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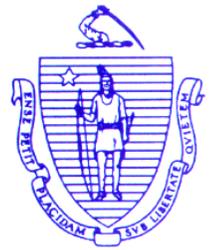
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Marine Fisheries Advisory

REMINDER: NEW POT/TRAP GEAR CONFIGURATION RULES NOW IN EFFECT

This notice serves as a reminder that new federal rules affecting lobster, fish, and conch pot/trap configuration are now in effect. These rules pertain to all commercial permit holders including those who hold only a state permit. The rules were implemented by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) as part of an update to the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan to further reduce the risk of large whales becoming entangled in pot/trap gear. The Division of Marine Fisheries issued an [advisory](#) in March 2015 to inform the public that these rules were pending.

New Federal Regulations Affecting Singles

- The use of single pots/traps is now prohibited, except within the Massachusetts Inshore Single Trap/Pot Area.
- All singles set within the Massachusetts Inshore Single Trap/Pot Area must be marked with three 12-inch markings on the buoy line - one marking at the top, middle and bottom of the line. Each 12-inch marking is to feature a 6-inch **RED** marking and the remaining 6 inches is to be composed of a Lobster Conservation Management Area (LCMA) specific color.
 - LCMA 1 - **WHITE**
 - Outer Cape Cod LCMA - **YELLOW**
 - LCMA 2 - **BLACK**
- The buoy line of any single set within the Massachusetts Inshore Single Trap/Pot Area cannot exceed 3/8" diameter.

New Federal Regulations Affecting Trawls

- Pot trawls featuring two or three pots/traps are limited to one buoy line.
- Pot trawls featuring four or more pots/traps may use two buoy lines.
- All buoy lines must be marked with three 12-inch **RED** markings – one at the top, middle, and bottom of the line.

Additional Information

Throughout 2014, the Division worked cooperatively with Massachusetts commercial pot fishermen and the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Team to address these federal regulations. We successfully argued that several rules first proposed by NMFS in June 2014, including a complete ban on the use of singles by commercial fishermen, would have posed an unnecessary safety and economic burden on the industry. At *Marine Fisheries'* request, the final rules were fine-tuned to ameliorate these concerns while still reducing the risk of large whales becoming entangled in this gear.

