

Sea Urchin Zone Council Meeting January 7, 2016 in Augusta, ME

DMR staff: Trisha Cheney, Carl Wilson, Maggie Hunter, Robert Russell, Marilyn Lash, Les White, Patrick Keliher and Rene Cloutier.

SUZC members: Teresa Johnson, Joe Leask, Steve Eddy, Tracey Sawtelle, Mark Nickerson, Chuon Muth and Dean Norris, Larry Harris, Atchan Tamaki, and Chuon Muth.

SUZC members not present: Jeff Edwards and Duane Carver.

Public: Danny Jodway, Danny Fitzsimmons, Paul Cox, Bill Sutter, Jimmy Ackley, Alice Ackley, Chris Leighton, Bill Dandy, Adam Johns, Jim Campbell, Jim Taylor, Tony Fitch, Brian Preney, Jim Wadsworth, Stephen Warner, Marilyn Lash, Jim Ackley, Alice Ackley, Chenda Dour and Yarann Im.

Meeting commenced at 1pm

Introductions – Council & Audience

J. Leask: A long time ago Bill introduced us to Roberts Rules of Order. It is a good guideline for letting everyone have the chance to speak. While the majority rules at these meetings, if you show up you will be heard. Best if council goes through one issue at a time. I have been at these meetings for over 20 years and sometimes one issue can rule the day. At this meeting, the hot issue is license transfers and we will get to that. We have an agenda; we will go item by item. First item is approval of the last meetings minutes.

Approval of last minutes

T. Sawtelle motioned to approve, seconded by C. Richardson. *Motion passed.*

DMR Updates – Landings & Survey Data (Slides in Appendix A)

Hi Maggie – I am just working up the minutes and wanted to run them by you to make sure I accurately captured all the information that you conveyed. I did have my recorder on at this point and wasn't able to take minutes on my computer, so I am going from written notes. Please review and make any edits as you see fit. Thanks!

DMR Updates – Landings & Survey Data (Slides in Appendix A)

M. Hunter: Recently, landings have been around 2 million pounds. The price was highest in 2012-13 season, which was \$3/lb., with the past two seasons being the 2 next best. The value of the fishery is around \$5 million/year. While the landings have been down, the-high prices has helped and is holding steady. When looking at the landings by month, last year was an odd weather year with strong catches in December, down in January, way down in February and then an uptick in March where some of that was made up. When the scallop season closed in Cobscook, it looks like folks switched back to urchin fishing in March last year.

D. Norris: The price bumped up last year in March too.

M. Hunter: While we don't have December landings for this current season as they have until Jan 10 to report, the poundage this season compared to last season is down for September and October, but up for November. Price was down for September and November, but up in October compared to last year. For active harvesters, overall we saw an increase in 2014-15 season (224) compared to the season before (204). This could be due to scalloping as that can influence participation.

J. Leask: How many total licenses were issued?

T. Cheney: 317 in 2014.

M. Hunter: For the survey, we have been conducting it since 2001. The survey's biomass ticked up the last couple of years, however there is a lot of variability and this may not be significant.

D. Norris: What sizes are you looking at?

M. Hunter: All sizes. This is measured in weight, so while smalls are included, they don't account for much.

D. Norris: What are the error bars on your graphs?

M. Hunter: It is a measure of the variability about the mean. It is not the same as a confidence interval.

A. Johns: Are you diving down to the Isle of Shoals?

R. Russell: We surveyed the whole state two years ago, which included York Harbor and Kittery Point. We haven't been to the Isle of Shoals in a while.

A. Johns: About 5 years ago I saw a whole lot of babies around Cape Neddick. Went back there this year and they were gone. Is there anything south for biomass?

R. Russell: A little in York Harbor, but it is very low.

A. Johns: There is nothing there. It worries me. If there was any biomass whatsoever, crabs must have eaten everything. As far as getting something going for increasing the biomass, we gotta rethink things.

J. Wadsworth: Jonah crabs or green crabs?

A. Johns: Jonah. The green crabs are gone because there are no mussels left. We got a good thing going with the Cat ledges Project. But we gotta increase the biomass. There is a possibility of them coming back as the crabs are gone. If things are coming back at all, we should close them as not viable for diving.

M. Hunter: Want to put a trend line on this survey biomass index graph to show that things are relatively stable.

T. Sawtelle: Looks like it is going up a bit.

D. Norris: If it goes up again it would be three years in a row.

M. Hunter: I have not presented information on exploitation rates before, but basically we plot the landings that are removed against the survey index. Zone 2 has been tracking down, which is what we want – it goes down if the survey index is higher and landings removals are lower and we want that if we want to rebuild, we have to keep our landings low. For Zone 1, it went down a lot when we initially went to 10 days, but recently went up when we increased the season to 15 days. However it went down last year which is good.

D. Norris: Why?

M. Hunter: It is probably because our survey index went up and the landings remained the same.

J. Campbell: What is the difference between available biomass and what we are taking?

M. Hunter: I don't have that, but I can calculate it. It depends on a lower limit of density as not all urchins are commercially exploitable. It is hard to define from the survey whether a m^2 is exploitable.

D. Norris: 1 urchin per m^2 is worth it to me.

M. Hunter: Interesting.

J. Campbell: Any changes in the environment?

M. Hunter: The water is warmer and we have seen some die offs [Frenchman's Bay].

J. Campbell: I am seeing them in different areas – in the eel grass and on the mud.

A. Johns: We are seeing urchins outside that feed inside. You disturb all the baby urchins on the bottom, which draggers do, after they have moved on in the last Zone 1 river. I would like to pick days. This is a buyers' market now. We got to buy the draggers out. We gotta keep this fishery alive.

T. Sawtelle: How many draggers are left in your Zone [1]?

A. Johns: Seven.

T. Sawtelle: How many draggers are in Casco Bay? [None] It is depleted now. The only place where they are coming back is where there are draggers.

A. Johns: Sheepscot is gone.

T. Sawtelle: Draggers can't get everything.

J. Leask: For twenty years we have had this diver vs. dragger conversation. Let's move on as we are not going to solve this one tonight.

D. Fitzsimmons: Our area is coming back [Lubec].

J. Leask: We won't be able to settle this here. We know for sure that draggers are a part of Maine. You have got to look at the bigger picture in an area; what boats are there and how they are working. Trish has spoken before about trying to better manage the industry for years. But I don't want to get into that today.

D. Fitzsimmons: Off Quoddy Head where the divers work it is depleted. In the bay where is it mostly drag, it is coming back.

M. Hunter: At a meeting in Bangor a couple of years ago a guy spoke to me about the scallop [rotational] closures and that he saw an increase in urchins in them. For scallops, Zone 2 is under a [Rotational Management Plan](#) where 1/3 of the areas are open while the others are closed to rebuild. The blue areas in this slide were closed for two years and reopened last season. So, I looked at our survey results for urchin biomass before and after the closure. While most areas did not have enough sites to draw conclusions, there was a decline in Frenchman's Bay, which we think was due to a die off. But we did see a significant increase in the survey results in the [Little Kennebec/Englishman Bay Rotational Area](#). So, we are recommending picking one of the areas [in the third rotation – PINK Areas] that will be closed for the next two years for scallop fishing and also closing it for 2 years to urchins and survey the heck out of it. I ran the urchin landings for the 2013-14 season and Machias has the most landings and also the most number of people impacted if the area were to be closed. The idea is that if closed to scallop fishing, we need to also think about closing one of the areas for urchins to evaluate it.

D. Norris: If closing an area for two years, we run the risk that the reefs will be loaded up with muffins.

M. Hunter: I would suggest looking an area to close that has a lot of small urchins in it.

D. Norris: The Machias Area would also include Little Machias – that is a good spot.

J. Leask: You should really look into those numbers as that is a large amount of landings for a few guys.

T. Fitch: Don't you need to study the impact of urchin dragging first?

M. Hunter: We are not trying to get at the impacts of scallop fishing on urchins.

T. Fitch: Are you proposing stopping scallop fishing?

M. Hunter: No, trying to test the benefit of having no dragging in the area on urchins.

J. Ackley: The urchin drag and the scallop drag are totally different gear. Scallops drags can go up and over bottom. Not so much trying to put scallop draggers out of business. I just don't think you can get at urchins with a scallop drag.

J. Wadsworth: How heavy is an urchin drag?

T. Sawtelle: I can lift my urchin drag. My scallop drag is 500-700 lbs.

J. Ackley: You need a heavier drag because of the tide. You are digging the bottom for scallops, tickling the bottom for urchins.

J. Campbell: Why are you considering this?

M. Hunter: Several scientists have suggested that we manage urchins by Rotational Management. So, this would test that.

T. Sawtelle: Do some of these places have any lobster bottom?

M. Hunter: Probably.

T. Sawtelle: Because a lot of people for years when they get urchins in there traps they dump them on the floor and break them. Maybe you should close to lobsterman too.

J. Campbell: If a study is going to be done, using urchin research money I assume, then do it specifically on urchins.

M. Hunter: WE have done that, but any changes can be confounded by scallop dragging.

J. Campbell: It's all bad. We don't need to spend money to figure this out.

D. Norris: I think this is pretty simple. It is just an urchin closure that happens to be a scallop closure.

M. Hunter: We did it for Whiting & Dennys Bays (WDB) and we overshot it, it was closed for three years and the urchins got, too abundant, too big and there was roe was poor. We have tried this before.

J. Leighton: I think we have too many closures already. We don't need anymore. We got Limited Access Area and the seven tote limit.

T. Sawtelle: I think every time there is a closure, when it opens it drives everybody into this one spot. It takes a beating for a year because everybody can't go into the other places. And what have you accomplished? Everything gets driven back to being worse than it was in the first place. They are really cleaning up the bottom – how is everything going to come back? It makes no sense whatsoever. We see how that is in Cobscook all the time. No one can fish anywhere else because it is closed. You drive everybody into one particular spot, like herding cattle so you know where everyone is and then it give you the opportunity to say there are too many boats there and you will have to close it down. Nobody knows how much biomass there is for any species in this state. States got 2500 miles of coastline, something like that. How much area are you surveying? What is the little tiny fraction of a percent that you have got? Nobody has any idea what is on bottom. Nobody wants to overfish any species.

J. Leask: Some better balance needs to be struck.

B. Sutter: If you look at the figures up there, if you divide the number of harvesters by the number of pounds there is not a big difference between any of those [rotational areas]. If you look at the statistics that you showed earlier, the average landings over the past 10 years has remained unchanged. If you go to a closure thing, it is one thing if you take a small area and close it to do a study. But it is another thing if you take one of these areas [scallop rotational areas] and close it to urchining and scalloping, all you are doing is taking the people who fished there on a regular basis and putting them over with other people in another area

and depleting the other areas. The other thing that occurred to me over time with urchins is that the level of our management is too large. It would benefit from finer scale of management. Bays, reefs ledges – small areas; if too many people show up to fish that area it makes a big impact. So, if you can keep them spread out more there will be less impact on the fine scale areas. Unless you want to get into finer scale management, which is the only thing that will really work for urchins, given the randomness of where people go. The rotational closures for urchins are under the older scheme of management that we have; it is probably not a good idea.

B. Preney: I am in support of what Tracey said. The rotational management - you get this area that has been closed down, when it reopens everyone jumps in and cleans it out. It kinda works for scallops as they are mobile and can swim in. They are not something that is dependent on the floor, the flora and fauna. With urchins, you go in there and you wipe a place down to a low level, we don't know how fast that phase change will come in and it will never grow back. WE have places all over the coast of Maine that are not coming back and it has absolutely nothing to do with harvesting. It is because they were taken down to an unacceptably low level and it will never have a chance. Maybe at some point nature will have a huge seed set and take over again, but none of us in this room have any idea when that is going to happen. The rotational program has worked in the scallop industry, but I hope we can put the nail in the coffin and never do it in urchins because you will kill places.

T. Fitch: Also, the one thing that people don't think about with closures of any kind or zones, some of us have wives and kids at home and we have no interest in travelling and living in hotels. When you put the Zone line in in Penobscot Bay, you forced me to travel across the bay from Rockland in all kinds of weather. If you close an area like Vinalhaven, that is really not fair. In terms of the Zone 1 and 2 line, we need to think about that. The line started because we totally killed it down south and the only active [Zone 1] fishery is in Muscongus Bay to Owls Head. Does it make sense to keep these two zones in the interest of spreading things out. Have people fish where they want, where they live. Maybe increase the Zone 1 days and down their totes and maybe down the Zone 2 days and up there totes to even it all out. I don't have an interest in going to Lubec; I want to stay home with my family.

M. Hunter: Personally, I think it [Zone lines] has outlived its usefulness. I am sure the Zone 1 guys agree.

J. Campbell: I want to address the closures. I am a worm digger and we had a gentlemen's agreement with the Brunswick clam diggers not to dig the mud flats up so they closed it down to worm and clam digging all together and everyone stayed out of it. It was all glorious. The day they opened it up there was 50 worm diggers and 50 clam diggers and by the time it was done it looked like a cow field. Everyone got pushed in to one spot. It was a horror show to see this many people show up. Be aware, the more they close us in, the more pressure there will be on those certain areas. If you could have seen what they had done to that flat, it was the first time I had seen something like that. It does happen. We call that the fishing mentality.

M. Hunter: it's a good lesson for us.

T. Sawtelle: There was only ever 8-10 people that ever fished the Whiting River until it was closed. When they reopened that we have 50-60 draggers and divers and there was no limit and everyone went and got piles and pile of totes. Nobody got any price.

M. Hunter: I think we have learned our lesson from that.

T. Sawtelle: I know, but when you are told something is wrong, it is like you have to go and do it anyways to be proven it was wrong.

DMR Updates – Management Recommendations [Appendix B for T. Cheney's Slides'

T. Cheney: So, to follow up with Maggie's presentation, these are our preliminary management recommendation based on the scientific advice. For Zone 1 we wish to recommend a status quo season of 15 days and 12 totes and for Zone 2 with 38 days and 7 totes again. We will be rolling out the swipe card system to allow us to accurately track landings so we have that information for these meetings. We want to propose the status quo like we did last year so we can ensure that the system works effectively and we work out the kinks before we consider anything above and beyond the set season structure that we have right now. However, we have been very clear that the management measures that we have put in up to now are not enough to rebuild the fishery, just stop the decline. We have seemed to stop the decline with the tote limit and culling on bottom, but they are not measures that are meant to rebuild. If the resource is kept at a level of low productivity, there is a very likely chance that the stock could eventually collapse due to biological or environmental factors. So, it is up to this council and industry to decide what you want to do for the long term. At the last council meeting we handed out some management recommendations that included ideas to be

debated and discussed, including huge management overhauls. I was hoping that after this first year of swipe card, we could eventually allow the ability for harvesters to pick their own days. Picking days would allow for a little finer scale management at the reef level which Bill was referring to as it will allow people to harvest a reef and move around as you would not be restricted to the same areas as over and over due to having to fish on fixed days in bad weather, thus depleting them. You could fish on better days and fish based on the market. We do understand that this would have to be closely coordinated with the processors as they can send trucks Downeast every day. There would have to be something like three set days in which you could fish and much more coordination between industry on making sure you have a place to sell your product at the end of the day. The swipe card system could also facilitate a Total Allowable Catch (TAC) for the fishery. We have providing advice that we need to try to bring landings down to around 1 million pounds or even keeping the level of harvest that we have now. With the swipe cards we could track that, when the catch comes in, the value and when the processors need it the most and gear our seasons around that. Having a TAC could ensure that we don't keep having these landings overruns. We have been trying to get to a 1 million pound target, but over the past couple of years we have been landing around 2 million pounds, and at that level you are not going to see a huge amount of rebuilding. We have discussed the elimination of the zone, however, that is a legislative item and we will have to wait until the next session next year and we wouldn't be able to put that into place until the season after that. We talked a bit about conservation closures and the fact that there are large conservation closures in the scallop fishery right now. If this industry decides that they do want to take that step we would suggest doing it in an area that has no scalloping activity. There has also been discussion about owner operator. This is also a legislative item that if we move forward it would have to be next year, with the idea of the person behind the wheel would be more responsible for their actions and have better stewardship in the resource. This would only pertain to draggers. And then there is the idea of the overall season; do you want to compact it more by eliminating the early and late seasons and just having one season, possibly elimination of the September fishery because the roe and quality is really poor or switching your season to later. In the past we have discussed the merit of an escape panel on the back of the drag as well as decreasing the tolerance of culled urchins from 20% to 10%. These are all options for the council and this industry to consider in an effort to begin rebuilding the biomass and I wanted to put everything here so you can have an informed discussion. Many of these items are in the FMP management Recommendation document [Appendix C].

2016-17 Season Discussion

T. Sawtelle: If you are going to discuss getting rid of zones you should send a letter to everybody that has a license.

J. Leask: Any of these items will have to be filtered through the FMP. So, status quo for this season, so let's keep this in mind. There has been a lot of talk in Zone 1 of changing the season drastically. This is something that can happen when we get to the season setting. We have the authority to do this. We also have the Commissioner here to talk to us about the issue of license transfer. I know it was not mentioned there, but I know it is important to a lot of people. Amongst the council are there any comments about what Trish just said?

A. Johns: What about transferable quota?

J. Leask: ITQ [Individual Transferable Quota]? Keep in mind that if you want to learn about ITQ or catch shares it is a system that government that was started in the great lakes in the 1970s and they tried to do it with their fish. There are arguments for it and arguments against it. Look up Catch shares on [Wikipedia](http://en.wikipedia.org) and it will tell you everything you need to know, about the history, the pluses and minuses. I am going to remind us that we are a state run fishery; we don't have the feds looking over our shoulder. We do catch shares for groundfish as you and you and I have talked about it.

A. Johns: We can't do it at a state level?

J. Leask: No, Trish just made it clear that that is something that is on the states radar.

T. Cheney: The TAC, the idea is that the fishery have a cap.

A. Johns: I am talking about the individual.

J. Leask: ITQ is tied to a license transfer to a certain extent. A TAC is actually something that we are already under. You have 12 trays and 15 days and you already have a hard catch, a TAC.

A. Johns: There is a moratorium on licenses and I am getting older and not going to fish forever. I have had my license since day one when you didn't even need a license. I have had no luck with any of this.

J. Leask: We are all getting older. There is no getting away with that.

D. Norris: Reduced effort is built into it.

J. Leask: The fact is that we are going to have to address licenses. The fact is that right now we are on an uptick. I have seen an uptick in my area. I have talked to guys across the state and it is not everywhere.

A. Johns: A lot of us don't want to do 12 trays anymore. We would like to go back down to 7 or 8 and get more days to do it and get better quality. When the market needs them, they need them.

J. Leask: Bill will tell you it is in the details. There are details of the season that we can do here. Details of the FMP which we will iron out in subsequent meetings which is why it is good for you to show up to the meetings.

D. Norris: You are saying you want lower totes and more days to get them to boost quality?

A. Johns: Yeah.

T. Fitch: it makes sense.

A. Johns: 12 toes is a lot. You are grabbing whatever you are grabbing. We like the idea of the seven.

T. Fitch: What if we got rid of the zones and everyone gets the same amount of days. Ill throw a number out there, say 28 days.

J. Leask: We can't do that right now. As they mentioned, it is legislative.

S. Warren: Where do you fish?

T. Fitch: Zone 2

S. Warner: I am Zone 1 and we just went through 15 years of conservative our season!

J. Leask: Do you want more days?

S. Warner: yeah, but I don't want to travel to Lubec to fish them.

J. Leask: This is the slippery slope that I was talking about. We can't settle it here.

C. Muth: I would like to see a little more balance from fishing from time to time. Like from September to November increase and a slack off a little bit in December. December passed buy, we had a lot of closure pass by. We cannot get ready for a big shot of urchins at one time.

C. Dour: We have problems with that this year. I support that because we have to compete for labor with lobster processing companies. I am hoping that we eliminate the 15 days in Zone 1. Instead we can just start from September to November for an early season in Zone 1 with a 7 tote limit and have more time to work with the 7 totes to get better product, better quality and better pay and you have more time for the product can grow. And the divers don't have to kill themselves for the 12 totes from morning until night time and sometimes can't get their limit. Us as the processor it won't put so much strain on us to look for more product from elsewhere. We can have a certain amount of product from Maine from month to month instead of all this product in December. When we have a different source, we can't say no I can't take your product anymore because I have Maine product right now. Who would want to sell to us?

J. Leask: Atchan would always tell me we need a steady supply.

C. Dour: Yes, that is what we want.

J. Leask: So if I understand you correctly, you would rather have Zone 1 start later?

C. Dour: No.

C. Muth: Start at the same time and give them more days and eliminate totes. Balance the quality.

J. Leask: yes. There is the issue of quality.

C. Muth: One more thing: the overlap with scallop. I see a lot of small and low quality urchins when there is overlap because they have to do both and they are rushed and they only care about quality, they only care about 7 trays or 90 lbs. of scallops.

C. Dour: And then if you can't pay them as much as the scallops, they say I won't go, I can make more money at scallops. But how can we pay for the 7 totes of low quality urchins?

C. Muth: Many die. I see it.

J. Leask: That is a good recommendation. Trish calls it marrying or coordinating the scheduled between scallops and urchins. Tracey worked on that a bit last year.

C. Muth: Me and Chinda, we oversee 100% of our product. We need a bit more consistent supply. Plus, a lower price to get December market. If we have been chased after by the domestic market and right now they are looking for somewhere else to buy. They are looking at Russia and other places. In December they limit us to how much we can ship, how much market we can have.

J. Leask: Just before Christmas we lost our price.

C. Muth: We don't have the volume of a market share like we used to. I bet we lost 60% of our market share because we are too expensive and don't have consistent product. From this year to last year we lost 60%, at least for my market. I don't know about others.

C. Dour: Same thing.

C. Muth: I buy more days in Zone 2 than anybody out there in December. I remember one day only be buying and fishermen chase after me to buy. Over flooded. And we have to fight with the labor for lobster. Right now we don't have as much labor as we used to. We have lost 50% of our labor market alone. The fishery we have put out in December is a lot more than we need.

J. Leask: So, just so I understand, we saw for the first time in the Christmas season the price go down. It did not spike in December like it usually does. You guys had an oversupply of urchins, and it was because you lost that market share, you were not able to overload and they gave you a fixed price, and that was why there was that dip. And a labor issue.

C. Dour: The season is not spread enough to supply the product to keep our labor so we cannot keep them and they move to another place. Therefore we cannot buy the products that are being fished in December.

S. Warner: Therefore we need to maximum our value by working in conjunction with the buyers and processors.

J. Campbell: Here here!

J. Leask: That ties in to the swipe cards and the possibility of picking days. Is Rob Watts in the building?

T. Cheney: He is usually in Boothbay.

J. Leask: You mentioned the possibility of picking your days, didn't you?

C. Muth: You guys cannot pick your own days.

T. Cheney: A possibility, but not for next year.

M. Nickerson: Buyers could get ahold of us and tell us when they need them. Call us a few days ahead. If you have from September to November for early season and December through March for late season, then buyers can get ahold of us and tell us we need them. With the swipe card, give us tags. Give us a quota, then 180 trays, tags the trays.

J. Campbell: No matter what goes on, these are our buyers and they lost their share, lost their labor. We want to hear from you Mr. Tamaki.

A. Tamaki: As processors, we want good quality. When the demand is there, we want to get as much as possible. In zone 1 early in September we got 7%, it is no good at all. We cannot even process 7%. That is why I have been saying Zone 1 September is no good – we never get a high percent. Nowadays with global warming, I think the next 10 years is going to be same as this year; poor quality in Zone 1 early. The best quality is in February and March; why don't you fish those days? As a processor we want a steady supply.

M. Nickerson: you are going to have to spread it out a bit as you are going to have 26 days, you know?

A. Tamaki: We have labor issues, we have the same amount of people working, 20 people. . If we start from September to March, that is all the same people working. What happened in December, everyone jumped in and we had an oversupply.

J. Campbell: Just so you guys know, that cost us big money in Zone 1.

T. Fitch: We also had great weather in December.

A. Tamaki: One thing is good quality and the second thing is steady supply. So we try to figure out how we can do that.

M. Nickerson: We got to cut down early part of the season to get rid of the bad quality.

J. Leask: That is the next part of the agenda, so discuss next season. That is something that you guys can do as Zone 1.

B. Sutter: The way it works now if people think a tote limit and so many days you have a max you can catch in a season. That could be a little bit less, and who cares when the season is. If you have so many tags you can get them, decide how many you want and then when and make the deal in August. That is how the Alaskan crab fishery does it, you make a deal before you go catch them.

C. Muth: I have something against that. Each fishermen when they finish fisher, how many processors are they going to call. If they get a tote limit, whoever gives the high price, you guys will run to. Right now we face that already. Fishermen do not stick with one buyer, they all chase the market.

S. Warner: Buyers done show up too! It is give an take, you don't need them you don't show up.

C. Muth: If buyers don't show up, the fishermen think we are not a good buyer. So we try to serve them and serve the market as well. Say you have 15 days, 12 totes and you fish it in three days because the market wants it that is good for you, but how I am going to face the market when I need it more? How many guys will work with one buyer consistently?

T. Fitch: I sell to one buyer the entire season. Loyalty.

C. Muth: But how many guys do that? You ever see a guy weigh up the totes, and then take away the totes because of 10 cents?

T. Fitch: I don't understand what you are saying?

C. Dour: What he is saying is that some guys will pull their product from the truck after they agreed already just because another guy says hey I'll give you 10 more cents. They will go up and pull products from truck and go to another place. So many times.

T. Fitch: You have to have mutual trust to sell to one buyer and he is not going to screw you.

C. Muth: This year I had one guy call me a crook. I showed up at the Lubec pier and a guy called me a crook while I told him to wait for the other truck to come before I offer him a price. And he still called me a crook.

T. Fitch: Then you should end your relationship with the guy.

C. Muth: That is what happened! I come up to him and told him you are old enough to learn to speak better, use better words. I showed up there every day that the urchin fishery is open.

Y. Im: I see as a buyer when I am out there, the tote limit really is just a thought in your head that you have to chase. When I see people are bringing 3-4 totes with a super, high quality urchins with a high price I see that is better than someone trying to chase the 7 tote limit, where 3 totes are good, but the other 4 totes are bad, it is hard to give them a price. I think if you lower that limit so the poundage when you look at it over the whole year is not that different, it is actually less than 7 totes. So, if you decrease the tote count, it forces guys to get better quality urchins. There are guys that come in with 2-3 totes and they make over \$1000 because it is good quality urchins. So, instead of keeping that 7-12 totes, lower it and guys will go to the good fishing spots and the price will be good. Even when market is bad, if quality is very good and then the price will be good too.

M. Nickerson: Do you guys realize that we all have other jobs? We can't make a living like this. This is just a 15 day hit that is all that it is. Try to find someone to tend you for 15 days, they all got jobs. You can't make a year paycheck on this anymore. You gotta get what you can get. I am not gonna dive 7 trays.

Y. Im: We are trying to slim down the tote limit and move more days into Zone 1.

M. Nickerson: Brian [Preney] is a prime example of that. He used to come in with 7 totes of primo stuff all the time, and then here we are coming in with 12 trays of crap, and the price difference is nowhere near the same.

C. Muth: The guys with the primo stuff, I have seen them paid \$3000. The guy with the same amount of trays of bad stuff gets \$1000. This year especially, when a guy has low quality, no one wants to look at them. Why? Because the processing time takes longer to process that small, skinny urchin. Low quality urchin, nobody wants to process it because we are short on labor. Nobody wants to buy that in Japan – the price goes down 100 yen.

J. Leask: The strength of our industry is quality. It benefits you and use.

C. Muth: Yes. If we focus on quality, set a price better, processing time is shorter and everyone is happy. That is why I don't want it to overlap with scallops. When they rush for scallop and rush for urchins, no quality for what comes in. We have issues with that. I see guys swear at the buyers. Buyers drive over 300 miles for 21 or 35 totes.

C. Dour: Seven or 14 totes! For what? It is a 5 hour drive from Portland. The quality in Zone 1 the most you get is 7% urchins; to see a 14% urchin is impossible. It is a mediocre urchin.

J. Leask: When we did the tote limit, it devastated by pocket. Seven trays of top quality stuff is easy to get with two tanks. From an older diver's standpoint, I think it is great. I would like to go out, if DMR and we all agreed we could get more, I would do it. But this diving is not easy on body. It is going to take its toll over time. The tote limit has detriments, good things about it. It is what it is. Jim said it – we gotta listen to the buyers. Thank you all for coming. Four buyers in a room at one time – I can't remember the last time that happened. We gotta listen; it is a niche market, based on quality. A good quality urchin benefits everybody. There are days that we simply can't fish the weather. There is a mention of possibly picking our days, Mark mentioned with swipe cards. We can't do that here for next season. There is one more topic and it is why the Commissioner is here. As far as license transfer, I would like to provide you with the opportunity to speak. The 2016-17 season is on the table to discuss, this is the earliest we have started this discussion. We could split up into groups if you wanted and come back and expedite process.

C. Dour: One important issue I would like to discuss. We cannot compare sea urchins with shrimp, scallops or lobsters because those product you freeze it. Sea urchins, the most you can keep it in cooler for 3-4 days, cannot be froze and sold later time limited. Time is precious to us. When you make your days, we don't know when the market is good, it is all supply and demand. If one area don't have products, then the demand goes up. We have too many Maine products, then the market will have it say.

Either you ship or you don't. You don't have a choice. Everybody has to listen to the market. Even though we try to pick certain days, steady like what Mr. Tamaki said, it is the best way to go. Two day weeks, spread out, and that way we have consistent product and consistent labor and everybody can work together.

D Fitzsimmons: Since there are four buyers here, have you ever thought about putting processing Downeast? We could use jobs?

C. Muth: No.

J. Leask: There is a different dynamic in eastern part of the state. Brian spoke of why Zone 1 hasn't bounced back. But urchins are doing well Downeast. Fishing is different Downeast, there are more people hired in the fishing industry.

C. Muth: In any community, which person can stand 16 hour days. Sea urchin is different than other types of seafood we have to start to finish. The other person cannot do the other persons jobs.

D. Fitzsimmons: So you can't find the workers?

C. Muth: No, they can't stand a 16 hour day. Sea Urchin cannot finish in 8 hours.

J. Leighton: There are plenty of people down there that could work late.

C. Dour: Randy Ramsdell processed down in Machias, Sakai processed in Machias, and another one in Rockland –they all failed because of labor. Too long, time consuming, patience. We are lucky to have what we have right now. No young people want to come in, they move on, we have what we have. Nobody is younger than 42 years old. No younger people coming in.

J. Leask: We need to start to prepare for the future.

D. Norris: I spoke to a 76 year old urchin diver, a Canadian guy. It can be done.

C. Muth: Can we let the buyers pick the days and can we maintain the fishing days from September to March on so stable, not everything come in at one time because of market and labor.

J. Leask: We are the season setting in two meetings this year. So the harvesters can put together a proposal and the buyers can put together one and we can try to work it out.

C. Muth: Last year we went 5 days, this year we are at 4. Now we have issues with labor. If we can balance from September through March so we can have room for our market to pick us back up. September, October and November everybody is short of product and the price goes sky high.

J. Leighton: The quality is no good in September.

D. Norris: Zone 2 did pretty well, the numbers we got from September.

C. Muth: September, October, November we are short product. Our customers are asking for more. We don't have it. We say if you have to have it, this is how much. And they say no and go buy from Russia, Korea, China all these other areas all over the world.

J. Leask: Could each buyer make recommendation on what you would like to see for next year?

C. Muth: We want to see the catch a little bit more in September, it is a good month. October is good too. November not so good. September and October should be the same amount of catch as December. And then February and late January are not good months because of all the holidays you have already spent your money.

C. Dour: I agree with that 100%.

C. Muth: I spoke with Chinda, I spoke with Sinuon. I spoke with myself. I did not speak with Surray. All those guys like it, on board with it.

J. Leask: The gentleman in that back – are you ok with this?

Y. Im: yes.

C. Muth: He is my brother, actually.

A. Tamaki: Chun you didn't speak with me. I told you that September is a quality issue. Market wise is good, but how do you process 7% urchins?

C. Muth: Let's put it this way. Russia is bringing in 5% urchins right now. Why can they process this? I just got an email yesterday, the market went up yesterday to 5000 Yen. You know who go it? Chinda got it.

J. Leask: Chinda we are coming to you next week.

D. Norris: I think Zone 2 would be high than 7% in September.

C. Muth: Why Russia get that? Everybody jump starts the market overseas in September, because when there is demand. And everybody tries to show off their product.

J. Leask: This is one component of the swipe cards that really appeals to me. The possibility could exist that when the supply is there we could fish. You don't burn 15 days for an 8% urchin and waster money. At the first meeting in Rockland I said this, we only have so much money in the account, but there are times it is worth more. I support in Zone 1 being able to pick their days. I have suggested the idea of February and March. You could make more money in March. Last year best price of the season was the end of March. We got \$5 from Atchan in March.

C. Dour: But he has a domestic market. We don't know when the market is going to go up.

J. Leask: There was a competition price in Lubec. The picking of the days when the market is strong and would benefit you guys for your market, only so far because you need a steady supply. But if there was a glut in December, if you didn't have to absorb all those urchins, steady supply, it would have been a win-win.

C. Muth: No, that is not a win-win. We want to move days from December to somewhere else. I need a balance from September through.

J. Leask: You didn't cover December. What is your recommendation for December?

J. Wadsworth: Don't overlap!

C. Dour: Don't overlap December!

A. Johns: I have a recommendation. Everyone call Trish with your recommendations and the next meeting we can pull it all together for the next meeting. She listens and she can give us something tangible.

J. Wadsworth: What I am hearing is that there were too many urchins coming in in December. So that means that the early season and late season shouldn't be overlapping and creating a glut.

J. Leask: What I am hearing is the possibility for Zone 2 to open a few days in September. The possibility of Zone 1 not fishing in September, but Zone 1 should be the ones who make that decision and no one else. Mr. Commissioner do you have anything that you want to add?

P. Keliher: No.

C. Dour: If you shut down September, and I understand that this year the product not as good roe, how are we going to supply our overseas market? We will just have to say we have no product, the Zones closed?

J. Leask: I would like to see things flexible. I don't think they will always see 7%. We have let them have September because they have less days. However, if quality is better in Zone 2, and you need better quality, then it would make sense to do that, if industry agrees. As far as overlapping, if Zone 2 did that early season, they wouldn't go all the way through to December, that would be a sacrifice they would have to make, but they would get September, that would be a tradeoff. Zone 2 early season would have to agree to this. One more meeting will allow us to discuss this. Just ideas right now.

D. Norris: I would like to point out that there were a few years we worked in Zone 2 in September. The quality was high. We made a lot of extra money, a few thousand dollars income and we were able to supply it to the market. Had a bunch of guys who were happy. Maybe it was 11%, Maggie had the numbers.

T. Fitch: It doesn't seem that people are taking into consideration gluts in the market, quality, the weather. If everybody gets to pick their days and goes on a good weather day, that will create a glut. Also, we all know it is harder to get good quality when it is nasty.

D. Norris: The Christmas schedule is a gamble; sometimes you win, sometimes you lose.

S. Warner: You gotta work with your buyers on the picked days.

M. Nickerson: Don't even have picked days. You got the swipe card; they know when you are going.

D. Norris: You never know what the weather is going to be. That is why it is a gamble.

C. Muth: This is what happened in the past two years. Our markets warning us three years ago and now it is getting worse that we are too high.

D. Norris: Well, no one is going to agree to get paid less.

M. Nickerson: We had three days last year that they didn't want to buy our urchins.

C. Muth: All the suppliers in the US, New York sea urchins, ignored the market. They said ok, you go out there and pay \$3; they paid \$3.50 and tried to force them because of competition. That is why we lost all our market share. If they told us to pay \$3, we paid three dollars and this is what it cost to make a \$3 container price. If we go \$3.50, it is going to cost more.

J. Wadsworth: We used to pay what Japan told us to pay.

C. Muth: yes, but not no more Jim. Now we pay after the competition.

J. Wadsworth: What do you expect than!? This is what you get.

C. Muth: Right now we pay after the competition pays. If I offer him [D. Fitzsimmons], he sells to me, \$3, then someone else offers \$3.20. He says I won't sell you to – you're a prick!

D. Fitzsimmons: I never said that [chuckles].

T. Sawtelle: He called and told me that!

C. Muth: Yeah! And you know what, if one guy in the whole Maine coast pays \$5, it will only take 5 minutes and the whole Maine coast knows!

J. Leask: When I get a high price, Atchan tells me not to tell anyone.

C. Muth: In Lubec, if you pay one guy \$3 and then pay the next guy \$3.40, they are gonna call you a rip off because everybody knows in 2 minutes.

J. Leask: Like what Jim said, you got what you got.

C. Muth: Do we want to lose our market? That is what we face now. That is why we lose our labor because we are not consistent.

J. Leask: At this meeting we are not picking days. We are putting ideas on the floor. We can get calendars at the next meeting to start picking days.

T. Cheney: Maggie and I can work up and I will email a blank calendar out with the minutes to the email list and you can bring those filled out with your ideas to the next meeting. I think we can come up with a draft season at the next meeting and then we can set it in March. Do it in two parts. We need to have more input from the processors.

J. Campbell: Commissioner, would you be willing to adapt our season next year to adapt to the market. Instead of 15 and 15 [days] we could have a longer season to spread it out with tote limits. Where are you on dramatically changing our season?

P. Keliher: Yes, I mean if you are talking about lower tote limits in exchange for additional days we can talk about it. The key component of this discussion today seems to be on quality. The Department believes whole heartedly in a focus on quality.

J. Campbell: So you would be willing to look at it.

P. Keliher: As long as it was a conservation equivalency.

J. Campbell: Because we are having some issues this year in Zone 1. Want to ensure there is flexibility to revamp it and DMR would be ok with it. We need to do something different. Down in Tenants Harbor we had to take our 12 trays and split them up between five buyers so they could pay for their gas to get there. I missed a couple of days in December because the market was flooded – we need to revamp it, the whole season so it doesn't overlap, doesn't flood the market, doesn't put our remaining buyers out of business, unless we all want to sell to Mr. Tamaki. You buyers are interested in spreading the season out, right? Zone 1 early season, spread it out more.

C. Muth: We want to balance the market so price won't be so high. We want to take our markets back.

J. Campbell: We want the high price.

C. Muth: If you want a high price, then someday you are gonna be shut down.

J. Campbell: It happened to me already this year – I got shut down two days, couldn't sell an urchin. Then the next day I lost \$1.40.

C. Muth: See that is what happens.

J. Wadsworth: What did you do with them? Dump them?

J. Campbell: We need to manipulate our season around coincides with these gentleman's our markets. I lost two days this year and that is ridiculous on a 15 day season, I have weather and now I have to worry about selling them? We definitely gotta do something.

J. Leask: All the harvesters and the buyers need to come up with a schedule that works for everyone. Over years we have done well spreading out. This year we had a bottleneck, never happened before in December. If Zone 1 decides not to harvest September, then all the groups need to agree and find something that works as best as it can in respect to other zones and gear.

J. Campbell: Why can't we have a September to December season and have everybody can pick our days? That way when the market is strong everybody fishes and when the weather is bad, nobody fishes.

C. Muth: That won't work.

J. Leask: If I understand correctly about swipe cards, we have a limit on what we can do for next year.

T. Cheney: We have to roll it out and test it first.

J. Leask: So, as far as picking days, at this juncture, all that we can do is used the swipe cards next season. But we can start planning through the FMP and discussion, I am hopeful that Zone 1 should have a little more flexibility to pick their days. When you look at the bigger picture, it is a far cry from where we started. I tend this area and am watching where you guys are fishing. Zone 1 needs the Cat Ledges Pilot. The idea of a large scale area being shut down, it will push a bunch of guys from one area to another area. I watched the draggers in the west side of Vinalhaven. I own a groundfish dragger. Draggers have a tremendous impact on the bottom. Tony the reason you are seeing the urchins on the bottom is because the draggers are pushing the urchins up on the ledges where we as divers fish. The dynamics of what the DMR has to juggle right now, we are just starting to grasp it. I am seeing areas that have not had urchins for years, Maggie spoke of that that we are seeing uptick in urchin populations. You have seen it in Zone 1. When drags work a certain area they will bunch urchins up on the edge of a ledge and you will find those urchins. Sometimes when you see urchins in eel grass, it is because they can't drag up there and the urchins are moving away.

J. Wadsworth: You are talking scallop drags now?

J. Leask: I am speaking about urchin and scallop drags. Its just a fact. You cannot tow something along bottom and not have an impact. I am not against dragging; I have seen some good things about it. I am not for dragging, even though I am a dragger.

T. Fitch: Do you drag for urchins?

J. Leask: No.

T. Fitch: Can you be a licenses dragger and license diver also?

J. Leask: We have those in our industry.

T. Fitch: So I can go get a drag license?

J. Leask: Not now, we have somewhat of a moratorium. We have had new licenses issued, even though there was a moratorium, but that is a whole another rabbit trail.

T. Fitch: This whole culling on bottom, which I am for, makes sense. But how does a dragger cull on the bottom?

J. Leask: We know they don't. That is a moot point. But Tracey has mentioned things about how the adjust the bail and putting the donuts on that make a difference on bottom. We spoke a few years ago about changing the drags. That is something as an industry and as a state we are going to have to tackle, how a drag touches the bottom, because we are too good at what we do. We can touch every piece of bottom, and we are really good at doing it. Penobscot Bay is jagged edges and they know that bottom; every piece of bottom has been tilled. Electronics and knowledge.

A. John: In Casco Bay there used to be big boulders, and now it is totally flat.

J. Leask: I have watched granite boulders the size of houses in Stonington move across the area I dive.

A. John: Do you carry both licenses, diving and dragging?

J. Leask: No comment.

A. Johns: how many divers/draggers are there?

T. Cheney: There are a handful of people who hold both licenses in the state.

A. Johns: So you can fish for both?

T. Cheney: yes, it is a very small population of people that got them in the beginning and they were grandfathered in.

D. Norris: They bought the licenses in the beginning.

C. Muth: Why don't we put an exchange from divers to draggers?

T. Cheney: We tried that in the legislature a few times. It failed because the legislature worried that there would be an incentive to exchange money in order to facilitate that. There would be some under the table deal. And it may also increase effort as a latent license would become active.

C. Muth: So, you don't want to put any value on the license.

T. Cheney: That is the next discussion item and why the Commissioner is here is because the transferability.

C. Muth: Zone 1 has been 10 to 15 days for 15 years. How long will that last?

T. Cheney: Until we see an improvement.

C. Muth: Do you see any improvement?

T. Cheney: Nothing significant.

B. Preney: I believe that Zone 1 needs a break. If we keep doing what we are doing the way we are doing it with good weather we are short lived. I would like to see parity between Zone 1 and Zone 2 with trays. We can't keep having people from Zone 2 come back to Zone 1 because of the 5 tray differential. That is a lot. And I understand why they would want to. WE have taken the Header boys back the line and they deserve to be in it just like anybody, but they are an apex predator just like the rest of us. How many more of those can we take in that little tiny corner of Zone 1 before we make a significant impact on it? I like 7 trays, like you say it hurt your pocket book terribly. I think 7 is a little low; but I think 8 trays is an acceptable limit. Have Zone 2 could go up to 8 trays and Zone 1 down to 8 trays. I think there should be a parity there so that we don't have people trying to jump back and forth.

J. Leask: If someone has a calculator you could take the 8 tray reduction and see how many days you would get.

B. Preney: Exactly. And the Commissioner has talked about the conservation equivalency. I think that should be done.

J. Leask: Where does Zone 1 want to go in terms of conservation equivalency, do you want to stay at Status Quo? Do you want to harvest half of what you have right now for twice as long? Those things have got to be on the table.

S. Warner: Work with industry for when to get them the best product. I would be willing to take less in the first season if I can ensure myself that I am going to get that product because right now I am allowed to have 180 trays. And I missed three days this year – no way to make it up. So, I would take some trays off.

J. Leask: Part of the reason the Commissioner allowed the Zone 1 days to be increased was because of that weather factor.

S. Warner: I don't think the weather factor should be used as a conservation factor. It is just too arbitrary.

J. Leask: Well, Maggie does factor it into the equation when making recommendations.

S. Warner: But don't you think that is too arbitrary when you have a day and tote limit in place? You could spread that out.

J. Leask: The question would be that when you pick days, would the DMR look for a reduction in days because theoretically, people could fish all these days.

M. Hunter: Right. I would recommend that if people were able to pick their days, so they could fish all 38 or 15 days then I would recommend a lower tote limit.

S. Warner: Would you be able to come up with a limit for that?

M. Hunter: I could come up with something.

B. Preney: That is the scary part.

S. Warner: Well, what do you want Brian?

B. Preney: 8 [totes].

S. Warner: You want 8. Well why don't you let her come up with something?

B. Preney: Because it would be 2.

M. Hunter: Well, 2 and a half [joking].

B. Preney: She has said zero before.

J. Campbell: This is the first meeting she has come to the meeting and not recommended to shut us down.

J. Leask: For Zone 1 would it be safe to put down a proposal for 8 trays and a few more days?

C. Muth: How many more days?

M. Nickerson: It is 22.5 days is what it would come out to. Because how many days in Zone 1 do you really miss?

C. Richardson: 9 trays at 20 days.

J. Leask: There would be no conservation in that.

J. Campbell: Joe, how is the 7 tray limit working out in Zone 2? Has that been working out for the divers and draggers?

J. Leask: I don't want to get into that. It's a mixed review right now, but there are some strong arguments for it.

L. Harris: If you went to 8 trays it would be 33 days in Zone 2 and 22 days in Zone 1.

J. Leask: I don't think Zone 2 is on the table, but we could put that in there.

L. Harris: Well, Brian suggested parody between the two zones with the number of trays, so I just did the calculations.

C. Muth: Why are we shortening the days?

J. Leask: It was something that was thrown out there.

L. Harris: It would be the same number of trays between each Zone.

C. Muth: If fishing is good for you, you want to take the most amount of trays all at once. But for me, if I put 200 totes on the on the Bento and Tsukiji auction, I will have half of my price.

D. Norris: You would rather have more days.

C. Muth: I would rather have more days and sell 30 each day and get 1000 more yen.

D. Norris: What happens is if you go down below 36 days, so 33 days and 8 totes, it gets hard to spread the days out enough to cover their overhead. You have got to keep these guys working every week if they can or they lose their employees. I know 36 was about the lowest we could come up with, and 33 is under that.

J. Campbell: 15 works!

D. Norris: But that is because it is working for us [Zone 2].

C. Muth: I know you guys have said you have a hard time to get a boat for 15, I have a hard time to get a tender for 15 days. How about these people who process 360 days?

D. Norris: They are critical to process.

M. Nickerson: We don't have to put our days on the same days as yours and that would put us up to 50 something days.

D. Norris: I am talking Zone 2 is critical for keeping the infrastructure open. Zone 1 doesn't have enough days to keep the plants open, you see. Zone 2 has to keep the plants open. You go below days too much and it is harmful.

C. Dour: Zone 1 needs to change.

B. Sutter: There are a number of things going on here and I am trying to wrap my head around it. One we are talking about swipe cards. The other one we are talking totes and talking days. The third we are talking the entire season. It seems to me in there somewhere if you have swipe cards and a total number you can take between September and march, that comes down to a Total Allowable Catch which is what you are working on now. Isn't it easier for the swipe cards to each person and you will only get some many days and you can use then between that time period. If you have those then the harvester and processor has the flexibility to determine when you want those totes.

M. Nickerson: If you have the swipe card, you pretty much have to be on a TAC anyhow like elvers. That is the way that they keep track of it, but weight.

C. Muth: You guys want to go out there on a good day, when the market is high and fish 25 totes on a good day. How many total totes you can fish, 180? All you have is 180 totes, what happens on a good market, good weather day, you want to fish it all. How about us? I have 25 people picking that needs 25 people picking, they need at least 200 days to work. If you finish your quota then I need product to sell, where am I going to get it? I will have to go elsewhere to do it.

J. Campbell: The big issue with the DMR and picking our own days was that they couldn't police us. Ever since they came out with this cucumber license, you have to call the day before you go out. So swipe cards are definitely coming. So our only problem with taking our days is the enforcement. Now with this new call in thing with the cucumbers, you call in the day before, area you plan to fish. I think we should work on this picking our days in Zone 1 and you have a call in system. We want to work around you – if you are not buying, then we are not fishing and that is the way it should be.

C. Muth: I understand, we have issues here. We have all the overseas market against the domestic markets. We want to get enough for overseas and enough for domestic markets. December is not selling good because of that issue. We want to get enough for our overseas and he [Atchan] wants to get enough for his domestic markets.

J. Campbell: If you could pick the days that would work.

C. Muth: If you stick with me all year round and sign a contract.

J. Campbell: If you can call me up and say I want them and if he calls me up and says he wants them, then who am I going to sell to?

S. Warner: Are you going to guarantee us a price?

C. Muth: No, there is no guarantee.

S. Warner: What about a commitment to loyalty?

C. Muth: That is why this kind of thing won't work. Because nobody is loyal to anyone.

D. Norris: Issue with the swipe card is if it is total free to go when you want, everyone is going to pick the highest price on the best days. That means it will be a rough February, the plant will be completely empty of urchins, because everyone has used their card up on the high priced days and all of his workers leave. They find other jobs because they say the hell with urchins because we have gone too far with it. The usefulness of the swipe card is that it gives you flexibility to pick your days, but you cant do it for the whole season. Maybe during a week, so if there are bad weather days, the divers could make a choice and the market gets it about when it needs and the workers get their work. We have some workers for 25 years and they are saying the heck with this and finding other jobs. We don't want to make a choice that makes it even harder for these guys. Nobody new is being trained. They need steady 200 days. Swipe card could be used during a week, and it would even out the supply and increase safety. Maybe we could even go so it is during a month. But you have to have guys working each month. That is why a totally free swipe card won't work for him. And it won't work for us as fishermen in the long run.

T. Sawtelle: I don't think picking your own days is going to work, I have always said that. If I am on call all week, maybe I will work one this week, three times or one in two weeks. How long am I going to stay at that job? Who can survive like that? If they know what days will be fishing, then the employees know what days they will be there. There workers know, three days this week. They have a calendar also. This picking your own days, three people go this day, four this one and then 60 people go this day. How in the world is that supposed to work?

C. Muth: Right now the processors asking for balanced supply from the fishermen so we can a lower price and we can get more market. If we have a high price, our market will shrink smaller.

C. Dour: We have to notify the market how much we have the product, when it is coming in, if it is consistent or not. The market is not going to wait is I have to say I have to wait for my divers to go out. The market has customer too.

C. Muth: it is not just us that have urchins, you know?

C. Dour: It is not just us. And we have to deal with the wildlife (US Fish and Wildlife inspectors). Right now how many boxes we could fish over Christmas because they were not working on Christmas day. We cannot hold product many days.

J. Leask: If you had parameters like the divers could only dive Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday. Would that be possible?

C. Dour: Yes, and if they can't go on Wednesday because of weather, give them a day during that week.

C. Muth: just like last week – it was too cold and windy and everybody didn't go out.

D. Norris: Everybody can see the weather.

T. Fitch: They are looking for a consistent supply. Why can't we have a calendar with three days in zone 2, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and then Thursday and Friday in Zone 1?

C. Muth: That is too many days. We are not going to pull our truck out there for 5 days.

B. Preney: Add one more thing, we just had two Septembers in a row with really good, flat calm weather in early season in Zone 1 and everyone got their 15 days and their limits. I firmly believe that if we keep whacking Zone 1 like that it is not going to be there much longer. There saying that Zone 2 has pretty good urchins in September. I say we get rid of Zone 1 September and give it to Zone 2 and then give us most of December and spread us out the rest of the winter with 22 days, whatever Larry came up with. That way buyers will get urchins in September like they need. Some people will suffer; some people will hate it in Zone 2.

D. Norris: You get your quality you know.

B. Preney: We can do this for 3 more years or 10 more years.

J. Leask: That is the key thing.

A. Tamaki: If Zone 1 is 180 totes, Zone 2 has 260 totes. We have a swipe card. We want steady supply. That is 2 days a week with a 7 tote limit I think that will work really well. At least two days a week, that is fine.

J. Leask: You were saying last year that you wanted 5 days a week.

A. Tamaki: What I am saying is that if buyer or processors and harvesters we need to talk to each other. You want to go tomorrow, ok, and then go with 7 totes.

J. Campbell: That would fall in place once all this is in order Joe. You wouldn't go out fishing if you didn't have markets. You would call Tamaki and say hey, do you need them today before fishing. And then if he needed them, he could call you.

J. Leask: The other portion is what we are not considering if what DMR and enforcement can support. For the call in system I have to give 48 hours' notice, but you have a whole week to choose from. They have already said they can't do that because of staff resources. It has to be a constriction of a schedule. And what I am hearing from you Atchan. Consider this a schedule with two or three days, but you can pick out of those days that you could go. That would stretch out your calendar. You can't go just any day.

C. Muth: That means five different guys pick five different days that means we need to drive down 5 different days!

J. Leask: you have said that in the past you don't want to drive a truck down there 5 days a week.

T. Cheney: What he is saying is there would be three possible days, so you wouldn't have to go down all five days, the divers could pick out of those 3 set days when they want to fish.

C. Muth: ok.

J. Leask: Furthermore, somebody mentioned it – communication. You can watch the weather.

C. Muth: Let DMR pick days based on weather.

T. Cheney: That is not possible.

C. Muth: ok.

T. Sawtelle: What is wrong with Monday, Wednesday, Friday?

C. Muth: It doesn't matter, whatever three day.

J. Leask: At the next meeting we can move that, three days.

A. Tamaki: I have overseas market too. I have domestic and overseas market. Why don't you have a buying station?

C. Muth: I do, I recommend it. I can't trust people. I can't afford a buyer. We cannot afford to pay middle man. I go out and buy myself. I have people who are cheating as well. They sell for \$2 and put 2.20 on sheet. I have to be out there myself.

J. Leask: That is in your court. There is nothing that we can do about that.

C. Dour: That is why we want three days, instead of five days.

J. Leask: We have come to that point. Three days seems to be a general agreement to take to the next meeting. Weather it is pick your own days, maybe we can make that happen.

J. Campbell: Here here for the three day week!

C. Muth: Three days, what if everyone could pick their three days. What if guys pick three diff days? It will be more days for us anyways.

M. Hunter: Not for next year.

J. Leask: It is something we can discuss at subsequent meetings because we can't do it next year.

B. Sutter: When you have a daily tote limit and fixed number of days, which is what we have been living under now, there are some places in the world where there are not buyers. I am in Zone 1 and when I come in at the end of the day and put them in a pickup truck, there is not a chance for me to put them in a cooler and combine them and make one trip if there is a small tote limit, I have to make a trip every day. That is a problem.

D. Norris: Didn't that just get made illegal last year. They should be allowed to do that.

B. Sutter: We can't keep two days' worth of product. This is a problem in places where the trucks don't come every day.

J. Leask: This is a problem in both Zone 1 & Zone 2, because of the possession limit of X totes per day is the law. Because of the daily limit you are not supposed to carry two days worth of urchins.

J. Campbell: Because of this, you can't hold your urchins overnight [and get a second limit the next day]. Buyers can, but we would require a license to do that. That was an issue for me this year; I had urchins and I had no buyer and I had to truck them to Portland. The weather was easy enough that I could have just held them over night. That was my plan until I found out that I wasn't allowed to do that.

D. Norris: Only recently that's been illegal. It's a common thing to have two days' worth.

J. Campbell: Would that be a legislative thing Trish?

T. Cheney: No, it would be a major enforcement issue though.

B. Sutter: You could change it in the rule making that comes with the season. It could be done at the same time.

T. Cheney: Yes, it could be done, but I know enforcement would have a big issue with that because then it is a loop hole; how do you determine that it is two days' worth of catch and not someone landings double their limit on one day.

J. Leighton: Tag your totes.

B. Sutter: He [Chun] has an agent on the wharf and that bought them and put them in the cooler. They are not mine anymore.

T. Cheney: Then they would be under his dealer license. He is allowed to have more than daily limit.

B. Sutter: If he had say 30 totes and then he [Chun] could send a truck to pick them up, couldn't ya?

C. Muth: Yes. Let's say you fish three days, and I have agreed with the wharf that he hold it for me or have the wharf pay you. I think that should be fine.

J. Leask: Bill if I understand you correctly, it is the possession limit of X totes per day that sometimes put the constraints – Jimmy ran into that and I know some gentlemen in the Downeast harbors that are forced to drive for 3 hours each way to drop off their seven trays of urchins to be able to sell them. They are put in a position where they may have to choose what if it is stormy and a Nor'easter and snow on the ground. I had to drive in a snowstorm recently, and you have to travel is you want to fish. I was forced to drive in that snow storm to sell my urchins and it was a fishing day after that. What are my choices? Do I fish two days with of urchins and take a chance with law enforcement and say, no these are two days' worth of urchins, you can see the urchin spines are matted down on day one and you can see these urchin spines are moving on day two. And they would tell you no, you are only allowed 7 totes and I would get a ticket for holding 14 trays of urchins.

C. Muth: If this is the case, I have to put a buying station. You hold these urchins.

J. Leask: We need to work with DMR on if there is a vehicle for us that we could hold more than 7 trays at a time.

D. Norris: yes, call in.

J. Leask: Whether it is a tag system, the swipe card where you are only allowed a TAC. There is a possibility in the FMP of making that happen. Trish is there a possibility of this year, this coming season of being able to hold more than your possession limit? Or is that Legislative?

T. Cheney: No, it is regulatory. I am seeing if patrol can come down to be part of this conversation. It is my understanding that this is an issue for verifying. They cannot verify that those would be two days' worth of urchins. Any item I have talked to them about it is a loophole. How do you ensure that it is not somebody coming in with 14 totes.

D. Norris: It may be that it is such a head ache for the fishermen, such a problem dealing with rough days, stormy days, it is normal for us to have two days' worth of product. Maybe it is a situation where they have to live with an issue. And maybe it is better for them to deal with an issue than have us inconvenienced to the point that we can't even fish. As in that you can't fish that second day because you have yesterday's urchins. That is costing us money.

J. Leask: At that meeting in Ellsworth Dean there was a law enforcement official and we spoke of that. He didn't give permission to carry two days of urchins, but he said call me. Any time I have run into issues like that, Marine Patrol has been top shelf about handling situations like that. They were very clear that if you work with us we will work with you.

D. Norris: There are too many legitimate reasons to be in possession of two days' worth of many urchins.

J. Leask: There are lots of legitimate reasons.

D. Morris: Lots of reasons. It has been fully legal for us to have more than one days' worth of urchins since the beginning of the industry. Maybe there is some mechanism that would make it easier for them, law enforcement side?

T. Sawtelle: Of all the years that I have fished I have held over my urchins three times.

[Major Rene Cloutier arrives. Joe Leask brings him up to speed on current discussion]

R. Cloutier: The way the regulation is written, and I am not telling you anything that you don't already know, but the regulation would definitely not allow you to do that. There were some people, and I am not telling you how to circumvent the law, who were looking into buying a wholesale seafood license with an urchin buying permit and at that point they would become a dealer and could possess more than the daily 7 totes. It's not that good of an idea you know.

J. Campbell: But if it works. I had my days' worth of urchins and I couldn't sell them. If I could hold on to them until the next day, over one night I probably would have gotten more money for them and wouldn't have had to travel with them.

R. Cloutier: If it is that big of an issue, I think the Department can look into some way to allow you to do what you need to do.

D. Norris: it is a common thing to have two days' worth.

R. Cloutier: So it might be something that I am sure that if everybody sits down and thinks about it a bit more so that we can come up with something. But right now, the way the regulation is written, and I am not telling anyone to go out and do it, the regulation says you can only be in possession of one days limit.

A. Johns: Wouldn't it be easier to have a call in?

J. Leask: If I called you today and it was a snowy day and I said listen, I have 7 trays I just got and I can't get to Portland. In order for me to fish tomorrow, what can I do to be able to do so?

R. Cloutier: I can't give you permission to violate a regulation. I can't do that.

J. Leask: No, I understand that.

R. Cloutier: but if you called me and it was some crazy extenuating circumstance, like your urchins are down off the road in the bushes and you gotta load them back up, then we may be able to do something. But on a routine basis, and it would be routine after once or twice, people would be calling all the time saying I got two limits today, I got three limits today. I been able to get to Portland, my truck broke down; I have run out of gas. As soon as I sell my urchins I will have enough gas money, you know. There are a hundred different scenarios why just a phone call thing won't work. But I am sure there is something they can come up with, somehow to facilitate what you want to do.

B. Sutter: You know how this will work, is that someone that is a lobster dealer and has a seafood dealer's license. That lobster dealer can get an urchin added to it?

R. Cloutier: Yes.

B. Sutter: And if they had the urchin added to it to be able to accept urchins on his behalf [Chun] or his behalf [Atcham] and then he would have to have a way for the swipe card, right?

T. Cheney: Yes, next year.

B. Sutter: How much of a complication is that for somebody to have that ability? Have the swipe card?

R. Cloutier: Not that big of a deal. Every elver dealers has that swipe machine.

B. Sutter: Is there any big expense for them to get that?

T. Cheney: For next year we were planning on giving all urchin dealers their first unit for free. For this fishery because it is such a small population of people, we were planning on providing the first one. But the unit itself costs a couple hundred dollars.

B. Sutter: Is that a problem? Do you have a buyer that could take them for you? Swipe their card?

C. Muth: A buyer can have their own license and a swipe card [machine] and buy them. There is no problem.

T. Cheney: That would be legal.

J. Leask: Alright. Maybe that is what we have got.

B. Preney: I am not against the swipe card, but if you can only have so many days and so many totes, why don't you get that many tags. You need to have a tag on the tote, your tag.

J. Leask: We can tackle this at the next meeting. We can tackle the tags or any other proposition.

Fishery Management Plan Discussion

J. Leask: We need to get to the license transfer conversation that is why there are a lot of people here. The issue on the table is license transfer. What has been thrown out there is a lot of people want to be able to transfer licenses. I have asked that the commissioner be here today to address that. It is one of the main reasons why we had this meeting here in Augusta. I personally would like my license to be transferable, or sellable. I can sell my groundfish license, which is a federal license. I can sell my lobster license which is a federal license. And there are people who have acquired licenses and paid their \$300 charge. There have been licenses that have been issued since the moratorium. Which to me provides the precedence for license transfer. WE are all getting older. I would like to be able to sell or give my license to my son.

M. Nickerson: That is what I would like to do.

J. Leask: The commissioner is going to explain DMR's side to that. I just wanted their side stated for the record so we could move forward with this dialogue.

P. Keliher: I don't know what you want to hear from me, but I can tell you what the administration's position is: we do not support transferability.

J. Leask: I know. You and I have had that conversation. I wanted the industry to be able to express their feelings on it.

P. Keliher: Yes, if anyone has concerns or thoughts, I am always happy to talk about it. This has been an issue within the lobster fishery for a number of years. We testified against it at the Legislature last year. There was an issue with the elver fishery last year. We do have an individual quota system in the elver fishery right now and because of that there was a move to go to transferability with licenses and quota. The concern with that revolved around one individual being able to buy up or control the quota. This is the system that they have right now in New Brunswick. Transferability of lobster licenses in New Brunswick right now is half a million to a million dollars to get into that fishery. The state of Alaska has transferability. They have been talking to us for the past month a half to figure out how they can mitigate against the negative effects of transferability because what has happened in Alaska is all of those local people who had and owned those licenses sold them and people from outside the community that have bought the licenses don't live there, they don't spend their money there. They go there, fish and leave. They are not employing local people and it is mostly with the inshore salmon fishery, and it is having a negative effect on those small, coastal communities up and down the coast. Deirdre Gilbert and I are presenting to them next week to talk about what programs we have in place. They are looking at training, apprenticeship, student programs to help resolve that. I think one of the conversations that this council needs to have is how do we start letting people in as licenses start going out. We have a lot of latency within this fishery. There are issues with latency in the scallop fishery. Like Tracey said, never mind the herd mentality but the latent licenses that have reengaged in that fishery as the fishery has started to rebuild. I think those types of things you need to talk about, need to talk about latency and how to get new people in, weather it is a ratio or something. I am not opposed to apprenticing or training in this fishery. In the past I have said that I am not interested in creating an apprentice program, but as we have looked at these closed fisheries, which this fishery is, we never have thought about the long term affect. WE see it now, every day with people ageing out and leaving with nobody coming back in. While this fishery is at an all-time low, it is still worth \$5 million to the coastal communities. We have seen a little uptick, we have seen some changes. This conversation here at the SUZC has evolved 180 degrees from when I started coming here five year ago and that is to the credit to everybody in this room. A lot of people said we can't do this. WE have totes now. All I heard we can't, we couldn't, we won't. Now we have totes. We have evolved to talking about; everything is progressing. Maybe it is not progressing as fast as everyone wants it to, but it is progressing. Those are the things that I am interesting in having conversations focus on a take place within this room.

J. Leask: Urchining is a unique fishery; it is a hands on fishery. There is no other fishery quite like it. Yes scallop diving may be hands on, but there is not quite the effort in scallop diving as there is in urchin diving. In the event that we can show that transferability would work to show the betterment of our industry, would you be willing to consider a change on your end? Or does it come from the state headquarters that that is the position of the state?

P. Keliher: That is the position of the LePage administration right now. I am happy to talk about ideas; I am open to talk about them. Occasionally I am wrong on things. But going to the legislature and having the discussion there is not always productive.

J. Leask: At this level here, is license transfer out of our hands? Is it a state issue?

P. Keliher: It is Legislative. There is no transferability; it is very clear in state law, in [Title 12](#) of the Marine Resources Laws.

T. Sawtelle: Transferability has happened. It happened with the people who were leasing their licenses. They were issues new licenses if the person they were leasing from would not transfer it, and then they were issued new licenses. I know that the state does not want to make this a monopoly kind of thing. If there was transferability, I don't think anybody should hold more than one license, that way they couldn't buy 2, 3, 4 - whatever. As far as monitory value, because I would just like to give mine to my son, there was a fellow in the back of the room at the last meeting that said there is no way for anyone to get in the fishery now; it is the same as scalloping. The younger kids growing up wasn't old enough to get an urchin license. It wasn't their fault they were not born at the right now. I don't feel that I am special and I got a license because I was born at the right time. I just think you have a boat, who you going to sell it to? No one has a license. I think an independent person could come in and evaluate your boat – not replacement value, but the value of the vessel. Say your vessel is worth \$20,000, \$60,000, \$50,000 – whatever. If they purchased the boat for the value of the boat, they automatically get the license. The people that haven't fished with the latent licenses, if there was transferability, we are going right now with all the information for those licenses that are being fished. If they transfer that to someone who is going to fish, that is going to affect everything we have worked for to try to sustain this fishery.

T. Fitch: Not everybody that has an urchin license has a boat though. There are divers that go on other people's boats.

J. Ackley: That happens with draggers to.

T. Fitch: You are thinking about dragging, but you are not thinking about the majority of the urchin harvesters.

J. Leask: There is the owner-operator provision on the table. Keep in mind you have to keep your ears open as this has been discussed, right Trish?

T. Cheney: It has been discussed, but it did not get into this emergency session at the Legislature. It would go into the next Legislative session

J. Leask: So that is off the table for next year.

T. Fitch: The owner-operator provision applied to draggers and not divers.

T. Cheney: Right.

T. Fitch: I have a boat, so I am not worried, but it wouldn't work for other divers.

J. Campbell: So Pat, you are in touch with Alaska and trying to learn from their mistakes?

P. Keliher: They actually contacted us to talk about our programs here.

J. Campbell: Since our industry is such a small industry would DMR be willing to work with us on a pilot to transfer our license?

P. Keliher: No, because there is no pilot. Once you transfer, you have to do the whole thing.

J. C: But I am just talking the urchin industry, not the whole state, not the other industries. Could it be a single industry thing? We are all getting older and I would like to transfer mine to my kid. If we could learn from Alaska and whatever problems they are having and have this board come up with the comprehensive plan, would you be willing to at least look at it?

P. Keliher: So, is the goal of transferability to have new people coming into this industry?

J. Campbell: That and to keep it local.

P. Keliher: Never mind the local component, if the goal is that there are new people coming in.

J. Campbell: The goal would be to keep the industry going itself. We keep losing people.

P. Keliher: There are other tools to address that besides transferability to do just what you are talking about.

J. Campbell: Like what?

P. Keliher: There is the student program; you could have an exit ratio for so many out and others coming in. You would have to ensure, and Tracey hit is on the head is activating latency.

J. Campbell: Right, I see what you mean. We have enough divers that are not using their licenses, if they transfer them it would change all our numbers.

A. Johns: We don't want an apprenticeship program.

P. Keliher: It wouldn't even have to be an apprenticeship program. You would just have to show that you meet the safety requirements.

A. Johns: I don't like the idea of having to put my son through it. But I have a son I would like to give it to.

P. Keliher: So if there is a blanket transferability that you could transfer to anybody, that may not necessarily be an issue. But you can't have transferability only for blood line.

T. Sawtelle: That is awful that you can't do bloodline.

D. Fitzsimmons: My son has been working with me for years. I hate to see him get out of a job if something was to happen to me.

T. Sawtelle: Pass it down.

P. Keliher: You can't just have a system where you "pass it down". That is bloodline and that is reserved for royalty on Europe. That type of system wouldn't even pass the constitution. It's been tried a few different times and has been talked about a lot. But you could have a system by which, I am thinking out loud here so don't hold me to this word for word here. But say you have a system where you could show through an affidavit that an individual has worked as a tender for X amount of years. That would give him a credit for so many years. Or for a dragger, you have got X amount of time crewing – how would that benefit them for getting a license, so they could show they had experience on a dragger where the idea to transferring to someone else who had zero experience.

J. Leask: We don't want new people coming in at the capacity that they had at the begging when they had no idea how to urchin.

P. Keliher: You don't even want to take the capacity you have now with the existing latency.

J. Leask: You went through that dialogue with the lobster discussion when they were discussing latency. My friend has a lobster license and he said good luck getting rid of my license after I paid for it all these years and bought my tags. I can hear Tracey saying from a few meetings ago saying well, they paid money all these years and that is something that needs to be discussed.

P. Keliher: That would have to be a legislative action. I could propose all day long that we are going to take every license that has no landings associated with it. But at the end of the day, the legislature is going to have to look everyone in the eye that we would take licenses from. They don't have the stomach to do it, to take something away at that level.

J. Leask: That is essentially what I am saying. I hate the idea of taking something away. That happened with lobster.

P. Keliher: They didn't take them. If they didn't renew it and lost it. That is different. That is what would happen to you with your urchin license.

M. Nickerson: I have been doing my landings reports – give us quota on our landings.

J. Leask: Way back when the elver lottery went through – I am against the lottery.

P. Keliher: I am not a lottery fan. You can't make a living predicting whether you are going to win or lose in the lottery.

J. Leask: Right. The elver lottery gave one chance for the lottery. I was told when I went to get my license that you can get it next year. When I went to get it the next year, they told me no, you didn't get it the last year, so now you can't get it. I was ruled out and then I only had one chance in the lottery. I like the idea of guys who fished historically having a chance to get it. I like what you spoke of a tender that have done it for year, has a good idea how to do it. I really like on the diving side of things an apprenticeship program. Showing the guys how to do it.

C. Muth: I think sponsorship or apprenticeship would be good.

J. Leask: I think apprenticeship would be good. I think we could have this discussion all day. The Commissioner made his point.

B. Sutter: I think a way to start to get at latency is increasing the price of the license and then you will see those guys drop out of it.

J. Leask: Well, seeing as this meeting seems to be concluding, the commissioner made it clear he is willing to entertain how licensing is going to be done down the road; how new entry is going to get into our fishery. We can table this discussion and continue it at the next meeting. I would encourage you all to be at the next meeting.

T. Cheney: I think today we had a really good discussion about the season next year. I am glad that all the processors came as well. Maggie and I will work on a draft calendar and if the processors could come up with what you want ahead of time so I could present that before we start to talk about what the harvesters want. I think this year an important aspect should be to allow the processors to really drive the selection of days. I know that is a big shift, because harvesters have in the past, but I think you have all heard loud and clear all the reasons why this is important.

J. Leask: Ok. We will talk about that at the next meeting.

[NEXT MEETING SCHEDULED FOR WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 24th AT JEFF'S CATERING IN BREWER AT 3:30PM]

Monitoring and Assessment of Maine's Sea Urchin Resource

Margaret Hunter
Robert Russell
Lessie White, Jr.

Maine Dept. of Marine Resources. January 7, 2016



Photo by Rachal Feaney, NEC, Sept. 2009



www.maine.gov/dmr

Maine Sea Urchin Landings by Zone

Season	Pounds			Value	Price
	Zone 1	Zone 2	Total	\$	\$/lb
2000-01	4,426,427	7,391,533	11,817,960	16,119,624	1.36
2001-02	3,202,928	4,647,644	7,850,572	9,717,479	1.24
2002-03	1,952,361	4,748,271	6,700,632	8,758,199	1.31
2003-04	1,293,602	5,040,920	6,334,522	8,860,609	1.40
2004-05	156,803	3,630,293	3,787,096	5,802,979	1.53
2005-06	112,192	3,740,713	3,852,905	5,371,416	1.39
2006-07	154,991	2,874,500	3,029,491	4,581,572	1.51
2007-08	178,550	2,975,853	3,154,403	5,043,356	1.60
2008-09	138,683	2,960,823	3,099,506	5,089,928	1.64
2009-10	121,710	2,991,471	3,113,181	5,902,851	1.90
2010-11	148,767	2,152,991	2,301,758	5,143,746	2.23
2011-12	181,226	2,149,873	2,331,099	5,081,370	2.18
2012-13	273,371	1,564,810	1,838,181	5,721,560	3.11
*2013-14	384,143	1,539,565	1,923,708	5,067,105	2.63
**2014-15	382,388	1,606,397	1,988,785	5,470,669	2.75

* preliminary

** very preliminary as of 6-18-15

Maine Sea Urchin Landings in Pounds

2013-14

Month	Zone 1	Zone 2	Price/lb
Sep	182,023	0	\$2.19
Oct	15,747	312,505	\$2.64
Nov	0	195,327	\$2.54
Dec	186,373	450,164	\$2.90
Jan	*	127,230	\$2.48
Feb	0	224,649	\$2.56
Mar	0	229,690	\$2.48
Total	384,143	1,539,565	\$2.63

* January included in December

2014-15**

Month	Zone 1	Zone 2	Price/Lb
Sep	176,136	22,819	\$2.08
Oct	41,162	333,752	\$2.63
Nov	0	164,891	\$3.08
Dec	165,090	524,935	\$2.92
Jan	*	110,229	\$2.52
Feb	*	94,944	\$2.79
Mar	*	354,827	\$2.84
Total	382,388	1,606,397	\$2.75

** very preliminary as of 6-18-15



Maine Sea Urchin Landings in Pounds

2014-15**

Month	Pounds	Price/Lb
Sep	198,955	\$2.08
Oct	374,914	\$2.58
Nov	164,891	\$3.01
Dec	658,335	\$2.97
Jan	134,187	\$2.44
Feb	99,049	\$2.76
Mar	378,272	\$2.79
Total	2,008,603	

** very preliminary as of 8-31-15

2015-16**

Month	Pounds	Price/Lb
Sep	183,396	\$1.78
Oct	228,848	\$2.96
Nov	177,997	\$2.73
Dec		
Jan		
Feb		
Mar		
Total		

** very preliminary as of 1-4-16



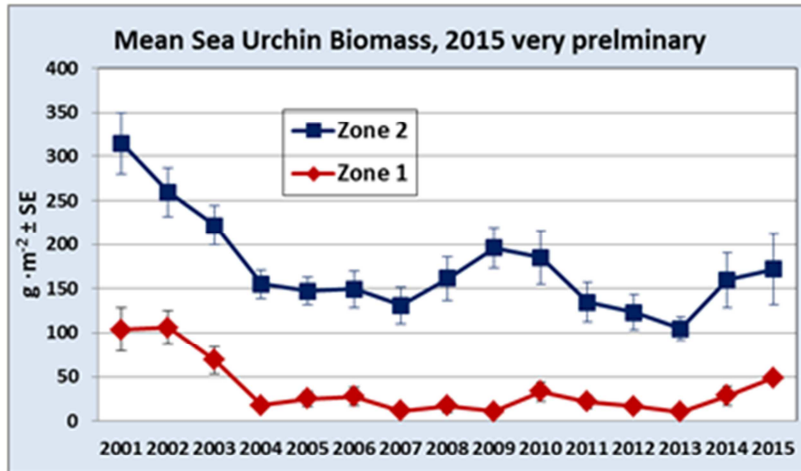
Number of Active Harvesters (sold at least 2 lots)

		Zone 1	Zone 2	Total
2011-12	Divers	29	111	140
	Draggers	7	94	101
	Total	36	205	241
2013-14	Divers	37	78	115
	Draggers	6	80	86
	Rakers	0	3	3
	Total	43	161	204
2014-15 As of 6-18-15	Divers	36	94	130
	Draggers	7	85	92
	Rakers	0	2	2
	Total	43	181	224

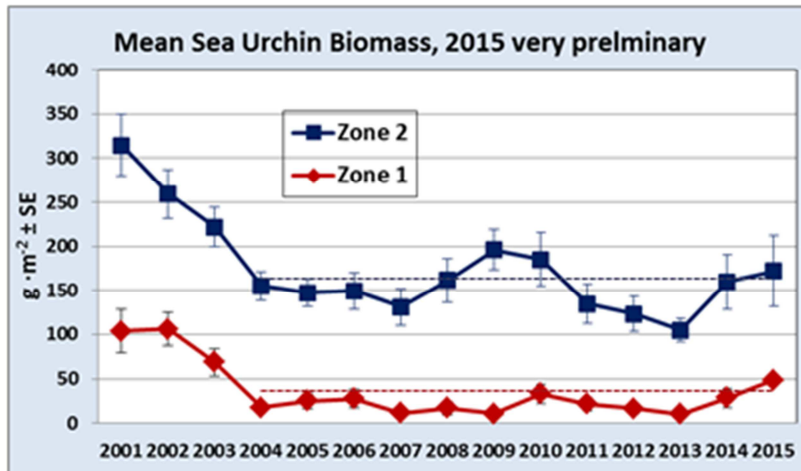
Spring Dive Survey



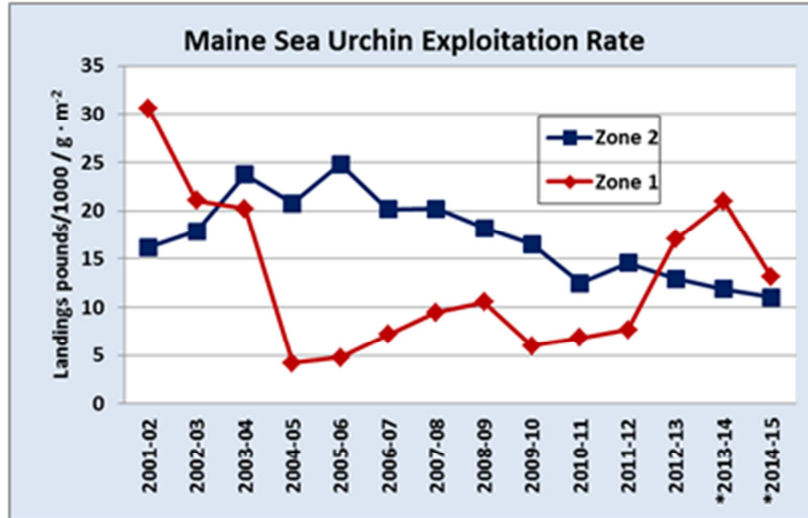
Spring Dive Survey



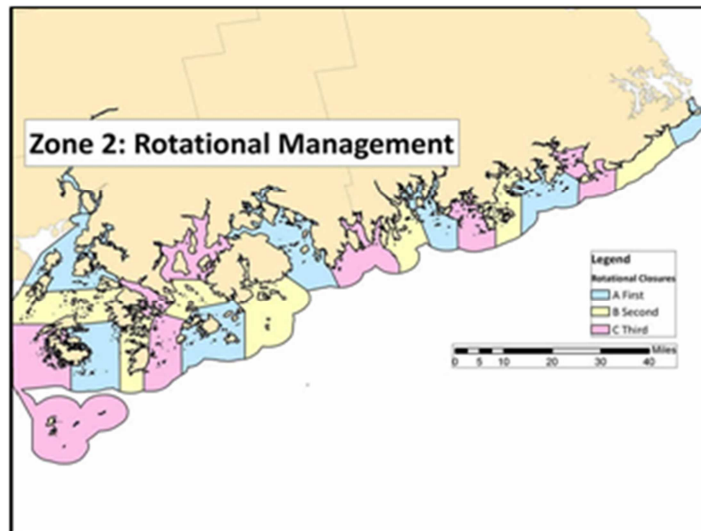
Spring Dive Survey



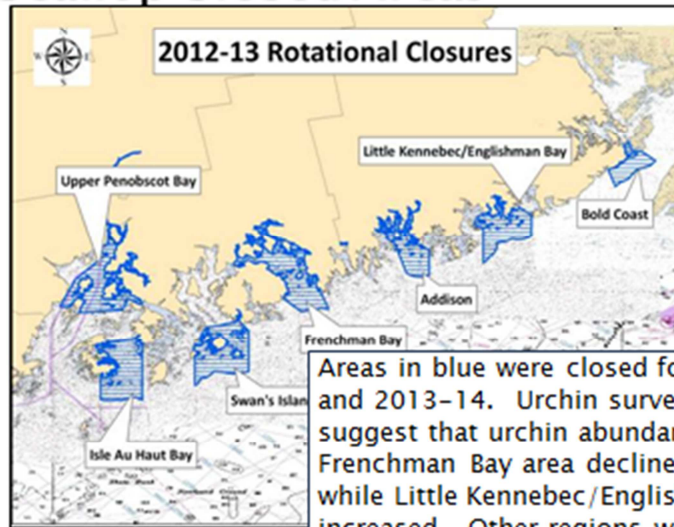
Exploitation Rates



Scallop Closed Areas

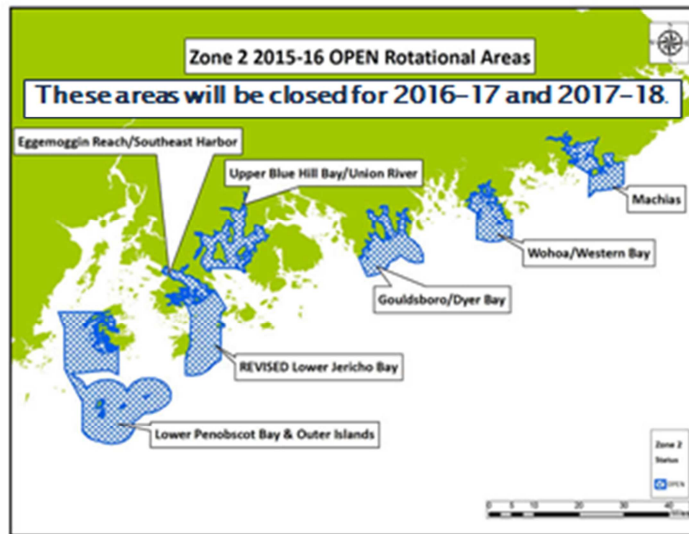


Scallop Closed Areas

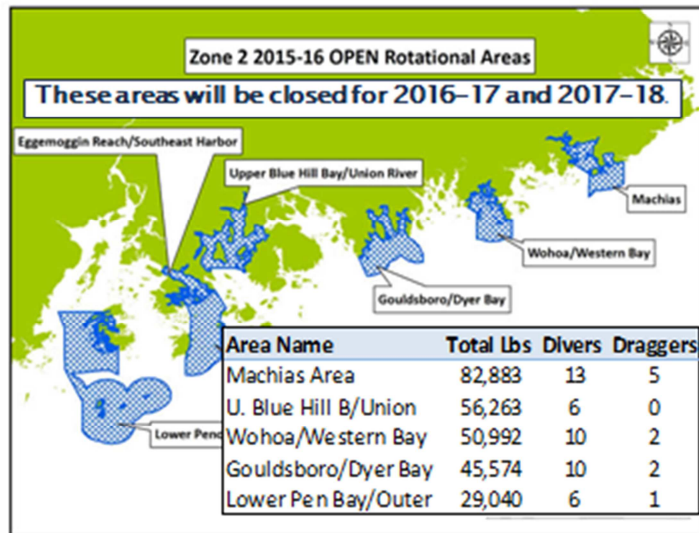


Areas in blue were closed for 2012-13 and 2013-14. Urchin survey results suggest that urchin abundance in the Frenchman Bay area declined (die-off?), while Little Kennebec/Englishman Bay increased. Other regions were not adequately sampled.

Scallop Closed Areas



Scallop Closed Areas



2014-15 Mean Age of Active Harvesters as of December 31, 2014

	Zone 1	Zone 2
Divers	51	49
Draggers	56	53

Mean ages of active harvesters fishing September-December 2014, some dealer data missing for December.

Maine Commercial Sea Urchin Licenses

Year	Zone 1					Zone 2					Statewide							
	Dive	Disp	Rake	Lnk	Total	Dive	Disp	Rake	Lnk	Total	Dive	Disp	Rake	Lnk	Harv. Total	Tender	Buyer	Proc.
1992											829	246			1,075			
1993											1,437	567			2,004			
1994											1,725	1,000			2,725	843		
1995	611	237	3	851	580	404	5	989			1,191	641	8		1,840	736	96	18
1996	501	167	2	670	562	327	4	893			1,063	494	6		1,563	730	70	19
1997	405	133	1	539	514	287	2	803			919	420	3		1,342	648	65	20
1998	348	95	1	444	460	260	1	721			808	355	2		1,165	544	51	18
1999	332	87	2	421	437	252	2	691			769	339	4		1,112	538	42	15
2000	313	74	2	389	407	242	2	651			720	316	4		1,040	530	31	18
2001	281	65	2	348	383	240	2	625			664	305	4		973	453	30	11
2002	246	53	2	301	343	242	1	586			589	295	3		887	355	23	12
2003	182	44	2	228	289	224	1	514			471	268	3		742	276	18	13
2004	134	30	2	166	261	206	1	468			395	236	3		634	212	12	12
2005	106	27	1	134	234	187	1	422			340	214	2		556	155	13	13
2006	83	24	0	107	213	178	1	392			296	202	1		499	150	13	12
2007	75	24	0	99	195	164	1	360			270	188	1		459	142	12	12
2008	61	21	0	82	188	163	1	352			249	184	1		434	138	13	12
2009	60	18	0	78	181	152	1	334			241	170	1		412	192	12	13
2010*	54	18	0	72	167	157	2	326			221	175	2		398	97	11	11
2011*	49	15	0	64	156	159	1	316			205	174	1		380	78	7	10
2012*	47	16	0	63	143	143	5	291			190	159	5		354	67	11	10
2013*	49	15	0	66	125	134	3	264			174	149	3	4	330	62	9	7
2014*	47	14	1	62	109	125	9	255			156	139	10	12*	317	46	11	5



Appendix B
Trisha Cheney's Slide Presentation
Sea Urchin Zone Council Meeting
January 7, 2016 – Augusta, ME

- I. Welcome and introductions
- II. Approval of last meeting minutes (10/08/2015)
- III. DMR Update
 - I. Landings & Survey Update
 - II. DMR's 2015-16 Season Management Recommendations
- IV. Discussion: 2015-16 Season
- V. Discussion: Fisheries Management Plan
- VI. Set Next Meeting Date & Time
- VII. Adjourn

2016-17 Season Management Recommendations

Zone 1

- 15 Day Season
- 12 Tote Limit

Zone 2

- 38 Day Season
- 7 Tote Limit

Swipe Card System Implementation This Fall

- Accurately & timely tracking of landings
- First season to ensure system works effectively

LONG TERM

- Current measures not enough to rebuild, just stop decline
- If resource kept at a level of low productivity, strong possibility that stock will eventually collapse due to biological or environmental factors

LONG TERM: Management Overhaul?

- Swipe cards could allow ability to pick days
 - Fish safely & flexibility to not deplete same area
- Total Allowable Catch (TAC)
- Elimination of Zones (*Legislative*)
- Closures to protect remaining areas with good urchins
- Owner-Operator (*Legislative*)
- Compacted Season
 - Elimination of Early & Late Season
 - Elimination of September fishery
- Escape panel on entire back of drags
- Decrease tolerance of culled urchins (ie from 20 to 10%)

Appendix C

Sea Urchin Fishery Management Plan Management Recommendations Document. Drafted by DMR staff to aid in conversation regarding the FMP's Management Recommendations Section.

MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

The following Management Recommendations have been developed as mechanisms to further the Goals and Objectives identified in Section X:

1. Promote growth of the resource while maintaining the viability of the fishery.

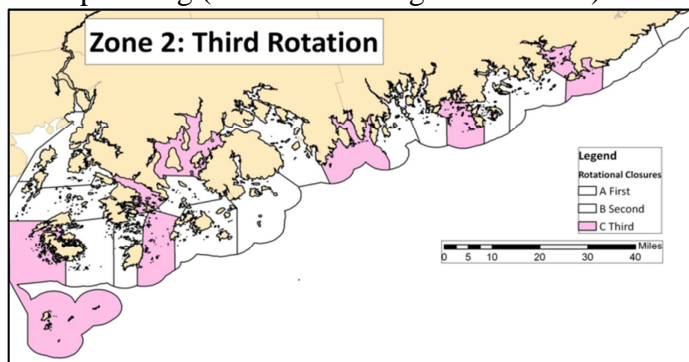
DIRECTION WE WANT TO HEAD: Rebuild the resource that supports a viable fishery now and in the future. Implement measures that incentivize harvesters to target quality vs. quantity and conservation minded fishing practices. Facilitate creative harvester-led initiatives which aim to restore depleted reefs/fishing grounds.

CURRENT ACTIONS:

- **Tote Limits & Culling on Bottom:** DMR & the SUZC have established tote limits and a culling on bottom requirement for divers in both fishing zones.
- **Pilot Restoration Project:** DMR & the SUZC are currently undertaking a Pilot Restoration Project in the Cat Ledge's area that aims to revive a once commercially viable reef by transplanting wild and hatchery reared urchins.
- **Owner-Operator Requirement:** A bill has been submitted for this upcoming legislative session that proposes to establish an owner-operator requirement for the drag sector of the fishery. Conceptually, DMR supports this requirement as it will ensure the owner of the vessel is more accountable for their actions behind the wheel (fines & suspensions), thus increasing stewardship and good fishing practices. Additionally, any newly reactivated license holders will be required to be the owner of the vessel being operated.
- **Swipe Card System:** Implementation of the swipe card system in the fishery has the potential benefit to provide more accurate data with which to evaluate potential management options.

OTHER OPTIONS:

- Total Management Overhaul
 - Total Allowable Catch (TAC)
 - Implement landings target limit
 - Evaluate Current Zone Structure
 - Consider elimination of Zones (Potential to spread out of effort and provide more flexibility/fairness/opportunity for fishermen?)
 - Consider further division of coast into more Zones, to enable improved, smaller scale management of the resource.
- Conservation Closures
 - Overlay closures in areas with high concentrations of sublegal urchins & are also closed to scallop fishing (rotational & targeted closures) to boost rebuilding efforts.



- Aquaculture seeding of hatchery reared urchins in conservation closures
 - Areas that have been depleted of urchins appear slow to recover. Some areas where fishing pressure has ceased entirely have seen no corresponding increase in urchin biomass. The purpose of this work would be to explore the potential to reestablish urchin populations in areas that were formerly commercially viable.

SUZY RECOMMENDATIONS:

2. Establish a mechanism for future participation in the urchin fishery.

DIRECTION WE WANT TO HEAD: Devise an entry system that allows for future access. New licenses in the urchin fishery were last issued in 2004. The existing license holders, particularly the dive sector, are beginning to age out of the fishery.

OPTIONS:

- Establish an Exit Ratio of licenses retired to licenses issued
 - 1:1 or 2:1
- Select future license holders through a lottery
 - Give additional weight in the lottery to tenders and/or past license holders
 - Create a waiting list prioritized by 1) number of years past harvest license held and 2) number of years tending.
- Issue Dive licenses only
- Establish a time limit on latent licenses
- Require completion of an educational program as a condition of receiving a license
 - Course components would include safety training, responsible fishing practices

SUZY RECOMMENDATIONS:

3. Increase safety in the fishery.

DIRECTION WE WANT TO HEAD: Implement a swipe card system that will potentially allow harvesters to eventually choose the days which they fish.

CURRENT ACTIONS:

- **Swipe Card System:** DMR is currently working on establishing a swipe card system in an effort to collect timely and accurate landings information. This system has the potential to allow industry to eventually pick their days, rather than be subject to a fixed season.

OTHER OPTIONS:

- Establish “potential” fishing days per week that a harvester may choose to utilize one of their fishing days, ensuring that dealers have enough urchins on any given day to process. This set up would also require additional coordination/communication between harvesters & dealers.
- Dean Norris has described a system used on the west coast where the open days for the coming week were set each weekend after reviewing weather and market forecasts.
- Require completion of an educational program as a condition of receiving a license
 - Course components would include safety training, responsible fishing practices

SUZY RECOMMENDATIONS:

4. Increase Flexibility & Adaptability in Management

DIRECTION WE WANT TO HEAD: Move pertinent management measures from statute to regulation, in order to allow more flexibility in management of the resource by DMR & the SUZC.

OPTIONS: Consider legislation that would remove certain management elements (highlighted below) from statute, so that they could be addressed through regulation.

12. M.R.S.A.

CHAPTER 623 SHELLFISH, SCALLOPS, WORMS AND MISCELLANEOUS LICENSES

SUBCHAPTER 2-C SEA URCHINS

Article 1 Licenses

§6748 Handfishing sea urchin license

§6748-A Sea urchin draggers license

§6748-C Drags

§6748-D Sea urchin hand-raking and trapping license

Article 2 Limits on Fishing

§6749 Sea urchin harvesting season and open days

§6749-A Minimum size

§6749-B Sea urchins and lobsters; simultaneous possession or transport prohibited

§6749-C Rules

Article 3 Emergency Limitations: Sea Urchin Fishery

§6749-N Closed areas; zone identification

§6749-O Limited entry; exceptions

§6749-P Licenses by zone

§6749-Q License surcharges

§6749-R Sea Urchin Research Fund

§6749-S Log books for sea urchin buyers and processors

§6749-U Extension of closing dates

§6749-V Dragging closure

§6749-X Sea Urchin Zone Council

§6749-Y Penalty

§6749-Z Changing zones

SUZC RECOMMENDATIONS:

April 26, 2012 Ellsworth Meeting Goal Setting Summary & Results:

Sea Urchin FMP Goal Setting Exercise Results	Votes
Considering the needs of your markets and processors	26
Sustainable resource, sustainable communities	16
Recovery – long term & short term	13
Culling on Bottom	13
Transferability; raising value of fishery	12
Reseeding/enhancement (natural & hatchery)/Conservation Pioneers	12
Match of effort to resource	9
Research: what is killing urchins besides amoeba	9
Assess benchmarks	8
Protection of beds on brink of extinction	6
Water quality & environmental conditions impacting urchins	6
Consideration of impacts from other fisheries	5
Divers be able to take an apprentice	5
Enhancing the safety of the participants	5
Consider closures	4
Call in system	2
A place for all gear types in fishery	2
Didenum/Invasive Species impact 80% of Zone 1 Waters	2
effort reduction incentives	1
Ability to change dive license for drag license	1
Survey areas must be privatized/screened	1
Survey involve industry volunteers	1
Protection of marine ecosystems	1

FMP GOALS

BROAD GOALS

- SUSTAINABLE RESOURCE/COMMUNITIES
- REVIEW STATUS OF FISHERY; HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF FISHERY, ADDRESS IN STATUS TO MANAGEMENT MEASURES
- SUSTAINABLE FISHERY FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS
- RECOVERY - LONG & SHORT TERM
- TRANSFERABILITY; RAISING VALUE OF FISHERY
- RESEEDING/ENHANCEMENT: NATURAL & HATCHERY
- PRESERVATION OF EXISTING URCHIN BEDS
- CULLING ON BOTTOM
- PROTECTION OF BEDS ON BANK OF EXTINCTION
- SURVEY AREAS MUST BE PRIVATIZED/SCREENED

FMP GOALS

- CONSIDER NEEDS OF MARKETS & PROCESSORS
- CONSIDER REMOVING ZONES - TREAT BOTH EQUAL
- ~~FEED~~ % ROE LIMIT
- CONSERVATION REQUIREMENT BY INDUSTRY PARTICIPANTS
- ZONE 2: NO MORE THAN 60 DAYS IN SEASON - REDUCTION
- RESEARCH: WHAT IS KILLING URCHINS BESIDES AMOEBA
- CONSIDERATION OF IMPACTS FROM OTHER FISHERIES
- WATER QUALITY & ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES/CONDITIONS
- ALLOW HARVESTERS TO 'POND' or 'HOLD' URCHINS OUTSIDE OF SEASON
- DINERS BE ABLE TO TAKE AN APPRENTICE
- HARVESTER BE ABLE TO PROCESS OWN ROE
- ZONE 1 SPLIT IN HALF. ie. 30 days in EWT, 15 days in WEST

FMP GOALS

- SURVEY INVOLVE INDUSTRY VOLUNTEERS
- MATCH EFFORT TO RESOURCE
- EQUALITY (SIMILAR MANAGEMENT MEASURES - STATE)
- CONSIDER QUOTA / TOTAL ALLOWABLE CATCH (TAC)
- PROTECTION OF MARINE ECOSYSTEMS
- EFFORT REDUCTION INCENTIVES
- A PLACE FOR ALL GEAR TYPES IN FISHERY
- SHORTER SEASON: RECONSIDER SEASON
- RECONSIDER ZONES / ~~PROVISIONAL ZONES~~
- MAX. ROE CONTENT / ECONOMIC YIELD FOR WHATS HARVESTED
- ENSURE VIABILITY OF INDUSTRY: HARVESTERS, BUYER & PROCESSORS
- CONSIDER CLOSURES
- ASSESS BENCHMARKS
- ENHANCE SAFETY OF PARTICIPANTS

FMP GOALS

- CONSERVATION 'PIONEERS' FOR RE-SEEDING FROM HATCHERIES
- CHANGE LAW TO HAVE ABILITY TO POSSESS UNDERSTOOD URCHINS. 2 SPOTS: INSIDE/OUTSIDE. LPA TO SUPP LICENCE & SPECIAL BOUY FOR URCHIN CAGES
- CALL IN SYSTEM
- WATER QUALITY: ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS THAT IMPACT URCHINS (CLIMATE CHANGE/OCEAN ACIDIFICATION) - RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THESE FACTORS & FISHERY: ID POTENTIAL RISKS
- DIDERMUM/INVASIVE SPECIES IMPACTS: 80% IN ZONE 1 WATERS
- GO 13 - UNLAWFUL TO TAKE URCHINS ON ANY DAY NOT OPEN TO HARVEST ON BOAT. REVISE TO ALLOW POSSESSION, BUT NOT HARVEST OUTSIDE OF SEASON.
- ABILITY TO EXCHANGE DNE LICENCE FOR A DRAGGER LICENCE @ A SET AGE THRESHOLD