

Date: February 24, 2023

Facilitators: Roger Berle (Cliff Island) and Brenna Cohen (Island Institute)

Attendees:

MIC: Kendra Chubbuck (Co-Chair, Isle au Haut), Jennifer Fox (Great Diamond), Ingrid Gaither (Cranberry Isles), Mark Green (Long Island)

GLIA: Peter Huston (South Bass)

Legislators: Christina Breen (Sen. King), Kelly Cotiaux (Sen. Collins), State Sen. Nicole Grohoski (Hancock Cty. unbridged islands, Stonington, Deer Isle)

Island Fellows: Mia Colloredo-Mansfield (North Haven)

Island Institute: Nick Battista, Jeff Frank, Stephanie Welch, Alex Zipparo, Bria White (notetaker), Lisa Millette

Update on lobster regulations: Nick

In December, 6 year regulatory pause put into effect. This was a political compromise based on underlying science on lobster and whales that is a little shaky. Climate change is a huge driver and hasn't been well accounted for.

Benefits and impacts of pause:

- Allows fishermen and scientists to collect data on where the whales actually are. Science can catch up and assess the real threat of lobster to whales
 - Important b/c of significant change in the Labrador Current/ coastal ecosystem that has warmed our waters
- Funding that comes with this pause includes largest allocation of money for research, which puts the resources to work to help address knowledge/data gaps and helps us put our finger on what can be done.
- The previous expectation of a 90% risk reduction would have had significant impact, while a 75%- 80% risk reduction target would not pause fishing to such a great extent. Though the regulations are less than they would have been, significant regulatory changes will come after 6 years. Don't expect this kind of regulatory pause to happen again. Climate change impacts played a large role in allowing the current pause.

II's response:

- Looking at communities most vulnerable to these impacts and islands are especially vulnerable. The future looks grim without a fishery.
- Protecting our WWFs, critical economic assets, by helping people get into aquaculture. These sorts of changes/transitions could take at least 5 years.
 - [Land for ME's Future](#)- looking into WWF protections. Matching grant funding available - to local land trusts and community org.s. LFMF secures commercial fishing frontage /potential commercial land to support the resilience of our WWFs. (Roger)
 - There is a bill working through the legislature now, which would allow land trusts (local community LTs committed to protecting character of a community) to hold a WWF covenant. State's acquisition of land is not responsive enough to the pace of real estate sales. This bill puts those processes in the hands of local entities and gives them the resources to act.

- Sen. Grohoski supports this legislation - thrilled to be working with federal partners to make this happen, contact her with questions and ideas
- [More info](#) on this new tool to preserve working waterfronts
- Broadband expansion efforts across islands and coast - getting fast, affordable internet to all vulnerable communities before these regulatory changes happen to enable these communities to continue carrying on.
- Looking at providing financial tools, planning support for those who've taken on debt to take part in the fishery (for boats, gear), especially for younger fishermen
 - boat prices are low, inflation of gas, lobster prices down- loans are already going in arrears

Community Data:

Licenses & landings

- In 8 communities more than 20% of residents have a lobster license, in an additional 9 communities more than 10% of residents have one.
- 4 ports accounted for more than 25% of lobster landings: Stonington, Vinalhaven, Friendship, Beals
 - 11 Communities accounted for more than 50% of landings: Stonington, Vinalhaven, Friendship, Beals, Spruce Head, Portland, Harpswell, Southwest Harbor, Milbridge, Harrington, Steuben

II's Business Resilience Team is assessing how to assist the lobster industry and the communities impacted (Jeff):

- Focusing on Infrastructure and asset protection
- Currently IDing critical pieces of WWF infrastructure that could possibly support diversification of the industry
- Providing tech assistance, funding, financial training, diversification to aquaculture or other opportunities
- Providing business resilience grants (local businesses) and workforce grants (individual and families) support to these goals

Legislative Updates:

Kelly Cotiaux (Sen. Collins): [Congressionally Directed Spending \(CDS\) Requests](#) deadline 3/15/23
Please contact us and offer your experiences/stories. If there is anything you need, contact us at 207.945.0417 or kelly_cotiaux@collins.senate.gov (email is best). There are no dumb questions. Fuel assistance now available and is being distributed through CAP agencies thanks to \$6 million in LIHEAP funding. This can help families affected by fishery's impacts.

Christina Breen (Sen. King): Senator King's [CDS Portal](#) accepted applications. Due Date: 3/17/23, 5pm. Christina is rep for Hancock, Waldo and Knox Counties.

Island projects have successfully been funded in the past (VH, Portland Harbor, Isle Au Haut). More communities should apply! Maine will be getting more attention this year. Fire stations, municipal buildings, historical preservation - have all been well supported in the past. Long Island received significant support to rebuild their wharf. Interested in applying? Have a fairly developed project idea and an idea of what it would cost- need more than just an idea. Senators' offices have grants specialists who can help you assess if your project is a good fit for this funding (or possibly other state or federal funding opportunities). Needing a feasibility study or planning can be included in funding. You need to know where you are in your process.

Here's an [article](#) about a wharf on Swan's Island that was funded by the last round of LFMF.

As islanders, the infrastructure needs are overwhelming but there is a significant lack of capacity/soft skills to apply for these opportunities, do the legwork needed to secure the funding. General paving of non-state roads in rural communities is a funding vortex and a huge need. Isle Au Haut especially vulnerable because of limited tax base due to half the island as national park. There is some funding support on the energy side. People are just beginning to realize that communities need support helping to form project ideas that are fundable- across state and local- and that can qualify for these funding streams. Many of the GLIA islands have a State Route designation for applying for additional funds. On South Bass, we pre buy our gas in September and it is purchased and stored allowing a fixed price per gallon for winter months.

Island Institute updates:

Fellows applications open – due March 17. <https://www.islandinstitute.org/priorities/strong-leadership/fellows/>

Island updates:

Great Cranberry – Ingrid:

The general store that served both Great Cranberry and Islesford was destroyed by fire. The owners are committed to rebuild, but it will take a long time due to the complications of building on island. The loss of the store is devastating – people lost jobs, food and supplies are harder to access.

This year, elementary students from Great Cranberry and Islesford are attending the Longfellow School on Great Cranberry. There are not many new students in the pipeline which is always concerning for the future of an island school

Great Diamond – Jennifer:

The December storm caused damage on the island. The island has committees that are working on broadband and sea level rise. The broadband committee has brought together residents from the private/condominium part of the island along with those who live along public roads.

Long Island - Mark

It's budget season, and waterfront infrastructure like wharves, docks and piers are an important part of the conversation. The town took over ownership of the pier, which is important infrastructure for fishermen and aquaculture gear. The pier needs to be rebuilt, but would have

to be 6 feet higher, which means that fishermen will not want to use it. Ponce's Wharf has been condemned. Mariner's Landing (ferry landing) is also in need of repairs, and wave breaks need to be rebuilt. At the same, there is concern about who will use the working waterfront because there is no housing for younger fishermen. The town is considering adding staff hours to work on the housing shortage. The planning board is also working on housing issues and [LD 2003](#). Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) are currently permitted on the island, but only for year round use by family members. ADUs are not permitted under the proposed legislation, LD 2003.

North Haven – Mia:

The town approved a \$5 million 20 year bond in December to fund a new fire station, and the planning board has approved a permit. A land use committee is proposing changes to make new housing easier to build in areas connected to town water and sewer. For example, minimum lot sizes would be smaller in these areas, allowing for addition housing to be built. The grocery store has been sold, and is closed for needed repairs and renovation, which creates a hardship for islanders. The farm stand is stocking some items, but islanders are coordinating grocery trips to Rockland. Funding is needed for repairs to address the damage from December flooding in the downtown area.