



American Lobster Stock Assessment Progress Update



American Lobster Management Board
February 4, 2025

Assessment Timeline



- Data Workshop: February 15, 26-27 (virtual)
- Assessment Workshop 1: July 22-24 in New Bedford, MA
 - *Periodic webinars and bi-weekly modeler calls between workshops
- Assessment Workshop 2: February 11-13, 2025
- Peer Review Workshop: August 2025
- Present Assessment and Peer Review Reports to the Board: October 2025

Assessment Progress



- Full SAS progress calls
 - 10/29: Model-free indicators
 - 12/9: Growth and reference point updates; shell disease trends
 - 1/8: Socio-economic indicators; distribution, abundance, habitat association modeling updates
- Weekly modeler calls
 - Model progress, troubleshooting
- Finalized 2023 data

Remaining Assessment Timeline



- Assessment Workshop 2: February 11-13, 2025
 - Great Bay National Estuarine Research and Discovery Center, Greenland, NH
 - Review assessment models through 2023 and reference points
 - Review model-free indicators through 2023
 - Review supporting information to describe environment, distribution, recruitment, and life history changes
- Peer Review Workshop: August 2025
- Present Assessment and Peer Review Reports to the Board: October 2025



Questions?

Jonah Crab Technical Committee Report



American Lobster Management Board
3 February 2025

Outline



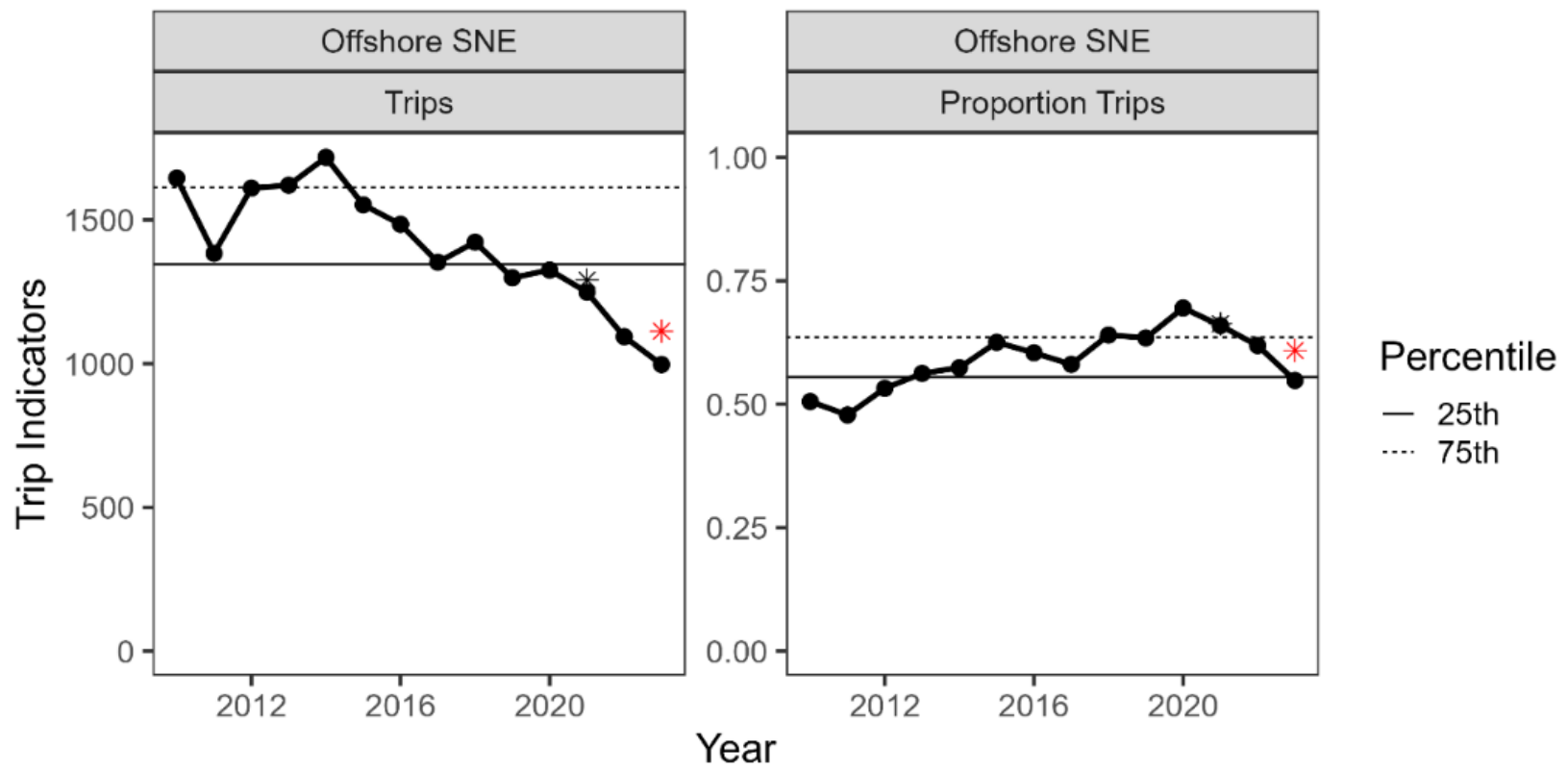
- 2023 Benchmark assessment overview
- Indicator update through 2023
- Proposed analyses for 2026 update

Background

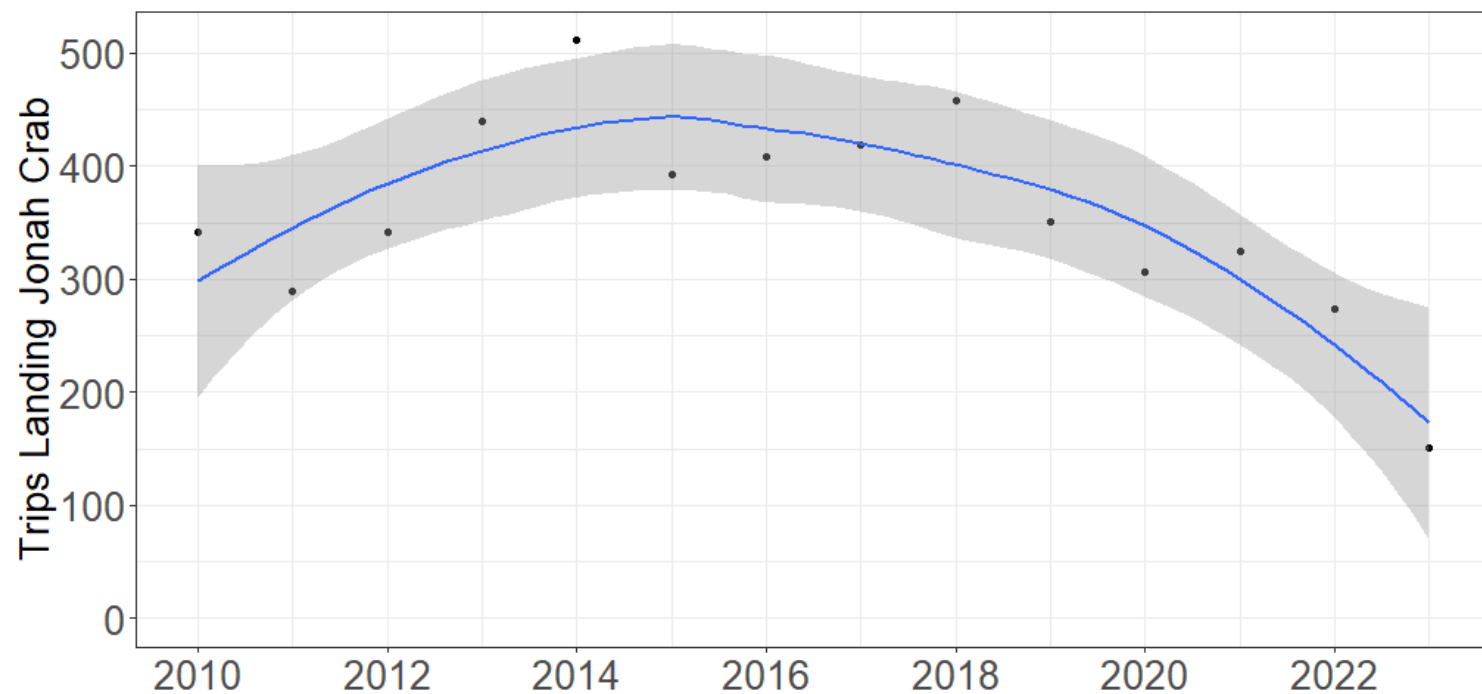


- Offshore Southern New England (OSNE), Inshore Gulf of Maine (IGOM), and Offshore Gulf of Maine (OGOM) not depleted to historical lows observed in 1980s and 1990s
- Insufficient data to determine abundance trends for Inshore Southern New England (ISNE)
- Peer Review noted uncertainty about stock status, with concerns about trends resembling Canada stock trajectory
- Technical Committee recommended annual indicator updates for OSNE
- This update provides data through 2023 for fishery-dependent indices; trawl indices to be provided biannually

Number and proportion of trips landing Jonah

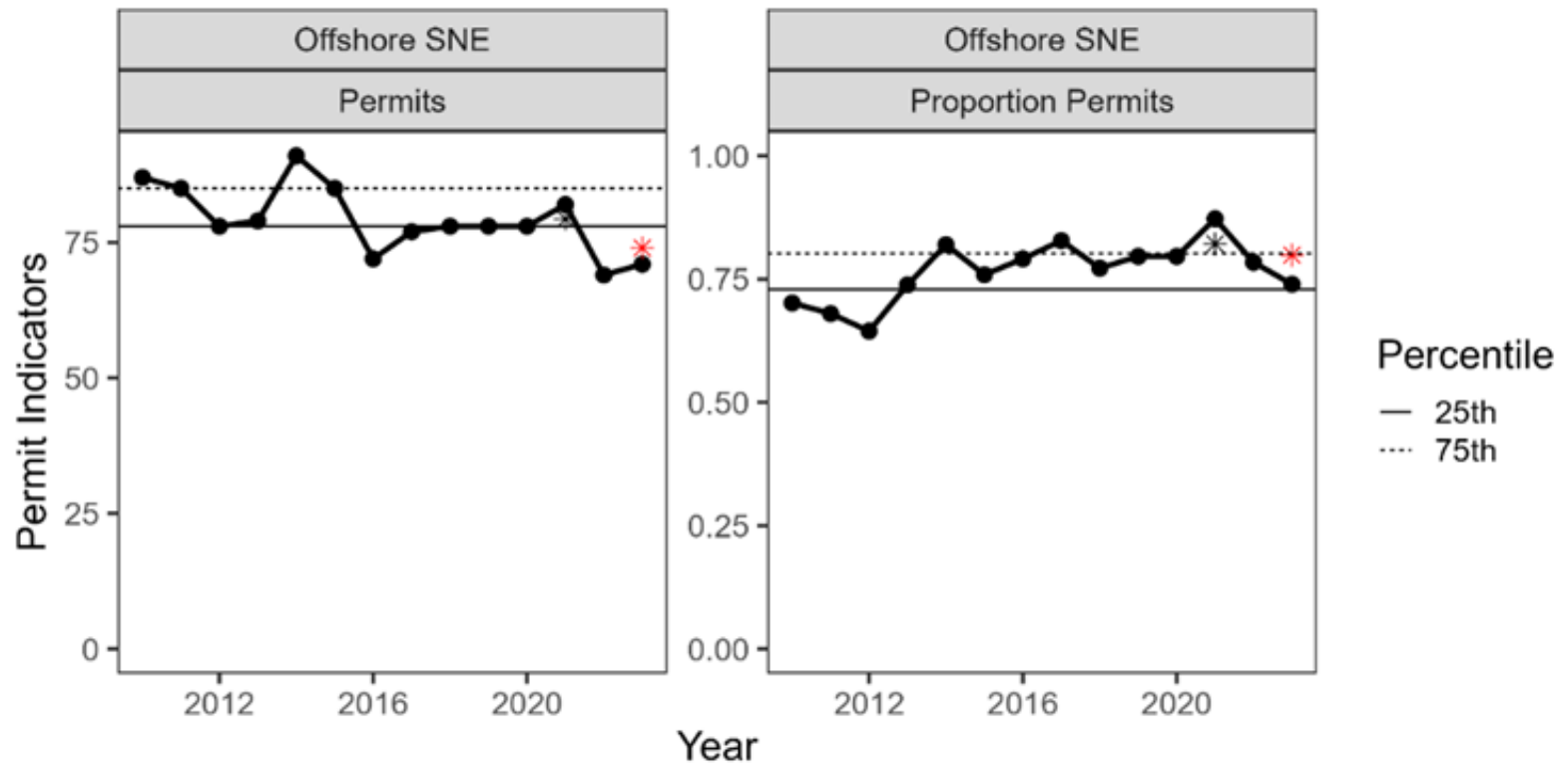


Number of OSNE trips landing Jonah crab, MA fleet

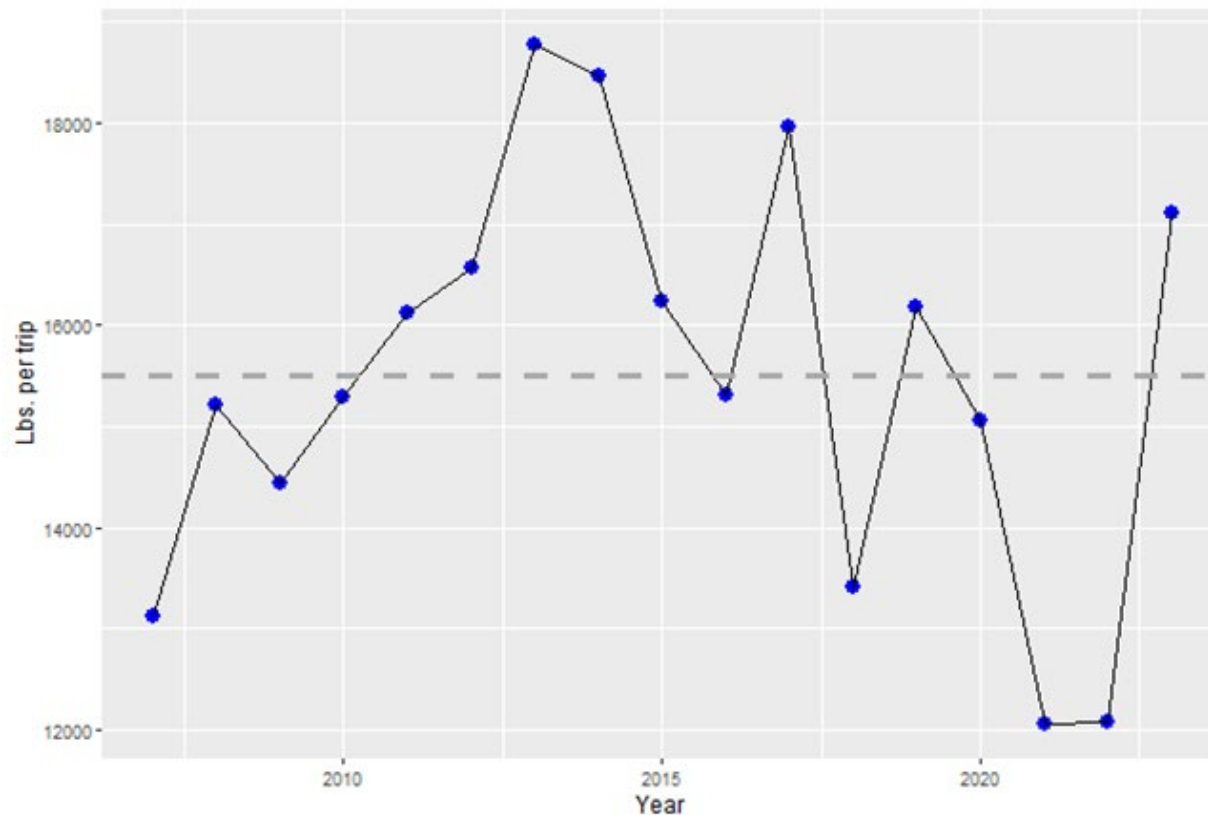


Similar trends to the stockwide indicator, with lowest levels in 2023

Number and proportion of permits landing Jonah crab

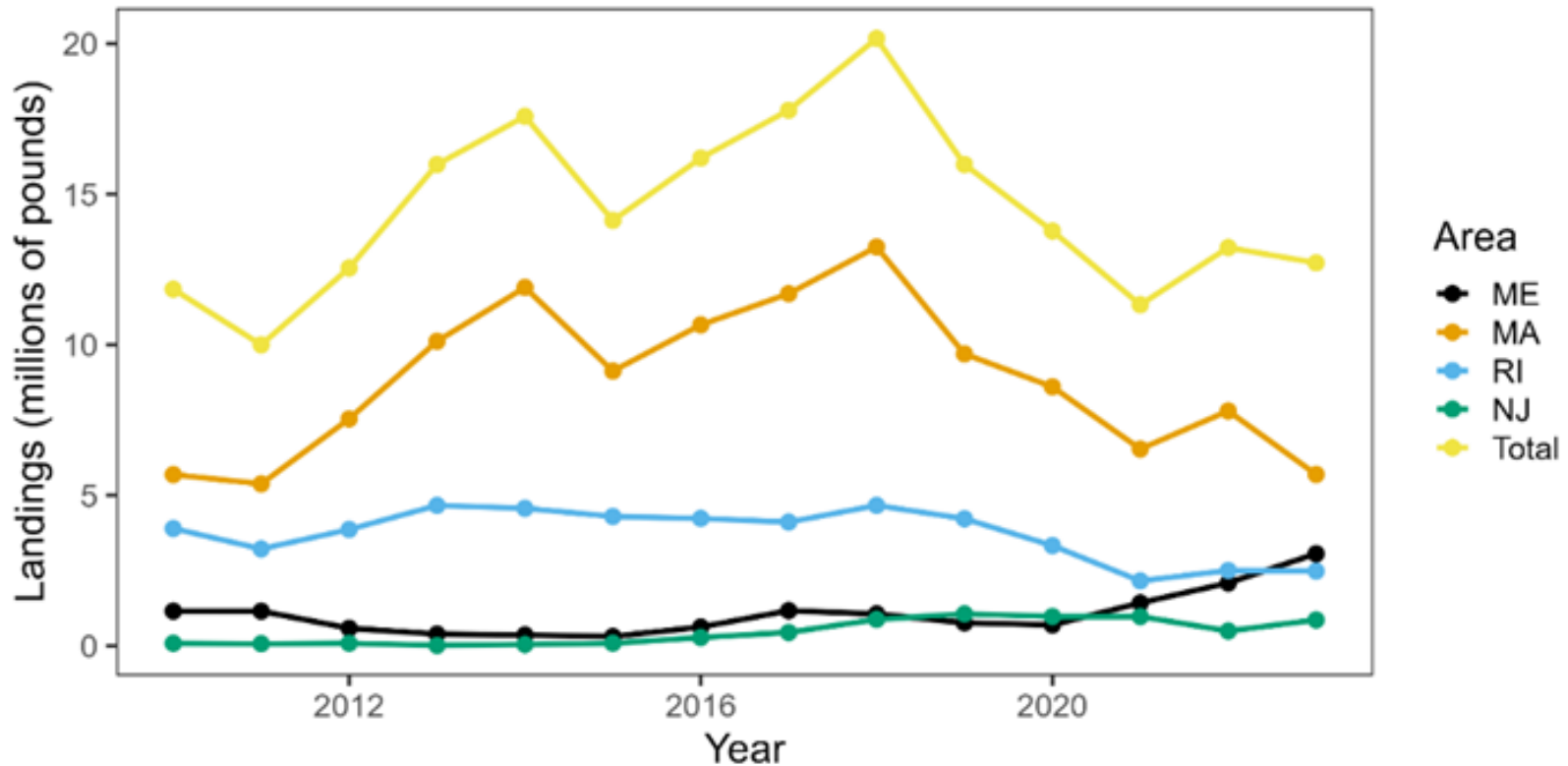


Landings per trip, RI highliner fleet



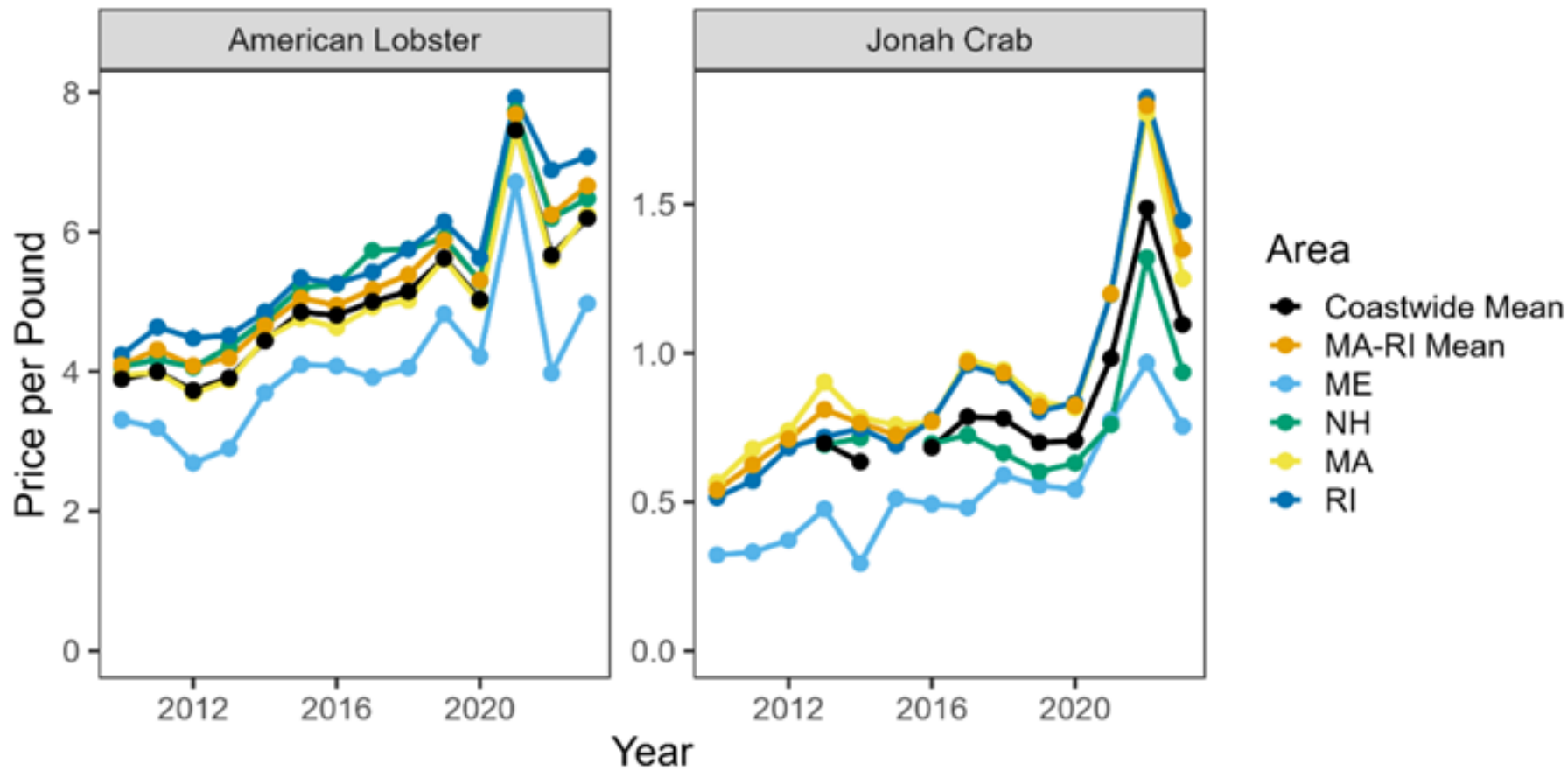
Catch per trip for a subset of consistent Jonah crab harvesters. Data also indicate changes in catch per day and trip length.

Landings by state



Decline since peak in OSNE in 2018

Price per pound for lobster and Jonah crab



Conclusions



- Status appears similar to that of 2021 (assessment terminal year)
- Data limitations preclude management recommendations
- Market factors appear to be driving factor in level of Jonah crab effort
 - Reports of changes in the fleet, trip limits, and low demand for Jonah crab

Recommendations



- TC recommends identifying a process to track dealer/processor-imposed trip limits (e.g., state-conducted interview of dealers)
- Revisit Commercial Fisheries Research Foundation ventless trap data
 - Review recent developments in data collection
 - Evaluate wind farm survey data



Questions?



Lobster Conservation Management Team 2 Meeting Summary: January 22, 2025

American Lobster Management Board
3 February 2025

LCMT 2 Meeting



- LCMT 2 met virtually January 22, with four team members and one additional lobster harvester in attendance
 - Review Lobster PDT analyses of changes in the fishing fleet since Addenda XXI and XXII were implemented by the states
 - Provide input on management measures implemented in NOAA Fisheries interim rule for LCMA 2 (ownership caps and trap cap reductions)
 - Recommend management measures moving forward

LCMT 2 Recommendations



- Recommendation is to maintain status quo management measures (i.e., those in place before the federal interim rule)
 - Fishery has responded to the reduction in lobster biomass already, as indicated by PDT analysis
 - Increased targeting of Jonah crab has further reduced lobster fishing pressure
 - Flexibility is needed for remaining harvesters to bank traps beyond 800 actively fished trap cap

LCMT 2 Recommendations



- Team members highlighted need for federal/state regulation consistency
 - State: support maintaining owner-operator requirement for RI and MA, with 800 active trap cap and allowance of 800 additional banked traps
 - Federal: maintain existing cap of 800 active traps per federal vessel permit with federal entity ownership cap at 1600
 - In cases where vessel owner has two separate permit under the same LLC or entity, limited to entity cap
 - More than two federal vessel permits could be included in same entity, constrained to the entity cap
 - No limit on the number of federal licenses (flexibility in building up permits)

LCMT 2 Recommendations



- Additional recommendations:
 - Allow individuals to transfer traps within an entity and not pay transfer tax
 - Flexibility in managing multiple vessels
 - One member recommends eliminating transfer tax altogether



Questions?