

Sea Urchin Zone Council Final Meeting Minutes
May 21, 2025, in Augusta, ME
Remote - Hybrid Meeting Option

DMR staff: Jen Harris, Lulu Bates, Melissa Smith, Corrin Flora

SUZC members present: Tracey Sawtelle (Chair), Brian Preney, Alan Knowlton, Joe Leask and Larry Harris in attendance in person. **Joining Remotely:** Sinuon Chau, Frank Peasley, Lucas Meyers, Teresa Johnson, Steve Eddy, and Justin Gebo.

SUZC members absent: Clint Richardson, Mark Nickerson, and Tim Peterson.

Audience: Chandler Sendek and Luz Kogson joined remotely.

Meeting commenced at 3:07 pm.

Quorum achieved.

Welcome and Introductions

Chair Tracey Sawtelle called the meeting to order at 3pm and introductions took place.

Motion: Brian Preney/T. Sawtelle

To approve meeting minutes as drafted for April 16, 2025.

Voting: Unanimous

2025-2026 Calendar Discussions

- Atchan Tamaki (ISF Processor) reached out to J. Harris with concerns and comments prior to the May meeting, regarding the Zone 2 calendars that were voted and approved by the SUZC at the April 16, 2025, meeting for the 2025-2026 season. He relayed his concerns to Joseph Leask, who presented them to the council. A. Tamaki suggested multiple changes to all of the Zone 2 calendars. Jen Harris had also received concerned comments from a late season Zone 2 Dive tender and diver crew who worked to sell urchins to Sinuon Chau. S. Chau presented the concerns of this dive tender to the council. Primarily, the dive tender was concerned there were not enough four-day dive weeks in December.

All Zone 2 calendars, except the late season Zone 2 dragging calendar, were discussed and voted on by the council to make minor changes to address concerns presented by S. Chau and J. Leask, on behalf of members of industry.

- The Early Season Zone 2 Dive Calendar that was voted and approved by the council at the April 16, 2025, meeting, was reviewed and voted on by council to be altered so that the 17, 24 and 31st of October 2025, were moved to the 17 and 24th of November 2025, and the 22nd of December, 2025.

Motion: J. Leask/Larry Harris

To accept the Zone 2 Early Dive calendar for 2025-2026 as amended.

Voting: Unanimous.

- The Late Season Zone 2 Dive Calendar voted and approved by the council at the April 16, 2025, meeting was reviewed and voted on by council to be altered to move three days from the end of March to December in the amended calendar: March 17, 18 and 19, 2026, were moved to December 12, 19 and 22, 2025.

Motion: Justin Gebo/ B. Preney

To accept the Zone 2 Late Dive calendar for 2025-2026 as amended

Voting: Unanimous.

- The Early Season Zone 2 Drag calendar voted and approved by the council at the April 16, 2025, meeting was reviewed and voted on by council to be altered so that the 10, 11 and 12th of February 2026, were moved to the 7, 14 and 21st of November 2025, and the 31st of December 2025, was moved to the 23rd of December, 2025.

Motion: T. Sawtelle / B. Preney

To accept the Zone 2 Early Drag calendar for 2025-2026 as amended.

Voting: Unanimous.

- The Zone 2 LAA calendars were reviewed and voted on by council members so that they fit the modifications made to the Zone 2: Early Season Dive, Late Season Dive, and Early Season Dragging calendars that had been previously voted on by council members at the April 16, 2025 meeting. These changes included adding the 16th of December, 2025, and removing the 17th of March, 2026, to the Late Season Dive calendar. This also included moving February 12, 2026, to February 4th, 2026, in the Early Season Dragging calendar.

Motion: T. Sawtelle/ J. Leask

To accept the amendments to Zone 2 LAA days for 2025-2026 as reflected in the changes from Zone 2 primary calendars.

Voting: Unanimous.

Center for Cooperative Aquaculture Research (CCAR)

Steve Eddy (See slides below in DMR Presentation) provided a brief presentation of CCAR's research to the council and audience members. Questions were well received by S. Eddy from council members and the audience, ranging from product quality questions to

difficulties with land-based aquaculture and bulking of product, to plans for future research. An item to note in his presentation was CCAR's Bulking experiment, which saw 18 to 25% roe quality. There is room for future discussions of land-based aquaculture, and aquaculture in general, for sea urchins. The overall response to S. Eddy's presentation was very positive.

Other Business –

Discussion on SUZC 8th Appointed Seat Vacancy

Request that SUZC submit names to J. Harris to compile a list of industry members to share with Commissioner Wilson. Names are due June 30.

Discussion on Entry with the Commissioner

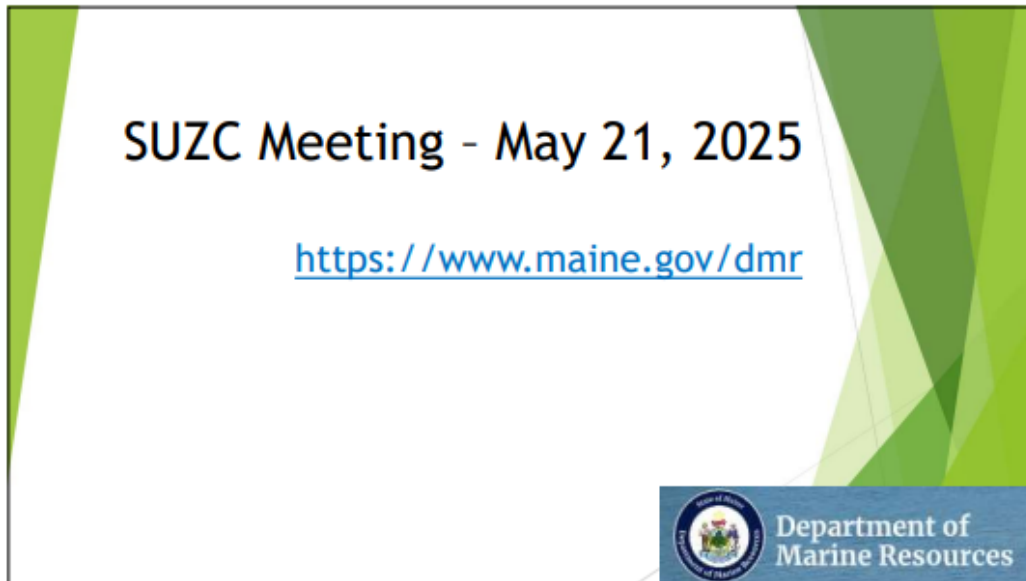
J. Harris discussed that the new Commissioner, Carl Wilson, would like to meet with industry members again soon this year, and suggested three potential dates he would be available to meet with industry and council members. She stated she could reach out to council members separately to determine which date would be best. The council discussed that meeting in Brewer would be the best location. J. Harris described that the Commissioner would like to discuss a limited entry option, potentially in the form of a lottery, with industry members.

There were comments from the council that were not favorable to a lottery idea for limited entry. J. Harris mentioned that these comments would be ideal to share with the Commissioner at the meeting. L. Harris also pointed out to the council this meeting would be a great opportunity to meet the new commissioner, if council members were not already familiar with him, to introduce themselves and have more of a discussion with him in person. It was discussed that in a static position with the resource, the fishery needs to be more careful about allowing new entrants in. B. Preney wanted to know what science thought about it.

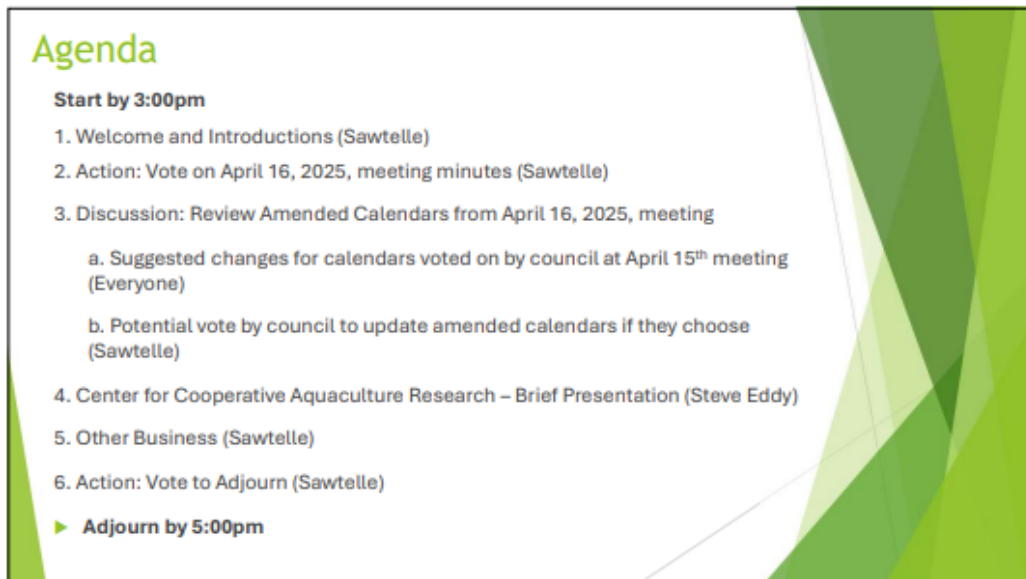
Motion to adjourn:

T. Sawtelle/B. Preney – Adjourn 4:42pm.

Slideshow presented by DMR:



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Zone 1 Calendar

2025 - 2026 DRAFT Sea Urchin Season for Maine Zone 1

- Amended Calendars Voted and Approved by the Sea Urchin Zone Council (SUZC)

- Motions were received and accepted to approve calendars shown here at the SUZC meeting on April 16, 2025, in Brewer.

A Zone 1 harvester may choose to fish 15 of the open days

☒ = open ☐ = closed

One Season for Divers, Rakers, Trappers and Druggers



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Zone 2 LAA Calendar

2025 - 2026 DRAFT Sea Urchin Season for Maine Zone 2 For Whiting & Denny's Bays Limited Access Area

- Amended Calendars Voted and Approved by the Sea Urchin Zone Council (SUZC)

- Motions were received and accepted to approve calendars shown here at the SUZC meeting on April 16, 2025, in Brewer.



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Zone 2 Calendar

- ▶ Amended Calendars Voted and Approved by the Sea Urchin Zone Council (SUZC)
- ▶ Motions were received and accepted to approve calendars shown here at the SUZC meeting on April 16, 2025, in Brewer.



Center for Cooperative Aquaculture
Research (Steve Eddy)



2004 Urchin Nursery System Project
With Larry Harris, Jim Wadsworth, Nick Brown



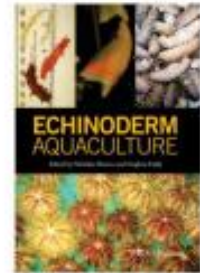
2006 Broodstock Maturation Project & Nursery Out-planting Projects
Nichole Kirchoff



2009 – 2012 Grow-Out Strategies Project
Pamela Fraungruber



2012 -2015 Gonad Enhancement Project
Ken Ung-Wei



Published 2015

2020- 2023
Improved Hatchery Production & Seed
for Growers Project
Dr. Coleen Suckling – University of RI
Dana Morse – Maine Sea Grant
Steve Eddy - CCAR

NORTHEASTERN REGIONAL AQUACULTURE CENTER

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We take pride in the NRAC program's remarkable ability to maximize the impact of federal funds. With our industry-driven research approach, we directly address issues identified at the grassroots level, benefiting both local communities and industries across the nation. Through our coordinated regional teams, we engage in vigorous collaboration to uncover innovative solutions, leveraging the exceptional scientific and outreach talent within the Northeastern Region.

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Luz Kogson
CCAR Sea Urchin Hatchery Manager



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Hatchery Capacity
 ≈ 1.2 million larvae



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Greenhouse Nursery System

- Spawning to settlement: 3-4 weeks
- Pre-conditioned plates and media



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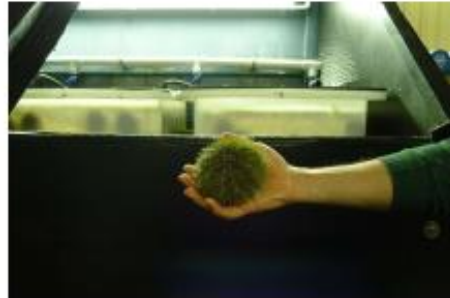


Greenhouse Nursery Capacity \approx 100,000 seed (10-15mm)

- Tremendous Growth Variation
- 1-2 years in Nursery
- Most expensive!

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Current Status



- Last hatchery run 2023
- About 10,000 seed distributed to growers & researchers
- About 5,000 seed remaining from 2023 hatchery run
- Six Maine growers have 1,000 – 5,000 urchins at lease sites
- Currently no new projects in the pipeline
- Proposal submitted for Japan knowledge exchange trip

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Additional Information for SUZC Meeting

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Current Sea Urchin Zone Council

Elected:

Fisherman	Seat
Alan Knowlton	Zone 1 Dragger
Tim Peterson	Tender
Brian Preney	Zone 1 Diver
Justin Gebo	Zone 2 Diver
Lucas Meyers	Buyer
Frank Peasley	Zone 2 Dragger
Sinoun Chau	Processor

Appointed:

Name	Seat
Steve Eddy	Aquaculturist; Center for Cooperative Aquaculture Research (CCAR)
Larry G. Harris	Scientist (Former Zoology Dept UNH, Retired)
Mark Nickerson	Zone 1 Diver
Joe Leask	Zone 2 Diver
Teresa Johnson	Scientist
Clint Richardson	Zone 1 Diver
Tracey Sawtelle	Zone 2 Dragger
Vacant seat	

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Late Season, Zone 2 Diver - Alt Idea

Late Season for Divers, Rakers, and Trappers

December 2025							January 2026							February 2026							March 2026							
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						1	2	3		1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7	8	9	10	11	12	13		4	5	6	7	8	9	10		7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
14	15	16	17	18	19	20		11	12	13	14	15	16	17		14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
21	22	23	24	25	26	27		18	19	20	21	22	23	24		21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31		
28	29	30						25	26	27	28	29	30	31		28	29	30	31									

Move 5 to 6 days from March to create more four-day diving in December

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- Atl Zone 2 idea for all zones

*Early Diver = addition of 1 more day on Thanksgiving week, and 2 days Christmas week.

*Late Diver = addition of 1 more day for Christmas week, and 1 more day for New years week. Also we need 3 days of 17 - 19. We cannot stop processing during a demand.

*Early Draggers. Addition of 1 more day for Thanksgiving week, and 2 days for Christmas week, 3 days for New Years week.

*Late Draggers. Addition of 1 day for Christmas week, 1 day for New Years week, and 2 days for February vacation week.

