

2021 Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan



LMA 3 Guide to Regulations for Northeast Lobster and Jonah Crab Trap/Pot Fisheries

The Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan for Northeast lobster and Jonah crab trap/pot fisheries was amended in 2021. If you fish in Lobster Management Area 3, the following requirements apply to you.

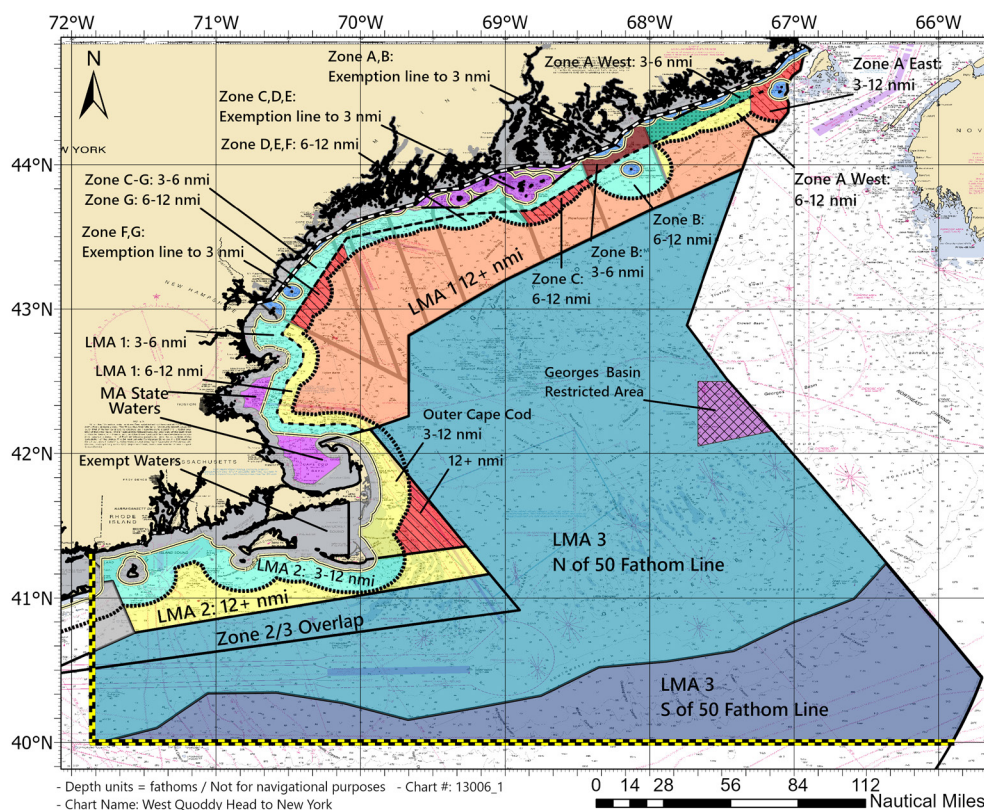
REMINDER: GENERAL TRAP/POT REQUIREMENTS

- No buoy line floating at the surface.
- No wet storage of gear (all gear must be hauled out of the water at least once every 30 days).
- All groundlines must be made of sinking line.
- These are currently required. No changes have been made.

To see these regulations and updates on our website, please scan the QR code with your phone's camera >>



MINIMUM TRAPS PER TRAWL IN LOBSTER MANAGEMENT AREAS EFFECTIVE MAY 1, 2022



LMA 3	MINIMUM TRAPS/TRAWL
North of 50 fathom line on the south end of Georges Bank	45, increase maximum trawl length to 1.75 nm
South of 50 fathom line on the south end of Georges Bank	35, increase maximum trawl length to 1.75 nm
Georges Basin Restricted Area	50, increase maximum trawl length to 1.75 nm

*Note that the 6 nm line refers to an approximation, described in 50 CFR 229.32 (a)(2)(ii).

This document is a summary of the 2021 additions and changes to the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan's commercial Northeast lobster and Jonah trap/pot fishing regulations. Additional regulations apply, and can be found in the Northeast Trap/Pot Outreach Guide available on our website www.fisheries.noaa.gov/ALWTRP. Because regulations change, it is your responsibility as a fisherman to become familiar with the latest regulatory updates and to comply with the current official regulations. Consult 50 CFR 229.32 for the complete Plan regulations.

LOBSTER/JONAH CRAB RESTRICTED AREAS EFFECTIVE 2021

CHANGES TO CLOSURE AREAS

All new and existing closures are modified from restricting all trap/pot fishing to only restricting trap/pot fishing that uses persistent (traditional) buoy lines, except for federal waters in the Outer Cape Lobster Management Area (LMA), which remains closed consistent with the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission American lobster Interstate Fishery Management Plan. Gear that does not use persistent buoy lines, such as “ropeless” gear that retrieves trap/pot trawls when the vessel is on-site, is now allowed. Fishermen must obtain authorization from the state (if in state waters) and Exempted Fishing Permits from NOAA to be exempt from other federal regulations requiring buoy lines before using ropeless gear.

RESTRICTED AREAS AFFECTING LMA 3 FISHERMEN

South Island Restricted Area

Closed to buoy lines February 1-April 30

Longitude	Latitude
-71° 19.00' W	41° 20.00' N
-69° 30.00' W	42° 10.00' N
-69° 30.00' W	40° 30.00' N
-71° 19.00' W	40° 30.00' N

Great South Channel Restricted Area

Closed to buoy lines April 1-June 30

Longitude	Latitude
-69° 45.00' W	41° 40.00' N
-68° 31.00' W	42° 10.00' N
-68° 13.00' W	41° 38.00' N
-69° 05.00' W	41° 00.00' N

LMA 1 Restricted Area

Closed to buoy lines October 1-January 31

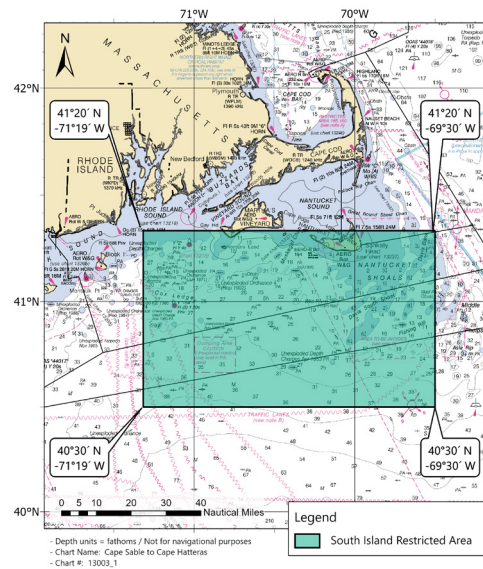
Note: There is a sliver of LMA 3 included in this area

Longitude	Latitude
-69° 36.77' W	43° 06.00' N
-68° 21.60' W	43° 44.00' N
-68° 17.27' W	43° 32.68' N
-69° 32.16' W	42° 53.52' N

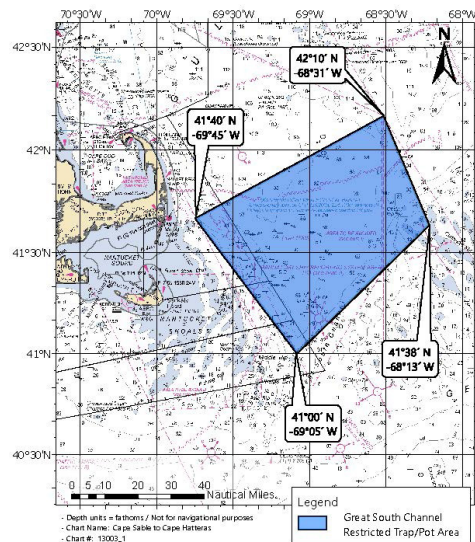
EXEMPTED FISHING PERMITS

Exempted Fishing Permits (EFPs) are issued for activities that support fisheries-related research. There are studies underway to develop fishing methods that do not use buoy lines to retrieve gear and alert other fishermen to the presence of gear on the bottom. Results of this work would enable the fishing industry to operate in areas where persistent buoy lines are prohibited. To participate in this research, federally permitted vessels must operate under EFPs, usually headed by a research, academic, state, or fishery organization that designs a research plan. If you are interested in testing ropeless gear or have another idea for research related to fishing without persistent buoy lines, please contact us at (978) 281-9315 or nmfs.gar.researchpermit@noaa.gov.

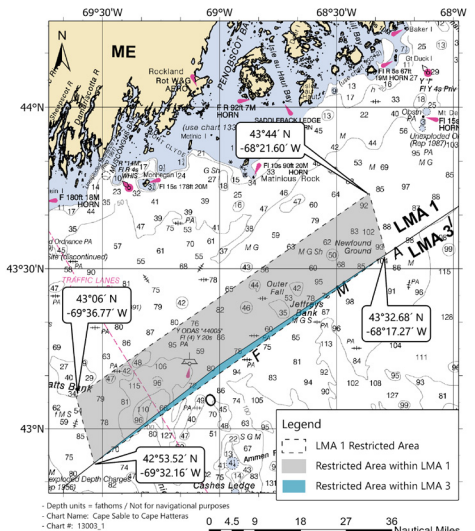
South Island Restricted Area



Great South Channel Restricted Trap/Pot Area



LMA 1 Restricted Area



NORTHEAST LOBSTER/JONAH CRAB GEAR MARKING REQUIREMENTS

EFFECTIVE MAY 1, 2022

SURFACE SYSTEM MARKING

A surface system is the collection of buoys, radar reflectors, and high flyers that identify the presence of stationary bottom fishing gear. If you are licensed in more than one jurisdiction, make sure you follow the proper gear marking requirements for your fishing area.

There have been no changes to the requirements for marking surface systems.

WAYS TO MARK YOUR GEAR

A solid **BLACK** rope may be used for LMA 3-specific gear marks, including the solid surface mark.

The solid 3-foot **BLACK** mark may be applied with dye, paint, tape, heat-shrink tubing, insertion of a colored rope or braided sleeve, or the line may be marked as approved in writing by the Greater Atlantic Regional Administrator.

Rope with a distinctive **BLACK** colored strand throughout or **BLACK** and **WHITE** Candy Cane rope may be used instead of the LMA 3-specific gear marks in the body of the buoy line.

For 12-inch federal marks or where LMA 3-specific **BLACK** rope is not used, the 12-inch marks may be added using dye, paint, tape, heat-shrink tubing, zip ties; spliced in insertion of a colored rope or braided sleeve or other material, or a thin line may be woven into or through the line; or the line may be marked as approved in writing by the Greater Atlantic Regional Administrator.

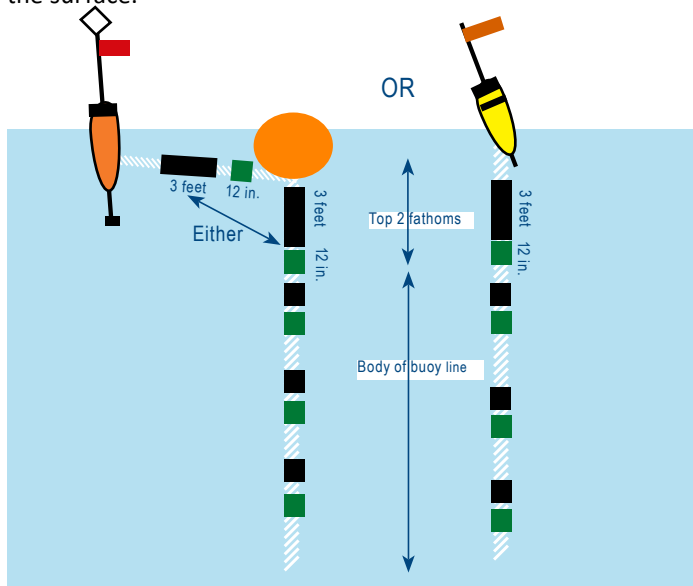
BUOY LINE MARKING

Required by May 1, 2022

Buoy lines must have at least four sets of marks:

One 3-foot **SOLID BLACK** mark within 6 inches of one 12-inch **GREEN** mark, both within 2 fathoms of the surface buoy or within 2 fathoms of the highfliers and buoys at the surface; and

One 12-inch **BLACK** mark within 6 inches of a 12-inch **GREEN** mark at the top, middle, and bottom of the buoy line below the surface.



Weak Ropes and Inserts

AREA REQUIREMENTS

LMA 3: Top 75% of one buoy line is weak rope. Bottom 25% can be higher strength.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

All weak inserts must be designed in such a way that the bitter end of the buoy line is clean and free of any knots when the weak link breaks.

Weak rope and inserts must be chosen from the list of NMFS-approved gear, and connected with any NMFS-approved rigging method on our [fisheries.noaa.gov/ALWTRP](https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/alwtrp) website.

To see the most updated list of approved weak ropes and inserts, please visit [fisheries.noaa.gov/NE-approved-weak](https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/NE-approved-weak).

APPROVED WEAK INSERTS

Weak Rope Inserts (not allowed for braided ropes)

All weak rope (1700-pound breaking strength) inserts must be at least 3 feet in length, must be connected on each end with a tuck or splice, and must be a contrasting color. Approved splices are on our website.

South Shore (Novabraid) Sleeve

Sleeves must be at least 3 feet long and of a contrasting color. Examples are available on our website.

In-line Manufactured Links

All in-line manufactured weak links must be stamped with the breaking strength, must be a contrasting color, and must be connected to the regular-strength rope with a tuck or splice.



Questions?

Contact NOAA's Greater Atlantic Region Fisheries Office

Jennifer Goebel, Take Reduction Team Coordinator: (978) 281-9175, nmfs.gar.alwtrt@noaa.gov

Rob Martin, Northeast Gear Specialist: (617) 710-6322, robert.martin@noaa.gov



U.S. Secretary of Commerce

Gina M. Raimondo

Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans
and Atmosphere

Dr. Rick Spinrad

Assistant Administrator for Fisheries

Janet Coit

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www.fisheries.noaa.gov

OFFICIAL BUSINESS

**National Marine
Fisheries Service**

Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office
55 Great Republic Way
Gloucester, MA 01930