

RIMFC Lobster Advisory Panel  
Coastal Institute, URI Bay Campus, Narragansett, RI  
October 26, 2011

**Meeting Attendees:**

Advisory Panel members (\* = primary voting member):

Jeff Grant, Chairman

\*Peter Brodeur (Trap - Inshore)

\*Lanny Dellinger (Trap - Inshore)

\*Todd Sutton (Trap – Inshore)

Others:

Stephen Parente, Lincoln Seddon (and wife), Representative Teresa Tanzi (and aid), Thomas Angell (RIDFW)

There were 10 people in attendance (see list above).

Meeting convened at 6:35 PM by new Lobster AP chairman J. Grant; **there was not a quorum of the Lobster Advisory Panel present, but the chairman decided to hold the meeting;** will try to develop a consensus of those in attendance for any recommendations. This will be the third meeting on this issue and recommendations need to be finalized.

**AGENDA:**

**1. Review / discuss recommendations from 4/21/2011 “Trap Definition” Working Group meeting.**

T. Angell briefly reviewed the issue of defining lobster traps versus other types of traps/pots and associated issues.

- Enforcement’s concerns about un-tagged traps/pots being used to fish for lobster and difficulties encountered trying to enforce the lobster regulations; people without a lobster trap allocation deploying traps/pots and calling them something other than a lobster trap, but are actually targeting lobsters.
- Out-of-state recreational fishers being able to fish in RI state waters with an unlimited amount of “traps/pots”.
- Concerns of lobster trap fishery for increased trap fishing effort as it relates to current lobster fishery management proposals for a 10% reduction in exploitation and vertical line issues involved in whale protection.

The recommendations made by the Trap Definition / Trap Type working group were reviewed and discussed (see Attachment #1).

Comments / Discussion / Recommendations:

- The Lobster Advisory Panel should not recommend imposing regulatory requirements (i.e. tagging) on other “trap/pot” fisheries (scup, black sea bass, whelk, crab, etc.), however there is consensus and agreement regarding Recommendation 1 to require all traps/pots that are fished within RI state waters to be tagged to identify which fishery those traps/pots are being used for.
- There are major concerns with Recommendations 2 and 3; concerns about the potential to increase exploitation in the lobster fishery; concerns about increasing the number of vertical lines in the water and the risk for increasing interactions with whales; increased administrative burden to provide and track “miscellaneous trap/pot” tags;



## ATTACHMENT #1

### RIMFC LOBSTER ADVISORY PANEL

October 26, 2011

#### SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS FROM 4/21/2011 “TRAP DEFINITION / TRAP TYPE” WORKING GROUP MEETING:

The Lobster Advisory Panel requests other trap/pot fisheries consider requiring special trap tags, such as are used for the lobster trap fishery, to identify the specie being targeted by that trap/pot. The Lobster Advisory Panel requests that the RIMFC task the other advisory panels that have associated trap/pot fisheries with considering trap/pot tagging requirements for those fisheries.

1. All pots/traps fished in RI state waters must be tagged to identify which fishery they are being deployed for (i.e. the lobster trap fishery or “other pot/trap fisheries)
2. Add “Miscellaneous Pot/Trap” endorsement to commercial licenses and recreational lobster license gear type options; endorsement fee should cover the cost of producing/supplying “miscellaneous pot/trap” tags; this will require approval by the General Assembly
3. Limit of 300 “miscellaneous pots/traps” per license / license endorsement
4. All “miscellaneous pots/traps” must have an escape vent of equal or greater size than the escape vent required for the lobster trap fishery, with the exception of conch, eel, and green crab pots/traps; eel and green crab pots/traps must have a 3” x 3” biodegradable panel (“ghost” panel) that can be incorporated into the pot/trap anywhere except on the bottom of the pot/trap
5. Need to define Eel, Conch, and Green Crab pot/trap
6. Limit the amount of lobster by-catch that can be kept from “miscellaneous pots/traps”; recommend a limit of 20 lobsters per day
7. Mobile Gear (otter trawl and gillnet) lobster by-catch will remain at 100 lobsters per day or up to 500 lobsters for fishing trips lasting 5 days or longer
8. Recommend to limit the number of lobsters that can be taken per day by recreational trap and diver licensees to 8 lobsters per day
9. Recreational lobster “miscellaneous pot/trap” endorsement limited to 5 “miscellaneous pots/traps”

#### Additional Recommendations:

- Keep the conch fishery separate from finfish/crab fisheries; maximum number of 250 pots/traps for the conch fishery
- Conch, eel, and green crab pots/traps will be exempt from escape vent regulations
- Trap tags for the conch fishery will be a different color from “miscellaneous pot/trap” trap tags for finfish/crab fisheries