

DMR protocol for responding to landowner complaints of rockweed theft

(confirmed as accurate by Lt. Troy Dow, DMR Marine Patrol, 8 Aug 2022, in person in Edmunds ME)

1. Complaint made by landowner.
 2. MPO identifies the complainant, and his/her relationship to property where harvest occurred.
 - MPO ask for deed to ensure that the person owns the property so Marine patrol can move forward
 3. If the landowner has been aggrieved, proceed.
 4. Landowners need to do this:
 - Get a copy of the deed and get ready to show it.
 - Third party video and photos are fine but they have to be conclusive.
- Note: MP Officer may not be available. Or nearby.
5. MPO inform immediate supervisor at Marine Patrol.
 6. MPO identify harvest location using lat/long or photographs or both. This is when Marine Patrol may return to the site to see where it was cut.
 7. MPO identify the type of seaweed.
 8. MPO identify market value of seaweed at time of theft. (In case of restitution)
 9. MPO obtain documentation of property boundaries at harvest location. (If the deed is ready, they will figure it out.)
 10. MPO document all investigative information into Record Management System.
 11. MPO forward completed investigative report through the chain of command. It goes to a supervisor.
 12. For all situations of unresolved seaweed harvest disputes, Marine Patrol will ask “what would you like done?”. If MP determines that you reasonably own the intertidal and you are in the upland and it’s not in a corner or close to the boundary, we will assume you own it.
 13. After completing the incident review process, MP personnel will either consult with the local DA’s office about a potential prosecution, or provide the complainant with a copy of the incident report and suggest that a civil remedy be sought by the complaining party.

Case report goes to the DA. DA decides whether to take it further.

Maine Rockweed Coalition/ Center for Ecological Teaching and Learning
Rockweed Workshop, 8 Aug 2022