

by

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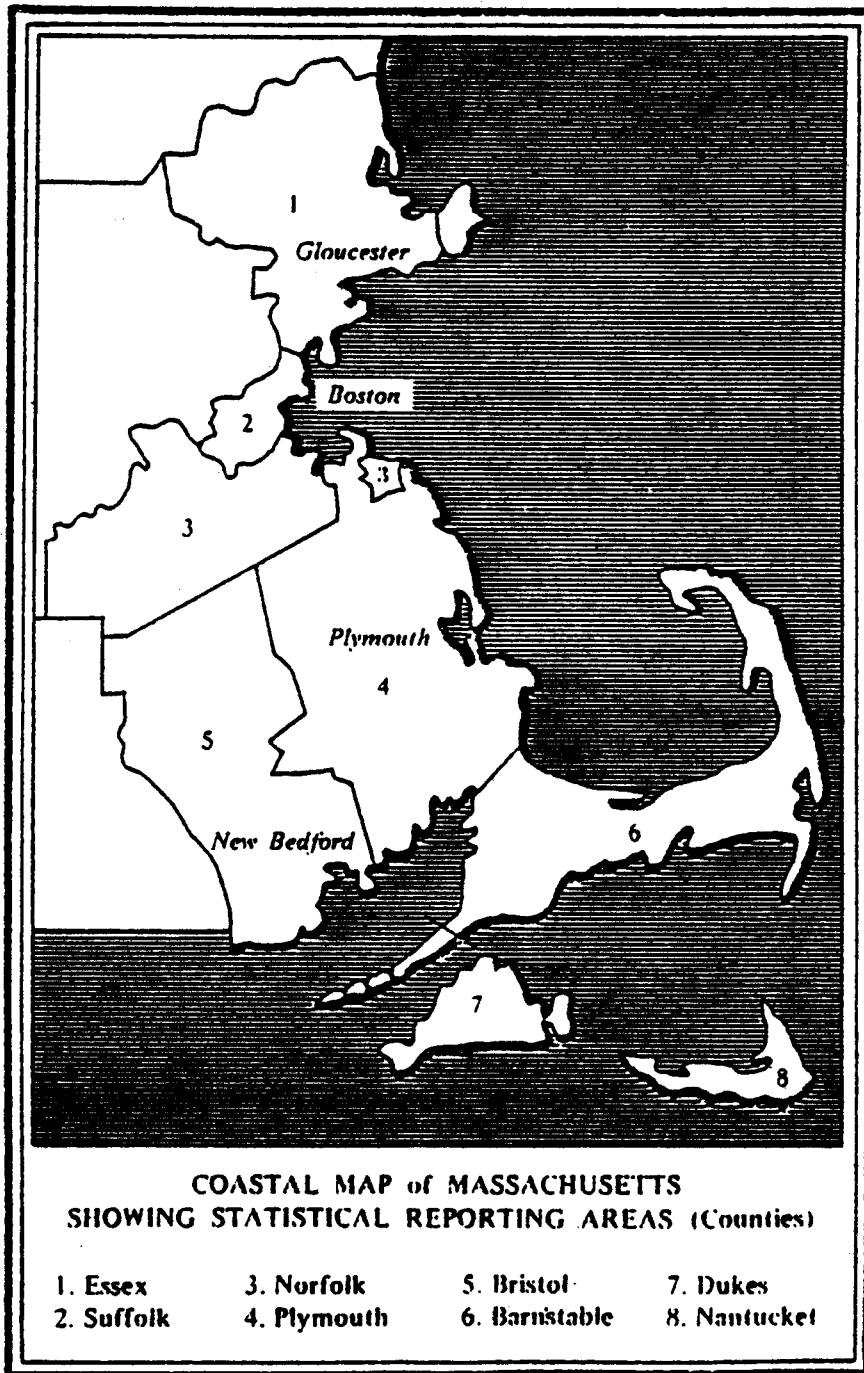


Figure 1

INTRODUCTION

The coastal lobster fishery of Massachusetts continues to be the most economically important single fishery conducted within the territorial waters of the Commonwealth.

Each passing year finds the lobster fishery becoming even more complex, involving far-reaching biological, sociological and economic considerations.

A moratorium now limits the issuance of coastal lobster permits to 1,300 per year, with renewal preference given to fishermen who held a valid permit for the prior year, actually lobstered during that year, and filed a completed catch report. There is also a provision for the issuance of an additional 130 permits to those who can demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Marine Fisheries Advisory Commission that they would suffer a substantial hardship if the permit were not granted to them.

This report constitutes the eleventh such annual presentation of coastal lobster statistics in a standardized format. It has been prepared by personnel of the Division's commercial fisheries statistics project, financed jointly by state and federal funds under the Commercial Fisheries Research and Development Act of 1964, Public Law 88-309.

The coastal lobstermen of Massachusetts, commercial and non-commercial, potmen and/or divers, have provided the data included here through their annual catch reports. They deserve a special thanks, as do the Division personnel who assisted in processing and preparing the wealth of material this report represents.

SOURCE OF DATA

No person may fish for or take lobsters or edible crabs in coastal water or land the same in the Commonwealth without a permit issued by the Director, Division of Marine Fisheries (Chapter 130, G.L., Section 38).

Chapter 130, G.L., Section 33, requires any person so licensed to file an annual report of his catch by January 31 for the preceding calendar year. License renewal application and catch report forms are mailed to licensees at the end of the calendar year.

The reports require the following information: permittees' name, address and permanent lobster number; method(s) used, (pots and/or diving); numbers, types and current value of gear used; percent that gear was used specifically for lobstering; numbers/pounds of lobsters taken and value if sold; principal port(s) of landing. Project personnel sort, edit and tabulate all reports.

Statistics presented in this booklet are based on reports received, and are not expanded to the 100% level..

EXPLANATION OF TABLES AREA

Statistics are report for the county in which the catch was landed. Data was placed in the county category of "other" when the county of landing could not be determined.

FISHERMAN CLASSIFICATION

Massachusetts' coastal lobster fishermen fall into three distinct categories, with a specific license for each: full-time commercial (\$100), seasonal commercial (\$25), and non-commercial (\$15). For statistical purposes they are classed as "regular", "casual", and "other", respectively. They are further sub-classed according to their method of fishing: potmen, divers, or combination potmen-divers.

\$100 Commercial Coastal Lobster Permit entitles the licensee to use any number of pots and/or dive, to sell his catch and to fish within territorial waters throughout the calendar year. The license could be taken in his name or in the name of his boat, in which latter case anyone aboard the boat could assist him with no other licenses required.

A \$25 Seasonal Lobster Permit allows the licensee to use up to 25 pots from June 15 through September 15 and sell the catch. Diving is not allowed, and this permit is issued to full-time students only.

The \$15 Non-Commercial lobster permit authorizes the holder to fish for, take and land lobsters for consumption by himself or his immediate family only. The licensee could use up to ten pots and/or dive lobsters but could not sell his catch.

VALUES

The value of the catch is determined by the price received by the fishermen. When individual value was omitted, an average price for that area was applied to the poundage listed.

Gear values were calculated on the basis of the fisherman's estimate of its current value and the percentage of its use specifically for lobstering. Average gear values for the county were applied when data was omitted.

The average value of pots from all areas combined was \$25 per pot. This includes the value of the buoys and lines. This figure was obtained from the Coastal Lobster Investigation Project.

1978 HIGHLIGHTS

- 1) There were 10,475 coastal lobster licenses of all types issued in 1978: 1,368 full-time commercial, 192 seasonal commercial, and 8,915 non-commercial.
- 2) Of a total of 8,918 lobster fishermen reporting, 3,282 reported they did not lobster during 1978.
- 3) A total of 7,028,598 pounds of lobsters were reported landed. Of these commercial fishermen (regular and casual) landed 6,729,745 pounds of lobsters which they sold for \$12,748,445.
- 4) Regular fishermen comprised 22.5% of the total number of lobstermen reported fishing, set 92% of the pots and landed 95% of the total pounds of lobsters taken.
- 5) Non-commercial ("other") fishermen comprised 75% of all fishermen and landed 4% of the total catch in pounds.
- 6) Divers comprised 32% of the fishermen reporting and landed only 1% of the total poundage reported.
- 7) In total pounds of lobsters landed, Essex County ranked first, Plymouth County second, and Suffolk County third.
- 8) In total numbers of reporting fishermen, Essex County ranked first with 2,003, Plymouth County second with 1,432 and Barnstable County third with 845.
- 9) Pots were valued at \$6,436,430; diving gear at \$770,818; and boats of all types at \$14,247,909; yielding a total gear value of \$21,455,177. Combining that with the value of the lobsters sold \$12,748,445 gives a total fishery value of \$34,203,622.

The reader is referred to Tables 1-15 for detailed statistics.

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TABLE I
COMPARISON OF SELECTED COASTAL LOBSTER STATISTICS
1973 - 1978

	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978
Licenses Issued	9,048	9,688	9,744	9,637	10,072	10,475
Licensees Fishing	4,906	4,405	5,645	5,638	5,713	5,636
Lobsters Landed (lbs.)	3,680,554	3,882,535	5,203,315	5,053,453	5,765,530	7,028,598
Value, Lobsters Sold	\$5,092,988	\$5,515,851	\$8,827,005	\$8,270,520	\$10,136,748	\$12,748,445
Total Fishery Value*	\$11,138,352	\$12,049,535	\$21,011,917	\$21,907,174	\$26,344,272	\$34,203,622
Pots Fished	169,749	156,987	213,468	240,035	236,796	257,458
Average Catch (lbs.)						
All Fishermen	750	881	922	806	1,009	1,247
Reg. Fishermen	3,847	4,173	4,078	3,925	4,554	5,274
Casual Fishermen	200	159	183	189	211	242
Other Fishermen	65	61	67	65	75	71
Avg. Catch/Pot (lbs.)	21.3	22.8	24.4	20.9	24.3	27.5
Avg. Price/ (lbs.)	148.6¢	150.2¢	179.9¢	173.3¢	186.6¢	189.4¢
Avg. Wt./Lobster (lbs.)	1.14	1.27	1.31	1.20	1.19	1.19

*Includes value of lobsters sold, current value of boats, pots, diving gear.

TABLE 2

Number and Types of Lobster Licenses Issued in 1978

\$100 Commercial (coastal)	1,368
\$25 Seasonal	192
\$15 Non-Commercial	<u>8,915</u>
TOTAL	10,475

TABLE 3

Status of Licensees Filing Catch Reports for 1978

Licensees Reporting	8,918
Licensees Fishing:	
\$100 Commercial	1,269
\$25 Seasonal	155
\$15 Non-Commercial	<u>4,212</u>
TOTAL	5,636
Licensees Not Fishing:	
\$100 Commercial	59
\$25 Seasonal	27
\$15 Non-Commercial	<u>3,196</u>
TOTAL	3,282

TABLE 4

Total Value of Massachusetts Coastal Lobster Fishery, 1978*

Gear:

Pots	\$ 6,436,450
Diving Gear	770,818
Boats	14,247,909
Lobster Sold	<u>12,748,445</u>
TOTAL	\$34,203,622

TABLE 5

NUMBER OF FISHERMEN
 IN MASSACHUSETTS COASTAL LOBSTER FISHERY
 1978*

FISHERMAN CLASSIFICATION	COUNTIES									TOTAL
	BAHNSTABLE	BRISTOL	DUKES	ESSEX	NANTUCKET	NORFOLK	PLYMOUTH	SUFFOLK	OTHER	
REGULAR										
POTMEN	112	61	31	535	5	70	293	110	10	1,227
DIVERS	6					1				7
POTMAN-DIVERS	11			7		5	10	2		35
SUB-TOTAL	129	61	31	542	5	76	303	112	10	1,269
CASUAL										
POTMEN	15	3	6	59	1	13	51	7		155
DIVERS										
POTMAN-DIVERS										
SUB-TOTAL	15	3	6	59	1	13	51	7		155
OTHER										
POTMEN	463	118	66	549	8	156	699	131	44	2,234
DIVERS	202	17	9	801		117	333	90	230	1,799
POTMAN-DIVERS	36	7	2	52		17	46	12	7	179
SUB-TOTAL	701	142	77	1,402	8	290	1,078	233	281	4,212
TOTAL	845	206	114	2,003	14	379	1,432	352	291	5,636

* Based on annual reports filed by fisherman

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TABLE 6

NUMBER OF LOBSTERS LANDED
IN MASSACHUSETTS COASTAL LOBSTER FISHERY

1978*

FISHERMAN CLASSIFICATION	COUNTIES									TOTAL
	BARNSTABLE	BRISTOL	DUKES	ESSEX	NANTUCKET	NORFOLK	PLYMOUTH	SUFFOLK	OTHER	
REGULAR POTMEN	320,585	212,084	59,310	2,430,800	18,077	390,426	1,077,621	937,976	62,939	5,509,818
DIVERS	6,903					825				7,728
POTMAN-DIVERS	17,641			18,807		8,066	53,329	2,128		98,971
SUB-TOTAL	345,129	212,084	59,310	2,449,607	18,077	399,317	1,129,950	940,104	62,939	5,616,517
CASUAL POTMEN	1,524	63	635	10,581	80	3,368	12,159	1,363		29,773
DIVERS										
POTMAN-DIVERS										
SUB-TOTAL	1,524	63	635	10,581	80	3,368	12,159	1,363		29,773
OTHER POTMEN	27,501	7,730	3,434	50,487	463	16,285	57,708	11,332	2,856	177,796
DIVERS	7,237	655	250	20,801		4,503	10,525	3,960	4,482	52,413
POTMAN-DIVERS	2,045	672	43	3,448		997	3,874	1,067	572	12,718
SUB-TOTAL	36,783	9,057	3,727	74,736	463	21,785	72,107	16,359	7,910	242,927
TOTAL	383,436	221,204	63,672	2,534,924	18,620	424,470	1,214,216	957,826	70,849	5,889,217

* Based on annual reports filed by fisherman

Division of Marine Fisheries

TABLE 7

POUNDS OF LOBSTER LANDED
IN MASSACHUSETTS COASTAL LOBSTER FISHERY

1978*

FISHERMAN CLASSIFICATION	COUNTIES									TOTAL
	BARNSTABLE	BRISTOL	DUKES	ESSEX	NANTUCKET	NORFOLK	PLYMOUTH	SUFFOLK	OTHER	
REGULAR										
POTMEN	507,006	248,468	76,455	2,780,947	24,065	471,891	1,267,086	1,108,918	66,763	6,551,599
DIVERS	16,264					1,060				17,324
POTMAN-DIVERS	33,274			21,347		10,670	55,469	2,505		123,265
SUB-TOTAL	556,544	248,468	76,455	2,802,294	24,065	483,621	1,322,555	1,111,423	66,763	6,692,188
CASUAL										
POTMEN	2,204	92	781	12,477	113	4,187	15,909	1,794		37,557
DIVERS										
POTMAN-DIVERS										
SUB-TOTAL	2,204	92	781	12,477	113	4,187	15,909	1,794		37,557
OTHER										
POTMEN	44,277	9,044	4,430	57,555	616	19,705	67,518	13,372	3,027	219,544
DIVERS	11,652	766	323	23,713		5,449	12,314	4,673	4,751	63,641
POTMAN-DIVERS	3,292	786	55	3,931		1,206	4,533	1,259	606	15,668
SUB-TOTAL	59,221	10,596	4,808	85,199	616	26,360	84,365	19,304	8,384	298,853
TOTAL	617,969	259,156	82,044	2,899,970	24,794	514,168	1,422,829	1,132,521	75,147	7,028,598

* Based on annual reports filed by fisherman

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TABLE 8

EX-VESSEL VALUE OF LOBSTERS LANDED
IN MASSACHUSETTS COASTAL LOBSTER FISHERY

1978*

FISHERMAN CLASSIFICATION	COUNTIES									TOTAL
	BARNSTABLE	BRISTOL	DIKES	ESSEX	NANTUCKET	NORFOLK	PLYMOUTH	SUFFOLK	OTHER	
REGULAR POTMEN	1,133,761	561,081	182,764	5,075,918	52,988	910,162	2,377,128	1,983,560	124,866	12,402,228
DIVERS	31,391					1,908				33,299
POTMAN-DIVERS	67,330			36,787		18,203	113,877	5,002		241,199
SUB-TOTAL	1,232,482	561,081	182,764	5,112,705	52,988	930,273	2,491,005	1,988,562	124,866	12,676,726
CASUAL POTMEN	4,877	182	1,806	23,472	284	8,056	29,727	3,315		71,719
DIVERS										
POTMAN-DIVERS										
SUB-TOTAL	4,877	182	1,806	23,472	284	8,056	29,727	3,315		71,719
OTHER POTMEN										
DIVERS										
POTMAN-DIVERS										
SUB-TOTAL										
TOTAL	1,237,359	561,263	184,570	5,136,177	53,272	938,329	2,520,732	1,991,877	124,866	12,748,445

* Based on annual reports filed by fisherman

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TABLE 9

NUMBER OF POTS FISHED
IN MASSACHUSETTS COASTAL LOBSTER FISHERY

1978*

FISHERMAN CLASSIFICATION	COUNTIES									TOTAL
	BARNSTABLE	BRISTOL	DUKES	ESSEX	NANTUCKET	NORFOLK	PLYMOUTH	SUFFOLK	OTHER	
REGULAR POTMEN	22,064	11,859	3,538	94,032	714	13,086	51,774	33,286	2,360	232,713
DIVERS										
POTMAN-DIVERS	1,200			1,055		389	1,890	300		4,834
SUB-TOTAL	23,264	11,859	3,538	95,087	714	13,475	53,664	33,586	2,360	237,547
CASUAL POTMEN	230	63	80	1,111	16	275	1,029	145		2,949
DIVERS										
POTMAN-DIVERS										
SUB-TOTAL	230	63	80	1,111	16	275	1,029	145		2,949
OTHER POTMEN	2,774	831	440	4,207	51	1,145	5,168	906	297	15,819
DIVERS										
POTMAN-DIVERS	197	41	7	335		113	326	67	57	1,143
SUB-TOTAL	2,971	872	447	4,542	51	1,258	5,494	973	354	16,962
TOTAL	26,465	12,794	4,065	100,740	781	15,008	60,187	34,704	2,714	257,458

* Based on annual reports filed by fisherman

Division of Marine Fisheries

TABLE 10

VALUE OF POTS FISHED
IN MASSACHUSETTS COASTAL LOBSTER FISHERY

1978*

FISHERMAN CLASSIFICATION	COUNTIES									TOTAL
	BARNSTABLE	BRISTOL	DUKES	ESSEX	NANTUCKET	NORFOLK	PLYMOUTH	SUFFOLK	OTHER	
REGULAR										
POTMEN	551,600	296,475	88,450	2,350,800	17,850	327,150	1,294,350	832,150	59,000	5,817,825
DIVERS										
POTMAN-DIVERS	30,000			26,375		9,725	47,250	7,500		120,850
SUB-TOTAL	581,600	296,475	88,450	2,377,175	17,850	336,875	1,341,600	839,650	59,000	5,938,675
CASUAL										
POTMEN	5,750	1,575	2,000	27,775	400	6,875	25,725	3,625		73,725
DIVERS										
POTMAN-DIVERS										
SUB-TOTAL	5,750	1,575	2,000	27,775	400	6,875	25,725	3,625		73,725
OTHER										
POTMEN	69,350	20,775	11,000	105,175	1,275	28,625	129,200	22,650	7,425	395,475
DIVERS										
POTMAN-DIVERS	4,925	1,025	175	8,375		3,825	8,150	1,675	1,425	28,575
SUB-TOTAL	74,275	21,800	11,175	113,550	1,275	31,450	137,350	24,325	8,850	424,050
TOTAL	661,625	319,850	101,625	2,518,500	19,525	375,200	1,504,675	867,600	67,850	6,436,450

* Based on annual reports filed by fisherman

Division of Marine Fisheries

TABLE 11

VALUE OF DIVING GEAR
IN MASSACHUSETTS COASTAL LOBSTER FISHERY

1978*

FISHERMAN CLASSIFICATION	COUNTIES									TOTAL
	BARNSTABLE	BRISTOL	DUKES	ESSEX	NANTUCKET	NORFOLK	PLYMOUTH	SUFFOLK	OTHER	
REGULAR										
POTMEN										
DIVERS	11,150					2,000				13,150
POTMAN-DIVERS	12,010			1,361		2,970	2,487	1,130		19,958
SUB-TOTAL	23,160			1,361		4,970	2,487	1,130		33,108
CASUAL										
POTMEN										
DIVERS										
POTMAN-DIVERS										
SUB-TOTAL										
OTHER										
POTMEN										
DIVERS	81,983	8,597	3,236	286,100		47,183	137,044	32,081	84,202	680,426
POTMAN-DIVERS	16,227	1,873	342	15,703		4,170	13,647	3,040	2,282	57,284
SUB-TOTAL	98,210	10,470	3,578	301,803		51,353	150,691	35,121	86,484	737,710
TOTAL	121,370	10,470	3,578	303,164		56,323	153,178	36,251	86,484	770,818

* Based on annual reports filed by fisherman

Division of Marine Fisheries

TABLE 12

NUMBER OF INBOARD BOATS
IN MASSACHUSETTS COASTAL LOBSTER FISHERY

1978*

FISHERMAN CLASSIFICATION	COUNTIES									TOTAL
	BARNSTABLE	BRISTOL	DUKES	ESSEX	NANTUCKET	NORFOLK	PLYMOUTH	SUFFOLK	OTHER	
REGULAR										
POTMEN	58	46	23	376	3	38	170	83	9	806
DIVERS	1									1
POTMAN-DIVERS	3			5		2	4	1		15
SUB-TOTAL	62	46	23	381	3	40	174	84	9	822
CASUAL										
POTMEN	4			5				1		10
DIVERS										
POTMAN-DIVERS										
SUB-TOTAL	4			5				1		10
OTHER										
POTMEN	69	18	7	78		27	113	50	17	379
DIVERS	7	2		40		9	13	17	5	93
POTMAN-DIVERS	4	1		8		5	6	4		28
SUB-TOTAL	80	21	7	126		41	132	71	22	500
TOTAL	146	67	30	512	3	81	306	156	31	1,332

* Based on annual reports filed by fisherman

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TABLE 13
 VALUE OF INBOARD BOATS
 IN MASSACHUSETTS COASTAL LOBSTER FISHERY
 1978*

FISHERMAN CLASSIFICATION	COUNTIES									TOTAL
	BARNSTABLE	BRISTOL	DUKES	ESSEX	NANTUCKET	NORFOLK	PLYMOUTH	SUFFOLK	OTHER	
REGULAR POTMEN	1,322,755	695,925	240,875	4,563,325	86,700	627,925	2,107,097	1,066,975	295,750	11,007,327
DIVERS	5,000									5,000
POTMAN-DIVERS	20,900			105,450		8,600	99,000	3,150		237,100
SUB-TOTAL	1,348,655	695,925	240,875	4,668,775	86,700	636,525	2,206,097	1,070,125	295,750	11,249,427
CASUAL POTMEN	800			5,675				150		6,625
DIVERS										
POTMAN-DIVERS										
SUB-TOTAL	800			5,675				150		6,625
OTHER POTMEN	42,028	17,532	4,506	97,243		26,724	128,501	36,889	14,611	367,934
DIVERS	4,800	213		46,141		23,069	21,452	24,323	11,430	131,428
POTMAN-DIVERS	3,225	9,000		4,296		5,294	7,400	13,100		42,315
SUB-TOTAL	50,053	26,745	4,506	147,680		55,087	157,353	74,312	26,041	541,777
TOTAL	1,399,508	722,670	245,381	4,822,130	86,700	691,612	2,363,450	1,144,587	321,791	11,797,829

* Based on annual reports filed by fisherman

TABLE 14

NUMBER OF OUTBOARD & NON-POWER BOATS
IN MASSACHUSETTS COASTAL LOBSTER FISHERY

1978*

FISHERMAN CLASSIFICATION	COUNTIES									TOTAL
	BARNSTABLE	BRISTOL	DUKES	ESSEX	NANTUCKET	NORFOLK	PLYMOUTH	SUFFOLK	OTHER	
REGULAR										
POTMEN	74	27	14	236	2	38	173	31	3	598
DIVERS	3					1				4
POTMAN-DIVERS	11			5		4	9	1		30
SUB-TOTAL	88	27	14	241	2	43	182	32	3	632
CASUAL										
POTMEN	8	3	6	52	1	13	51	6		140
DIVERS										
POTMAN-DIVERS										
SUB-TOTAL	8	3	6	52	1	13	51	6		140
OTHER										
POTMEN	260	99	56	454	6	123	576	70	18	1,662
DIVERS	54	2	1	84		16	58	11	19	245
POTMAN-DIVERS	24	4	2	35		12	38	5	2	122
SUB-TOTAL	338	105	59	573	6	151	672	86	39	2,029
TOTAL	434	135	79	866	9	207	905	124	42	2,801

* Based on annual reports filed by fisherman

Division of Marine Fisheries

TABLE 15

VALUE OF OUTBOARD & NON-POWER BOATS
IN MASSACHUSETTS COASTAL LOBSTER FISHERY

FISHERMAN CLASSIFICATION	COUNTIES									TOTAL
	BARNSTABLE	BRISTOL	DUKES	ESSEX	NANTUCKET	NORFOLK	PLYMOUTH	SUFFOLK	OTHER	
REGULAR										
POTMEN	127,528	34,322	14,230	439,603	3,550	99,698	357,948	93,730	7,200	1,777,809
DIVERS	9,782					5,400				15,182
POTMAN-DIVERS	29,417			7,350		10,050	24,970	1,275		73,062
SUB-TOTAL	166,727	34,322	14,230	446,953	3,550	115,148	382,918	95,005	7,200	1,266,053
CASUAL										
POTMEN	10,650	8,400	3,655	40,249	900	9,365	43,612	3,950		120,781
DIVERS										
POTMAN-DIVERS										
SUB-TOTAL	10,650	8,400	3,655	40,249	900	9,365	43,612	3,950		120,781
OTHER										
POTMEN	110,731	51,155	29,067	235,021	367	72,753	287,648	34,207	16,827	837,776
DIVERS	24,538	275	800	67,444		10,050	23,533	9,617	27,292	163,549
POTMAN-DIVERS	11,045	4,680	135	12,236		10,115	16,808	3,602	3,300	61,921
SUB-TOTAL	146,314	56,110	30,002	314,701	367	92,918	327,989	47,426	47,419	1,063,246
TOTAL	323,691	98,832	47,887	801,903	4,817	217,431	754,519	146,381	54,619	2,450,080

* Based on annual reports filed by fisherman

Division of Marine Fisheries

