

COMMERCIAL FISHERIES RESEARCH FOUNDATION

The Commercial Fisheries Research Foundation is a non-profit, private research foundation founded and directed by members of the commercial fishing industry. The CFRF's primary mission is to conduct collaborative research and education projects that assist in the achievement of sustainable fisheries and vibrant fishing communities.

MESSAGE CORNER:

Happy summer from the CFRF! We hope that everyone has a moment to stop and enjoy the diversity of local seafood that is available at this time of year (and year round, for that matter!). Thank you to the many hard-working fishermen, processors, purveyors, and chefs that bring the bounty of the sea to the supper table. Here at the CFRF, we strive to conduct research and education that enables the nation's fisheries resources and fishing communities to thrive and the public to access and appreciate the plentiful, healthful, and sustainable seafood harvested off of our coastline. Helping us achieve this mission are the 35+ fishermen that currently participate in the CFRF's Research Fleets, and the many more fishing industry members, scientists, managers, and culinary professionals that work with us. Please read on for more information about the CFRF's work and check out the CFRF's new sponsorship page (www.cfrfoundation.org/support-us) if you are interested in supporting our work.

Fred Mattera, CFRF President, North East Safety Training Company

NEW PROJECT: ELEVATING SUSTAINABLE SEAFOOD IN THE OCEAN STATE

In August, the CFRF will kick off a new project that aims to increase the awareness and utilization of local seafood by Rhode Island restaurants, institutions, and consumers. As part of this project, the CFRF will hold a "RI Seafood" workshop with Chef Derek Wagner from Nick's on Broadway (Providence, RI) to educate food professionals about the availability, sustainability, preparation, and procurement of local seafood. The workshop will include an educational component focused on familiarizing food professionals with the fish and shellfish harvested locally and the operational characteristics of the Rhode Island fishing industry, a business component focused on the logistics and economics of sourcing local seafood, a hands-on component focused on identifying, breaking down, and preparing local seafood, and a networking component focused on connecting food professionals to local seafood harvesters, wholesalers, and retailers.

The CFRF will also develop a Rhode Island Seafood Guide that includes a calendar of fish and shellfish availability, a catalogue of local seafood sources, and pairing and preparation recommendations. Ultimately, this project seeks to develop lasting relationships between seafood harvesters, food professionals, and seafood consumers and to stimulate the integration of local seafood in the Rhode Island food system.

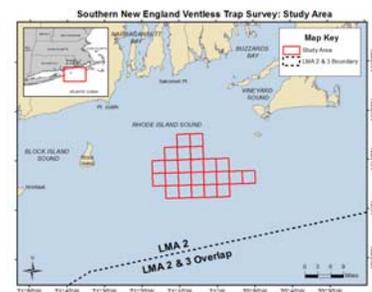


To kick off the project, the CFRF will host a RI Seafood Demo at the Boston Public Market on Saturday, August 12th from 1-3PM. Please join us to learn about (and taste!) the bountiful seafood that RI has to offer! Also, please follow along with the CFRF's Facebook page as we share facts, videos, and recipes for a different seafood species every week. For more information about the project or kickoff event, please visit

www.cfrfoundation.org/ri-seafood.

UPCOMING PROJECT: SOUTHERN NEW ENGLAND COOPERATIVE VENTLESS TRAP SURVEY - PHASE II

In 2018, the CFRF, in collaboration with the University of Rhode Island, will conduct the second phase of the Southern New England Cooperative Ventless Trap Survey, which seeks to assess the seasonal distribution, movement, and habitat use of the American lobster and Jonah crab in the Cox's Ledge Wind Energy Area (WEA). Project components include: 1) Monthly sampling of 24 locations within the Cox's Ledge WEA from May-November 2018 aboard the F/V Persistence, F/V Amelia Ann, and F/V Three Sons, 2) Lobster tagging in and around the study area, and 3) Habitat surveys at each sampling location. Ultimately, this project seeks to establish a pre-construction baseline for lobster and Jonah crab populations to enable assessment and mitigation of the impacts of offshore wind energy development. For more information about this project, please visit www.cfrfoundation.org/snecvts.



Learn more about CFRF at www.cfrfoundation.org



Like us on Facebook!

PROJECT UPDATE: SHELF RESEARCH FLEET

Since 2014, the Shelf Research Fleet has gathered oceanographic data from across the continental shelf south of Rhode Island using wireless Conductivity, Temperature, and Depth instruments (RBR Concerto CTDs) deployed from commercial fishing vessels. Fishermen participating in the Shelf Research Fleet also use a specialized iPad app to immediately view their data and communicate data to the CFRF and collaborators at the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution (WHOI). To date, the Shelf Research Fleet has collected 373 profiles, shedding light on the seasonal cycles and inter-annual variability of this dynamic area.



A new phase of the Shelf Research Fleet began in June 2017 and will continue through May 2019, with support from the van Beuren Charitable Foundation. This phase focuses on bi-weekly collection of oceanographic data by participant fishermen, analysis of data in the context of a changing ocean climate, collaborative discussions of the relationship between oceanographic conditions and fisheries resources, and public presentations to coastal communities across Rhode Island.

To access the oceanographic data collected by the Research Fleet as well as summary graphics, please visit WHOI's website at: www.science.whoi.edu/users/seasoar/cfrfwhoi/. For more information about the Shelf Research Fleet, please visit www.cfrfoundation.org/shelf-research-fleet.

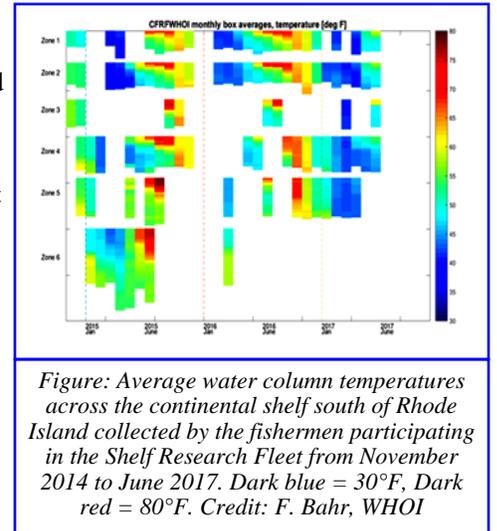


Figure: Average water column temperatures across the continental shelf south of Rhode Island collected by the fishermen participating in the Shelf Research Fleet from November 2014 to June 2017. Dark blue = 30°F, Dark red = 80°F. Credit: F. Bahr, WHOI

PROJECT UPDATE: QUAHOG RESEARCH FLEET



The Quahog Research Fleet, which launched in August 2016, continues to collect biological and environmental data throughout Narragansett Bay as part of routine fishing practices. The Research Fleet's five participants sort their quahog catch into size classes (sub-legal, little neck, cherrystone, top neck, chowder) and record their data in the On Deck Data app. Each Research Fleet participant samples eight stations per month, four of which are assigned by CFRF and four of which are self-selected. To date, Research Fleet participants have sampled over 18,000 quahogs from Narragansett Bay. The CFRF has begun working with the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (RI DEM) to analyze project data, focusing on the effect of environmental conditions on quahog density and size structure. Project data will ultimately feed into the quahog stock assessment, providing information from areas and times of year never before sampled.

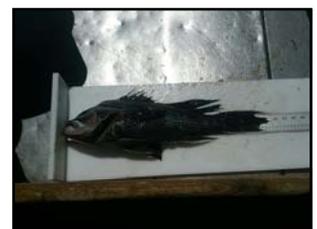


The next major step for the Quahog Research Fleet project is calibration of bullrake sampling to the RI DEM dredge survey, which will be conducted during the summer and fall months. The calibration is an essential part of the project, as it allows the data collected by the Research Fleet, by bullrake, to be standardized to the annual dredge survey conducted by RI DEM. During the calibration, Research Fleet members will sample side by side with the RI DEM dredge, while SCUBA divers follow along on the bottom and count all the quahogs left behind by each surveying method. Ultimately, these calibrations will be used to estimate catch efficiencies for each bullrake sampler and the RI DEM dredge survey. More information about the project can be found at www.cfrfoundation.org/quahog-research-fleet.

PROJECT UPDATE: BLACK SEA BASS RESEARCH FLEET

After several months of preparation and training, the eight fishermen participating in the CFRF Black Sea Bass Research Fleet began sampling in December 2016. The bulk of the black sea bass stock was offshore during the winter months, so the Research Fleet's offshore trawlers (F/V Second Wind, F/V Excalibur) were the most active samplers. Small black sea bass, however, were also observed by the Research Fleet's inshore F/Vs during the winter. With warmer waters moving inshore this spring, the Research Fleet's black sea bass sampling steadily increased. To date, Research Fleet participants have sampled over 2,300 black sea bass from Narragansett Bay to Hudson Canyon. To ensure that these important data are readily available to black sea bass stock assessment scientists, the CFRF compiled and submitted all data to the Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program in June 2017. This data sharing routine will be repeated every six months through project completion (March 2018).

In addition to sampling black sea bass from their commercial catch, Research Fleet participants operating in Rhode Island state waters have also been collecting a subset of their discarded black sea bass for laboratory sampling at the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management. To date, Research Fleet members have collected over 400 black sea bass for laboratory analysis, which includes morphometrics, stomach content analysis, sexual maturity analysis, and otolith extraction. Otoliths collected during this project are destined for the black sea bass aging database at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science. More information about the project can be found at www.cfrfoundation.org/black-sea-bass-fleet.



PROJECT UPDATE: LOBSTER AND JONAH CRAB RESEARCH FLEET



June 2017 marked a major milestone for CFRF's Lobster and Jonah Crab Research Fleet: four full years of data collection! Since the start of the project in 2013, the Research Fleet has collected biological data from more than 95,000 lobsters and 37,000 Jonah crabs, helping to fill major data gaps in poorly sampled areas and times of year. With support from NOAA and The Campbell Foundation, the Lobster and Jonah Crab Research Fleet will continue to collect and relay biological lobster and Jonah crab data and bottom water temperatures from the Gulf of Maine to Cape Hatteras through March 2020.

This spring, the CFRF welcomed two additional vessels to the Research Fleet: F/V Two

Dukes (Sea Isle City, NJ) and F/V Excalibur (Newport, RI). These two F/Vs expand the spatiotemporal coverage of the Research Fleet and provide information from extremely data poor areas, including offshore waters south of Hudson Canyon. In the coming months, the CFRF will also add two new fishing vessels (F/V Virginia Marie and F/V Freedom) to the Research Fleet to provide lobster and Jonah crab data from within the Northeast Canyons and Seamounts National Marine Monument. The CFRF looks forward to continuing to evolve the Research Fleet to address the ever-changing data needs and research questions surrounding lobster and Jonah crab.



The CFRF staff shared the collaborative approach, data summaries, and findings of the Lobster and Jonah Crab Research Fleet with hundreds of scientists, managers, and fishermen at the Massachusetts Lobstermen's Association Annual Weekend and Tradeshow in January and the 11th International Conference and Workshop on Lobster Biology and Management in June. Discussions centered around the Research Fleet's electronic data collection technologies, continued industry participation, insights from the Research Fleet's data, and the comprehensively collaborative approach. Follow along on the CFRF's Facebook page and website for announcements of upcoming outreach events! For more information, please visit the CFRF Lobster and Jonah Crab Research Fleet webpage at: www.cfrfoundation.org/jonah-crab-lobster-research-fleet/.



SUPPORT US!

Your support makes it possible for the CFRF to develop new initiatives that sustain healthy fisheries resources and vibrant fishing communities. If you are interested in supporting collaborative research and sustainable seafood, please consider making a donation to the CFRF at www.cfrfoundation.org/support-us/!

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ATTENTION RI FISHING BUSINESS OWNERS: WE NEED YOUR PARTICIPATION!

The CFRF is seeking participation from all Rhode Island fishing business owners (fishermen, processors, dealers, gear suppliers, vessel repair businesses, etc.) in a survey intended to demonstrate the economic importance of the fishing industry in the Ocean State. The survey takes 5 minutes to complete and is available at www.riopr.org/s/fisheries. Survey responses are 100% confidential and data will not be shared with third party or government agencies. After the study is complete, members of the fishing industry will have access to aggregate data summaries tailored to their interests.



PLEASE TAKE 5 MINUTES TO FILL OUT THE SURVEY NOW!

Your participation is critical, no matter the size of your business. Only with full participation will this study be able to accurately characterize the contribution of the fishing industry to Rhode Island's economy.

For more information about the project, please visit www.cfrfoundation.org/economic-impact-of-fisheries-in-rhode-island.

CFRF PRIORITIES – RESEARCH & EDUCATION:

- ◆ Industry-based biological data collection (research fleets)
- ◆ Commercial fisheries dynamics in SNE
- ◆ Habitat and trophic dynamics
- ◆ Ecological impacts of offshore wind energy
- ◆ Alternative uses for seafood processing waste
- ◆ Local seafood access and utilization
- ◆ Sustainable seafood education



We encourage members of the fishing industry to reach out with research ideas and priorities!