

# Commercial Fisheries News

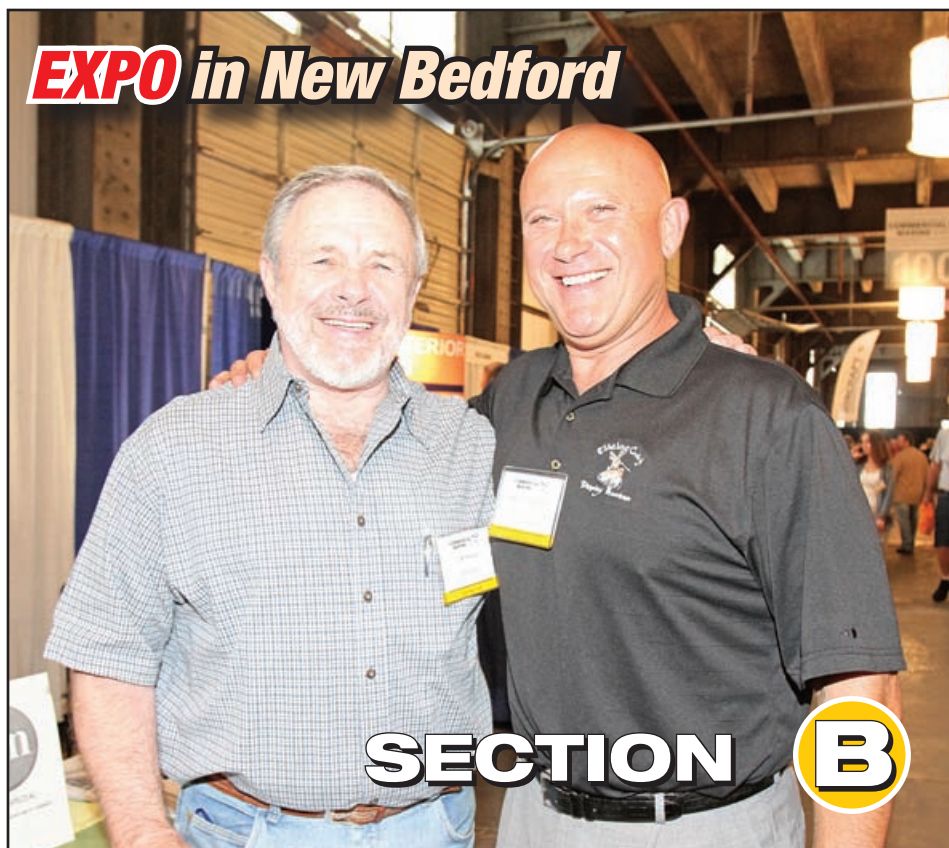
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Rosemary Kramer photo



Steven Kennedy photo

## Aging groundfish/scallop fleet draws concern

by Janice M. Plante

PORTLAND, ME – The Northeast fishing fleet is getting old. Although some impressive state-of-the-art offshore scallopers have been built in recent years, particularly in New Bedford, the sobering fact is that well over half of the boats holding federal scallop and/or groundfish permits were constructed between 1970 and 1989, meaning these hulls are 21-to-40 years old.

The New England Fishery Management Council has been concerned about the safety implications of the region's aging fleet for some time now. Hoping to get a better grip on the situation, it asked the Coast Guard back in April for more information about age and size of both scallop and groundfish boats and the casualties associated with them.

During the council's June 22-24 meeting in Portland, Capt. Pete DeCola of the First Coast Guard District presented some early findings.

Two stark points emerged from the initial data run.

First, of the vessels holding Northeast multispecies permits, 23% were built between 1970 and 1979 and 42% of the vessels in that age group suffered casualties of one sort or another.

Second, among scallopers, only 5% of the fleet consisted of vessels in the 30'-39' category, yet those boats accounted for 16% of casualties.

Maine council member Jim Odlin called the report "revealing" in that it confirmed "some of the hunches" he had.

"There's a lot in here that we can use," Odlin said.

### Data

The report represents the Coast Guard's first cut at running the numbers, and the council was quick to ask for more breakdowns by different categories, which

DeCola said the First District could do with additional help from the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) to narrow down and further refine the permit data.

For this particular run, the Coast Guard used the NMFS Northeast Region permit database to obtain information about the number of vessels holding groundfish, scallop, or both permit types.

The Coast Guard also used safety

**This possibly suggests that older ships have more casualties than newer ships.**

—Capt. Pete DeCola

data from the First District Fishing Vessel Casualty Database and the Coast Guard's Marine Information for Safety & Law Enforcement pool.

The casualty data involved "reported casualties in the scallop and multispecies fleets from 2008 to the present to give a quick and manageable snapshot of the safety picture," DeCola said.

Casualties included vessels that

became disabled, went aground, collided, capsized, sank, flooded, caught fire, or somehow involved personal injuries, man overboard incidents, or required medevacs.

### Scallopers

For scallopers, the Coast Guard looked at a total pool of 873 permits, which included the regular full-time/part-time/occasional limited-access fleet, the general category fleet, boats that held both a regular limited-access permit and a general category permit, and scallop vessels that also held groundfish permits.

Of those 873 permits: 26 were on  
*See AGING FISHING FLEET, page 18A*

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*On the Cover: Left, in North Carolina, Sam Ott and Brett Wilson aboard Hot Tuna, December '07. Right, Jim Kendall, left, and Ray Canastra at CME.*



## EDITORIAL

# Businesses buoyed by CME venue, attendance

Because success can be contagious, we're encouraged by the modest swell of enthusiasm and enterprise that ran through the aisles of the Commercial Marine Expo (CME) trade show in New Bedford in June.

This year's show was not perfect. But it was a credible, ground-up retooling of the former Fish Expo-Atlantic, and it seemed to strike just the right chord with exhibitors and attendees.

Fish Expo, frankly, had fallen on hard times. By its final run in April 2008 in Providence, RI, the show had eroded to a shadow of its former self.

Some of us remember the glory years when Fish Expo meant hundreds of booths and boats filling Boston's Hynes Auditorium or the Bayside Expo Center. Marine supply houses from across the region would send tractor-trailer loads of gear to help satisfy the demands of thousands of fishermen looking for show specials.

Granted, those fishing boom days were in the past, but Fish Expo-Atlantic had slipped out of sync with the commercial fishing industry.

So, when the show went up for sale, *Commercial Fisheries News* was among the bidders. We bid low, not certain what

it would take to turn the ailing franchise around. But we bid nevertheless, committed to the belief that Expo was important to the industry, that it was an institution worth preserving.

When another bidder ended up with the show, we, along with many others, watched with interest as he set about re-energizing the ailing event.

And there was some skepticism when show director Ted Hugger announced: a name change from Fish Expo-Atlantic to Commercial Marine Expo; a location change from the Rhode Island Convention Center to the State Pier in New Bedford; date changes from early spring to early June; and a refocusing of the event to include nonfishing elements, including the work boat community.

Well, it worked.

Hugger recognized that the show needed to get "real" and get back to its roots. New Bedford was the right place to do that. The city and the local industry welcomed CME with open arms and worked to assure its success.

The venue, while spartan to say the least, was ideal for re-establishing the working feel of the show and creating an environment where industry people could feel at home.

Some old timers might recall the great show at the State Pier back in the late 1980s co-sponsored by *Commercial Fisheries News* and the New Bedford Chamber of Commerce. That was a low-tech event that died with the scallop fishery collapse at the end of the decade. But, at its best, it worked well and was popular with both exhibitors and attendees.

CME recaptured that magic.

Hugger also concluded correctly that the show focus had to be expanded to bring in more potential buyers. Many exhibitors – the marine engine and electronics folks, for example – service markets beyond commercial fishing.

While some exhibitors missed the small boat guys from Maine, who show up at the Maine Fishermen's Forum in March, Hugger has promised to push harder to reel them in next time.

And many more exhibitors said the expanded show formula worked well and that they had good traffic. Most importantly, they said, folks were buying. And that's good news for all of us.

No, this isn't a boom, but it's progress. Here's hoping this success is, indeed, contagious. /cfn/

## Tierney pushing for answers

The following June 7 open letter to fishermen from US Rep. John Tierney (D-MA) was forwarded to CFN for publication. Tierney's district includes the port of Gloucester. —Editor

Dear Friend:

I am writing to offer you an update on recent efforts to address the critical issues facing our fishing community.

Most recently, I joined congressional colleagues in a meeting with Department of Commerce Secretary Gary Locke and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Administrator Jane Lubchenco to discuss ongoing issues facing our local fishing families.

I reiterated to Secretary Locke and Dr. Lubchenco the urgency and seriousness of the situation facing our fishing community. During the meeting, we urged the secretary to recognize the negative economic impact of the new catch share limits and immediately provide local fisheries with more flexibility.

Additionally, we again asked the secretary to respond to inquiries regarding unfair and abusive practices of NOAA's enforcement office. For far too long, local fishermen have been subjected to unfair treatment, cited for seemingly arbitrary violations, and charged exorbitant fines.

As you may recall, in order to ensure accountability and put an end to these abusive practices, I spearheaded a congressional field hearing on the fisheries enforcement programs in March at Gloucester City Hall.

As a result of this hearing and subsequent findings by the Inspector General of the Department of Commerce, Dale Jones, who testified at the hearing and who was the director of (the National

Marine Fisheries Service's) Office of Law Enforcement at the time, was removed from his position as director and a replacement was announced.

I have consistently called for follow-up investigations into the specific enforcement cases pending in the Northeast and will continue to work with my colleagues to demand action from Sec. Locke and Dr. Lubchenco until the aforementioned issues are resolved.

I intend to work with my colleague Congressman Barney Frank (D-MA) in raising this issue to the White House level in the absence of a satisfactory response from the secretary and NOAA.

Be assured that I remain committed to fighting for the needs of our fishing community and our fishing families. We all have a stake in seeing that the appropriate steps are taken to make sure that this critical part of our economy is allowed to continue and prosper.

As always, please feel free to contact my office if you have any questions, comments, or concerns about this matter at (978) 531-1669.

John F. Tierney  
Washington, DC/  
Peabody, MA

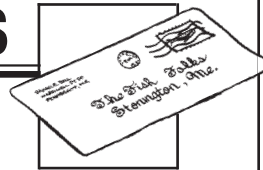
## DMR looks for input from local scallopers

To the Editor:

The Maine Department of Marine Resources (DMR) is committed to ensuring a sustainable scallop fishery for the state of Maine. Over the past two years, we have worked with the Maine Scallop Advisory Council (SAC) and with fishermen throughout the state to implement important scallop conservation closures.

We believe incorporating local knowledge into the management of these

## LETTERS



area closures will be critical to their success. To increase opportunities for local input, the DMR recently announced it will work with the SAC to develop nine ad-hoc advisory committees along the coast.

Committees will be composed of people who fish in each of these areas and will help facilitate communication with the SAC and the department concerning the area closures and what management measures should be put into place prior to any reopenings of those areas.

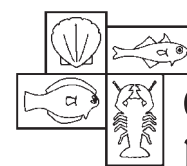
The committee chair will be selected based on suggestions from area fishermen and will act as an official conduit between his area and the SAC. He will ensure the opinions of fishermen in his area are represented at SAC meetings and also will help ensure that fishermen are aware of what is going on at the SAC.

The chair will not be a member of the SAC but will help the SAC perform its advisory role by improving area-specific knowledge and enhancing communication with local fishermen.

SAC meetings will be moved between Downeast, Midcoast, and Western Coastal Maine locations on a regular basis. Although statewide management issues will be discussed, each meeting will be tailored to focus on issues of particular interest to the areas closest to the meeting location.

This framework will allow for augmented opportunities for local input and it also will continue to encourage coordination and compatibility of management. Final management plans may be tailored to meet local needs, but they cannot create undue burdens

See MORE LETTERS, next page



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*Expo's back in business*

# High marks for CME's move to New Bedford



Max Isaksen, left, and Kevin McLaughlin, right, are joined in their Fairhaven Shipyard Companies Inc. booth by Mark Ellis, center, of Surfaceworx.



From left, Kelly Bendiksen, Laura Orleans, and Kirsten Bendiksen at the Working Waterfront Festival (WWF) booth. This year's WWF is set for Sept. 25-26.



Ray DiPietro, second from right, fields a customer question at the Motor-Services Hugo Stamp booth as Tobias Zimmermann, center, looks on.



Rodney Avila, left, discusses safety training and gear at the IMP Fishing Gear display.

NEW BEDFORD, MA— A renamed, relocated, and refocused Commercial Marine Expo (CME) opened to mostly rave reviews from exhibitors and attendees here during its two-day run at the State Pier June 9-10.

Show director Ted Hugger took some bold strides this year to revamp the former Fish Expo-Atlantic event. Most noticeable was the decidedly “dressed down” look of the show – bare concrete floors in the aisles, less fancy signage, and much more of a waterfront feel.

In fact, in his director’s message on the first page of the show guide, Hugger warned, “A word of caution. The State Pier is a working warehouse and pier. Watch your step.” And some folks did have to dodge the pigeons that swooped in through the hall from time to time.

But the locale was a winner. The aisles filled up quickly shortly after the show opened and most exhibitors seemed pleased with both the quantity and quality of show traffic, especially in the current economy.

“We’re still tabulating registration data at this time, but preliminary reports indicate we had approximately 3,300 industry professionals attend this year’s show,” Hugger said.

Veteran exhibitors like Bob Mitchell of the R.A. Mitchell Co. in Fairhaven said Hugger seemed to have succeeded in breathing new life into the venerable old show.

“This is a better location, a more economical and user-friendly venue, and, as for show traffic, I was busy for the most part,” Mitchell said. “It was a mix – some fishermen, some work boat people, what have you – but all good quality. I was satisfied.”

R.A. Mitchell was among more than 150 companies exhibiting at this year’s CME. Counting inside booths, outside display space, and in-the-water boat exhibits, Hugger said CME included just over 300 “booth equivalents,” which represents a 31% increase over the 2008 show in Providence, RI.

### City, state support

While many factors contributed to the show’s overall success, Hugger said the move to New Bedford was pivotal.

“The most gratifying aspect of this year’s event was the way industry and governmental communities came together. See CME IN NEW BEDFORD, page 24B

Photos by Steven Kennedy



Janine Goodwin, left, and Carla Thomas of Dixon's Marine Group.



Kevin Hampson, left, and Chris Scanzillo man the Milton Cat booth.



Bob Tokarczyk, right, was joined by Jerry Stewart and Heather Dietzenbach in staffing the John Deere Power Systems booth.



From left, Arne Ness, Doug Short, and Greg Sangster of Integrated Marine Systems/Wescold.



Richie Canastra, center, seemed to know just about every fisherman who passed by the Whaling City Seafood Display Auction booth.

# CME in New Bedford

Continued from page 1B to promote and produce CME in a new location," he said.

"From Mayor Scott Lang's office, to Kristin Decas and her staff at the New Bedford Harbor Development Commission, to city and state employees who worked tirelessly throughout the buildup and show days, the outpouring of support and assistance was unprecedented," Hugger said.

He added that the Office of Gov. Deval Patrick even came to the rescue by authorizing an 11th hour repair to the building when a portion of the roof was blown off during a huge storm a few days before the show.

## Other draws

While the exhibits at CME were obviously the key draw, many attendees looked in on the industry seminar programs hosted by *Commercial Fisheries News* and *Professional Mariner* magazine.

The ZF Beer Garden and Restaurant, right off the show floor was also a convenient spot for a quick bite or a cold beverage – and a good spot to view the industry films that were continuously running in the CFN Theater.

In keeping with tradition, CME was also the scene again this year for *National Fisherman* magazine's presentation of its prestigious Highliner Awards.

This year's recipients were: Jim Odlin of Atlantic Trawlers, Portland, ME; David Spencer of the fishing vessel Nathaniel Lee, Jamestown, RI; and Bob Evans of the fishing vessel Tempest, Churchton, MD.

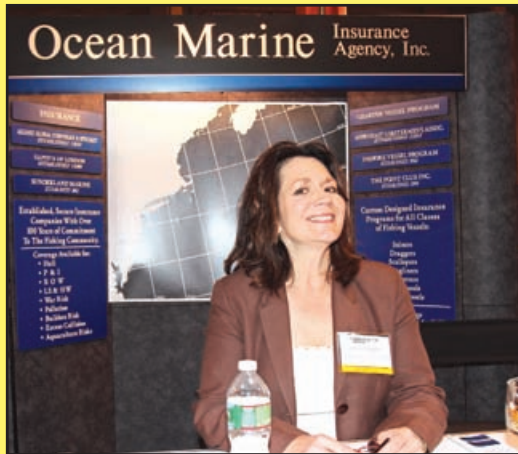
Hugger has confirmed plans to return to New Bedford with the CME in June 2012.

In the meantime, however, the traditionally biennial show is going annual next year.

Commercial Marine Expo is scheduled for June 15-16, 2011 at the Half Moone Cruise Ship Terminal in Norfolk, VA. /cfn/



Among the full crew on hand from Smithwick & Mariners Insurance Agency were from left, Suzanne Veilleux, Laurie Woodley, Kevin Rocha, and Bill Hart.



Kathy Petarca tends the Ocean Maine Insurance Agency booth while Kris Boehmer and Bob McVey take a quick tour around the show.



Garth Hersey, right, takes down some specs from a customer at the Brooks Trap Mill booth.



Certainly one of the more eye-catching exhibits, Mack Boring had this live cow on display to illustrate Scania's "make your next engine a cash cow" promotion.



Commercial Fisheries News coordinated the fishing-related seminar program at this year's Commercial Marine Expo, including this roundtable discussion on "how catch-share programs affect you," led by Madeleine Hall-Arbor, center, with microphone.

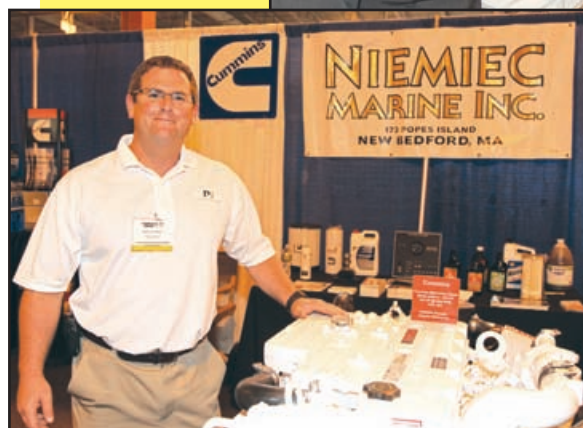


Jerry Wadsworth, right, chats with a fisherman at the Friendship Trap Co. exhibit.

From left, John Saunders and Roy Enoksen stop for a chat with Garrett Norton at the Farrell and Norton Naval Architects booth.



Below, Reidar Bendiksen, right, fields a gear inquiry at the Reidar's Manufacturing Inc. exhibit.



Brad Niemiec in his booth.



Bob Mitchell is flanked by daughters and business colleagues Jennifer Mitchell DeMello, left, and Karen Mitchell Joseph at the R.A. Mitchell Co. booth.