' engagement efforts; bringing plans and policies to Commission meetings for feedback; and compiling recommendations and commentary on commercial fishing in state plans, e.g., Biodiversity Plan, Ocean Plan, DFG Strategic Plan.
 - Use collaborative research to inform science management groups determining quotas.
 - **PA:** Advocate to use alternative science, collected by fishermen, in models and stock assessments.
 - **PA:** Advocate for funding for fishermen to collect data and studies.
- Members formed small groups to meet in advance of the next meeting to discuss and develop a path forward on (1) offshore wind, and (2) port profile and infrastructure. Other topics will be discussed later in the year. Member participation in these small groups is below:
 - Offshore wind: Jackie Odell, Katie Almeida, Gordon Carr, Ed Barret, Todd Callaghan, Hollie Emery, Brad Schondelmeier
 - Port profile and infrastructure: Beth Casoni, Aubrey Church, Ed Barret, Gordon Carr, Story Reed, Tyler Soleau

Participants

Commission members

Alison Brizius, Co-chair	Office of Coastal Zone Management
Dan McKiernan, Co-chair	Division of Marine Fisheries
Al Cottone	Gloucester Fisheries Commission
<i>Angela Sanfilippo, absent</i>	<i>Gloucester Fishermen's Wives Association</i>
Aubrey Church	Cape Cod Commercial Fishermen's Alliance
Beth Casoni	Massachusetts Lobstermen's Association
Ed Barret	MA Fishing Partnership
Eric Hansen	Fisheries Survival Fund
Gordon Carr	New Bedford Harbor Development Commission
Hollie Emery	EEA Designee, Office of Coastal Zone Management
Jackie Odell	Northeast Seafood Coalition
Katie Almeida	Responsible Offshore Development Alliance
Kevin Stokesbury	UMass Dartmouth SMAST
<i>Pamela LaFreniere, absent</i>	<i>Center for Sustainable Fisheries</i>
Roger Berkowitz	MA Seafood Collaborative
Tim Brady	Stellwagen Bank Charter Boat Association
<i>Vito Giacalone, absent</i>	<i>Gloucester Fishing Community Preservation Fund</i>

Elected representatives and staff, and state agency staff

Senator Bruce Tarr	Massachusetts State Senate
Bob Glenn	Division of Marine Fisheries
Brad Schondelmeier	Division of Marine Fisheries
Bradlie Morgan	Division of Marine Fisheries
Jared Silva	Division of Marine Fisheries
Lisa Engler	Massachusetts Clean Energy Center
Matt McCormick	Staff for Representative Ann Margaret Ferrante
Savannah Roth	Staff for Representative Antonio Cabral
Steve Tedeschi	Staff for Representative Christopher Hendricks
Story Reed	Division of Marine Fisheries
Todd Callaghan	Office of Coastal Zone Management
Tyler Soleau	Office of Coastal Zone Management
William Currier	Legislative Aide to Senator Bruce Tarr

Members of the public

John Regan	New Bedford Port Authority
Julia Logan	Massachusetts Lobstermen's Association

Meeting facilitated by Pat Field and Abby Fullem, Consensus Building Institute.

Port Profile Focus Group

Meeting: Monday, June 16th

Members: Ed Barrett, Gordon Carr, Beth Casoni,
Aubrey Church



Focus Group Feedback

Fisheries Data

- Deeper dive into permits (active vs inactive)
- Consider separating wild harvest and aquaculture

Harbormaster Survey

- Collect more details on dedicated commercial vs recreational moorings/slips and waiting lists, including definitions of “commercial”
- Ask about recent grants received for infrastructure
- Coastal resiliency issues

Fisher Survey

- Have infrastructure projects taken place that have hindered commercial fishers in ports?
- Seasonal lobster trap storage issues
- Add question to understand commute times for fishers



Port Profile Timeline

Draft Timeline

June 2025

- Meet with CFC Focus Group
- Begin fisheries statistics work

Summer 2025

- Begin work with Urban Harbors Institute
- Finalize survey*

Fall/Early Winter 2025/2026

- Distribute Harbormaster and Fisher Surveys
- Survey outreach*

Winter 2026 – Analyze results and write report

Spring 2026

- Release full report
- Report outreach*

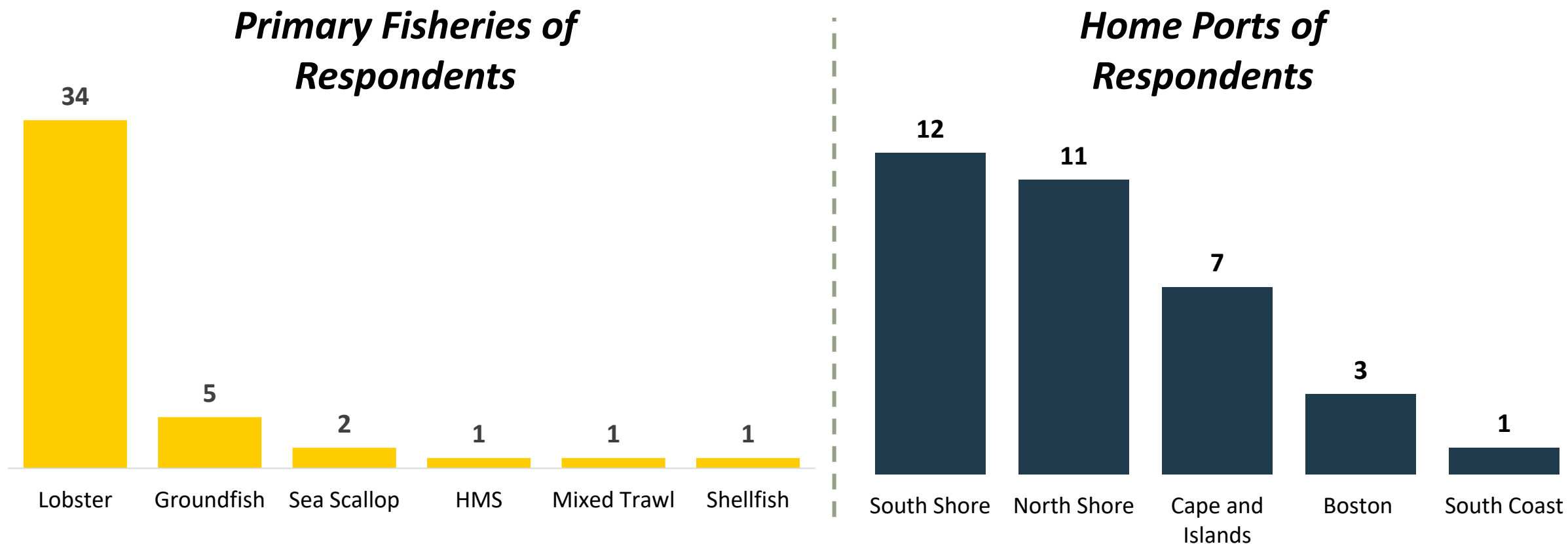


Commercial Fisheries Commission (CFC) Survey Responses June 2025

A survey conducted by Consensus Building Institute for the
CFC was adapted to be shared with their organizations



Respondents were disproportionately lobstermen from the North/South Shore



Survey results used net promoter score (NPS) to consider ‘promoters’ (scored 9-10) and ‘detractors’ (scored 0-6) and find difference in percent

Promoters	21
Passives	8
Detractors	6



Promoters	15
Passives	4
Detractors	16



Most Popular Ideas (>30)

- Addressing economic effects of fisheries management decisions
- Improving state OSW policy, procurement, and procedures to give the fishing industry a meaningful seat at the table
- Growing markets for local, sustainable seafood
- Developing best practices for mitigating impacts of OSW on commercial fisheries and related industries
- Local seafood marketing

Promoters	21
Passives	5
Detractors	9



Middle of the Pack Ideas (30 – 15)

- Identifying lessons learned from OSW planning and permitting to date
- Streamlining permitting process for harbor and port development and improvement
- Working waterfront infrastructure and port investment
- Developing recommendations to improve communication when OSW array goes awry
- Improving the science of fisheries management and encouraging collaborative research
- Ensuring state plans, activities, and policies support and enhance commercial fisheries

Promoters	17
Passives	7
Detractors	11



Least Favorite Ideas (~<10)

- Developing harvesting guidelines or best practices within wind energy areas
- Shoreside processing needs and improvement
- Developing framework for DMF-managed OSW resiliency funds

Very Unpopular (< 0)

- Developing recommendations on OSW transmission and procurements
- Addressing the aging of the fleet (i.e. vessels and permit holders)
- Adaptive management, especially in the face of climate change
- Promoting innovations in and the use of sustainable fishing gear and technology

Promoters	10
Passives	4
Detractors	21



Final Takeaways*

High	Respondents are very interested in the CFC pursuing issues related to addressing and mitigating economic impacts on commercial fisheries especially due to OSW, commercial fishery representation in OSW policy, and increasing local seafood markets.
Med	There is substantial interest in improving port infrastructure, greater communication and planning surrounding OSW, improved science of fisheries management, and supporting commercial fishing through state policies.
Low	Respondents have little to no interest in the CFC addressing shoreside processing, the aging fleet, adaptive management, gear innovations, and OSW issues beyond 'lessons learned' and mitigation.

*34/35 respondents were lobstermen

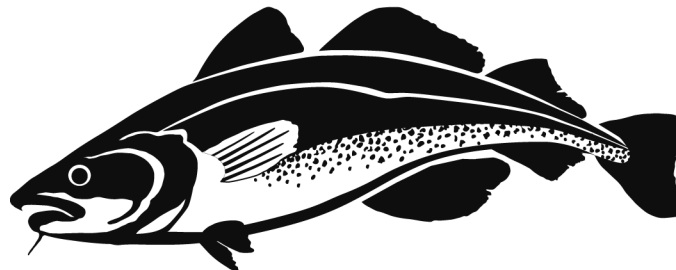
Additional Comments From Respondents

- Requests for help during seasonal closures through unemployment and encouraging new fisheries
- Fewer permit transfer restrictions for retiring lobstermen
- Increased price of lobsters to wholesalers
- Identifying ineffective management practices
- Streamlined regulatory compliance information

Managing Derelict Fishing Gear in Massachusetts

Commercial Fisheries Commission
June 27, 2025

Marine Fisheries
Commonwealth of Massachusetts



Derelict Fishing Gear – “ALDFG”

- ALDFG – Abandoned, Lost, or Otherwise Discarded Fishing Gear
- Composed of traps, pots, nets, ropes and buoys
- In MA primarily comprised of lobster traps and rope from our commercial and recreational fisheries
- Causes issues both on the land and in water
- Scale of the issue has increased in recent decades as fisheries have grown and as materials used to construct fishing gear have evolved
- Efforts to manage ALDFG in MA are hampered by previous law



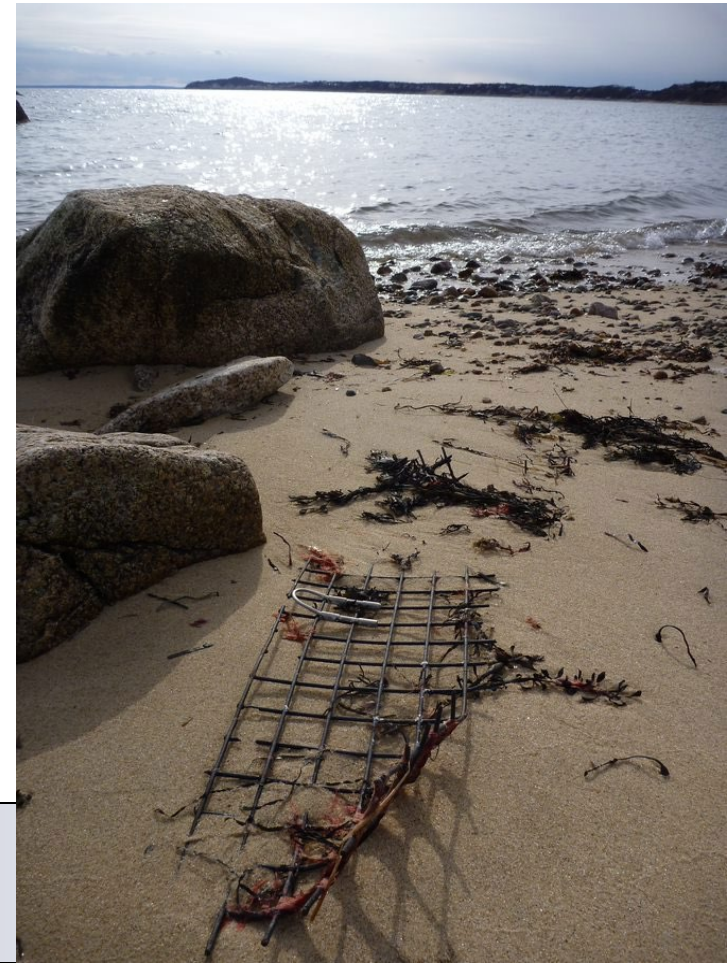
Massachusetts Derelict Gear Task Force

- Formed in July of 2022
- Purpose: Study the issue of ALDFG in Massachusetts waters and to develop solutions for the removal of such gear
- Comprised of members from a broad cross section of stakeholders with experience in commercial fishing, fisheries policy and management, law enforcement, conservation, and derelict fishing gear research and retrieval
- Members:
 - **Bob Glenn** (Chair), Deputy Director, Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries
 - **Jared Silva**, Senior Policy Analyst, Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries
 - **David Chosid**, Marine Fisheries Biologist, Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries
 - **Julia Kaplan**, Environmental Analyst, Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries
 - **Tori LaBate**, Assistant General Counsel, Massachusetts Department of Fish and Game
 - **Chris Baker**, Major, Massachusetts Environmental Police
 - **Laura Ludwig**, Manager of Marine Debris and Plastics Program, Provincetown Center for Coastal Studies
 - **Beth Casoni**, Executive Director, Massachusetts Lobstermen's Association
 - **Raymond Kane**, Outreach Coordinator for the Cape Cod Commercial Fishermen's Alliance and Chairman of the Massachusetts Marine Fisheries Advisory Commission.
 - **Arthur Sawyer**, Commercial Fisherman/President, Massachusetts Lobstermen's Association and member of the Massachusetts Marine Fisheries Advisory Commission

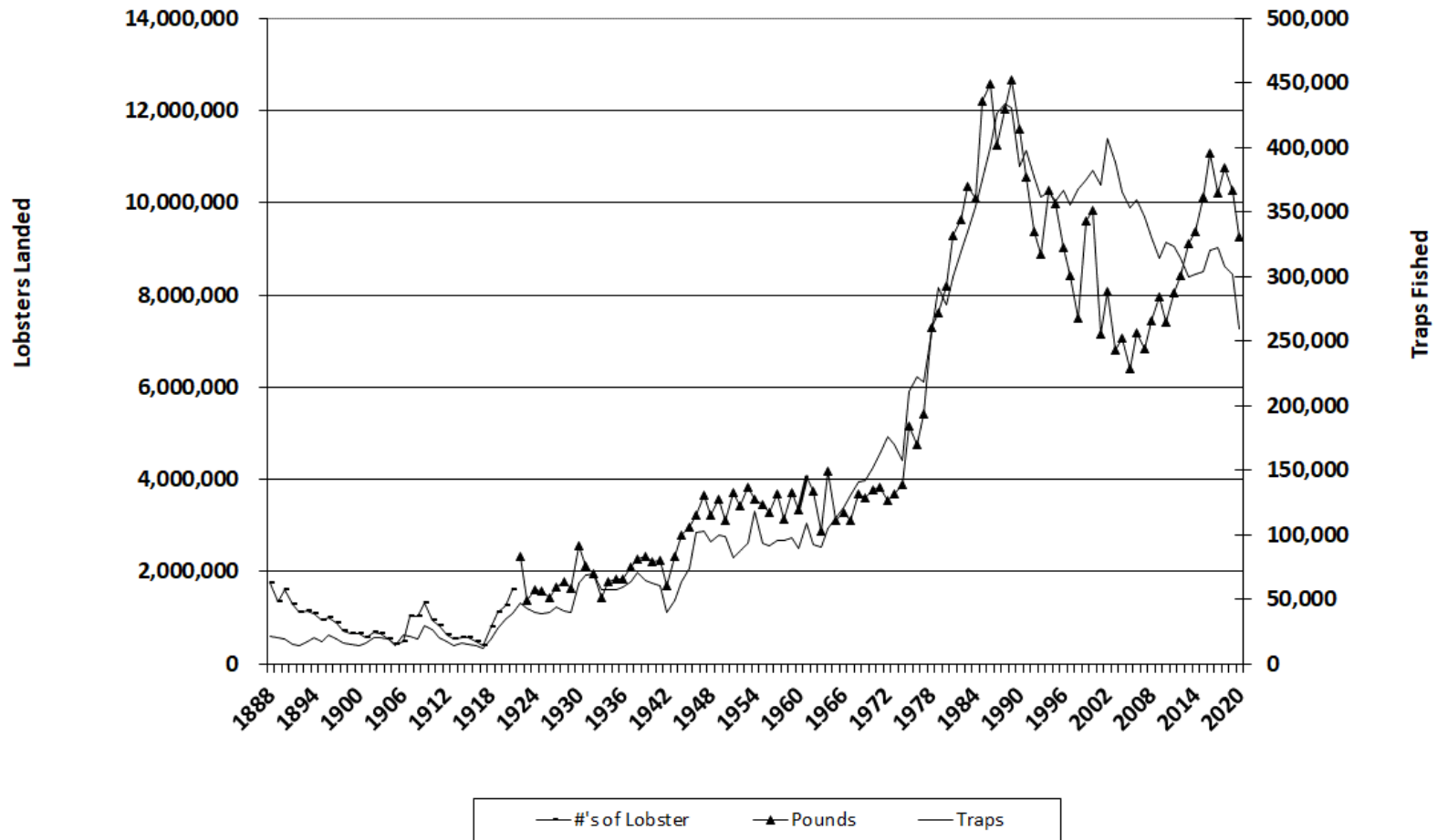


Why has ALDFG Become Such an Issue?

- Scale of trap/pot fisheries in MA have increased
- Advancements in material used to construct gear
 - More durable
 - Persist in the environment



Why has ALDFG Become Such an Issue?



July 11, 2025

Division of Marine Fisheries

Slide 5



Why has ALDFG Become Such an Issue?

- Scale of trap/pot fisheries in 2019
 - Commercial Lobster = ~ 250,000
 - Commercial Whelk = ~ 12,000
 - Commercial Fish Pot = ~ 4,500
 - Recreational Lobster = ~ 18,500*
- DMF survey work indicates fishers lose between 7% and 10% of their gear annually
- ALDFG compounds as more gear is lost annually and gear previously lost persists indefinitely



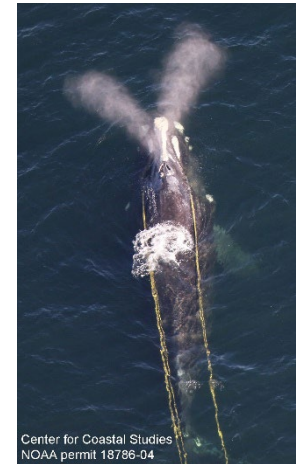
Why has ALDFG Become Such an Issue?

- Advancements in plastics and co-polymers have led to widescale use in gear construction
- Historically.....
 - Traps were made of wood
 - Rope was made of jute
 - These materials were biodegradable
- Modern Fishery
 - Traps are made of polyvinyl coated steel mesh
 - Rope of made of polyethylene and polypropylene
 - Materials not biodegradable
- Empirical evidence suggests these material can persist in the marine environment for greater than a decade



Impacts of ALDFG to Marine Environment

- Ghost fishing – occurs when abandoned traps continue to catch and kill lobsters, crabs, and fish
 - Can impact stock size and reproductive capacity
 - Can negatively affect landings and net revenue
- Ecosystem Impacts
 - Can damage sensitive habitats such as eel grass and corals
 - Generates microplastic debris as it breaks down in the ocean
- Entanglement Risk to Protected Species
 - Buoyed ALDFG can entangle whales and sea turtles
 - Dilutes effectiveness of risk reduction measures the industry undertakes to protect NARW's
 - Requires DMF to run costly and labor-intensive gear retrieval program



July 11, 2025

Division of Marine Fisheries

Impacts of ALDFG to Marine Environment

- Navigation Hazard/ Gear Conflict
 - Buoyed ALDFG poses a navigation hazards to boaters who get ropes caught in their propeller.
 - Un-buoyed ALDFG cause gear conflict issues with mobile gear fishers who inadvertently tow their nets/dredge into ALDFG on the ocean floor
 - Both things can cause a safety risk to the mariner
 - Both things can cause damage to vessels and gear



Impacts of ALDFG on Shore

- Public Nuisance/Public Safety
 - Large amounts of ALDFG wash up on shore
 - Occurs especially after large storms
 - Most of the gear that washes up is severely damaged
 - Litter and “eye-soar” issue
 - Management issue for municipalities and property owners
 - Creates a safety issue for unknowing beachgoers who step on fragments of corroding wire mesh panels



Other Issues with ALDFG

- Removal/Disposal

- Under current MA law ALDFG (even damaged and non-functional) are considered personal property
- Technically cannot be disposed of without notifying the owners and giving them 60 days to claim it.
- Costly and logistically difficult to remove and transport
 - Large quantities often require heavy equipment and large trucks to transport
 - Often wash up in remote and logistically difficult areas to access
 - Gear lost on the sea floor require special sonar equipment and grappling gear to retrieve
- Difficult to dispose/re-purpose
 - Many municipal landfills will not except ALDFG
 - Damage and deterioration often prevent salvage and re-purposing



Statement of the Problem

- Issues that ALDFG cause are numerous and well understood
- There is strong interest in addressing the problem
 - DMF/MEP have been working on this for decades
 - Municipalities
 - Conservation Groups
 - Commercial Fishermen
- Previous state law state law prevents the efficient management of ALDFG



Law Amended to Enhance Clean Up of Derelict Fishing Gear

- December 2024 – MA Legislature amended state law
 - Efficient and timely removal of derelict fishing gear not possible
- DMF now has the authority to regulate removal and disposal of derelict fishing gear



Statutory Changes

- G.L. c. 130 § 31
- No person shall, without the consent of the owner, take, use, destroy, injure or molest ~~a weir, pound net, fish trap, seine, set net or lobster or crab pot or other fishing gear, or a fish car or other contrivance used for the purpose of storing fish, including any such fishing gear which is swept ashore by storm or tide or other natural causes and deposited upon the shore, beaches or flats, whether public or private, or take fish therefrom.~~ fishing gear.

Notwithstanding, the Division of Marine Fisheries, with the approval of the Marine Fisheries Advisory Commission and the Department of Fish and Game, shall promulgate regulations that may authorize or permit the removal of fishing gear debris from the waters under the jurisdiction of the Commonwealth and the adjacent coastal shoreline. Fishing gear debris collected under the Division authority shall not be subject to the G.L. c. 134.



Statutory Changes

- G.L. c. 130 § 32

- ~~The owner of any fishing gear mentioned in section thirty one which is swept ashore by storm or tide or other natural causes and deposited upon the shore, beaches or flats, whether public or private, may recover the same within thirty days from the time of such deposit without liability for trespass; provided, that such owner in so doing does not commit any unreasonable or wanton injury to the property whereupon such fishing gear is deposited. In the event such fishing gear shall not be so recovered within such period or recovered by other legal means within sixty days it shall enure to the riparian owner of such shore, beach or flat in the manner provided in chapter one hundred and thirty four.~~



Fishing Gear vs. Fishing Gear Debris

- Statutory Changes to G.L. c. 130 § 1
- Distinguishing Fish Gear from Fishing Gear Debris
 - “Fishing gear”, a trap, net, fish car, or other contrivance that is: **intact**; functions as it is intended to take, hold, or capture fish; and is maintained in the water during the **open season**.
 - “Fishing gear” has value to owner
 - “Fishing gear debris”, a trap, net, fish car, or other contrivance that is: **not intact**; does not function as it is intended to take, hold, or capture fish; or is maintained in the water during a **closed season**.
 - “Fishing gear debris” has no value to the owner



Regulatory Framework

- Defining “intact” commercial fishing gear
 - (1) For a commercial trap to constitute intact fishing gear, it shall have at least three of the following elements:
 - (a) Buoy that is marked as set forth by 4.13.
 - (b) Buoy line that complies with marking and modification requirements set forth by 12.06.
 - (c) Current years’ trap tag associated with a valid current years’ fishing permit set forth by 6.31.
 - (d) Trap gear configuration requirements set forth by 6.02. (e.g. 6 sides, escape vents, ghost panels)
- “Intact” definition ensures
 - Owner is identifiable
 - Trap has all the elements that make it functional
 - Buoy line is identifiable to the fishery



Regulatory Framework to Permit and Regulate Fishing Gear Debris Clean up

1. Provide a blanket year-round authorization to any person or organization to remove and dispose of fishing gear debris found on the shoreline.
2. Authorize DMF and the Massachusetts Environmental Police (MEP) to remove and dispose of fishing gear debris found in the water.
3. Allow proponents to apply for a Special Project Permit to authorize the removal and disposal of fishing gear debris found in the water. Applications will require proponents submit a detailed scope of work. Authorizations will be granted at the discretion of DMF with each application being evaluated based on: (a) expertise of the applicant; (b) likelihood of success; and (c) ability to avoid gear and user group conflicts. Proposals that would occur during seasons closed to fixed gear fishing would be given priority.
4. Allow mobile gear vessels operating in state waters to bring ashore and dispose of fishing gear debris obtained incidental to their fishing operation. The molesting of fixed fishing gear will remain strictly prohibited.



DMF seeking public comment on best practices for the handling of fishing gear debris

1. While it will not be mandatory to return the fishing gear debris to its prior owner, the practice will be encouraged in instances when the fishing gear debris is mostly intact, identifiable, and potentially salvageable.
2. Fishing gear debris shall be disposed of lawfully. In instances when the fishing gear debris is salvageable it may be repurposed or resold.
3. There is a significant need to create a network to accommodate the disposal of fishing gear debris. This includes funding gear dumpsters at ports, working with municipalities to accommodate disposal (e.g., transfer stations), and connecting clean-up efforts with entities capable of disposing of or salvaging the fishing gear debris.



Questions



July 11, 2025

Division of Marine Fisheries

Slide 20



Commercial Fisheries Commission (CFC) Focus Group on Offshore Wind

Meeting 1 | April 30, 2025 | 3 –4 PM

Draft Key Takeaways Summary

Focus Group Participants:

CFC Members: Alison Brizius (co-chair), Dan McKiernan (co-chair), Gordon Carr, Hollie Emery, Katie Almeida, Ed Barrett, *Jackie Odell (not present)*

Agency Staff: Brad Schondelmeier, Bradlie Morgan, Jared Silva, Todd Callaghan

Facilitation: Pat Field, Abby Fullem

Actions

- Agency staff: Draft potential options for the CFC’s approach to engaging with offshore wind. Share draft with focus group for review prior to sharing with the full CFC.
- Brad: Share list of offshore wind projects and their status from New England through the Mid-Atlantic. Include: permits, construction, PPA status.

Key Takeaways and Recommendations

- The focus group recommends that the **CFC interface with the MA Fisheries Working Group on Offshore Wind (FWG)** in the following fashion:
 - The FWG will work “in the weeds” on specific projects.
 - The CFC will work to pick up issues raised at the FWG, think about them at a higher policy level, and make recommendations where applicable.
 - CFC meetings should be held a few weeks after FWG meetings so CFC members can discuss the high-level outcomes and potential next steps.
 - The CFC will help identify agenda topics for the FWG.
- The CFC Focus Group recommends that the CFC use this federal pause on development to improve processes that it believes were not sufficiently inclusive of fishermen. The CFC wants to be proactive and recommend ways to better incorporate the perspectives and influence of the commercial fishing industry into development, especially when (or if) offshore development progresses.
- The focus group identified four potential actions for the CFC:
 - 1) **Learn from constructed projects:** Develop a method to track actual effects offshore wind development on fishing and fishermen in and around existing arrays and use such evidence to improve layouts, construction practices, among others.
 - *Potential Output: Recommendations for improved monitoring, design, construction and operation practices.*
 - 2) **Review planning and permitting processes** (including Power Purchase Agreement negotiations) and identify where key state leverage points such as CZM review and PPAs can involve fishermen more effectively and directly and be used to generate monies

for research and/or resilience for the fishing community (i.e., similar to how NY and NJ have done).

- *Potential Output: Recommended policies and practices to the Legislature and/or Governor and agencies*

3) **Improve economic and compensatory mitigation analyses** to better reflect the actual financial impacts on fishing, including shoreside services, and re-evaluate assumptions for data (e.g., multipliers, that fishermen will continue fishing).

- *Potential Output: Guidelines for the improved analysis of economic impacts from OSW on fishing.*

4) **Share input on the Regional Fund Administrator's claims development process** to provide input on how the process is designed (within the scope and schedule of that regional effort).

- *Potential Output: Share input with the Regional Fund Administrator on key design elements of a regional compensatory mitigation framework.*

- The focus group discussed the fact that the CFC is **legislatively mandated but not funded**. The focus group recommends working this year without additional funding for studies and technical consultants, producing the required annual report at the end of the calendar year, and making a meaningful budget request to the legislature to support specific and necessary work next year (the request being made in January for FY27 beginning July 2026).

OSW Focus Group

Recommendations for Commission Consideration

CFC and FWG coordination

- The focus group recommends that the **CFC interface with the MA Fisheries Working Group on Offshore Wind (FWG)** in the following fashion:
 - The FWG will work “in the weeds” on specific projects.
 - The CFC will work to pick up issues raised at the FWG, think about them at a higher policy level, and make recommendations where applicable.
 - CFC meetings should be held a few weeks after FWG meetings so CFC members can discuss the high-level outcomes and potential next steps.
 - The CFC will help identify agenda topics for the FWG.

Potential Action #1

- **Learn from constructed projects:** Develop a method to track actual effects offshore wind development on fishing and fishermen in and around existing arrays and use such evidence to improve layouts, construction practices, among others.
 - *Potential Output: Recommendations for improved monitoring, design, construction and operation practices.*

Potential Action #2

- **Review planning and permitting processes** (including Power Purchase Agreement negotiations) and identify where key state leverage points such as CZM review and PPAs can involve fishermen more effectively and directly and be used to generate monies for research and/or resilience for the fishing community (i.e., similar to how NY and NJ have done).
 - *Potential Output: Recommended policies and practices to the Legislature and/or Governor and agencies*

Potential Action #3

- **Improve economic and compensatory mitigation analyses** to better reflect the actual financial impacts on fishing, including shoreside services, and re-evaluate assumptions for data (e.g., multipliers, that fishermen will continue fishing).
 - *Potential Output: Guidelines for the improved analysis of economic impacts from OSW on fishing.*

Potential Action #4

- **Share input on the Regional Fund Administrator's claims development process** to provide input on how the process is designed (within the scope and schedule of that regional effort).
 - *Potential Output: Share input with the Regional Fund Administrator on key design elements of a regional compensatory mitigation framework.*

Overall Resource Recommendation

- The focus group discussed the fact that the CFC is **legislatively mandated but not funded**. The focus group recommends working this year without additional funding for studies and technical consultants, producing the required annual report at the end of the calendar year, and making a meaningful budget request to the legislature to support specific and necessary work next year (the request being made in January for FY27 beginning July 2026).