

Rhode Island Trawl Gear Characterization
Prepared by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

1.1 TRAWLS

1.1.1 Otter Trawls, Pair Trawls, and Beam Trawls

1.1.1.1 Gear Description

Fishermen possessing 500 pounds (227 kilograms) or more of scup from November 1 through April 30 or 200 pounds (91 kilograms) or more of scup from May 1 through October 31 may only fish with nets that have a minimum mesh size of five inches (13 centimeters) diamond or square mesh with a minimum length of 75 meshes from the terminus of the net. For nets with less than 75 mesh codends, the entire net must have a minimum mesh size of five inches (13 centimeters) diamond or square (RI Regulations Part 10.11).

Fishermen possessing 500 pounds (227 kilograms) or more of black sea bass from January 1 through March 31 or 100 pounds (45 kilograms) or more of black sea bass from April 1 through December 31 may only fish with nets that have a minimum mesh size of 4.5 inches (11 centimeters) diamond applied throughout the codend for at least 75 meshes from the terminus of the net. For trawl nets with codends less than 75 meshes the trawl net must have a minimum mesh size of 4.5 inches (11 centimeters) throughout the net (RI Regulations Part 10.11).

Fishermen in possession of scup or black sea bass cannot use rollers greater than 18 inches (46 centimeters) in diameter (RI Regulations Part 10.11).

Bottom trawl nets targeting winter flounder must have a minimum mesh size of six inches (15 centimeters) diamond or 6.5 inches (17 centimeters) square (RI Regulations Part 7.8).

For general descriptions and diagrams of trawls see the gear appendix.

1.1.1.2 Targeted Species

Trawling vessels target scup, black sea bass, and winter flounder among other species. Otter trawl fishermen may target summer flounder in the summer, though this fishery has declined in recent years.

1.1.1.3 Number of Licensed Fishermen

In 2002, 12 fishermen held a license to fish otter/beam trawls. Twelve fishermen held this license in 2001, and 16 held this license in 2000 (RIDFW 2004). The number of those fishermen actively fishing was not available for this report. For a complete list of licenses and permits issued see Appendix 2.

1.1.1.4 Effort

For areas closed to trawling see Part 11.2, 11.5, 11.6, and 11.14 of Rhode Island regulations. Otter trawl fishermen targeting summer flounder fish in state waters in the summer, though this fishery has declined in recent years (RIDFW 2005b). Information on the depth, month, and time of day fished was not provided for this report.

1.1.1.5 Status of the Fishery

Trends in catch and effort by trawl fishermen were not provided for this report, and no other information on trends in the fishery were available.

1.1.1.6 Sea Turtle Bycatch

There are no current state-run observer programs in Rhode Island, and past projects have not observed sea turtle bycatch. No other sea turtle bycatch information was available.

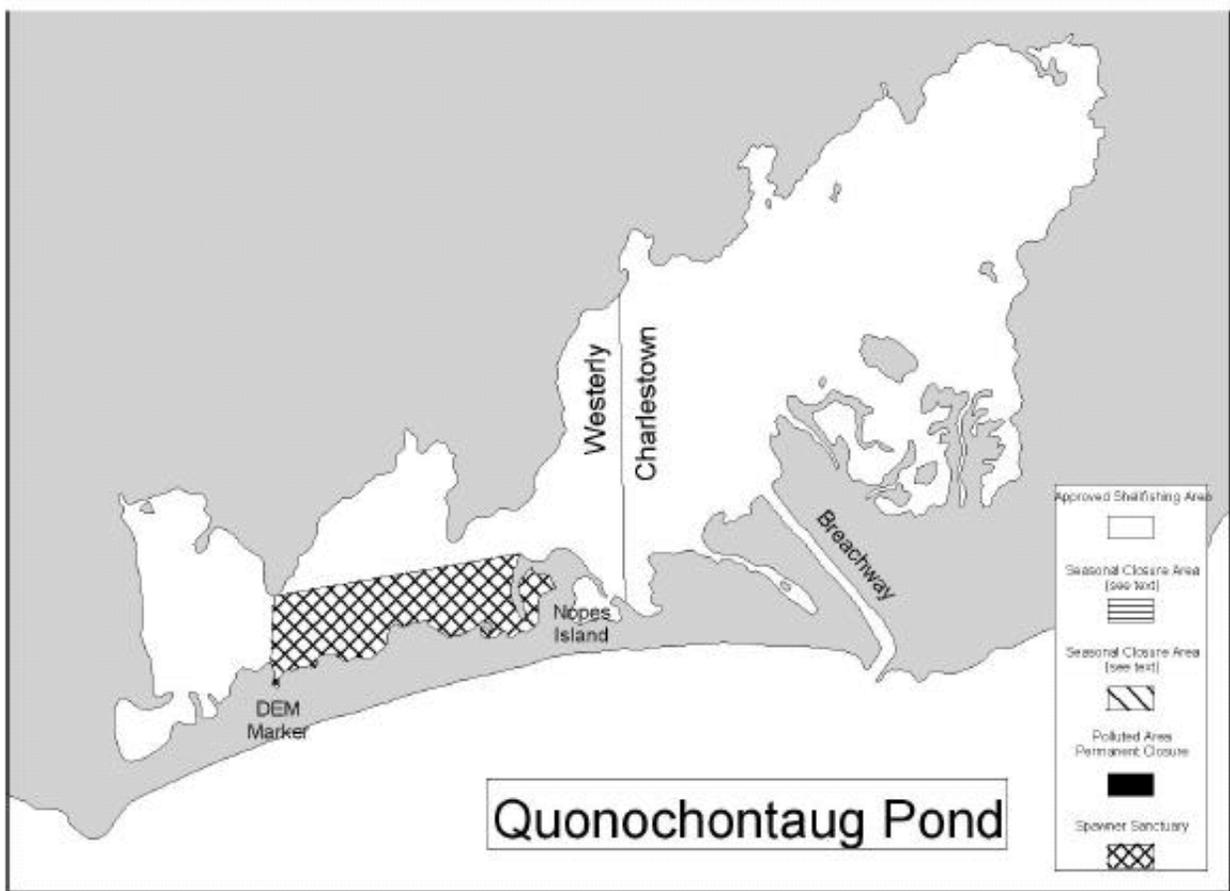
1.1.1.7 Laws and Regulations

Fishermen possessing 500 pounds (227 kilograms) or more of scup from November 1 through April 30 or 200 pounds (91 kilograms) or more of scup from May 1 through October 31 may only fish with nets that have a minimum mesh size of five inches (13 centimeters) diamond or square mesh with a minimum length of 75 meshes from the terminus of the net. For nets with less than 75 mesh codends, the entire net must have a minimum mesh size of five inches (13 centimeters) diamond or square. Fishermen possessing 500 pounds (227 kilograms) or more of black sea bass from January 1 through March 31 or 100 pounds (45 kilograms) or more of black sea bass from April 1 through December 31 may only fish with nets that have a minimum mesh size of 4.5 inches (11 centimeters) diamond applied throughout the codend for at least 75 meshes from the terminus of the net. For trawl nets with codends less than 75 meshes the trawl net must have a minimum mesh size of 4.5 inches (11 centimeters) throughout the net. Fishermen in possession of scup or black sea bass cannot use rollers greater than 18 inches (46 centimeters) in diameter (RI Regulations Part 10.11). Bottom trawl nets targeting winter flounder must have a minimum mesh size of six inches (15 centimeters) diamond or 6.5 inches (17 centimeters) square (RI Regulations Part 7.8).

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APPENDIX 1. Quonochontaug Pond



APPENDIX 2. Fishing Licenses Sold from 2000 to 2004.

Table 2-1. Fishing licenses sold by gear type from 2000 to 2002.

License	2000	2001	2002
Fishermen			
Shellfish	1,381	1,337	1,320
Multi	986	998	991
Multi/Gnet	366	371	366
Lobster	93	95	95
N/c Lob Diver	541	539	529
N/c Lob Pot	425	434	439
Ot/Beam Trawl	16	12	12
Shell Dredge	1	1	1
Rod & Reel	392	390	388
Misc Pot	1	1	1
FW Minnow	17	14	14
Dealers			
Lobster	8	7	7
Shellfish	12	10	10
Finfish	13	14	14
Multi	77	79	79
Landing			
Resident	6	12	14
Non-res	142	144	135

Table 2-2. Fishing licenses sold in 2003 and 2004.

License	2003	2004
Multi-Purpose License	1,191	1,135
Principal Effort License	1,325	1,148
<i>Lobster Endorsement</i>	61	56
<i>Non-lobster Crustacean Endorsement</i>	19	20
<i>Quahog Endorsement</i>	924	776
<i>Non-quahog Endorsement</i>	672	556
<i>Restricted Finfish Endorsement</i>	338	326
<i>Non-restricted Finfish Endorsement</i>	138	147
Commercial Fishing License	271	283
<i>Lobster Endorsement</i>	50	48
<i>Non-lobster Crustacean Endorsement</i>	68	69
<i>Non-quahog Endorsement</i>	156	172
<i>Non-restricted Finfish Endorsement</i>	192	198
Over 65 Shellfish License	50	86
Student Shellfish License	107	97

Table 2-2, cont.

Landing Permits	2003	2004
Resident		
<i>Multi-purpose</i>	17	20
<i>Finfish</i>	9	8
<i>Crustacean</i>	2	1
<i>Shellfish</i>	0	0
<i>Miscellaneous</i>	0	0
Non-Resident		
<i>Multi-purpose</i>	54	46
<i>Restricted Finfish</i>	5	5
<i>Non-restricted Finfish</i>	26	23
<i>Crustacean</i>	2	2
<i>Shellfish</i>	1	4
<i>Miscellaneous</i>	0	0
Gear Endorsements		
Fish Trap	9	9
Gillnet	323	307
Other Licenses and Declarations		
Aquaculture License	10	9
Vessel Declaration	1,905	1,829
Boat Plate	96	65
Dealer Licenses		
Multi-purpose	172	176
Finfish	14	30
Lobster	10	6
Shell	11	22