



Surveying in the Near Shore Environment: Opportunities & Challenges (a.k.a. Headaches & Migraines)

Sally Sherman – Maine DMR
Chris Bonzek - VIMS

NEAMAP

North East Area Monitoring
and Assessment Program

NEAMAP: Framework

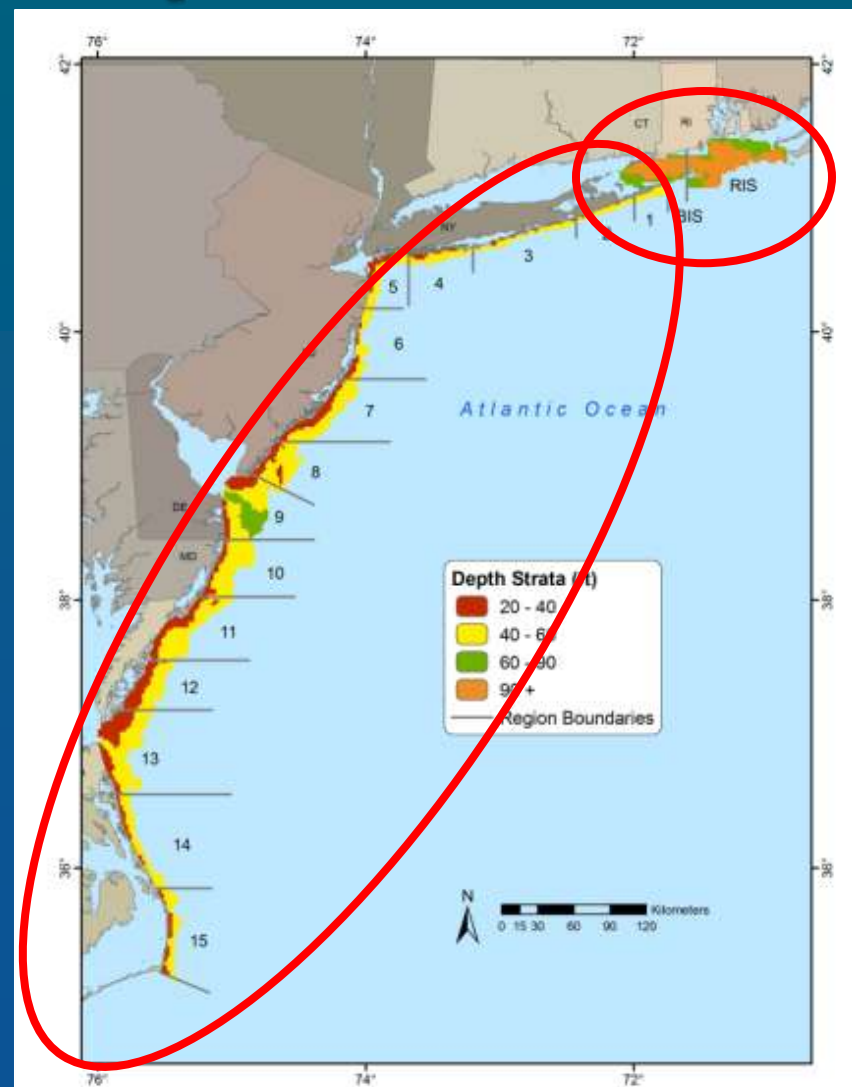
- **Conceived in ~1998 - ASMFC**
- **Dual Goals**
 - **Coordinate existing survey work**
 - **Fill sampling gaps / under sampled areas**

NEAMAP: Timeline

- 1998 – 2004
 - Survey Design & Committee Work
- 2003 - 2006
 - NEFSC Trawl Advisory Panel
- 2005
 - ACFCMA 'Plus-up' dollars allocated to Pilot Survey

NEAMAP: Survey Basics

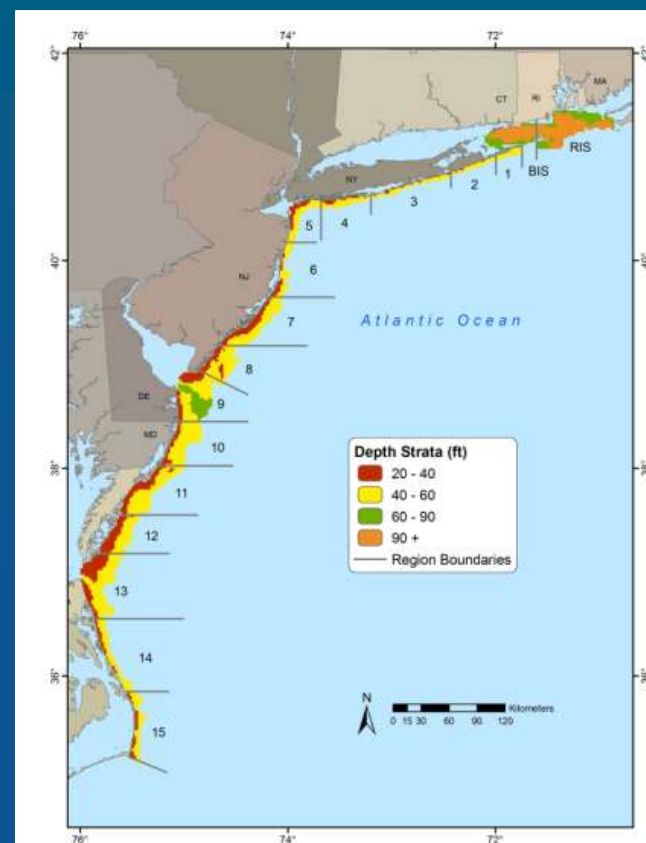
Where?



Near Shore – Shallow Water Sampling

Challenges:

- Shoreline!
- Shallow Water Hangs
- Vessel Traffic
- Boat Effects
- Scoping



Near Shore – Shallow Water Sampling

Positives:

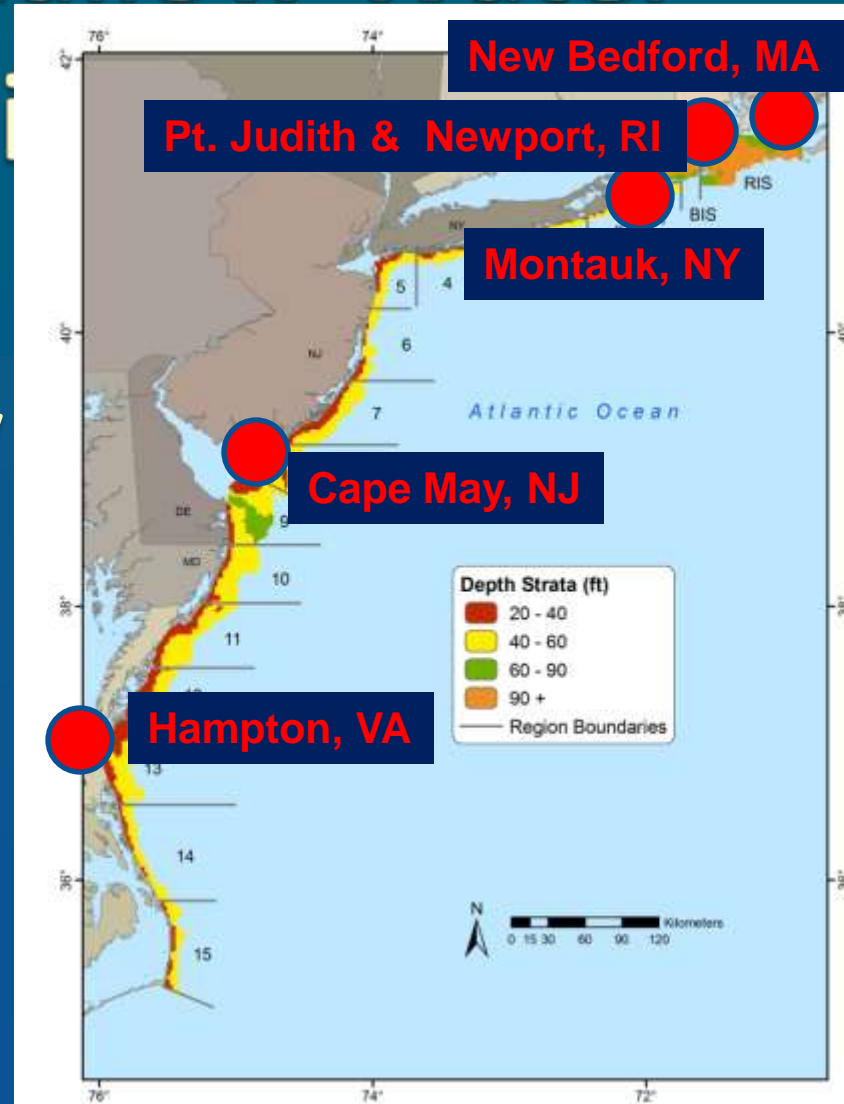
- **Effective Sampling – 25% - 90% of the water column**
- **Manageable Logistics**
 - **Crew Changes / Supply Replenishment**
 - **Shorter Between-Station Distances (8-12 Sta/Day)**
- **Fewer Hangs (Known Areas / Fisherman Advice)**



Near Shore – Shallow Water Sampling

Positives:

- Survey Transparency
 - Stakeholders
 - Managers
 - Press
 - Policy Makers

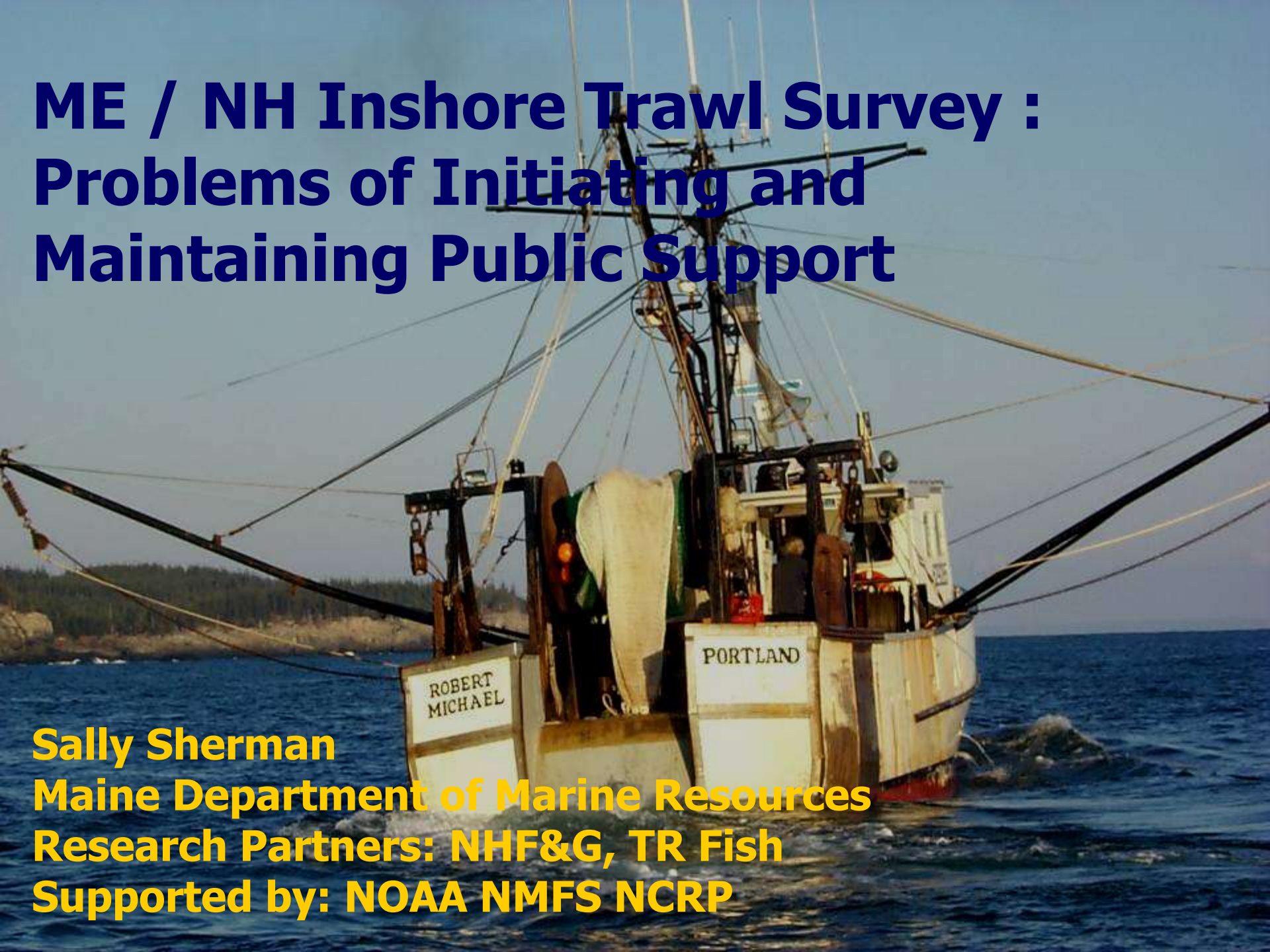


VIMS

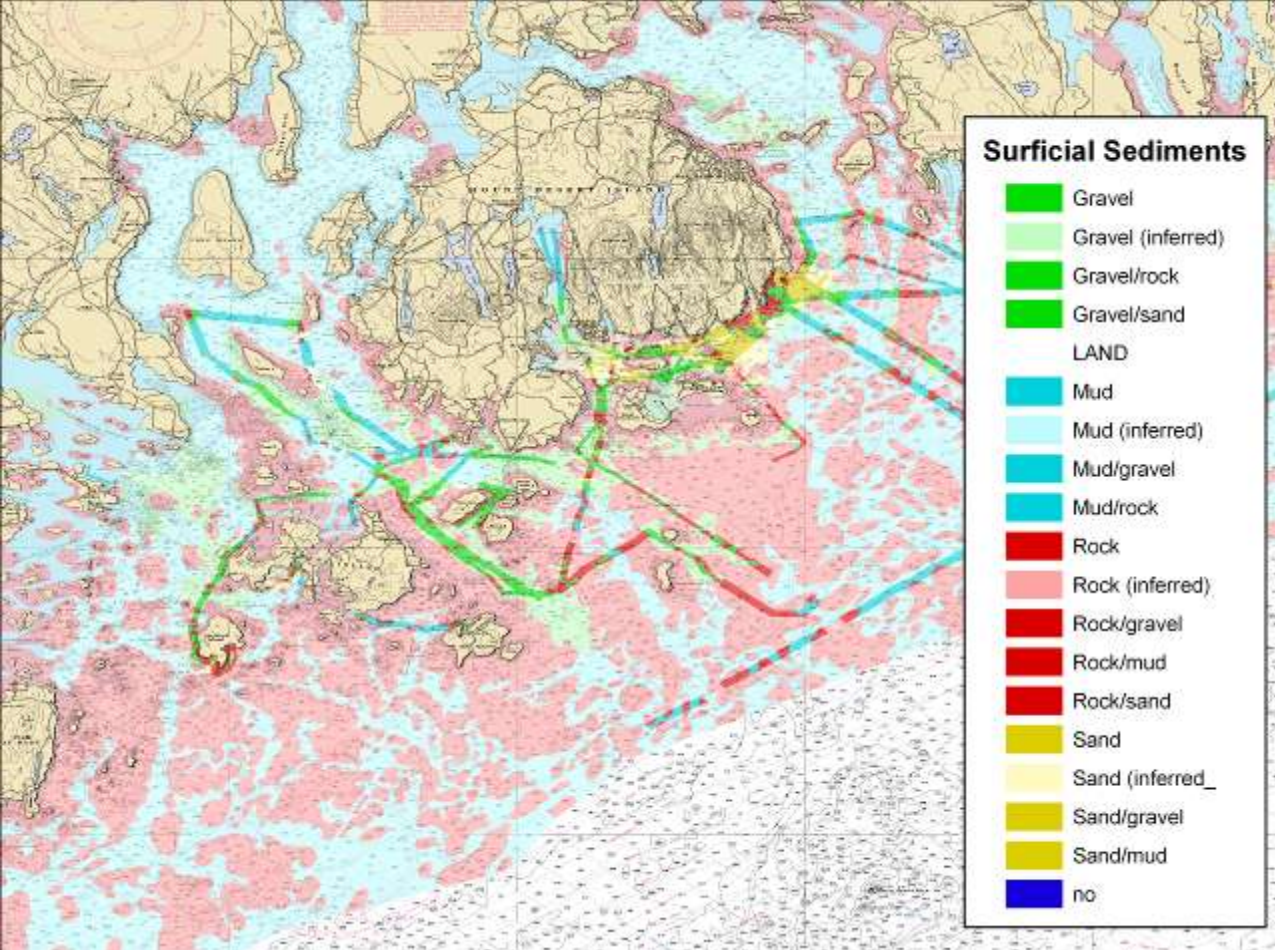


ME / NH Inshore Trawl Survey : Problems of Initiating and Maintaining Public Support

Sally Sherman
Maine Department of Marine Resources
Research Partners: NHF&G, TR Fish
Supported by: NOAA NMFS NCRP



Initial Challenges



Primary Public Outreach

- Meetings with project collaborators
- Meetings with “Trawl Advisors” about towable areas
- Met with each Lobster Zone Council
- Articles in fisheries magazines
- Letters to all lobstermen
- ‘Local knowledge’ observers
- Videotaping of all haul-backs to assure transparency

Winter/Spring 2001

The background image shows the deck of a fishing vessel. Several crew members are visible, some wearing orange protective gear. A large green net is being hoisted by a crane, and a large white spool of rope is visible on the left. The scene is set against a clear blue sky.

- **2 Proposed Bills in the Maine Legislature to ban the survey**
- **'Lukewarm' responses to summarized trawl data**
- **"Lobster survey" misinformation**
- **Lobstermen ask Marine Patrol to arrest us for molesting lobster gear**

Wednesday, October 3, 2001

COLUMN: *Bill Nemitz*

State pulls plug on hit fishery video

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"It's hard to say which video clip Ron Huber found more riveting - the deckhand dropping a short-nosed sturgeon on its endangered proboscis Or the entire fishing crew howling as one member, just off camera, apparently undoes his pants and moons them from the pilothouse.

But of one thing Huber is certain: Reality TV doesn't hold a candle to raw footage of Maine's semiannual Inshore Trawl Survey. And now that the state has pulled the plug on its video camera, Huber can only imagine what scenes are going unrecorded out there on the vast Gulf of Maine.

"Socially, the tapes are a vivid snapshot of the Maine fishery, circa 2001," said Huber, a longtime environmental gadfly from Rockland.

"Scientifically, they provide raw data - right there for everyone to see."

Or not....."

".....state officials videotaped every haul – primarily to persuade ornery lobstermen that the trawler would not foul their traps....."

Unanticipated Problems

- **Penobscot Bay Watch (PBW) denied access to remaining videos**
- **Freedom of Information Act request by PBW**
- **John Sowles sued by PBW for ‘official oppression’** (a public servant acting with intention to benefit himself or another or to harm another)
- **DMR Commissioner and ME AG’s office statement (FOIA)**

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Conflict in Corea: Lobstermen Halt DMR Drag

BY AARON PORTER

GOULDSBORO—Tempers flared Monday when a conflict between local lobstermen and a Department of Marine Resources research dragger came to a head off Corea.

The protest was not violent: A flotilla of lobster boats surrounded the 55-foot dragger *Robert Michael* as its crew prepared to conduct a mile-long tow, part of the state's inshore trawl survey.

"We were practically unable to maneuver," said Sally Sherman, chief scientist on the *Robert Michael*, who conceded that she was shaken by the event.

Dana Tracy, a lobsterman from Corea who participated in the protest, said the dragger and its captain were never impeded by the lobstermen.

"We did nothing to threaten him," Tracy said. "If he'd towed there was nothing we could have done but watch."

Tracy and lobsterman Arvin Young, who also participated, said the protest hadn't been planned. But when lobstermen tending their traps Monday morning saw the dragger prepar-

ing to tow in the lobster rich waters off Corea, they made hasty arrangements over the radio.

Between 15 and 30 lobster

part in the protest.

Tracy and Young said the fleet followed the dragger from one designated drag site off Corea to

but no drag was ever carried out. In the afternoon the *Robert Michael* returned to port.

Others finally just gave up and

Marine Patrol Lt. Alan Talbot. He said a Marine Patrol vessel was standing by through the entire incident, which he described

part of lobstermen.

"They didn't do anything we could charge anyone with," he added.

"This was a show of disapproval," Tracy said.

The message, he said, was clear: "We don't approve of what you're doing."

The inshore trawl survey is a Department of Marine Resources effort to gather data on groundfish populations in Maine's coastal waters. Sample drags are taken at intervals along the coast twice a year. The first series of drags was last fall, and it was repeated last spring.

John Sowles, director of ecology for the department, said the trawl survey will be done twice a year until an alternative means of assessment is developed.

He said the state has needed local stock data for at least the past decade. Without it, fisheries management policy is set using extrapolated data from Massachusetts and offshore stocks.

He said the department didn't expect the opposition it ran into Monday.

"We were blindsided," He said. "I would have rather had some-

body give me a call and tell me they were upset."

Tracy said the lobstermen's immediate disapproval is with the department's practice of dragging in lobster-rich waters at a time when egg-bearing lobsters are plentiful close to shore.

In an impromptu study done by 13 Corea lobstermen Tuesday, 401 egg-bearing lobsters were brought up in traps, 298 of which had been previously notched by lobstermen to connote their egg bearing potential. Another 103 were newly notched Tuesday before they were returned to the water.

Tracy said it just doesn't make sense to risk damaging so many egg-bearing lobsters when a month's delay in the drag schedule would find most lobsters moved to deeper water.

"Obviously it's not going to ruin the whole lobster industry, but it's not going to do it any good," he said.

There's also an element of ongoing animosity between lobstermen and the department.

"We've been working for 30 years to build this industry up,"

Continued on Page 10



PHOTO COURTESY OF FISHERMEN'S VOICE

The dragger *Robert Michael*, chartered by the Department of Marine Resources to conduct a coastal trawl survey of

groundfish stocks, is surrounded by members of the Corea lobster fleet Monday during a nonviolent protest of state-

sponsored dragging at this point in the lobster season. The protest halted survey activity for the day.

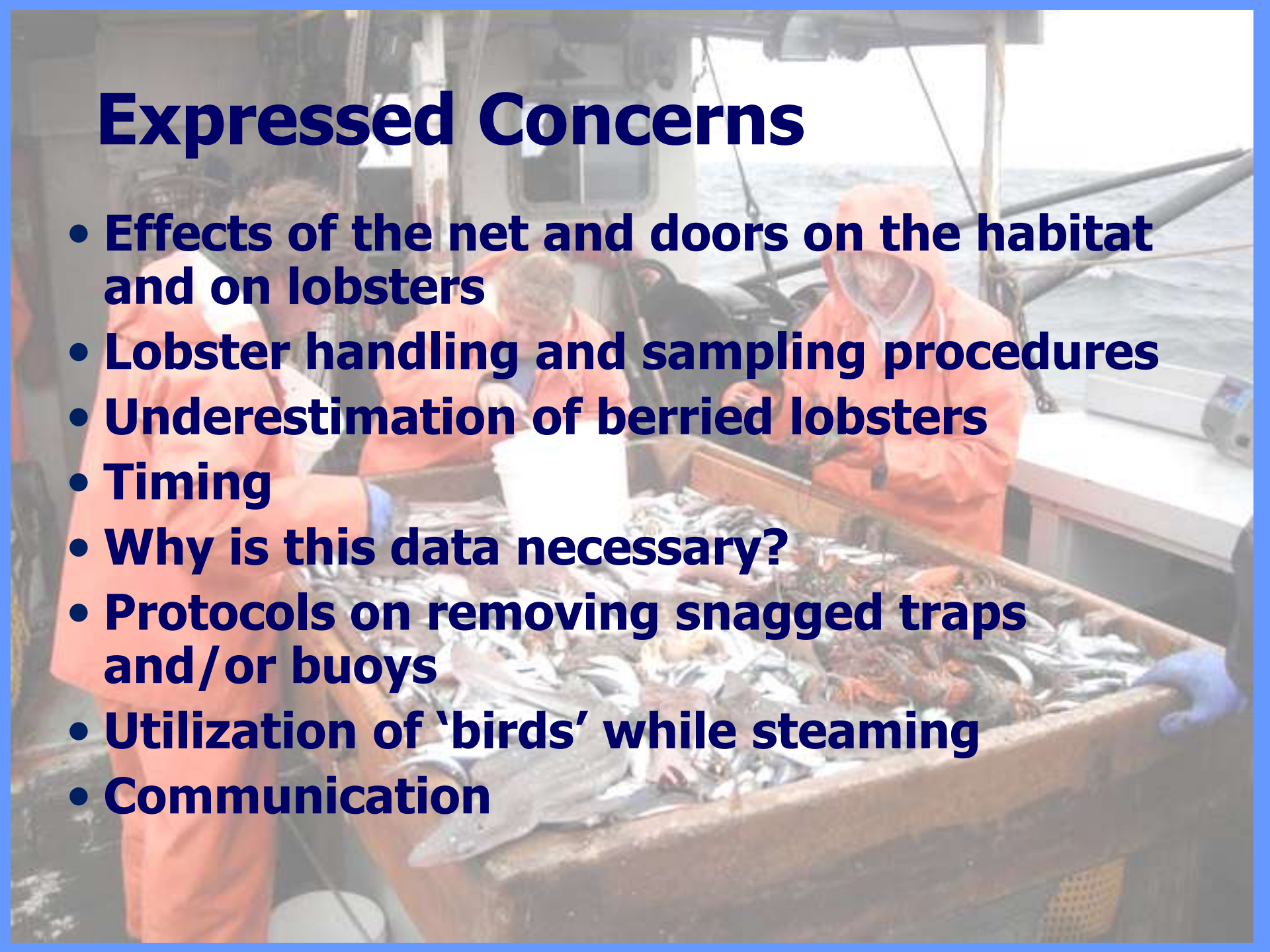


**Over 30 boats attempted,
and succeeded in stopping
our work**



Expressed Concerns

- Effects of the net and doors on the habitat and on lobsters
- Lobster handling and sampling procedures
- Underestimation of berried lobsters
- Timing
- Why is this data necessary?
- Protocols on removing snagged traps and/or buoys
- Utilization of 'birds' while steaming
- Communication



Direct Responses

- **Two special cruises – Net and doors camera work to assess habitat damage and camera and diver work to assess lobster damage**
- **Several small meetings with 'Downeast' lobstermen and full circuit of Zone Councils again**
- **Revised policy on lobster handling onboard**
- **Revised policy on handling snagged lobster gear and steaming**
- **Meeting with PBW, NMFS, and DELA**
- **Several presentations at meetings such as Maine Fisherman's Forum**

The background image shows various pieces of fishing gear. In the center is a large, orange, circular plastic basket with a grid-like pattern, filled with water. To its left is a green plastic crate. Above the basket is a red bucket. To the right is a white bucket. A yellow and red bag is visible on the left. A metal rope or cable runs diagonally across the scene. The overall setting appears to be a dock or a boat deck.

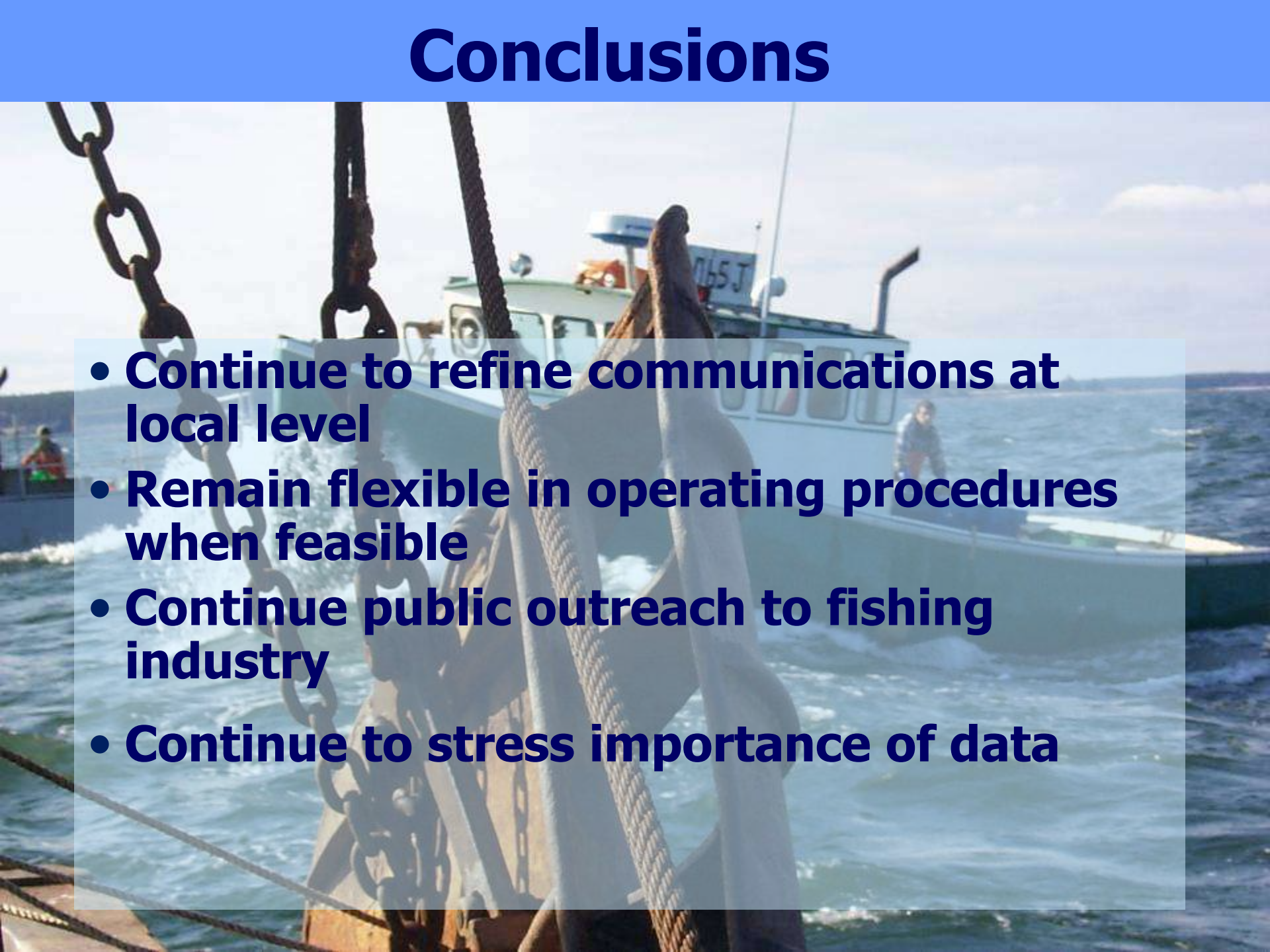
Spring 2002

•PBW and Downeast Lobstermen's Association demand we return the 2002-03 NMFS grant money and the 2003-04 money be taken away.

Cooperation in Some Areas



Conclusions

- 
- **Continue to refine communications at local level**
 - **Remain flexible in operating procedures when feasible**
 - **Continue public outreach to fishing industry**
 - **Continue to stress importance of data**