

Report on the
Maine Zone 1 Sea Urchin Harvester Survey
December 2002

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Introduction

In response to reports from divers that sea urchin stocks, especially in Zone 1, are seriously depleted, the Maine Sea Urchin Zone Council (SUZC) recommended at its November 14, 2002 meeting that a survey of Zone 1 harvesters be conducted. The SUZC asked the department of Marine Resources (DMR) to conduct the survey in order to determine whether there was industry support for an emergency closure of the fishery. DMR staff worked with SUZC members to design a questionnaire, which was mailed to all licensed Zone 1 harvesters on November 25th. 359 questionnaires were sent out. Return postage was paid by DMR. A copy of the questionnaire form is in Appendix A. Harvesters were asked to return their surveys by December 9.

Results

89 of the 359 surveys (25%) had been returned to DMR as of January 8, 2003, and their contents are presented here. Full listings of all responses are in Appendices B-D.

It should be noted that the questionnaires were sent out before the drag fishing season for Zone 1 had opened. The Zone 1 drag season opened December 1. The dive season opened September 3.

Question 1: Are you a diver or a dragger?

76 divers, and 13 draggers responded to the survey. See table below. (We apologize to the two licensed rakers in Zone 1 who were sent surveys, but who were left out of this question.)

Question 2: About how many days have you fished for urchins this season?

Responses varied from 0 to 50 days. See Table 1. 12 of the 76 divers, and all of the 13 draggers had not fished at all so far this season. The median response was 23 days.

Question 3: About how many days did you fish for urchins last season?

Responses varied from 0 to 94 days. See Table 2. The median response was 52.5 days. Only 7 divers and 6 of the draggers had not fished at all last season.

Question 4a: Do you feel Zone 1 should close early (emergency) this season?

There were 51 “No” responses (57%), and 38 “Yes” (43%). See table below.

	Close?		Total
	No	Yes	
Diver	44	32	76
Dragger	7	6	13
Total	51	38	89

Questions 4b: If so, when?

33 of those who answered Yes to question 4a gave answers ranging from “Immediately” to February 1. See Table 3. The median response was December 31.

Question 5: How many days do you feel Zone 1 should be open next season (2003-04)?

There were 81 responses, ranging from 0 to 365 days. See Table 4. The median recommendation was 60 days. The median recommendation of those who supported a closure this year was 40 days. The median recommendation of those who did not support a closure for this year was 94 days.

Question 6: Do you favor other types of conservation? If so, what?

55 respondents recommended other types of conservation measures. The three most common responses favored a daily catch limit, reseeded, or leaving things alone. See Table 5 for a list. See Appendix C for the full text of the recommendations.

Question 7: Comments:

55 respondents made comments. See Appendix D for the full text of the comments.

Question 8: Your name (optional):

62 respondents gave their name, and sometimes their phone number.

Discussion

The majority of respondents (57%) did not support a closure of the fishery. Of those who did, the average (median) recommended closure date was December 31st (Table 3). The current Zone 1 season for divers goes until February 14, with 13 open days in January and 10 open days in February. Closure on December 31 would result in a loss of 24 of 94 possible fishing days.

We had expected that harvesters who hold licenses but are not currently fishing would be more likely to support a closure of the fishery, since they would not be as adversely impacted by a closure. This was not entirely the case. For example, of the 12 divers who had not fished this season, 6 supported a closure and 6 did not (Table 1). Likewise, of the 6 draggers who did not fish last year, 3 supported a closure and 3 did not (Table 2). However, of the 49 divers who fished 50 or more days last year, only 15 supported a closure (Table 2).

These questionnaires provide evidence that although harvesters are reluctant to support a closure this season, there are problems in the Zone 1 fishery (see comments in Appendix C & D). The majority of respondents recommended a shorter season for next year (51 of 81, or 63%, Table 4). There were also many suggestions for other management measures.

Table 1. Answers to questions 1, 2, and 4: Do you favor a closure, by license type and number of days fished so far **this** season.

	Days fished this year	Close?		Total
		No	Yes	
Divers	0	6	6	12
	1		1	1
	2	1	1	2
	5		1	1
	9		1	1
	10	1	3	4
	11		1	1
	17	1		1
	18	1		1
	20	4	2	6
	25	1	2	3
	27		1	1
	30	5	3	8
	31	1		1
	35	2	1	3
	36		1	1
	37	1	1	2
	38	2		2
	39	2		2
	40	4	1	5
	42	2		2
	46	3		3
	47	2		2
	48	1		1
	50	1	3	4
	58	1		1
	77	1		1
	(blank or ?)	1	3	4
Diver Totals		44	32	76
Draggers	0	6	6	12
	(blank)	1		1
Dragger Totals		7	6	13
Grand Total		51	38	89

Table 2. Answers to questions 1, 3, and 4 by number of days fished **last** season.

	Days fished last year	Close?		Total
		No	Yes	
Divers	0	3	4	7
	2	1		1
	7		1	1
	10		1	1
	11	1		1
	15		1	1
	20	1	1	2
	22		1	1
	30	2		2
	35		1	1
	36	1		1
	37		1	1
	40	1	3	4
	48		1	1
	49		1	1
	50	4	1	5
	51	1		1
	54		1	1
	55	2	1	3
	56	1		1
	60	2	4	6
	62	1		1
	63	1		1
	65	7		7
	69	1		1
	70	1	2	3
	74		2	2
	75	2	3	5
	78	1		1
	80	4		4
	85	1		1
	87	1		1
	89	1		1
	90	1		1
	93		1	1
	94	2		2
	(blank)		1	1
Diver Total		44	32	76
Draggers	0	3	3	6
	7	1		1
	20	1		1
	30	1		1
	47		1	1
	50		2	2
	65	1		1
Dragger Total		7	6	13
Grand Total		51	38	89

Table 3. Recommended closure dates.

Date	Number of responses
11/01/2002	1
12/09/2002	11
12/24/2002	1
12/25/2002	3
12/31/2002	3
01/01/2003	9
01/10/2003	1
01/15/2003	1
01/31/2003	2
02/01/2003	1
Total	33

Table 4. Number of days recommended for next season.

Number of Days	Number of Responses
0	15
15	1
30	2
37	2
40	7
45	3
47	1
50	3
55	2
60	5
64	1
65	1
70	1
74	1
75	3
80	2
84	1
90	3
93	1
94	13
95	2
100	3
120	2
125	1
365	5
Total	81

Number of Days, Grouped	Number of Responses
0	15
1-10	0
11-20	1
21-30	2
31-40	9
41-50	7
51-60	7
61-70	3
71-80	6
81-90	4
91-100	19
101-110	0
111-120	2
121-130	1
365	5

Table 5. Other types of conservation recommended, and other comments.

Recommendation	Number in favor
daily catch limit	12
let fishery/market self regulate, existing measures work	10
reseed	10
rotate closures	9
close several years	8
how will I support my family?	7
no dragging	7
no new licenses	6
license buy back	5
mandatory conservation work	5
cull on bottom	3
days at sea	3
don't shut out draggers	3
let Z1 harvesters go to Z2, or move boundary	3
financial support from government	2
fish for crabs	2
individual quotas	2
limit divers per boat	2
minimum 10% roe limit	2
more enforcement	2
aquaculture	1
bag mesh law	1
gear modification	1
increase minimum size	1
more zones open to residents only	1
move poor urchins to feed areas	1
no diving	1
no research surcharge	1
no zones	1
stiffer penalties	1

Appendix A. The questionnaire form.

Dear Zone 1 Sea Urchin Harvesters,

DMR and the Maine Sea Urchin Zone Council are concerned about recent reports from divers that the status of the sea urchin stocks, especially in Zone 1, are seriously depleted. We would like to know your opinion on this issue, and on the idea of closing the zone early this season. Please fill out the survey below, tape it closed, and mail it to the address on the other side **by December 9**. The postage has been paid. Thank-you.

Please check one: Are you a Diver _____ Dragger _____

About how many days have you fished for urchins this season? _____

About how many days did you fish for urchins last season? _____

Do you feel Zone 1 should close early (emergency) this season? Yes _____ No _____

If so, when? _____

How many days do you feel Zone 1 should be open next season (2003-04), if any? _____

Do you favor other types of conservation? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, what?

Comments:

Your name (optional) _____

Appendix B. Answers to the first six questions.

<u>Survey Number</u>	<u>Diver?</u>	<u>Dragger?</u>	<u>Days fished this year</u>	<u>Days fished last year</u>	<u>Close? Y/N</u>	<u>If so, when?</u>	<u>Days next year</u>
1	Y		50	70	Y	Jan. 1	Sept,Dec
2	Y		37	37	Y	Nov. 1	30
3		Y	0	50	Y	Jan. 1	0
4	Y		40	75	Y	Jan. 1	Sept., Dec.
5		Y	0	0	Y	?	?
6	Y		1	55	Y	?	0
7	Y		0	0	Y	Dec. 25	0
8	Y		0	0	Y	Jan. 1	30
9	Y		27	0	Y	Dec. 25	45
10	Y		30	74	Y	Dec. 31	50-60 (Aug., Sept. & Dec.)
11	Y		2	40	Y	Jan. 1	Nov.-Dec.
12	Y		0	60	Y	Immediately	0
13	Y		20	75	Y	Jan. 15	50
14	Y		9	7	Y	Jan. 1	Sept. - Dec. 23
15	Y		20	60	Y	Immediately	0
16	Y		25	60	Y	Jan. 31	75
17	Y		30	75	Y	Immediately	0
18	Y		35	65	N		0
19		Y	0	50	Y	see notes	50
20	Y		31	51	N		0
21	Y		5	20	Y	Immediately	0
22	Y		30	50	N		all of them
23	Y		42	78	N		94
24	Y		39	63	N		90
25	Y		40	65	N		60
26		Y	0	20	N		90
27	Y		46	85	N		same
28	Y		42	90	N		94
29	Y		38	65	N		94
30	Y		0	11	N		same
31	Y		40	75	N		same
32		Y	0	65	N		same
33		Y	0	0	N		60
34		Y		30	N		365
35	Y		30	70	N		6 months
36		Y	0	7	N		50-60
37	Y		46	80	N		74
38	Y		50	65	N		
39	Y		10	20	N		84
40	Y		18	36	N		Sept., Dec., Jan
41	Y		2	2	N		45-50
42	Y		46	80	N		100
43	Y		25	50	N		Sept. - Jan. 15
44	Y		35	all	N		Sept. & Dec.
45	Y		20	65	N		same
46	Y		25	48	Y	Jan. 1	45

47		Y	0	47	Y	?	0
48	Y		11	22	Y	Jan. 10	45
49	Y		36	54	Y	Dec. 31	64
50	Y		?	93	Y	Immediately	Sept., Dec.
51	Y		50	70	Y	Dec. 31	50
52	Y				Y	Immediately	60
53	Y		10	50	Y	Immediately	0
54	Y		50	74	Y	Jan. 31	60-70
55	Y		10	10	Y	Jan. 1	37
56	Y		0	40	Y	Immediately	same
57	Y		0	0	Y	Feb. 1	0
58	Y		30	49	Y	Dec. 24	Sept., Dec. only
59		Y	0	0	Y	Immediately	0
60	Y			40	Y	Immediately	0
61		Y	0	0	Y		
62	Y		0	15	Y	Immediately	0-30
63	Y		35	60	Y	Jan. 1	not sure
64	Y		39	69	N		100
65	Y		47	94	N		95
66	Y		17	30	N		
67	Y		0	0	N		Sept.-Dec. 31
68	Y		37	65	N		80
69	Y		38	89	N	Why	all
70	Y		30	65	N		70
71		Y	0	0	N		all year
72	Y			62	N		120
73	Y		47	75	N		94
74	Y		40	87	N		125
75		Y	0	0	N		?
76	Y		0	0	N		
77	Y		30	55	N		Dec. & Oct.
78	Y		20	30	N		90
79	Y		40	55	N		same
80	Y		0	40	N		
81	Y		20	50	N		same
82	Y		20	60	N		same
83	Y		48	80	N		75
84	Y		30	56	N		35-40
85	Y		0	0	N		all
86	Y		77	80	N		100
87	Y		10	35	Y	Dec. 25	0
88	Y		0	50	N		60
89	Y		58	60	N		93

Appendix C. Other types of conservation favored.

Survey Number	Other Conservation Suggestions
1	Stop dragging and giving out new licenses. Underwater culling.
3	Daily tote limit per diver or dragger.
4	Both Zones must be shut down immediately. Seasons for 2003: Sept., Dec. only for Zone 1 and December March for Zone 2 only.
6	Close for a minimum of 5 years, license buy back.
7	I think if the zone is closed for 3-4 years the urchins will come back on their own.
10	I've been diving for sea urchins for 12 years and the largest problem is VERY LITTLE law enforcement! I leave 2 inch urchins on the bottom UNTOUCHED only to have the next diver harvest and sell them! We need to stop baby rakers! ALL UNDERSIZED URCHINS need to be left on the bottom UNMOLESTED PERIOD. Strict laws on those who don't (meaning license suspension)! "Heavy fines" for buyers who buy illegal sea urchins.
11	Keep certain areas closed and open areas when the stocks are healthy again. Maybe seed in depleted areas.
13	Seeding, maybe if the divers can be compensated on a yearly basis close the season for a 5 or 3 year time frame.
17	Shut down Zone 1 for about 5 years, seed it, especially Casco Bay. Then open it for only the ones that decide to sit out the 5 years.
19	Separate Zones next year with Zone one with 50 days.
22	Bag mesh law
24	I think a 10% minimum roe count. Also I think there should be more Zones, with limited numbers of divers in each Zone and also I think divers should be a resident in his Zone.
25	Buy back licenses from divers-draggers who want to sell and continue moratorium on licenses.
27	Maybe lower the tote limit to 500 lbs, because everyone would take only the good urchins and leave the bad ones to get better.
28	Moratorium
30	Marine conservation areas (no fishing). Seeding - can the research money be used for this?
32	No more Divers they take all the spawning urchins
34	Free and open fishery. Simple economics will solve the problem. Also gear modification.
36	Rotational closures.
37	Tray limits! Get rid of September.
38	You can take more days off. license for trapping crabs. Shutting down urchin fishing from Pem. Pt. And seeding in!
39	Absolutely no need to shut down totally for the whole season or for emergency. Slightly shorter season with 2 conservation measures. Should be totally open for the first 6 weeks of season, then SHUT DOWN totally for next 6 weeks until Dec., then totally open until middle or 3rd week in Jan. that gives a season of about 84 days but with conservation time of 6 weeks no harvesting when market values and demand are at lowest all season. Also end of season harvesting stops well before spawning (mass spawning seasonal) guaranteeing maximum reproduction.(Another conservation measure).
40	We need individual quotas, community service like the clam industry to help urchin beds.
43	Tote limits and roe % of at least 10 %.
44	Like not letting anyone else into the fishery. If DMR wants to limit the take, they shouldn't be encouraging people to get into the fishery.
45	I feel that one way of conservation is to open up Zone 1 to more area. Obsolete the Zones because the concentration of divers in Zone one are from Tenants Harbor to Rockland and that puts a lot of pressure in that area. All the divers from the Portland area all moved to the east when they depleted their area. Now the majority of them are in Zone 2. So I feel if you plan on closing Zone 1 you should close all of urchin harvesting its only fair.
46	Strict!!! Enforcement of the size law, i.e. shoot for zero tolerance. If we don't, we are done. The excuse that the judicial system won't take a guy's license because it is his living does not cut it. I lose my living if it doesn't stop now! Conservation duty of some sort. Participation in surveys, reseeding with Larry Harris's (or preferably our own), seed. Do the duty or you don't get the license. Tray limits. Many

	others.
47	Stop Diving PERIOD!!!
48	If no huge cut in days then we need a tray limit 400lbs?
49	Sept. through Dec. Two days per week in Oct. & Nov. No weekends.
51	Tote limit, reduction of days
52	A tote limit
53	Reseeding if it works, done by divers. Close areas where there are still small urchins.
54	size measurements
55	Open only 20 days in Sept. and 20 days in Dec.
56	Aquaculture
59	Close down ALL ZONES for at least 5 years and let the urchin stocks rebuild!!! Stop selling any licenses!! When you do re-open - give the people that held licenses 6 or 7 years before a chance to purchase a new license - then allow a limited amount of new people in. Stop all dragging - only allow harvesting from the top end of the chain!! - only then will you have a sustainable harvest.
60	Close season for 2 years. During those 2 years all divers must harvest undersize urchins. Relocate the urchins in areas where there aren't any, but where they existed in the past. Each diver must donate a set amount of days during the closed time. When the season reopens, put divers on a 400lb limit.
62	minimum size increase, area closures, DEFINITELY A RESEEDING PROGRAM, participation required for harvesting license.
63	Less days of harvesting in the good weather months of Sept. and close down the season after the Christmas holiday.
66	If you haven't already, maybe you should take a look at the market. The urchins that are out there are not worth taking when the market is down. This is the season I propose for 03-04: A season similar to this would work great to maximize price with market. Sept: open weekdays, 20 days. Oct: open 1st 2 weeks, weekdays. Nov: closed. Dec: open weekdays, 20 days. Jan: open weekdays, 20 days. Feb: closed. this month is a waste, price is down, and most important we see too much spawn in Feb. * closed weekends. This is 70 open days, if you want to reduce more days cut out Jan. or part of it.
67	2" limit.
68	I have a few ideas. I would be in favor of daily quotas, something like 6 trays per day or maybe an allotted number of pounds landed for the season. Days at sea? Buy back program of license purchases to reduce fishing pressure.
70	I agree urchins are depleted. A closure would help only with some kind of conservation plan in accordance with closure. A weight limit (possibly 500lbs) a fewer days would help sustain the fishery.
72	Diver choose days of diving not government, because during the season there are many days which we cannot dive (bad weather).
73	Underwater culling, moratorium on new divers and draggers, closed areas.
74	Buy back licenses from those who want out or to close the season - Instant Conservation.
76	Give us a set number of days to harvest during a larger period of time - such as commercial fishermen get. Let us go when it is good weather - we choose the days. This will allow the divers to move out farther and leave the hardest hit areas alone.
77	How about sharing the surcharge we have paid. Give us a grant, or pay us not to urchin. No zones
79	500 lb weight limit just Zone 1.
80	No dragging in the bays, including scallops.
83	I think issue of new licenses should be slowed down.
84	Kill the crabs, they are eating all the urchins and spat; in 0' to 30' depth. Also, the starfish are doing a number on them too.
88	Large-scale grow-out of urchins from sperm&egg in laboratory/tanks; transplant seedlings coastwide on massive scale. Or establish strategically located sanctuaries (closed to harvesting) and re-seed, may require abolishment of 2-zone system. Otherwise, 60 day season, zones closed <u>before</u> spawning.
89	Eliminate urchin draggers. They destroy everything in their path.

Appendix D. Other comments.

Survey No.	Comments
1	Yes, the urchins are going fast. Not only in Zone 1 but Zone 2 is also scarce. The State needs to stop issuing new licenses especially to draggers. There are boats with 4+ divers on them working areas until all the urchins are gone. We should be fishing when the prices are good in Sept and Dec. Most divers just don't get it, they will dive until nothing is left, I just don't understand why a guy will dive all day for 3 totes. That about \$150-200.00 for the day, not worth it when X-mas comes around, there is nothing left to harvest. Most guys are eligible for retraining but won't take advantage of the program. Personally I think we should buy back licenses from divers and draggers with the surcharge fund and stop issuing new ones. Close the season for 2 years and reopen it with strict regs. (Underwater culling) 2 divers per boat max, (no dragging), shorter season, etc. It seems to me that the State issues new licenses so the State can make money on license fees and for that STUPID Safety Course. There are a lot of small urchins in Zone 1 but they need to grow. Divers rake them up just to bring them to the boat and throw them back into deeper water where they die. (underwater culling) would end this. allow 10% small on the boat or in your bags only.
3	Long over due.
4	If we want this industry to recover in (harvest?) we've got to keep the new schedule for at least 2-3 years.
5	If that's what the fishermen want. I haven't urchined for several years - do whats best.
7	I'm also a lobster fisherman. I fish close to the rocks where the urchins used to be. The urchins appear to be coming back. I'm seeing small urchins in the traps mixed in with feed.
9	(03-04 season from Sept. 23 to Dec. 22) This is already a part-time profession. Lets not lose it altogether.
10	Our best market is the month of DEC. I would like to finish the year. Jan./Feb. are our poorest markets and won't be missed. Next season: 50-60 days Aug. 15 to Sept. 30 (close Oct. & Nov.) open Dec. 14 to 24 - closed until next year. Last 7 years diving the Rockland/Tenants Harbor area. What I propose for new laws: 1. Marine Patrol present at all Buy Stations to oversee size limits are being met for every open dive day even if that means a small fee increase or tipping fee for selling them? 2. NO DRAGGING! that kills all small urchins? 3. Like the West Coast measure and harvest only keepers on the BOTTOM leaving small ones untouched. 4. Zero tolerance for selling your harvest. One warning then "heavy fines" and license suspension if you persist in the harvest of illegal urchins 5. Nail the buyers to the wall if they buy illegal sea urchins.
13	start mid Aug. until end of Sept. and a week or two in Dec.
14	They have been depleted for 3-4 years now. It is just like any other fishery, the harvesters will harvest until you kill it. I went to work landscaping because it wasn't profitable. P.s. I've been diving since '89.
19	this season: We do not open until tomorrow. Close: Possibly, only if draggers are allowed to fish the same number of days that divers have already been open. Next season: will know better by Dec. 10th. All this talk about closing when the draggers haven't even opened yet. Address this issue with fairness. Also, it is easy to say close when the season and market drops right after Christmas. The divers want it all - they have had the gravy.
21	Nice to see such a response to concerns brought by harvesters.
23	If closing the zone, this would eliminate up to 80% and supporting my family.
24	I live in the Rockland area and there is just too much pressure from out of town divers that have moved up the coast because they have cleaned out their urchins. I also think boats should be limited to two or three divers. Boat with up to 5 or 6 divers seem to work an area and clean everything they can.
25	Open the season during Sept. and Dec. when the market is strong.
26	The season for draggers hasn't even opened yet and you're already talking about closing it. Friendship

27	I believe there are a lot of bad urchins that are not going to get any better unless they are moved to a better feeding place and then they might reproduce faster in the good bottom because they will eat better. Each diver could put some time in during the summer like the clam diggers have to. Just for an example: Metinic Island. I know where there is a lot of urchins on one side of the island that has no feed, bare rock bottom. On the other side of the island is all feed and nice urchin bottom. And I believe if they were moved to the good side they would grow, and reproduce much faster and healthier.
28	Diving for sea urchins is very physical, dangerous and overall challenging work. Each year many, many people move on to safer more secure ways of living. Within 2 years we are probably going to have the right number of divers. There will never be a "point of no return" there are many urchins out there. I see the ocean bottom much more diverse and full of life as compared to ten years ago. The kelp, mussels, starfish, crabs, conchs, periwinkles, everything is rebounding and someday soon you'll see the smaller fish and then bigger fish along the coast. These people complaining about urchin stocks are people who need to move on. Lets give to the ones who want to work a chance to do so. I believe this years schedule was very good and well thought out and recommend next years to be the same. p.s. What are we going to do with the divers in Zone 1 if we shut it down. Lets not forget, Zone 1 or Zone 2, we are all urchin divers and deserve equal treatment. Lets let the people who want to go to Zone 2 go and take some pressure off Zone 1. Thank you.
29	I think that this season should remain open because some people are counting on it for a living. Next year the divers will have a chance to pick up odd jobs to fill in for the off days.
30	I am hesitant to vote for early closure because I don't go that often. If the resource has crashed let the market determine any closure. Use the research money.
31	(one Zone) let a person fish same number of days proven by landings as last year. Season open Sept.-Mar. Let person make his own schedule in July for the days he can fish, for enforcement. (and my two kids)
33	The business will regulate itself, if catch is too low people will not go fishing then the stocks should get better. Can't close just one zone.
34	As long as the "rule" or law is fair to all citizens to harvest their Public Resources.
37	The season was set, let us finish the season, make your changes next year. If you shut Zone 1 down, let us that are fishing now go to zone 2. You can tell who's been fishing by the log book. Zone 2 divers helped deplete Zone 1 a lot of them fished here first.
38	Also stop the dragging of sea urchins! This needs to be done or else! Its Over!
39	Urchins where I am from are maintaining food replenishment with tons of 0.5 to 1.5" new recruits. Also we have just the right number of divers (3) so that harvesting efforts do not outweigh recovery replenishment. Kennebunkport
40	We need enough product to keep the infrastructure in place. When the buyers are gone, the urchin industry is done.
41	It seems to me that opening the season around Nov. 1st until the first of the next year would give harvesters and dealers the chance to harvest the product when it is at its best and the market is wide open, an early finish to the season would be reasonable as it seems earlier every year that the buyers complain that the eggs are getting soft.
42	all but 4 days fished.
44	days open: maximizes value, keeps divers from overgrazing junk piles. Comments: Do away with the surcharge. It was supposed to go in 3 years, where's all the research in a COLLAPSED fishery for my money?
45	Zone 1 diver 10 years.
47	close, when: any day, seems fitten we should get this paper now divers have had their season, now it's the draggers season!!! Diving is 100% efficient. Dragging is maybe 10% . What ever you do the divers will still clean up all the urchins, not to mention taking small urchins. Something definitely has to be done.
48	40 days in 2000
49	Rotational closures of islands or ledges.
50	It's so far gone, it won't matter. No inshore dragging of any type, even scallops.

51	Something has to be done about the crabs killing the urchins!
53	I have dove since 1988. Every season the last 3 years are the worst. I've seen no small eggs in a lot of good spots. The season needs to be shut down for a while.
54	I've noticed a big difference in the amount of eggs from last season "a lot less" but Oct. and Nov. we go and give our eggs away for nothing. We need to go when the market is strong. I don't want to put myself out of work but at least a two year closure would help a lot. There is just too much pressure on them!
58	Sept. and Dec. are the only good money months, let us go until Dec. 24 we've come this far. After Dec. 24 shut it down.
60	Back five years ago, my uncle and I tried to bring back urchins to an area that had been wiped out. Much to our surprise, we had great success. What we did was put around 25 pounds of mature urchins in 4ft wire lobster traps and spaced them 20 - 30 yards apart down the shore line, in shallow water with hard bottom. One year later there was a band of baby urchins 15-20 yards long and 4-5 feet wide on each side of the lobster traps that we had set. 2 years later we harvested around 3,000 pounds of urchins out of this area. It is important to use only around 25 pounds of urchins in each lobster trap, much more than that and the urchins seem to die for some reason. p.s. I am willing to help in any conservation or research as long as it is more than just shortening the season. All of us divers and processors have done the damage to our industry. Now it is time to fix the problem before urchins and urchin divers become a thing of the past, like it pretty much has on the west coast, where the urchin industry. I've been a professional diver for 12 years. I never thought I would say something like this, but I've seen what we have done to our stock. It's so bad out there that I went from 300-400 pounds of urchins per tank , just 4 years ago, to 30-40 last year. SOMETHING DRASTIC NEEDS TO BE DONE!
62	close when: honestly, right now, today. But in consideration of the market/economic forces perhaps 2nd week of Jan. Comments: from what I've seen in the mid-coast area, nothing short of a total shutdown, coupled with stock enhancement for several years will give the resource a chance.
63	As a Zone 1 diver I sometimes search for urchins in the Portland area of Casco Bay in the historically lucrative spots. I have yet to find measurable or small urchins in most of these areas. For an area that hasn't been harvested for at least 5 years the rebound of the urchin population is obviously very slow. I feel something drastic in conservation has to be done for there to be a future a few years down the road in the urchin industry.
64	We go through this every year... Divers not having much luck, squawk about Zone 1 emergencies on their way out of the business. Their intention is to keep anyone else from doing business. Existing conservation measures are working. We are now harvesting in the true sense of the word.
65	Just because there is some crybabies there that want to make hundreds of \$ a day shouldn't have the right to close the diving. This is all I have this time of year and I also have a wife and a 14 yr. Old daughter to support. Thank you!
67	I dove for urchins from 1988-1997. Then they told me what days I could fish during the week, its bad enough with the weather any way. The Federal Gov. and the State has put me out of every fishery. Urchin, Tuna, groundfishing its BULLSHIT!! Only the strong survive.
68	What we are talking about is the income for a number of fishermen and their families. I don't think the fishery needs to be closed for this season. If we were to implement an allowable amount to be landed on the remainder of the fishing days, that allows a controlled amount of landings and the fishermen retain an income for the remainder of their fishing season and forces everybody to work on quality as well. Some thought needs to be applied to our fishermen and not only for the urchin. I have more thoughts, not enough room to finish. Please allow more discussion.
73	For one thing if you close Zone 1 where do we replace that income? Zone 1 divers and draggers should be the only ones voting on this proposal.
75	If urchins are real scarce fishermen will not work on them.
76	I own and operate a scuba store. I may not actually harvest but I am very much involved in the business. Close Zone 1, you will damage any purchaser's capability of survival. Divers are selectively reducing their dive days.

79	A weight limit would lengthen the season by making the same amount of urchins go more days we wouldn't clean spots off just in the opening days of Sept. and Oct. And there would be no temptation for divers to take small urchins because they would want to get the best 500 lbs they could.
80	If divers are not making money they will stop diving on their own.
83	You are concerned about recent reports. Reports from whom? What was said? It would be nice to get a few more details spelling out concerns prior to answering this questionnaire.
84	close early: 3/4 to 2/3 of my income comes from urchins. If you close WHO is going to pay my BILLS? Unemployment or like a farmer's feedback? TELL ME! comments: Find a market for crabs and starfish and let us dive on them. DMR & MSUZC messed up; they shouldn't have open Zone 1 until Nov. 1st. Then we would of had a good product and price for what we had left.
86	Leave it alone, if it gets too bad we will stop but let us decide, not someone whose living does not depend on it. Thank you.
87	If we did it back when it was first talked about it probably would of worked better! Now it's kind of like shutting the barn door after the cow already has run out.
89	I see a decrease in some areas, but there are still plenty of urchins, just have to lookharder. The people who want to shut it down probably have another job. I say just leave everything as it is. It will regulate itself, when it gets bad enough people will drop out, and that will decrease the pressure on the resource. Those with licenses that want to tough it out should have that option. Shortening the season more will ruin it for those trying to make a livelihood. Please leave it be.