

# We must do more to protect our fish stocks

by “East End” Eddie Doherty



## *Federal fishing laws need to keep rebuilding stocks and address climate change*

I am a Cape Cod Canal fisherman. I plan fishing trips, prepare fishing gear and surf cast on the canal almost every day for about eight months of the year.

I also am an author and have the opportunity to interview or speak with many fishermen and women in the course of a day, month or year. So having a say in our nation’s fisheries is important to me and all the anglers I come in contact with. Monday, Sept. 28, was a big day for the fishing community in New England.

Congressman Jared Huffman (D-California) ran his ninth listening session on the Magnuson-Stevens Act (MSA), the federal fishing law of this nation.

This session had New England fishery stakeholders on the panel including my friend — and Sun Chronicle columnist — Capt. Dave Monti.

Congressman Huffman, who is chair of the Water, Oceans, and Wildlife Subcommittee of the House Natural Resources Committee, was joined by other members of Congress including Massachusetts 6th Congressional District Congressman Seth Moulton and Congressman Bill Keating from the 9th Congressional District of Massachusetts.

The listening tour is a part of Congressman Huffman’s efforts to foster a more transparent, deliberative, and science-based process for developing natural resources legislation.

The input from this listening tour, and from other stakeholder outreach will inform his introduction of a Magnuson-Stevens reauthorization bill in the future.

Through this inclusive approach, Congressman Huffman hopes to restore the historically bipartisan character of marine fisheries policies including prior successful Magnuson-Stevens reauthorizations.

As recreational anglers, it is important to weigh in on changes to our Federal fishing law. We need to keep science-based Allocable Catch Limits (ACLs) and rebuilding timelines strong to rebuild fish stocks as they have started to falter since 2018. Today a fifth of known stocks are overfished.

Overfished stocks, such as Gulf of Maine Atlantic cod, may become a thing of the past as the region has allowed it to be overfished for 30 years. We need to do more to rebuild and maintain stocks at healthy levels because doing so will provide stability and economic opportunity.

We also need to support the development of tools that help address climate change impacts on fish.

Warm water fish such as black sea bass, scup and summer flounder are now here in abundance and cold water fish such as winter flounder, American lobster and cod have left for cooler/deeper water.

Solutions need to be worked in our federal fishing laws that address shifting stocks and allocation. Managers need to find ways to adapt and still have the responsibility to maintain sustainable fishing levels. We have to create a management system that better accounts for climate impacts and is better equipped to deal with uncertainty.

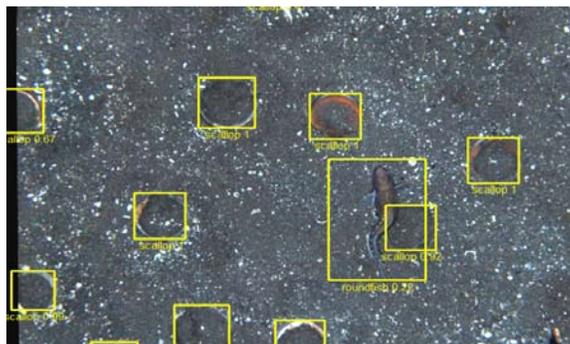
Thank you Congressmen Huffman, Keating and Moulton for listening to New England anglers.

RISAA Member East End Eddie Doherty is a Cape Cod Canal fisherman, fish advocate, lecturer and author. His book, *Seven Miles After Sun Down* is about surfcasting for striped bass on the Cape Cod Canal. He lives in Mattapoisett, MA.

### NOAA (from page 20)

This raises an interesting question: How do you create a population estimate from a group of imprecise or “fuzzy” variables? Answer: statistics to the rescue.

Led by [Jui Han Chang](#), Hart and other colleagues compared the data collected from the same images by human analysts and by VIAME. Then they analyzed four different ways of calculating an estimate of objects in an image, combining data collected by human analysts and by VIAME. The results were used to get a corrected estimate of the abundance of organisms. That estimate is then applied to all of the collected images across a range of habitats and environmental



**Example of a HabCam image annotated by VIAME sea scallop and fish detectors**

“Automated image analysis has the potential to reduce labor costs, since automated annotators can reduce requirements for manual annotators,” says Hart. “But it also can do it faster—several images per second compared to 1-2 per minute for manual annotators—and annotate many more images for more potential targets, not only scallops and fish, but many other organisms on the seafloor that are not usually surveyed. This will improve our understanding of the seafloor communities and help guide ecosystem-based fisheries management.”