

DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES

Chapter 75: PROTECTED RESOURCES

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75.01 Definitions

A. In addition to the definitions set forth in 1 M.R.S.A. §§ 71 and 72 and 12 M.R.S.A. §6001, the following definitions shall apply in this chapter.

1. “Area 1” means EEZ Nearshore Management Area 1, for Lobster Management Areas, that is defined by the area, including state and federal waters that are near-shore in the Gulf of Maine, bounded by straight lines connecting the following points, in the order stated, and the coastline of Maine, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts to the northernmost point on Cape Cod:

Point	Latitude	Longitude
A.....	43 deg. 58[min] N.	67 deg. 22[min] W.
B.....	43 deg. 41[min] N.	68 deg. 00[min] W.
C.....	43 deg. 12[min] N.	69 deg. 00[min] W.
D.....	42 deg. 49[min] N.	69 deg. 40[min] W.
E.....	42 deg. 15.5[min] N.	69 deg. 40[min] W.
G.....	42 deg. 05.5[min] N.	70 deg. 14[min] W.
G1.....	42 deg. 04.25[min] N.	70 deg. 17.22[min] W.
G2.....	42 deg. 02.84[min] N.	70 deg. 16.1[min] W.
G3.....	42 deg. 03.35[min] N.	70 deg. 14.2[min] W.

Along the coastline of Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Maine, and the seaward EEZ boundary back to point A. (50 CFR 697.18(a))

2. “ALWTRP” stands for the federal Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan. The federal citation for these rules is 50 CFR Wildlife and Fisheries, CHAPTER II National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Department of Commerce, Subchapter C Marine Mammals, Part 229 Authorization for Commercial Fisheries Under the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972. (50 CFR Part 229, 64 FR 7552, effective February 16, 1999) Also see <http://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/Protected/whaletrp/>.

3. NOAA Fisheries Assistant Administrator contact information:

NOAA Fisheries Service
Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office
55 Great Republic Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2276

Web site: <http://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/Protected/whaletrp/>.

4. “State of Maine Exemption Line” or “Exemption Line” means the area landward, to within the rise and fall of the tide, of a line which connects the following 25 numbered coordinates from the Maine/New Hampshire Border to Maine/Canadian Border:

1. Odiornes Pt. Portsmouth NH: 43° 02.55' N 70° 43.33' W

2.	R 2KR Whistle - Kittery Point:	43° 02.93' N	70° 41.47' W
3.	N 2MR - Murray Rock:	43° 04.06' N	70° 36.70' W
4.		43° 20.23' N	70° 23.64' W
5.		43° 27.63' N	70° 17.48' W
6.		43° 31.52' N	70° 08.41' W
7.	RG N BS - Bulwark Shoal:	43° 36.04' N	70° 03.98' W
8.	R 20ML Bell - Mile Ledge:	43° 41.44' N	69° 45.27' W
9.	R 2BR Bell - Bantam Rock:	43° 43.64' N	69° 37.58' W
10.	GR C PL - Pemaquid Ledge:	43° 48.96' N	69° 31.15' W
11.	R 2 OM Whistle - Old Man Ledge:	43° 50.28' N	69° 18.86' W
12.	G 5TB Bell - Two Bush Channel:	43° 56.72' N	69° 04.89' W
13.	R 2A Bell - Old Horse Ledge:	43° 59.83' N	68° 50.06' W
14.	R 2 Bell - Roaring Bull Ledge, Isle Au Haut:	43° 59.36' N	68° 37.95' W
15.	Southern point Great Duck I:	44° 08.36' N	68° 14.75' W
16.	R 8BI Whistle - Baker I:	44° 13.55' N	68° 10.71' W
17.	R 2S Bell - Schoodic I:	44° 19.08' N	68° 02.05' W
18.	R N 2 - Petit Manan I:	44° 21.66' N	67° 51.78' W
19.	R 2SR Bell - Seahorse Rock, west of Great Wass I:	44° 25.74' N	67° 38.39' W
20.	Freeman Rock - east of Great Wass I:	44° 27.77' N	67° 32.86' W
21.	Obstruction - southeast of Cutler:	44° 37.70' N	67° 09.75' W
22.	R 28M Whistle - Baileys Mistake:	44° 45.51' N	67° 02.87' W
23.	R N 2 - Morton Ledge:	44° 47.36' N	66° 59.25' W
24.	G 1 Whistle - West Quoddy Head:	44° 48.64' N	66° 56.43' W
25.	R N 2 - Quoddy Narrows:	44° 49.67' N	66° 57.77' W

5. “Maine Sliver Area” or the “Sliver” means the area between the State of Maine Exemption Line and the 3-mile limit, as identified on National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration nautical charts.
6. The Maine Six-Mile Line waters are defined for a minimum number of traps per trawl and are as follows:

The Maine Six-Mile Line is a line connecting the following points (Machias Seal to Isles of Shoals).

- * 44°31.98' N. lat., 67°9.72' W. long (Machias Seal)
- * 44°3.42' N. lat., 68°10.26' W. long (Mount Desert Island)
- * 43°40.98' N. lat., 68°48.84' W. long (Matinicus)
- * 43°39.24' N. lat., 69°18.54' W. long (Monhegan)
- * 43°29.4' N. lat., 70°5.88' W. long (Casco Bay)
- * 42°55.38' N. lat., 70°28.68' W. long (Isles of Shoals)

7. The Maine Pocket Waters are defined for a minimum number of traps per trawl and are as follows:

Maine Pocket Waters

- * West of Monhegan Island in the area north of the line 43°42.17' N. lat., 69°34.27' W. long and 43°42.25' N. lat., 69°19.3' W. long
- * East of Monhegan Island in the area located north of the line 43°44' N. lat., 69°15.08' W. long and 43°48.17' N. lat., 69°8.02' W. long
- * South of Vinalhaven Island in the area located west of the line 43°52.31' N. lat., 68°40' W. long and 43°58.12' N. lat., 68°32.95' W. long
- * South of Bois Bubert Island in the area located northwest of the line 44°19.27' N. lat., 67°49.5' W. long and 44°23.67' N. lat., 67°40.5' W. long

8. Trap trawl regulatory requirements relative to the three-mile line shall be based on the “three nautical mile line” as depicted on NOAA nautical charts.
9. Trap trawl regulatory requirements relative to the twelve-mile line shall be based on the “territorial sea and contiguous zone” line as depicted on NOAA nautical charts.
10. “Maine Zone A East” is defined as the portion of Lobster Zone A whose western boundary runs along the 67°18.00' W longitude line to Cross Island and whose eastern and offshore boundaries follow the International Boundary Line between Canada and Maine extending to and following the Exclusive Economic Zone boundary to approximately 44°08' N. lat., 67°18.00' W long.
11. “Maine Zone A West” is defined as the portion of Lobster Zone A whose eastern boundary is the 67°18.00' W longitude line to Cross Island and whose western boundary is equivalent to that of the western boundary of Zone A (see Chapter 25.92). The offshore boundary is the LMA 1/3 boundary.
12. “LMA1 Restricted Area” is defined as by the following coordinates and falls within the offshore portions of Maine Zones C, D, and E
 - 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
 - 69° 36.77' W 43° 06.00' N

75.02 Trap/Pot Fisheries Gear Restrictions

A. The following trap/pot fishing gear restrictions shall apply:

1. Universal requirements in coastal waters

All persons who fish lobster gear and trap/pot fisheries (including but not limited to all crab species, hagfish, finfish, whelk, and shrimp) within Maine’s coastal waters shall comply with the following federal universal requirements for the ALWTRP:

- (a) No floating line at the surface; and
- (b) No wet storage of gear over 30 days.

2. Waters to the Exemption Line

1. All persons who fish lobster gear or other trap/pot gear in Maine’s coastal waters from the head of tide to the Exemption Line shall comply with one of the following ALWTRP options:
 - (a) **Option 1:** All buoys must be attached to the buoy line with a weak link having a breaking strength no greater than 600 pounds (272.4 kg). Weak links may include swivels, plastic weak links,

rope of the appropriate breaking strength, hog rings, rope stapled to a buoy stick, or devices approved in writing by the NOAA Fisheries Assistant Administrator (See contact information in 75.01 (A)(3)). In addition, the weak link must be designed so that the bitter end of the buoy line is clean and free of knots when the weak link breaks; or

(b) **Option 2:** All buoy lines must be made entirely of sinking line; or

(c) **Option 3:** All ground lines must be made entirely of sinking line.

2. All buoy lines must be marked with three (3) purple marks: one at the top of the buoy line, one midway along the buoy line, and one at the bottom of the buoy line. The mark at the top of the buoy line must be 36 inches and must be in the top two fathom of buoy line. The middle and bottom marks must be 12 inches. Each color code must be permanently affixed on or along the line and the color code must be clearly visible when the gear is hauled or removed from the water.

Exception: Vertical lines less than 100 ft. in length may be marked with only two (2) purple marks: one at the top of the buoy line and one at the bottom of the buoy line. The mark at the top of the buoy line must be 36 inches and must be in the top two fathom of the buoy line. The bottom mark must be 12 inches. Each color code must be permanently affixed on or along the line and the color code must be clearly visible when the gear is hauled or removed from the water.

3. It is unlawful to fish lobster gear within Maine's coastal waters inside the Exemption Line which has a buoy line marked with a green mark.
4. All buoy lines must have a 1700-pound weak insertion 50% of the way down the vertical line or approved 1700-pound breaking strength line in the top 50% of the vertical line. A manufactured weak link or weak rope may be attached in whatever manner a fisherman selects. A list of NOAA approved manufactured 1700-pound weak rope and 1700-pound weak insertions can be found at this website:
<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/new-england-mid-atlantic/marine-mammal-protection/approved-weak-inserts-and-line-atlantic-large>. In addition, a weak insertion can include:
 - i. A buoy line comprised of 5/16th rope which includes an in-line overhand knot 50% of the way down the vertical line
 - ii. A buoy line comprised of 5/16th rope in the top 50% of the vertical line and is connected to the bottom 50% of the vertical line with a fisherman's knot or sheet bend knot
 - iii. A 3-foot section of 5/16th rope which is incorporated into the vertical line 50% of the way down, and is connected with a fisherman's knot or sheet bend knot

3. Sliver Area

All persons who fish lobster gear or other trap/pot fisheries in the Maine Sliver Area, shall comply with each the following ALWTRP requirements:

- (a) All buoys, floatation and/or weighted devices may be attached to the buoy line with a weak link having a breaking strength no greater than 600 pounds (272.4 kg). Weak links may include swivels, plastic weak links, rope of the appropriate breaking strength, hog rings, rope stapled to a buoy stick, or devices approved in writing by the NOAA Fisheries Assistant Administrator (See contact information in Chapter 75.01(A)(3)). In addition, the weak link must be designed so that the bitter end of the buoy line is clean and free of knots when the weak link breaks plus each weak link must be installed as close to the buoys, floatation and/or weighted device as possible.
- (b) All buoy lines must be marked with three (3) purple marks, one at the top of the buoy line, one midway along the buoy line, and one at the bottom of the buoy line. The mark at the top of buoy line must be 36 inches long and must be in the top two fathom of buoy line. The middle and bottom marks must be 12 inches in length. Each color code must be permanently affixed on or along the line and the color code must be clearly visible when the gear is hauled or removed from the water.
- (c) It is unlawful to fish lobster gear within the Sliver Area which has a buoy line marked with a green mark.
- (d) All buoy lines must have a 1700-pound weak insertion 50% of the way down the vertical line or approved 1700-pound breaking strength line in the top 50% of the vertical line. A list of NOAA approved manufactured 1700-pound weak rope and 1700-pound weak insertions can be found at this website: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/new-england-mid-atlantic/marine-mammal-protection/approved-weak-inserts-and-line-atlantic-large>.
- (e) The attachment of buoys, toggles or other floatation devices is prohibited on ground lines.
- (f) Ground lines. All ground lines must be composed entirely of sinking line.
- (g) Sink rope means, for both ground lines and buoy lines, line that has a specific gravity greater than or equal to 1.030, and, for ground lines only, does not float at any point in the water column.
- (h) Multiple traps only – no single traps allowed. See section 5 below for minimum number of traps per trawl; except as identified for Zones C, D, and E in section 5 below. Trawls with less than or equal to 5 traps may only possess 1 buoy line.
- (i) Fishermen are encouraged, but not required, to maintain knot-free buoy lines.

4. **Federal waters**

All persons who fish lobster gear or other trap/pot gear in Maine's coastal waters southerly of the Three Mile Limit, or as shown on NOAA, National Ocean

Survey nautical charts, and within Area 1, must comply with each of the following ALWTRP requirements:

- (a) All buoys, floatation and/or weighted devices may be attached to the buoy line with a weak link having a breaking strength no greater than 600 pounds (272.4 kg). Weak links may include swivels, plastic weak links, rope of the appropriate breaking strength, hog rings, rope stapled to a buoy stick, or devices approved in writing by the NOAA Fisheries Assistant Administrator (See contact information in Chapter 75.01(A)(3)). In addition, the weak link must be designed so that the bitter end of the buoy line is clean and free of knots when the weak link breaks plus each weak link must be installed as close to the buoys, floatation and/or weighted device as possible.
- (b) All buoy lines must be marked with four (4) purple marks. There must be three 12-inch marks, one at the top of the buoy line, one midway along the buoy line, and one at the bottom of the buoy line. In addition, each buoy line must be marked with a 36-inch purple mark in the top two fathom of buoy line. Each color code must be permanently affixed on or along the line and the color code must be clearly visible when the gear is hauled or removed from the water.
- (c) All buoy lines must be marked with four (4) 12 inch green marks. Each green mark must be placed adjacent to, and within 6 inches, of the four purple marks along the buoy line.
- (d) All buoy lines must have 1700-pound weak insertion(s) or approved 1700-pound breaking strength line at the location and frequency specified by Zone and distance from shore below. A list of NOAA approved manufactured 1700-pound weak rope and 1700-pound weak insertions can be found at this website: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/new-england-mid-atlantic/marine-mammal-protection/approved-weak-inserts-and-line-atlantic-large>.

The 1700-pound weak link insert requirements by location are as follows;

- ME Zone A West*, B, C, D, E; Federal Waters 3–12 nm: 2 weak inserts at 25% and 50% down the line OR top 50% of buoy line weak rope
- ME Zone A East*, F, and G; Federal Waters 3–12 nm: 1 weak insert 33% down the line
- Beyond 12 nm: 1 weak insert 33% down the line

* Zone A East and Zone A West are defined in Chapter 75.01 (A) (10 and 11).

- (e) Multiple traps only – no single traps allowed; See section 5 below for minimum number of traps per trawl; trawls of 5 or fewer traps must have only one buoy line.

- (f) The attachment of buoys, toggles or other floatation devices is prohibited on ground lines.
- (g) Ground lines. All ground lines must be composed entirely of sinking line.
- (h) Sink rope means, for both ground lines and buoy lines, line that has a specific gravity greater than or equal to 1.030, and, for ground lines only, does not float at any point in the water column.
- (i) Fishermen are encouraged, but not required, to maintain knot-free buoy lines.

5. Minimum Number of Traps per Trawl

In Maine, trap trawl requirements are based on the enforcement lines defined in Chapter 75.01 and the Maine lobster management zones defined in Chapter 25.94. Pocket waters* will follow the trawl minimums in their respective zones between the exemption line and the 3-mile line. State water trawl maximums can be found in Chapter 25.04. See each individual management area for details on the traps per trawl requirements:

ZONE	EXEMPTION LINE TO 3NM	3 TO 6* NM	6* TO 12 NM	BEYOND 12 NM
Zone A East*	3 for 1 line	10 for 1 line 20 for 2 lines	10 for 1 line 20 for 2 lines	25 for 2 lines
Zone A West*	3 for 1 line	4 for 1 line 8 for 2 lines	8 for 1 line 15 for 2 lines	25 for 2 lines
Zone B	3 for 1 line	5 for 1 line	5 for 1 line 10 for 2 lines	25 for 2 lines
Zone C	2 for 1 line 4 for 2 lines	5 for 1 line 10 for 2 lines	10 for 1 line 20 for 2 lines	25 for 2 lines
Zone D	2 for 1 line 4 for 2 lines	5 for 1 line 10 for 2 lines	5 for 1 line 10 for 2 lines	25 for 2 lines
Zone E	2 for 1 line 4 for 2 lines	5 for 1 line 10 for 2 lines	5 for 1 line 10 for 2 lines	25 for 2 lines
Zone F	3 for 1 line	5 for 1 line 10 for 2 lines	5 for 1 line 10 for 2 lines	25 for 2 lines
Zone G	3 for 1 line	5 for 1 line 10 for 2 lines	10 for 1 line 20 for 2 lines	25 for 2 lines

* The Six-Mile Line and Pocket Waters are defined in Chapter 75.01(A) (6 and 7). The three-mile and 12-mile lines are also established in Chapter 75.01(A) (8 and 9).

* Zone A East and Zone A West are defined in Chapter 75.01 (A) (10 and 11).

Exception: Those fishing in waters within ¼ mile of Monhegan Island, Matinicus Island Group, (Metinic Island, Little Green Island, Large Green Island, Seal Island, Wooden Ball Island, Matinicus Island and Ragged Island (Criehaven) and Isles of Shoals Island Group (Duck Island, Appledore Island, Cedar Island, and Smuttynose Island) are exempt from the minimum trap per trawl requirements. Single traps are permitted within ¼ mile from these islands.

B. The following restricted area will be closed to the use of persistent buoys lines.

1. The LMA1 Restricted Area* is closed to the use of buoy lines from October 1 to January 31 annually. Gear that does not use persistent buoy lines, such as “ropeless” gear that retrieves trap/pot trawls when the vessel is on-site, is allowed in these areas for research purposes with appropriate state and federal permits.

*LMA1 Restricted Area is defined in Chapter 75.01 (A) (12).

75.03 Gillnet Gear Restrictions

A. The following gillnet gear restrictions shall apply:

1. Sliver Area and Federal waters

All persons who fish gillnet gear in the Maine Sliver Area, shall comply with the following requirements for the ALWTRP:

- (a) No floating line at the surface.
- (b) No wet storage of gear over 30 days.
- (c) Buoy lines must be marked with a green, 4-inch mark midway on the buoy line.
- (d) The license-holder’s name, homeport, and license number must be clearly displayed on every gillnet marking buoy for Commercial Fishing, Commercial Pelagic and Anadromous and Menhaden license holders.
- (e) All buoys, floatation and/or weighted devices must be attached to the buoy line with a weak link having a maximum breaking strength no greater than 1,100 pounds (498.95 kg).
- (f) All gillnets, regardless of the number of net panels, must be anchored with the holding power of not less a 22-lb Danforth-style anchor at each end of the net string (must be burying anchor; no dead weights).
- (g) Each net panel must be configured with five or more weak links, depending on the panel length, with a breaking strength no greater than 1,100 pounds (498.95 kg). The weak link placement must meet one of two configurations:

(1) **Configuration 1**

For all variations in panel size:

One weak link must be placed in the center of each of the up and down lines at both ends of the net panel; and

One weak link must be placed as close as possible to each end of the net panels on the floatline.

For net panels 50 fathoms or less in length: One weak link must be placed in the center of the floatline.

For net panels greater than 50 fathoms: One weak link must be placed at least every 25 fathoms along the floatline.

(2) **Configuration 2**

For all variations in panel size:

One weak link must be placed in the center of each of the up and down lines at both ends of the net panel; and

One weak link must be placed between floatline tie-loops between net panels; and

One weak link must be placed where the floating tie-loops attach to the bridle, buoy line, or groundline at each end of the net string.

For net panels 50 fathoms or less in length: One weak link must be placed in the center of the floatline.

For net panels greater than 50 fathoms: One weak link must be placed at least every 25 fathoms along the floatline.

(3) **Exceptions:** Individual weak links are not required in locations where rope of appropriate breaking strength is used. Additionally, if no up and down line is present then weak links are not required at that location.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY:
12 M.R.S. §6171

EFFECTIVE DATE:
July 22, 2008

AMENDED:

February 16, 2009 – Section 02(A)

October 26, 2010 – Section 03(A)(1)(d)

May 13, 2015 – Sections 01(A)(2)(3) amended; 01(A)(6)(7)(8)(9) added; 02(A)(2) & (A)(3)(b) amended; 02(3)(f)(g) added; 02(A)(4)(b)(g) amended; 02(A)(5) added.

November 13, 2019-Sections 02(A)(2)(2)&(3); 02(A)(3)(b)&(c)&(d), 02(A)(4)(b)&(c)&(d)

April 21, 2020-Section 02(A)(2)(2)

May 1, 2022-Sections .01(10)-(12), .02(A), .02(3), .02(4) .02(5); .03(A)

August 13, 2023-Section 01(4)