

Sea Grant's Long Island Sound Lobster Initiative

Steering Committee for Lobster Research and Disease

Who They Are

Background

An *ad-hoc* Planning Committee was organized in January 2000 to plan the first in the series of Long Island Sound Lobster Health Symposia, and develop a strategic plan of action to respond to the lobster mass mortality and shell disease in Long Island Sound. The Planning Committee, which was comprised of regulatory agencies, NOAA, EPA, Sea Grant Programs and state universities, continued activities to secure funds for research.

The *ad-hoc* Planning Committee recognized the implications of Congressional approval for \$6.6 million in research funds, and the need to establish a formal framework for conducting the extensive research work plan for the Long Island Sound lobster fishery. In an unprecedented move, ASMFC's Lobster Management Board passed the following motion on August 24, 2000:

“Move that the American Lobster Management Board establish an ASMFC Steering Committee for Lobster Disease Research with members to be appointed by the Chair of the Lobster Management Board.”

The Lobster Steering Committee is charged to:

- Provide oversight and accountability for expenditure of funds appropriated for research into the causes of Long Island Sound lobster fishery disaster.
- Monitor research on lobster health and provide the Lobster Management Board with periodic reports on research results and assess the implications for the ASMFC American Lobster Management Program.
- Recommend Board action/support for future lobster health research needs.

The agencies that presently comprise the Lobster Steering Committee are:

- Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection
- New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
- Sea Grant Programs in New York and Connecticut
- NMFS, Northeast Regional Office
- NMFS, Northeast Fisheries Science Center
- National Sea Grant College Program
- EPA – Long Island Sound Project Office
- New York State's Lobster Industry
- Connecticut Lobster Industry
- Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

For additional information, contact:

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*NYSG's Jack Mattice addresses over 250 attendees
at April 2000's first annual Lobster Health
Symposium held in Stamford, Connecticut*

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Bringing Science to the Shore