

Lobster Zone A Council

June 18, 2019

Goal of Meeting

- Opportunity for Zone Council to digest information and provide feedback to ME DMR
 - Outline of federal regulations impacting the lobster fishery
 - Overview of TRT meeting & required risk reduction
 - Review of draft scenarios which meet this reduction in Maine
 - Hear feedback from Zone Council on draft scenarios
- No final decisions at this meeting

***Industry feedback will help shape these measures and*
the future of the fishery**

MMPA TRT & ESA Overview

Lobster fishery impacted by two federal laws:

1. Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA)

- Focused on reducing serious injury and mortality
 - Action triggered when takes are above Potential Biological Removal (PBR) (0.9)
 - Take Reduction Team (TRT) lives under this Act
 - April 2019 TRT agreement to reduce risk by 60%
- > **Our focus today is how ME should achieve this reduction**

2. Endangered Species Act (ESA) (ASMFC?)

- Considers broader impacts on right whales including habitat changes, reproduction, sub-lethal affects
- Biological Opinion determines whether a fishery is jeopardizing an endangered species
- 50% line reduction will go towards avoiding jeopardy

MMPA and the Take Reduction Plan

- 60% risk reduction goal based on Takes vs PBR
 - 2017 Stock Assessment (2011-2015)
 - Population size = 455 Takes = 5.36 PBR = 0.9
 - 4.55 entanglement (0.81 ship strikes)
 - 2018 Stock Assessment (2012-2016)
 - Population size = 445 Takes = 5.56 PBR = 0.9
 - 5.15 entanglement (0.41 ship strikes)

Timeline For These Regulations

TRT Meeting	April 2019
ME DMR staff develop draft scenarios	May 2019
LAC Meeting #1	May 28, 2019
Zone Council Meetings round #1	June 4-27, 2019
ME DMR staff respond to comments/suggestions on draft scenarios	July 2019
NMFS Scoping Meetings in Maine	July 2019
Zone Council Meetings round #2	August 2019
LAC Meeting #2	September 2019
ME DMR submits proposal to NMFS	September 2019
NMFS Proposed Rule Published & Public Comment	Winter 2019/2020
Biological Opinion Released	Winter 2020?
Implementation of New Regs	2021?

Foundation of the TRT Agreement

The consensus agreement from the TRT was that each state or LCMA meet the required 60% risk reduction in their jurisdiction.

Diversity Is Important

- 2012 Lobster Community Meetings - discussions unanimous that maintaining diversity of ME lobster fleet was important to the future of this fishery (licensing conversation)
 - **Want to support regional differences in fishing practices**
 - **Want to support Maine's high diversity of lobster businesses (small inshore to larger nearshore to offshore vessels)**



Maine Draft Proposal from TRT

To achieve 60% risk reduction target:

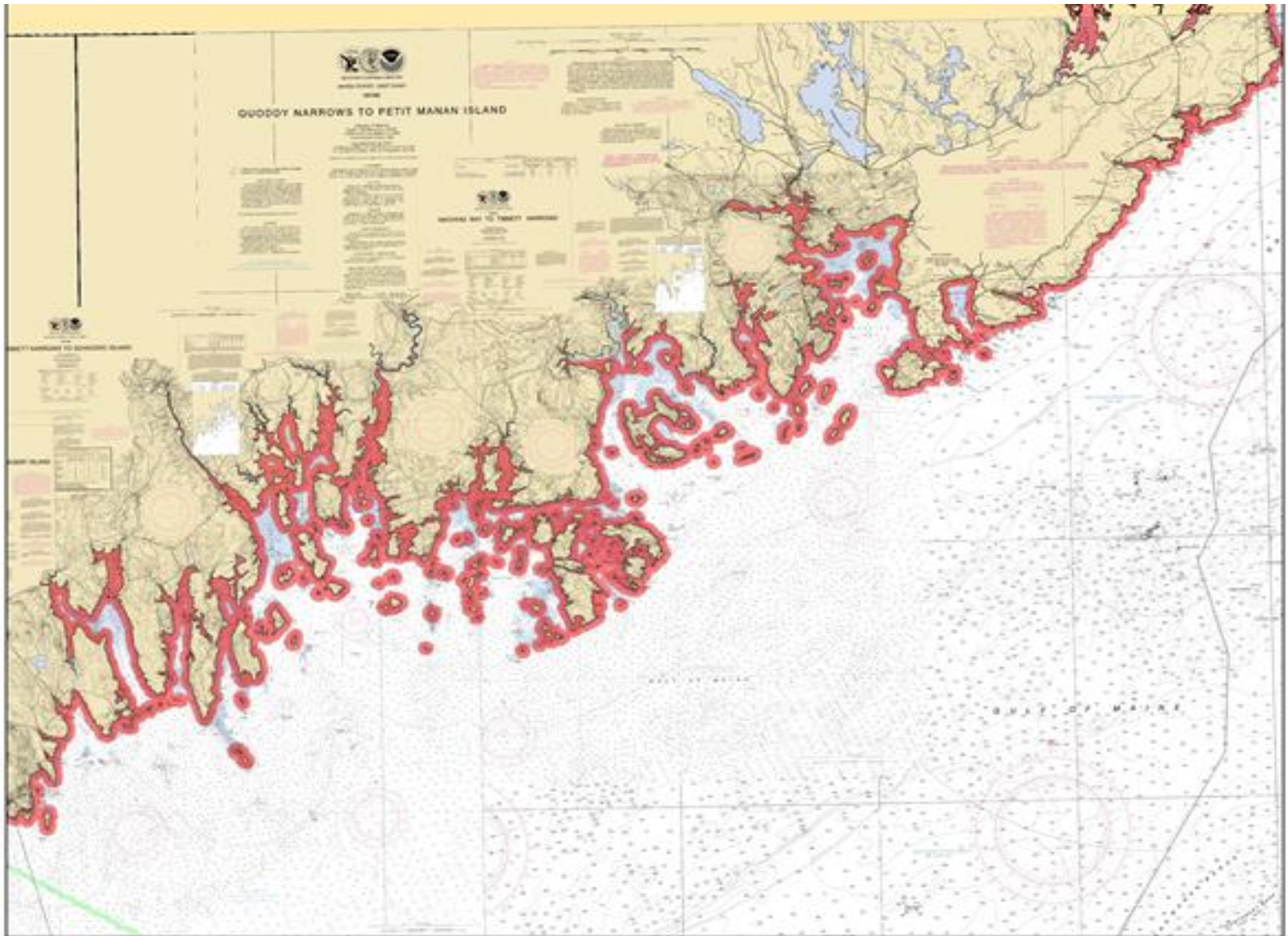
- 50% Vertical Line Reductions
= *50% risk reduction*
- Toppers in Federal Waters
= *10% risk reduction*
 - 1,700 lbs breaking strength equivalent
 - 75% of length
- *TRT also considering*
 - *ME only gear markings*
 - *Vessel tracking in federal waters*
 - *100% reporting*

**What was avoided at the TRT was Closed Areas
and Ropeless Fishing**

Calculations to Reach 50% VL Reductions

- Data used includes:
 - 100% dealer reporting (active permits)
 - 10% harvester reporting (trap config., distance from shore, number of traps in water)
- Can estimate by month, by zone/distance from shore
- Baseline = 2017
- Draft scenarios developed considering configurations and trap limits based on distance from shore

1/4 Mile Buffer – Zone A Configuration Exemption



Framework of Maine Plan

- Vertical line reduction (50%)
- Toppers in federal waters (10%)
- 1/4 NM Buffer
- Maine gear marking
- 100% reporting
- Fleet diversity and safety is important

Possible Scenarios

LAC
Request

Traps	400	500	600	800	350	400	600	600
Distance								
State Waters	Triples 57%	Triples 51%	Quads 57%	Quads 53%	Pairs 48%	Pairs 43%	Triples 46%	Triples 46%
3-12	10's 48%	15's 54%	15's 47%	20's 52%	10's 54%	15's 61%	15's 47%	20's 58%
12+	20's 47%	30's 56%	30's 49%	40's 55%	20's 53%	30's 64%	30's 49%	40's 62%
Total Reduction	56%	51%	56%	53%	49%	45%	46%	47%

State/Federal Hybrid Scenarios - LAC Request

Distance	Traps		
	300/600	400/600	600/800
State Waters	Pairs 54%	Triples 57%	Triples 46%
3-12	15's 47%	15's 47%	20's 52%
12+	30's 49%	30's 49%	40's 55%
Total Reduction	53%	56%	46%

Definition of most restrictive rule to be determined

What is left in the tool box to get to the 50% mark?

- For scenarios between 45-49%, we can add:
 - Weak toppers in State Waters
 - Seasonal Closures

What to Expect at August Meeting

- Second round of Zone Council Meetings in August
- Zone Council will be asked to identify a preferred scenario
- Important that fishermen have discussions within your Zone and District ahead of the August Zone Council meeting

Zone Council Discussion

- What scenarios can you live with?
- What scenarios can you not live with?
- Is there a scenario that stands out as preferred when compared to the others?
- Do you have alternative scenarios you would like to suggest?

Alternative scenarios must be submitted to

ME DMR by July 15th