

Inverness South Fishermen's Association
823 Mabou Harbor Rd.
Mabou, NS
B0E 1X0
(902) 945-2459
invernesssouth@outlook.com
www.invernesssouth.com

January 4, 2017

To Whom It May Concern:

In 2014, the lobster fishers of 26B South voted in favour of voluntarily increasing their minimum carapace size to 82.5mm over a period of 3 years. They agreed upon a 1mm increase in 2015, a 1mm increase in 2016, and a final 1.5mm increase in 2017.

While everyone expected these size increases to have some effect on catches, the 2016 season saw a much more dramatic decrease in catches than anyone anticipated, with many fishers reporting a large portion of the lobsters they threw back being just below the minimum size.

Many fishers came to the Inverness South representatives during the 2016 lobster season expressing concern for the further increase scheduled for the coming 2017 season. On September 11, 2016, Inverness South Fishermen's Association held a meeting at which the majority in attendance voted in favour of holding a vote to determine if the lobster fishers of 26B South wanted to request a 1 year delay of this final increase in carapace size.

In December 2016, Inverness South mailed ballots to every lobster fisher in 26B South. Of the 76 ballots that were returned to us, 60 fishers voted in favour of the delay request and 16 voted against it. We did our best to mail out to all lobster fishers in 26B South, although for various reasons some may not have received a vote, but due to the overwhelming majority who voted in favour we believe that the results of the vote would not have changed.

As such, on behalf of the lobster fishers of 26B South, Inverness South Fishermen's Association is requesting from the Department of Fisheries a one year delay of the last carapace size increase. We are requesting that there be no carapace size increase in 26B South for this coming 2017 season, and that the last 1.5mm increase to 82.5mm happen in the 2018 season.

Our goal is to prevent undo hardship for the lobster fishers of 26B South while still reaching the 82.5mm carapace size. We believe the delay would allow for catches to recover from the previous 2 increases and minimize the impact the final increase would have on catches. We realize that the schedule currently set to reach our 82.5mm goal was approved by the fishers of 26B South when it was put in place; at the time it was believed that spreading the increase out over 3 years would be enough to allow for a minimal effect on catches and the financial wellbeing of the fishers.

The fishers of 26B South realize that we are requesting a change of conditions that we ourselves initially asked to set in place, and we do not do so lightly. It is out of great concern for the hardship this scheduled increase may cause, and with a desire to balance this concern with reaching our industry goals, that we respectfully request for this one year delay from DFO. Thank you in advance for your consideration of this request.

Respectfully,
Jordan MacDougall
President
Inverness South Fishermen's Association