

## **Sea Urchin Zone Council Meeting Summary April 25, 2019, Brewer**

**DMR staff:** Nick Popoff, Maggie Hunter, Robert Russell, Melissa Smith, MPO Jeff Turcotte, MPO Tyler Sirois

**SUZC members present:** Tracey Sawtelle (Chair), Teresa Johnson, Tim Robbins, Brian Preney, Alan Knowlton, Clint Richardson, Mark Nickerson, Chuon Muth, Larry Harris, Steve Bechard, Steve Eddy

**SUZC members absent:** Joe Leask, Randy Ramsdell, Sinuon Chau, Tim Peterson

**Public:** Mitch McConnell, Rodney Dame, Adam Atherton, Tom Reno, Jim Wadsworth

Meeting commenced at 1:05 pm.

### **I. Welcome and Introductions**

Chair T. Sawtelle welcomed the group and asked everyone to introduce themselves around the room, both council members and audience.

### **II. Approval of last meeting minutes (3/28/19)**

C. Richardson moved to accept with amendment to Limited Access calendar; T. Sawtelle seconded the motion.

**UNANIMOUS. Approval of minutes passed.**

Note: T. Sawtelle pointed out an error in the minutes and the resulting calendar schedule regarding drag harvesting within Whiting/Denny's Bay. The calendar as made highlighted Wednesday as a harvest day and it was intended to maintain status quo from last season which would be Thursday harvest days.

### **III. DMR Update**

- a. **Blue Hill Bay Experiment** - Maggie Hunter provided a presentation (Appendix A. meeting slides)
- b. **Annual Survey** – Robert provided a presentation (Appendix B. meeting slides)

For the Blue Hill Bay Experiment, a total of 29 trackers were given out; 6 were not activated. Discussed preliminary results of a phone survey conducted with the participants actively harvesting in the area. The general interest in the area spoke to the better availability of the resource after several years of low resource levels.

M. Hunter also presented landings information that shows a shift of landings within Zone 2, divided into 3 regions. There appears to be a shift in harvest towards the western portion of Zone 2.

R. Russell highlighted the intent to have closed areas within BHB; however, the active fishing areas/ledges within the study area is relatively small and wouldn't allow for the closing of specific ledges to compare effort. After monitoring for two seasons, it became clear that implementing closures may no longer work because the available harvest areas are so small.

R. Russell reported out on survey results, indicating most Zone 2 areas are still trending downward, except 4 and 9 (see Appendix).

R. Russell also mentioned that science staff at Bigelow Laboratories were continuing to monitor and study algal composition and the potential changes that are occurring in traditional urchin habitat.

L. Harris pointed out that he may need to re-evaluate when collector plates for larval settlement should be placed out, but it seems that with climate change occurring, the time of settlement is shifting to earlier in the year. Also suggested that collector plates should have a shorter downtime on bottom, so that the plates do not become cluttered with other organisms.

#### **V. Discussion: 2019/2020 Season Restrictions**

N. Popoff recapped the topic from the previous meeting regarding concern within the fishery, harvest levels and continued concern over the resource. The focus of this discussion is to determine if there is interest by the Council and the audience to alter from the status quo for the upcoming season.

C. Muth pointed out that every year there seems to be less fishermen participating in the fishery and as a result, effort on the resource is naturally reducing because of this.

*T. Robbins motioned to restrict harvest in Zone 2 such that no boat could land more than 7 totes a day for divers and draggers. Larry seconded the motion to carry forward the conversation.*

**Vote: 3:3 with 4 abstentions – motion does not carry.**

T. Sawtelle suggested that perhaps this should be a topic to be discussed at a later meeting, considering that it was a new topic that was not on the agenda previously.

C. Muth asked why is owner/operator only for draggers and not for dive vessels?

DMR Response: Dive boats have not been limited to owner/operator due to safety concerns.

B. Preney discussed that typically, harvesters from either zone attempt to not speak to actions that would occur in the other zone, clarifying that management is specific to each zone. Preney posed the question of DMR's position regarding the motions that were made at the previous meeting.

N. Popoff clarified that the Department is open to consider the motions from the previous meeting but it's not clear that the Zone 1 motion would achieve a reduction in harvest. Considering the conversation council members and audience had during the last meeting related to the resource, does the council wish to discuss the motions further?

B. Preney motions to reduce tray limit in Zone 1 from 12 to 10 totes for divers, maintain but tweak the early and late seasons: early season September 1 – October 31; late season December 1 to February 28/29. Harvesters may operate on any week day for 15 fishing days during their respective season. C. Richardson seconded it.

**Vote: 7:1 with 3 abstentions. Motion carried.**

A. Knowlton motions to maintain the drag calendar as proposed and passed by the Council during the previous meeting in Zone 1, but to reduce the daily limit from 12 to 10 totes per day. C. Richardson seconded.

**Vote: 9:0 with 2 abstentions. Motion carried.**

Discussion moves towards Zone 2 and what alternative plans should be suggested. Upon reviewing J. Leask's motion from the previous meeting, options were put on the table. This motion did not pass but

there were several individuals that suggested more protection was needed. Differing options center on tote reductions and season.

S. Bechard motions for a 40 day season, allow 30 days to fish with a 6 tray daily limit, for Zone 2 divers only. C. Richardson seconds the motion.

**Vote: 5:0 with 6 abstentions. Motion carried.**

C. Muth states it will negatively impact the processors.

T. Robbins motions to maintain the drag calendar as proposed and passed by the Council during the previous meeting in Zone 2 but to reduce the daily tote limit to 6. S. Bechard seconds the motion.

**Vote: 9:0 with 2 abstentions. Motion carried.**

S. Bechard motions to reduce the dive calendar by the specified dates: Zone 2 dive early (REMOVE: Sept 17, 18, 19; October 3, 10) and Zone 2 dive late (Remove: January 3, 23; Feb 20; March 17, 18). Seconded by C. Richardson.

**Vote: 8:0 with 3 abstentions. Motion carried.**

#### Licensing Discussion

Generally, there was a sentiment of concern given the reductions were passed by the Council. If the resource is diminished, is this the time to increase the number of harvesters?

Transferability has been raised and has been a non-starter for DMR. Apprenticeship has also been suggested. Work towards a framework for if licenses are added. Lottery additions are not preferred.

Apprentice for diving would perhaps tender for a few years to learn the fishery and then be eligible for a license. Discussion mentions tiered daily limits.

From the drag apprentice perspective, after a training period, the mentor would “give up” a portion of his daily limit to the graduated apprentice.

Apprenticeship can also instill conservation ethic and stewardship for the resource.

M. Smith described efforts underway to develop a scallop apprenticeship program.

If with diving, the apprentice was on bottom with the license holder, they could harvest together but not exceed permit daily limit. (This may require a legislative change).

T. Sawtelle motions to consider an apprenticeship as method for entry when the time comes to allow for a release of licenses. T. Robbins seconds.

**Vote: Unanimous.**

Future meeting dates were not proposed for 2019.

T. Sawtelle motioned to adjourn [approximately 3:30pm]; C. Richardson seconded.

**Vote: Unanimous.**



## **Sea Urchin Zone Council Meeting Agenda**

**1:00pm Thursday, April 25, 2019**

***Jeff's Catering, 15 Littlefield Road, Brewer, ME***

- I. Welcome and Introductions
- II. Approval of meeting minutes (03/28/19)
- III. DMR Presentation
  - a. Blue Hill Bay
  - b. Annual Survey
- IV. **Discussion**
  - **2019/2020 season**
    - Two motions were made during the previous meeting related to harvest. We will continue conversation regarding the upcoming season.
  - **Licensing**
- V. Set Future Meeting Dates, Other Business
- VI. Adjourn

## Blue Hill Bay Sea Urchin Project



### Experimental Area – Blue Hill Bay

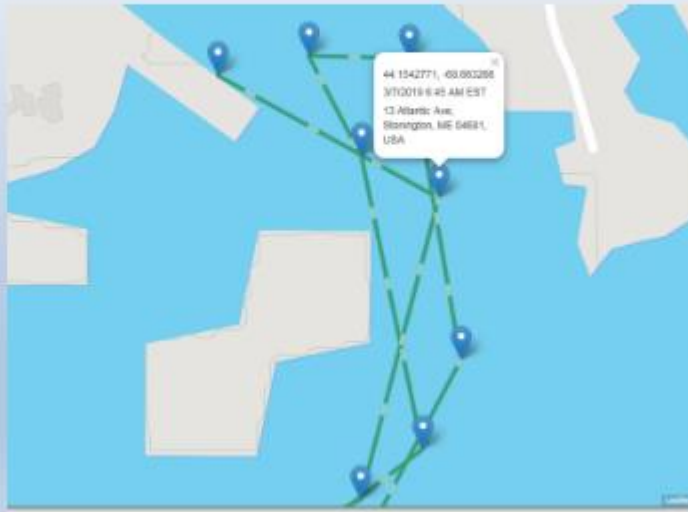
- Year 1 (2017-18) – open
  - Evaluate fishing patterns
  - Develop survey methods
  - Work with industry to identify closures
- Year 2 (2018-19) – 50% ~~closure~~
- Year 3 (2019-20) – 25% ~~closure~~
- Year 4 (2020-21) – 12% closure
- Year 5 (2021-22) – open

## Trackers from Faria Beede

- Required to fish in area
- DMR will supply first ~~30~~ 35 units + data
  - \$250 + \$20/mo
- Confidential data
- Harvesters will have access to their own data
- Trackers will continue to ping regardless of location
- Ping rate 1/min (1/hr if stationary)



## What do the Data Look Like? Using the Faria Beede website....



## What do the Data Look Like?



About 4.5 hours urchin dragging, about  $\frac{1}{2}$  square mi

## What do the Data Look Like?



About 56 minutes of diving

## What do the Data Look Like?



Different boat, about 1 hr 15 mins of diving

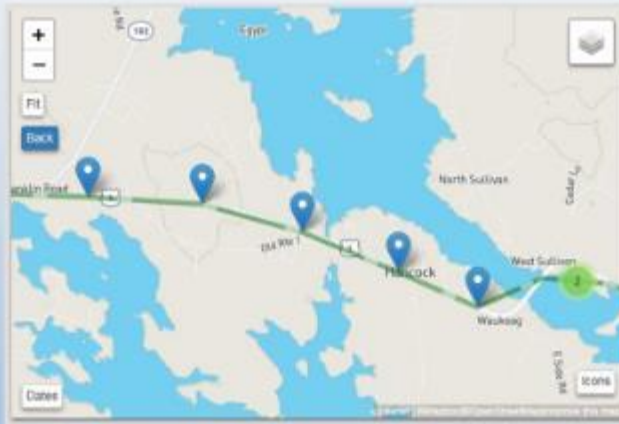
## What do the Data Look Like?



Transiting was excluded by removing points with speeds greater than about 5 kt.



## What do the Data Look Like?



We excluded all points on land and outside BHB area.

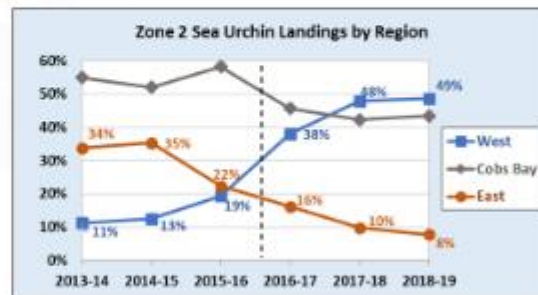
## 2018-19 Summary - Preliminary

- 29 Trackers were given out
- 6 were not used (had one just in case)
- 23 transmitted data, from
  - 6 Draggers and 17 Dive boats
  - The 17 dive boats carried up to 30 divers
  - 1 of the draggers and 1 of the dive boats never fished in BHB, so
- 5 draggers and 17 dive boats with up to 28 divers fished in BHB at least one day

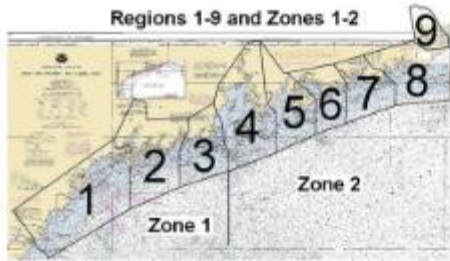
## Comparing 2018-19 with 2017-18

- In 2018-19, **5** draggers and **17** dive boats with 28 divers fished in BHB at least one day and caught about **194,000** lbs there.
- In 2017-18, **3** draggers and **11** dive boats with 18 divers fished in BHB at least one day and caught about **160,000** lbs there.
- Participants went up by more than 50% while landings only went up ~20%, suggesting the resource could not support, or could not attract, more effort.  
Or maybe something else: e.g. the weather was just worse in 2018-19, or new 2018-19 participants didn't know the area as well, etc.

## Maine Sea Urchin Fishery — Is Zone 2 Fishing Effort Shifting Westward?

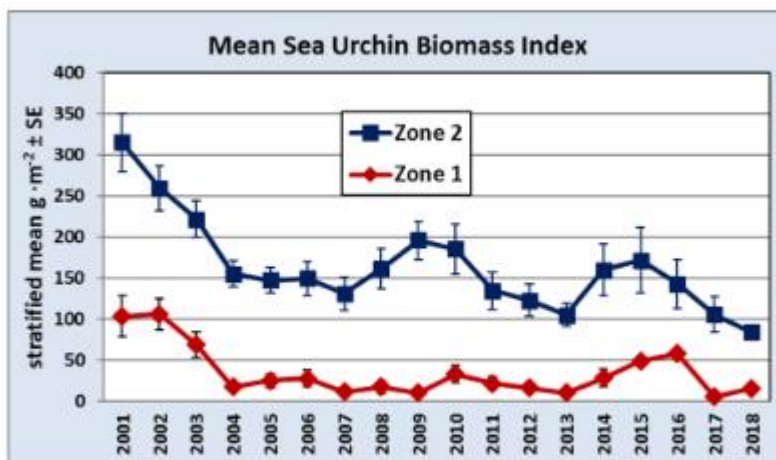


## Maine Sea Urchin Dive Survey

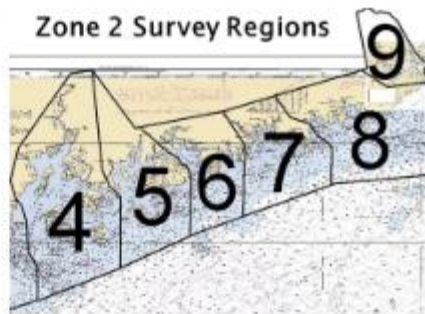


- Conducted annually since 2001 in nine regions; 3 in Zone 1, 6 in Zone 2
- In each region, 16 sites with hard bottom; 5 fixed, 11 random
- At a site, 20 m<sup>2</sup> quadrats are evaluated in each of 3 depths, 0–5m, 5–10m, and 10–15m.

## Maine Sea Urchin Dive Survey

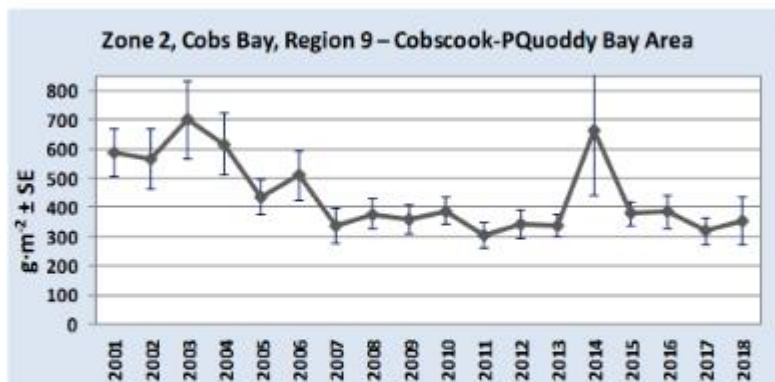


## Maine Sea Urchin Fishery — Why is Zone 2 Fishing Effort Shifting Westward?

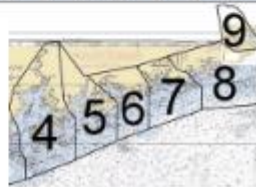


## Why is Zone 2 Fishing Effort Shifting Westward?

### Region 9, Cobscook Bay Area

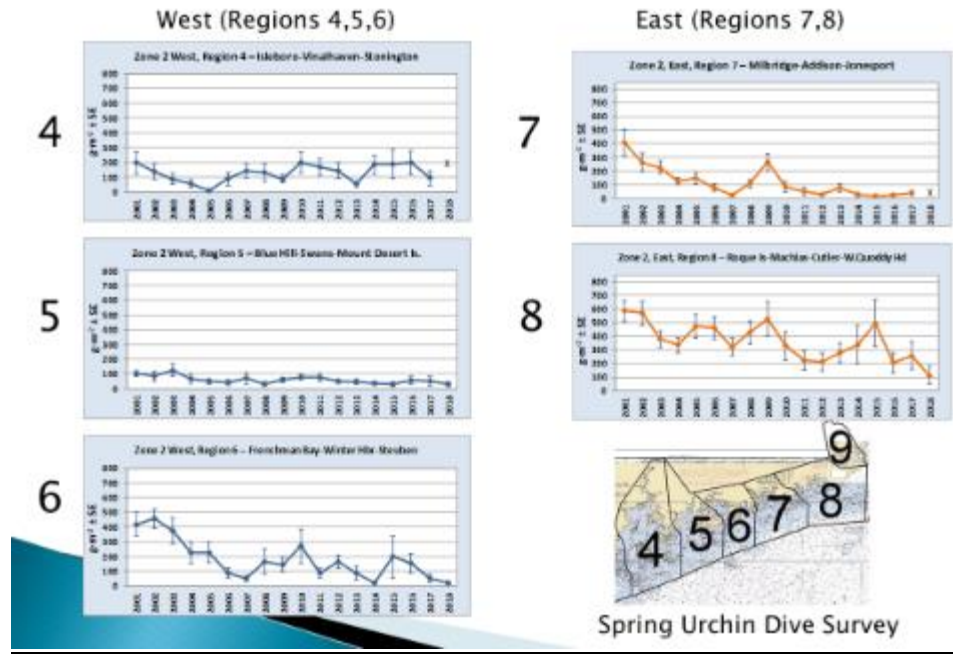


Spring Urchin Dive Survey

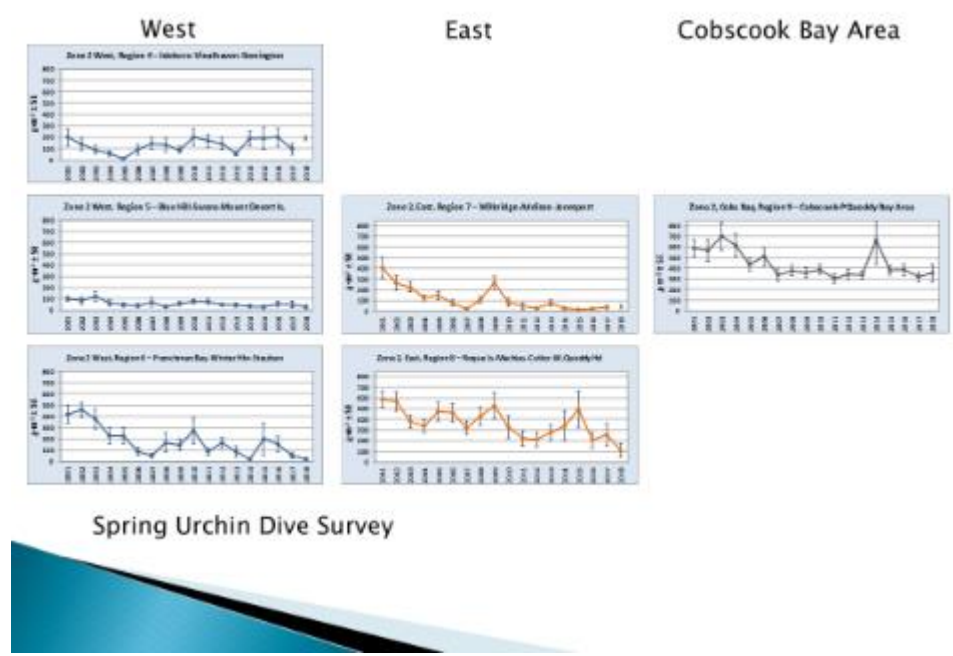




# Why is Zone 2 Fishing Effort Shifting Westward?



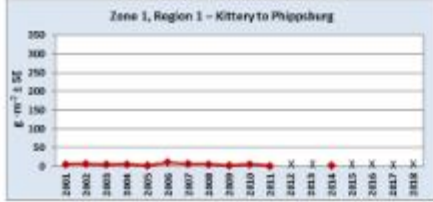
# Why is Zone 2 Fishing Effort Shifting Westward?



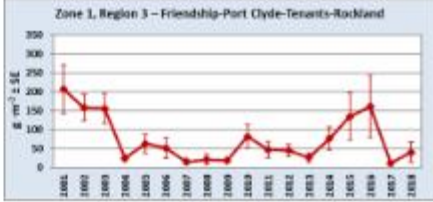
**Note: an “X” on a graph indicates the region was not surveyed that year.**

# Zone 1

## Region 1



## Region 3



## Region 2



Spring Urchin Dive Survey

**Proposed**

**2019-2020 Sea Urchin Season for Maine Zone 1\***

\*A Zone 1 harvester may choose to fish 15 of the available days

= Open

= Closed

**Early Season for Divers, Rakers, and Trappers**

**Late Season for Divers, Rakers, and Trappers**

September 2019							October 2019						
S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S	S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7			1	2	3	4	5
		o	o	o	o				o	o	o	o	
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	o	o	o	o	o		o	o	o	o	o	o	
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
	o	o	o	o	o		o	o	o	o	o	o	
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
	o	o	o	o	o		o	o	o	o	o	o	
29	30						27	28	29	30	31		
	o						o	o	o	o			

December 2019							January 2020						
S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S	S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7				1	2	3	4
	o	o	o	o	o					o	o	o	
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
	o	o	o	o	o		o	o	o	o	o	o	
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
	o	o	o	o	o		o	o	o	o	o	o	
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
	o	o	o	o	o		o	o	o	o	o	o	
29	30	31					26	27	28	29	30	31	
	o	o					o	o	o	o	o	o	

**Early Season for Draggers**

December 2019						
S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	o	o	o	o		
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
	o	o	o	o	o	
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
	o	o	o	o	o	
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
	o		o	o	o	
29	30	31				
	o	o				

February 2020						
S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	o	o	o	o	o	
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
	o	o	o	o	o	
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
	o	o	o	o	o	
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
	o	o	o	o	o	

**Late Season for Draggers**

February 2020						
S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
			o	o	o	
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
			o	o	o	
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
			o	o	o	
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
			o	o	o	

March 2020						
S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
				o	o	
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
	o	o	o	o		
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
	o	o				
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

**Proposed**

**2019-2020 Sea Urchin Season for Maine Zone 2**

\*A Zone 2 harvester may choose to fish 30 of the 40 available days

**O** = Open       = Closed

**Early Season for Divers, Rakers and Trappers**

September 2019							October 2019					November 2019						December 2019										
S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S	S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S	S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S	S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7			1 o	2 o	3	4	5							1	2	1	2	3 o	4 o	5 o	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	6	7	8 o	9 o	10	11	12	3	4	5 o	6 o	7 o	8	9	8	9	10 o	11 o	12 o	13	14	
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	13	14	15 o	16 o	17 o	18	19	10	11	12 o	13 o	14 o	15	16	15	16	17 o	18 o	19 o	20 o	21	
22	23	24 o	25 o	26 o	27	28	20	21	22 o	23 o	24 o	25	26	17	18	19 o	20 o	21 o	22	23	22	23	24	25 o	26 o	27	28	
29	30						27	28	29 o	30 o	31 o			24	25	26 o	27 o	28	29	30	29	30 o	31 o					

**Late Season for Divers, Rakers, and Trappers**

December 2019							January 2020						February 2020						March 2020									
S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S	S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S	S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S	S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S	
1	2	3 o	4 o	5 o	6	7				1	2 o	3	4							1	2	1	2	3 o	4 o	5 o	6	7
8	9	10 o	11 o	12 o	13	14	5	6	7 o	8 o	9 o	10	11	2	3	4 o	5 o	6 o	7	8	8	9	10 o	11 o	12 o	13	14	
15	16	17 o	18 o	19 o	20	21	12	13	14 o	15 o	16 o	17	18	9	10	11 o	12 o	13 o	14	15	15	16	17 o	18 o	19 o	20	21	
22	23	24	25 o	26 o	27 o	28	19	20	21 o	22 o	23	24	25	16	17	18 o	19 o	20	21	22	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	
29	30	31					26	27	28 o	29 o	30 o	31		23	24	25 o	26 o	27 o	28	29	29	30	31					

**Early Season for Draggers**

October 2019							November 2019							December 2019							January 2020						
S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S	S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S	S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S	S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
		1 o	2 o	3 o	4	5						1	2	1	2	3	4	5 o	6 o	7				1	2 o	3 o	4
6	7	8 o	9 o	10 o	11	12	3	4	5 o	6 o	7 o	8	9	8	9	10	11	12 o	13 o	14	5	6	7	8 o	9 o	10	11
13	14	15 o	16 o	17 o	18	19	10	11	12 o	13 o	14 o	15	16	15	16	17	18	19 o	20 o	21	12	13	14	15 o	16 o	17	18
20	21	22 o	23 o	24 o	25	26	17	18	19 o	20 o	21 o	22	23	22	23	24	25	26 o	27 o	28	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
27	28	29 o	30 o	31 o			24	25	26 o	27 o	28	29	30	29	30	31					26	27	28	29	30	31	

March 2020						
S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4 o	5 o	6	7
8	9	10 o	11 o	12 o	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				



**Late Season for Draggers**

December 2019							January 2020							February 2020							March 2020							
S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S	S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S	S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S	S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S	
1	2	3 o	4 o	5 o	6	7				1	2 o	3 o	4								1	1	2	3 o	4 o	5 o	6	7
8	9	10 o	11 o	12 o	13	14	5	6	7 o	8 o	9 o	10	11	2	3	4 o	5 o	6 o	7	8	8	9	10 o	11 o	12 o	13	14	
15	16	17 o	18 o	19 o	20	21	12	13	14 o	15 o	16 o	17	18	9	10	11 o	12 o	13 o	14	15	15	16	17 o	18 o	19	20	21	
22	23	24	25	26 o	27 o	28	19	20	21 o	22 o	23 o	24	25	16	17	18 o	19 o	20 o	21	22	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	
29	30	31					26	27	28 o	29 o	30 o	31		23	24	25 o	26 o	27 o	28	29	29	30	31					

**Proposed**

**2019-2020 Sea Urchin 15 DAY Season for Whiting & Dennys Bays  
LIMITED ACCESS AREA (WDB LAA)**

**○ = Open      □ = Closed**

**Early Season for Divers, Rakers, and Trappers**

September 2019							October 2019							November 2019							December 2019						
S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S	S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S	S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S	S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7			1	2	3	4	5						1	2	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30						27	28	29	30	31			24	25	26	27	28	29	30	29	30	31				

**Late Season for Divers, Rakers, and Trappers**

December 2019							January 2020							February 2020							March 2020						
S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S	S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S	S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S	S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7				1	2	3	4						1	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31					26	27	28	29	30	31	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	29	30	31					

**Early Season for Dragers**

October 2019							November 2019							December 2019							January 2020						
S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S	S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S	S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S	S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5						1	2	1	2	3	4	5	6	7				1	2	3	4
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
27	28	29	30	31			24	25	26	27	28	29	30	29	30	31				26	27	28	29	30	31		

**Late Season for Dragers**

December 2019							January 2020							February 2020							March 2020						
S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S	S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S	S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S	S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7				1	2	3	4						1	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31					26	27	28	29	30	31	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	29	30	31					