COMMERCIAL FISHERIES CENTER OF RHODE ISLAND NEWSLETTER

December 2025

Mission Statement

The Commercial Fisheries Center of Rhode Island is the home for the Ocean State's commercial fishing community. The center was founded to preserve commercial fishing as a profession, culture, and way of life through promoting the sustainability of the resource. Achieving true sustainability in our fisheries is a difficult and complicated feat. But CFCRI believes in cultivating an environment of open communication and encouraging the sharing of knowledge about our ocean and it's resources. In the pursuit of sustainable seas, our approach is innovative, our lens is optimistic, and our goals are ambitious.

Our members believe in commercial fishing as a profession, a culture and a way of life. We seek to preserve the sanctity of our community, the solvency of our small business and the sustainability of the fishery resource. The Commercial Fisheries Center of Rhode Island is our headquarters to bring fishermen, scientists, managers, and elected officials together in a collaborative effort to improve our fisheries and our understanding of the marine environment so that the proud heritage of our industry continues nobly through future generations.

CFCRI Project Updates

Seafood Donation Program - November and December Update

2025 has officially come to a close, and with that, we have had a great year for our Seafood Donation Program. We wrapped up the year with 16,775 pounds of seafood donated in November and 8,443 pounds donated in December. This brings our total for the year to 203,821 pounds. In addition, CFCRI was able to put approximately $237,056 of revenue back into the industry. The CFCRI team can't wait to see what 2026 brings for the program going forward!

Please visit our website to learn more about the program in general or see our Five-Year Impact Report, which reviews all the successes. If you would like to donate to the program, please make a check out to the Commercial Fisheries Center of Rhode Island and mail it to P.O. Box 5161, Wakefield, RI 02880.

Beavertail Lighthouse Drone Launch

In late November, CFCRI and the Commercial Fisheries Research Foundation attended a drone launch from Beavertail Lighthouse in Jamestown, RI, being operated by Dr. Brennan Phillips of the University of Rhode Island and his team. The launch was run not only to test the drone's capabilities but also to possibly locate a mystery object that has been snagging on trawl nets in the area. The drone test was successful; however, the mysterious object remains unknown at this time.

2026 CFCRI Apprenticeship

CFCRI is currently finalizing our plans for the 2026 Apprenticeship. If previous apprentices or captains who worked with apprentices have any constructive feedback about the program, or if any industry members want to get involved this year, please contact Fred Mattera. In addition, the application for this year will be released in February, so please spread the word if you know anyone who may be interested.

New England Fishermen's Stewardship Alliance

CFCRI is now a part of the New England Fishermen's Stewardship Alliance (NEFSA). NEFSA "is a bipartisan, non-profit organization committed to uniting Americans in the fight to preserve what could be the last wild frontier: the ocean, where fresh, wild, protein-rich American seafood that nourishes our nation is harvested." (NEFSA). If you would like to learn more, please check out their website.

Thanksgiving Food Drive

Thank you to everyone who donated to our Thanksgiving Food Drive. The drive was very successful, as we were able to donate three full boxes to each of our partners: Jonnycake Center for Hope at Westerly and Peacedale, and to Rhode Island Center Assisting Those In Need (RICAN).

CFCRI Calendar Updates

CFCRI has begun updating our website calendar once again. Important events from other organizations and from CFCRI will be posted as they occur. Examples of events include, but are not limited to, trainings, workshops, and meetings. If you believe something should be added, please reach out to our Communications Coordinator, Liz Levandoski, via email. Once received, the calendar item will be reviewed before possibly being posted.

Wind Farm Updates

Revolution Wind Compensation

The Revolution Compensation **application** has been extended; please submit it if you haven't already. Currently, the website has a due date of August 15th; please disregard this information. There is no current deadline; however, individuals who believe they are eligible for compensation are encouraged to apply as soon as possible.

Upcoming Events

New England Fishery Management Council – January Meeting

The New England Fishery Management Council is holding a virtual meeting from Wednesday, January 28th, 2026, to Thursday, January 29th, 2026. The agenda for this meeting has also been posted on their website for those who are interested. Additionally, for those who missed the December meeting, the council's motions and audio are available on their website.

Massachusetts Lobstermen Association's Annual Weekend & Trade Show

The Massachusetts Lobstermen Association has its Annual Weekend & Trade Show from Thursday, January 29th, to Sunday, February 1st, at the Margaritaville Resort in Hyannis, MA. If you would like to learn more about the event or register as a vendor, member, or attendee, please visit their website.

Fishing Partnership February Trainings

Fishing Partnership has multiple training sessions in February for those interested in attending. There are two First Aid & CPR trainings: one on February 2nd in Hampton, VA, and one on February 5th in Cape May, NJ. There are also two Fishing Vessel Stability Classes: one on February 6th in Cape May, NJ, and one on February 24th in New Bedford, MA. If you would like to attend any of the sessions, please make sure to sign up using the Fishing Partnership website.

New England Young Fishermen's Alliance March 2026 Greenhorn Apprenticeship

The New England Young Fishermen's Alliance has a rolling application open for their Greenhorn Apprenticeship taking place in March. This is a 5-week program for individuals trying to begin their careers as deckhands or sternmen. Classes take place in Portsmouth, New Hampshire Monday through Friday. If you would like to learn more, please check out their application.

Additional Updates

Commercial Fisheries Research Foundation's License Plates are STILL AVAILABLE!

Commercial and Combination license plates are still available for pre-order from the Commercial Fisheries Research Foundation for the state of Rhode Island. At this time, however, the Passenger Plates pre-order is closed and currently in production. If you still want to purchase a Passenger Plate, once current production is complete, you can order it directly through the RI DMV.

As a reminder, each plate costs $42.50, with $20 of the proceeds going to CFRF. Andrew Lloyd Goodman, an Assistant Professor at the Community College of Rhode Island, designed the plate, which features eight species found in Rhode Island waters. For more information about the plates, mail-in, and online forms, visit CFRF's website.

National Future Fishermen Coalition

The National Future Fishermen Coalition (NFFC) invites active fishermen to join. As a reminder, the NFFC offers resources, support, and connections that the next-generation fishermen need to succeed in the industry. There is an annual membership fee with three different tiers. Memberships start at $50.00. For more information and the membership form, please visit NFFC's page.

The Commercial Fisheries Center of Rhode Island team hopes that everyone had a wonderful and safe 2025 Holiday Season and wishes everyone a Happy 2026!

Board of Directors

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Greg Mataronas **Mike McGivney** **Todd Sutton** **Brian Thibeault**

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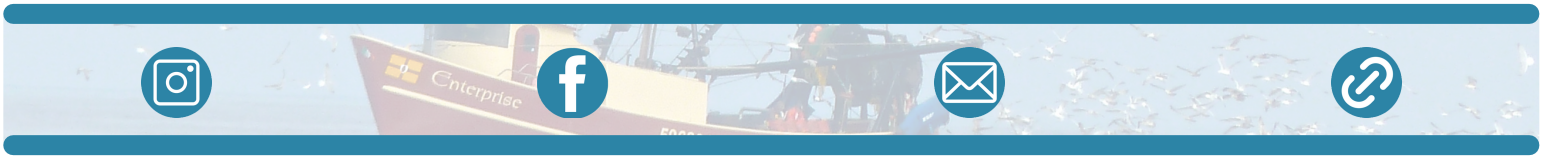
Ocean State Fisherman's Association | RI Commercial Fisherman's Association | RI Lobstermen's Association | RI Shellfishermen's Association | RI Monkfishermen's Association | Point Judith Fishermen Memorial Foundation | RI Party & Charter Boat Association | Eastern New England Scallop Association | Pt. Judith Scholarship Foundation