



NOAA
FISHERIES

Nov/Dec 2022 Draft ALWTRT Meeting Summary* and Next Steps

*Team has not yet completed review of Key Outcomes
GARFO PRD, Jan 2023

Update on Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan

- Charge to the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Team
- Risk reduction measures
- Overview of package recommendations and vote outcome
- Preliminary Interpretation of Consolidated Appropriations Act and next steps
- Mid Atlantic December and January large whale strandings



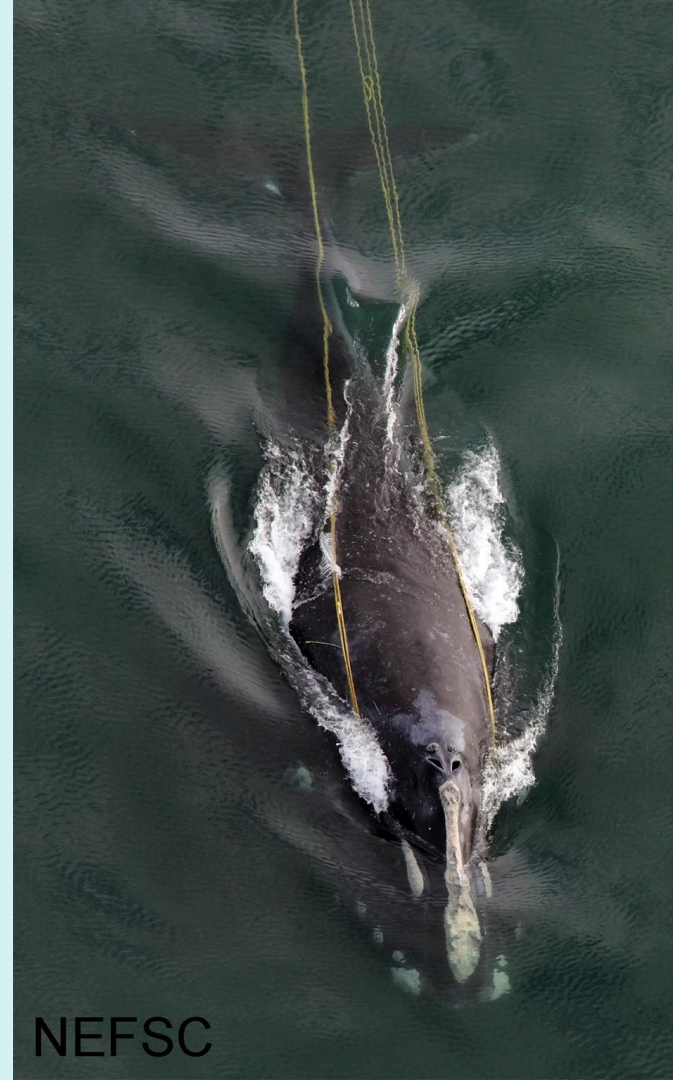
Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan

Mandated by law (MMPA) when incidental mortality and serious injury in U.S. commercial fisheries exceeds Potential Biological Removal (PBR)

- Develop and recommend measures to reduce mortality and serious injury
- Consensus-based
- NMFS ultimately responsible for taking action

Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Team

- 60 member team including 23 fishermen
- Right, humpback, and fin whales



NEFSC

Fisheries Managed Under the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan

1. **Northeast lobster and Jonah crab trap/pot fishery**
2. **Mid-Atlantic gillnet fisheries** for monkfish, spiny dogfish, smooth dogfish, bluefish, weakfish, menhaden, spot, croaker, striped bass, large and small coastal sharks, Spanish mackerel, king mackerel, American shad, black drum, skate species, yellow perch, white perch, herring, scup, kingfish, spotted seatrout, and butterfish
3. **Northeast sink gillnet fisheries** for Atlantic cod, haddock, pollock, yellowtail flounder, winter flounder, witch flounder, American plaice, windowpane flounder, spiny dogfish, monkfish, silver hake, red hake, white hake, ocean pout, skate spp, mackerel, redfish, and shad
4. **Northeast drift gillnet fisheries** for shad, herring, mackerel, and menhaden and any residual large pelagic driftnet effort in New England
5. **Southeast Atlantic gillnet fisheries** for finfish, including, but not limited to: king mackerel, Spanish mackerel, whiting, bluefish, pompano, spot, croaker, little tunny, bonita, jack crevalle, cobia, and striped mullet
6. **Southeast Atlantic shark gillnet fisheries** for large and small coastal sharks, including but not limited to blacktip, blacknose, finetooth, bonnethead, and sharpnose sharks
7. **Northeast anchored float gillnet fishery** for mackerel, herring (particularly for bait), shad, and menhaden
8. **Atlantic mixed species trap/pot fisheries** for hagfish, shrimp, conch/whelk, red crab, Jonah crab, rock crab, black sea bass, scup, tautog, cod, haddock, Pollock, redfish (ocean perch), white hake, spot, skate, catfish, stone crab, and cunner
9. **Mid-Atlantic trap/pot fisheries** for lobster and Jonah crab
10. **Atlantic blue crab trap/pot fishery** for Atlantic blue crab

2022 Charge to the Take Reduction Team

Create recommendations to NMFS to reduce M/SI of right whales in U.S. commercial fisheries to below Potential Biological Removal Level (PBR=0.7/year)

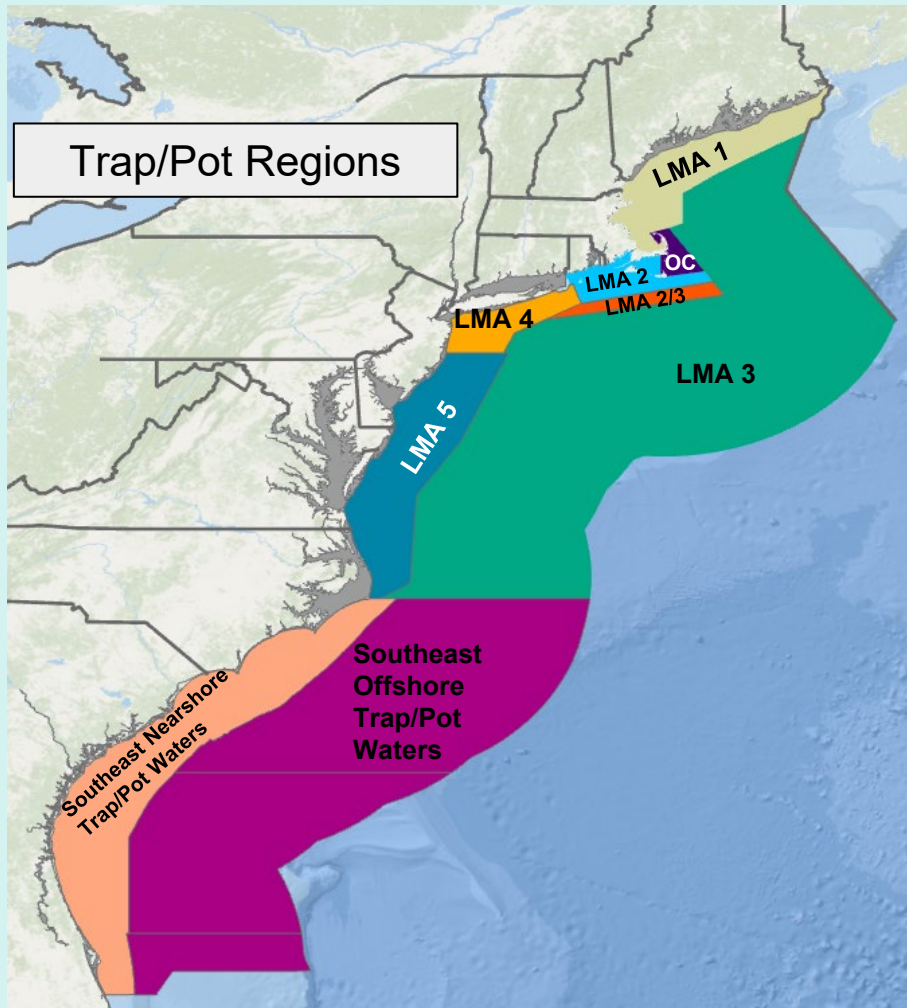
~88-93 percent total risk reduction, or an additional 41 to 46% of the risk remaining after implementation of the September 2021 Final Rule.



Recommended Measures Brought to a Vote

Types of Measures:

- **Closures to buoy lines:** in Northeast many large seasonal buoy line closures
 - Implementation challenges discussed:
 - Could not avoid economically important months
 - Ropeless not ready or affordable on a large scale
 - Gear conflict and enforcement
 - Most allow gear to move and therefore can reduce, but doesn't remove, all risk
- **Line Reductions:** seasonal and year round trap caps, line caps, trawling up, one buoy line trawls
 - Implementation challenges discussed:
 - Trap caps - equity concerns if applied to only one state
 - Line caps - administration (by permit?) and enforcement
 - Trawling up - safety on smaller vessels
 - One endline requires modifications of FMPs and concerns around gear conflict
- **Weak rope**
 - Implementation challenges discussed
 - Not as good as less rope, disliked by NGOs and some academics
 - Not available in deep waters (over 100 fathoms?)
 - Lost gear, safety, etc.



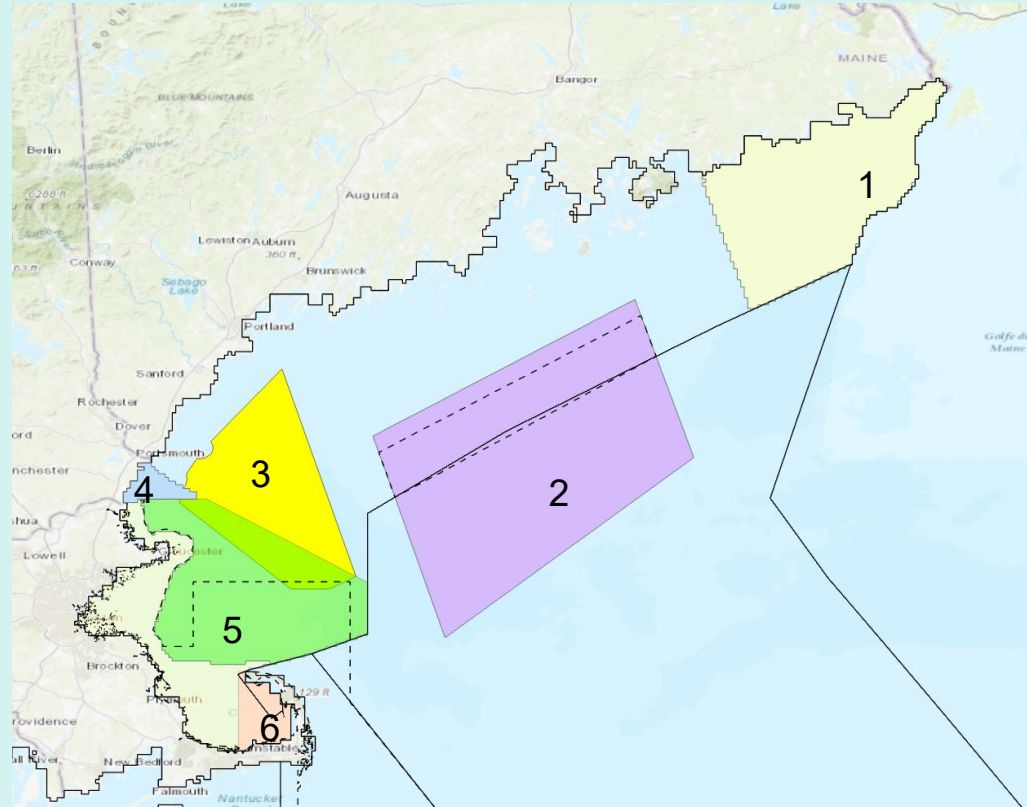
Trap/Pot Package Elements

Trap/Pot LMA 1

Seasonal Closures to Buoy Lines:

1. **New:** ME Zone A*; Jun, Jul
2. Expand LMA1 RA; Oct-Jan
3. **New:** Jeffreys; Jan-May
4. **New** NH Waters; Mar, Apr
5. Expand MRA to Stat Area 514 Fed, and from Feb-**May**
1. Expand MRA closure to **Dec and Jan** in Cape Cod Bay East

Existing closures shown with a dashed line.



Trap/Pot LMA 1 continued

Line Reduction:

- Reduce to 400 Traps for all vessels fishing in Maine lobster zones and Jeffreys Ledge polygon (3 in yellow in previous slide)
- Line cap @ 30 lines in Jeffreys Ledge polygon (3) Nov-Dec (closed Jan-May).
- Trawl up to 10 in Mass LMA1 state waters Dec-Jan, 15 in Mass LMA1 3-6 miles, 20 in Mass LMA1 6-12 miles

Weak Rope

1700 breaking strength as rope or as weak inserts every 60 feet; for tag line = 600 lbs as rope or weak inserts every 60 feet

- In < 50 Fathoms: 100% Weak @ 1,700 re weak insert every 60 feet
- 50-100 Fathoms: 1 hauling line 100% weak* @ 1,700 lbs, 1 tag line @ 600 lbs;
- 100+ Fathoms: 1 hauling line top 33% weak @ 1,700 lbs, 1 tag line @ 600 lbs

Trap/Pot: Outer Cape Cod

Seasonal Closures to Buoy Lines:

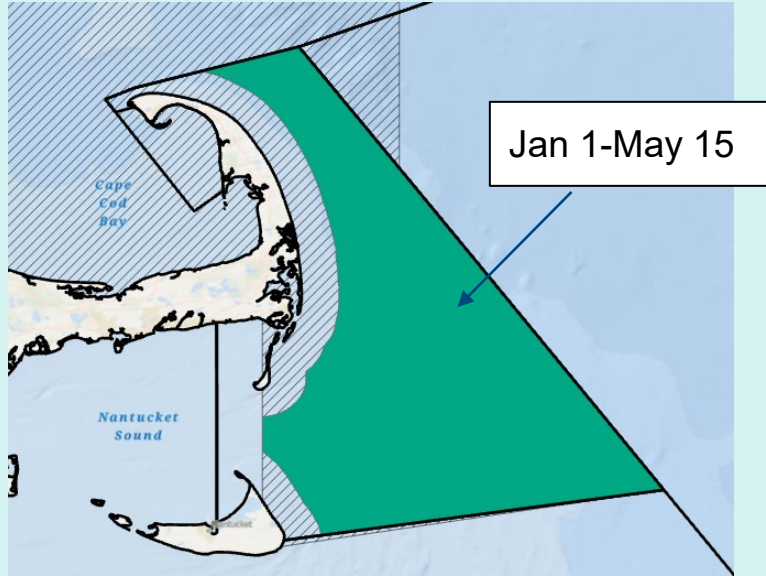
OCC federal waters (green) Jan 1-May 15

Seasonal Line Reduction:

10 trap trawls in December

Weak Rope:

100% weak (stronger float chafing rope in bottom few fathoms)



Southern New England (LMA2 and 2/3 Overlap)

Seasonal Closures to Buoy Lines:

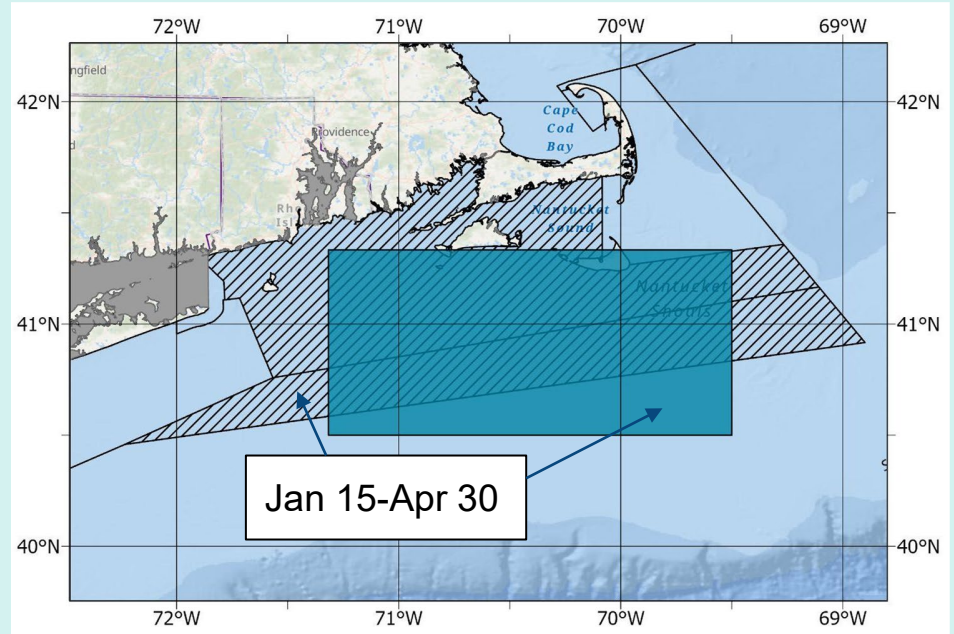
Expand buoy line closure to entire LMA2 and LMA 2/3 overlap (hatched areas) between Jan 15-Apr 30

Line Reduction:

- Trawls with only one buoy line within LMA 2 and LMA 2/3 overlap (hatched area)
- 15 traps/trawls in federal waters south to 41°
- 30 traps/trawl South of 41°N

Weak Rope:

100% (to bottom few fathoms of rope)

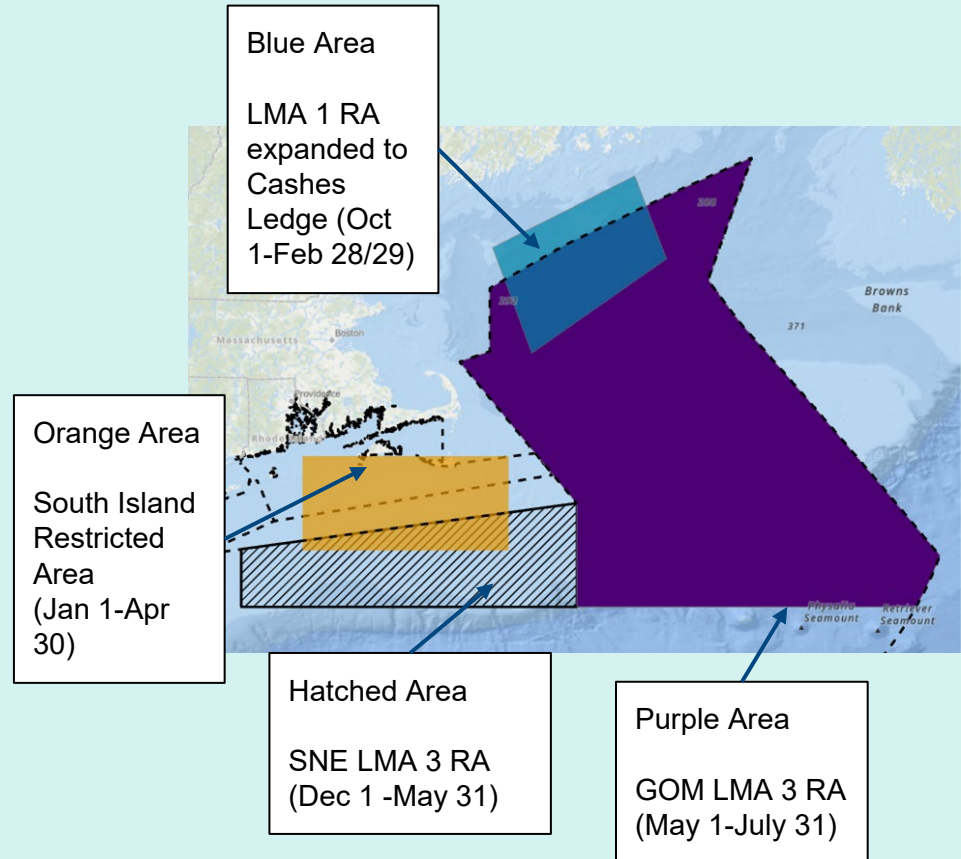


Trap/Pot: Lobster Management Area 3

Closure areas identified by NMFS due to achieve sufficient risk reduction within LMA3

Buoy Line Closures:

- **New:** Expand the LMA 1 Restricted Area to Cashes Ledge (blue) Oct 1-Feb 28/29
- Expand the South Island Restricted Area to January (orange) Jan 1-Apr 30
- **New:** GOM LMA 3 North Closure (purple) May 1-Jul 31
- **New:** Southern New England LMA 3 closure (hatched area) Dec 1-May 31



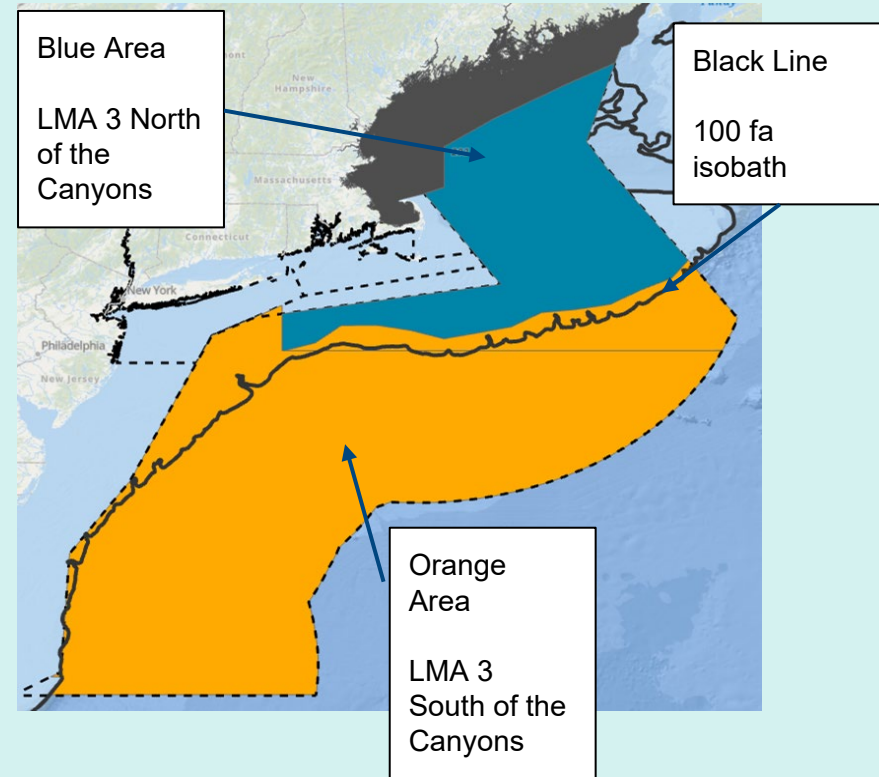
Trap/Pot: Lobster Management Area 3 continued

Line reduction:

- Line cap for LMA 3 lobster set at 45
- Remove one endline in North of Canyons area year round
- Remove one endline in LMA 3 South of Canyons thru Mid-Atlantic
 - In depths less than 100 fa: year-round
 - In depths greater than 100 fa: May-Sept

Weak Rope:

- Top 33% weak at 1,700 lb (less than current requirement)



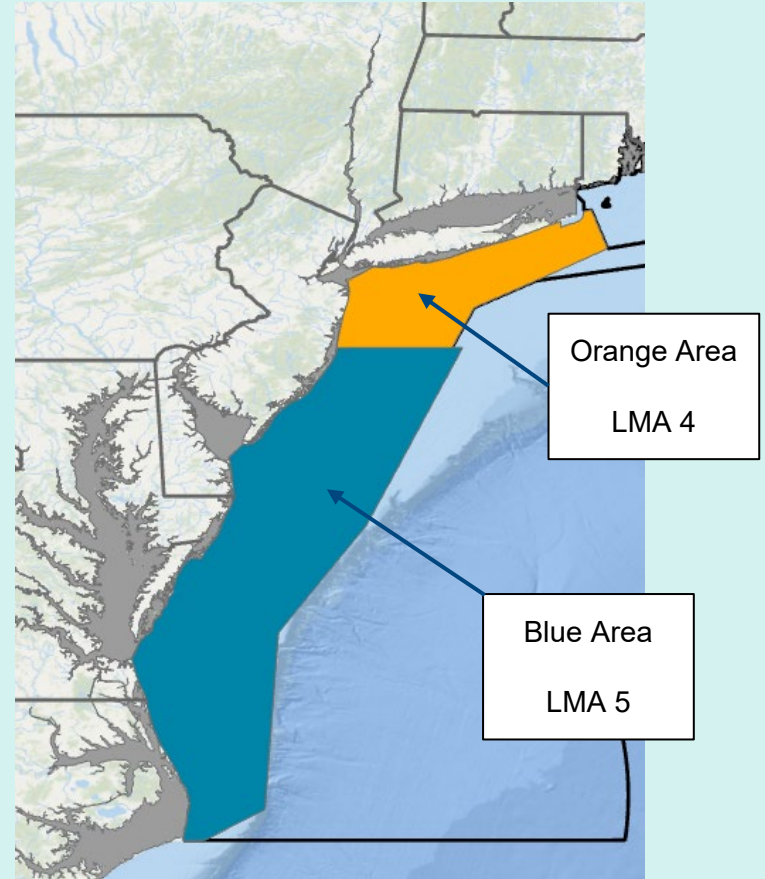
Trap/Pot: Lobster Management Areas 4 & 5

Line reduction:

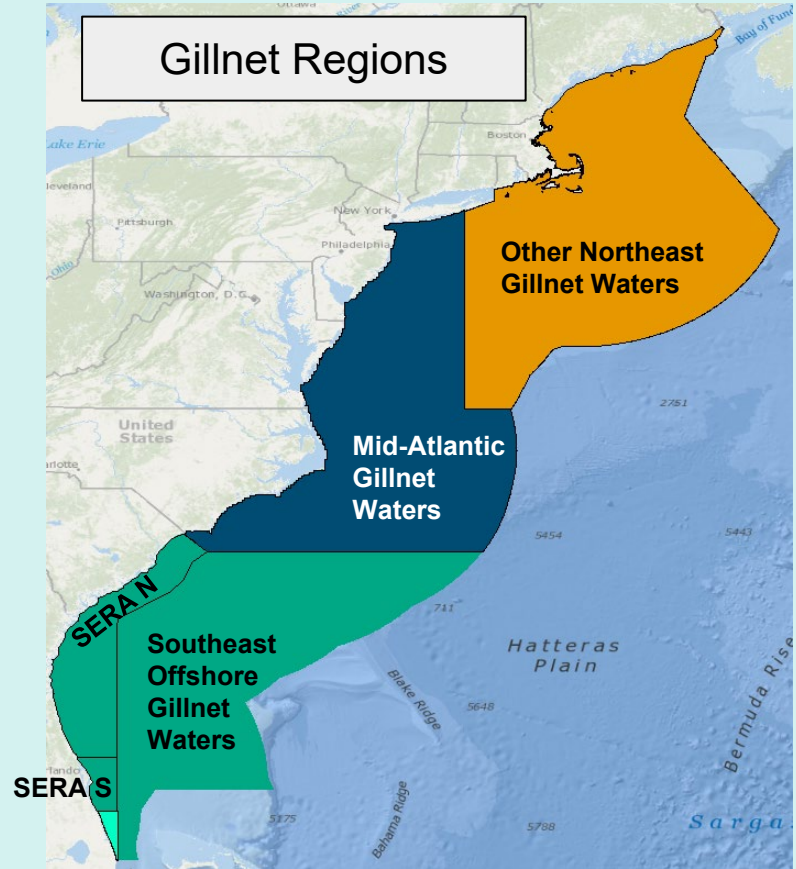
- Min 20 traps/trawl, Lobster
- Min 20 traps/trawl, Black Sea Bass from NY-VA
- One endline for trap/pot fisheries DE, MD, and VA

Weak Rope:

100% Weak at 1,700 lb

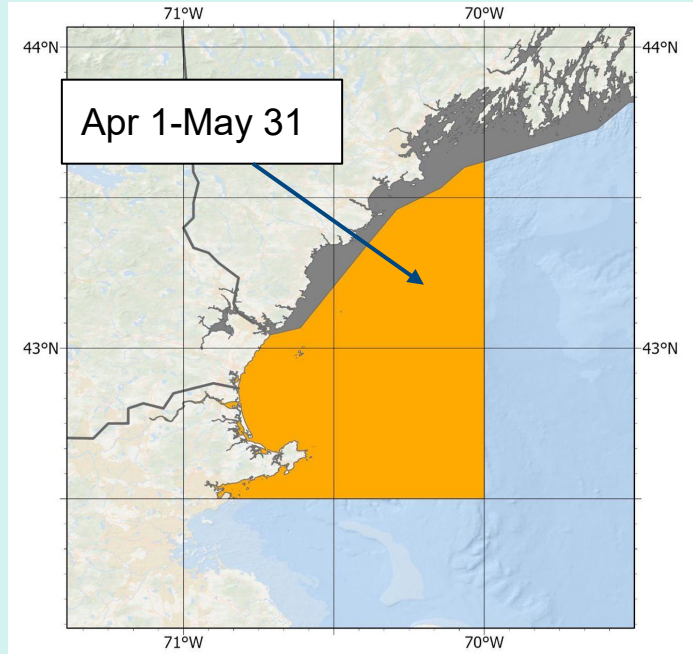


Gillnet Package Elements

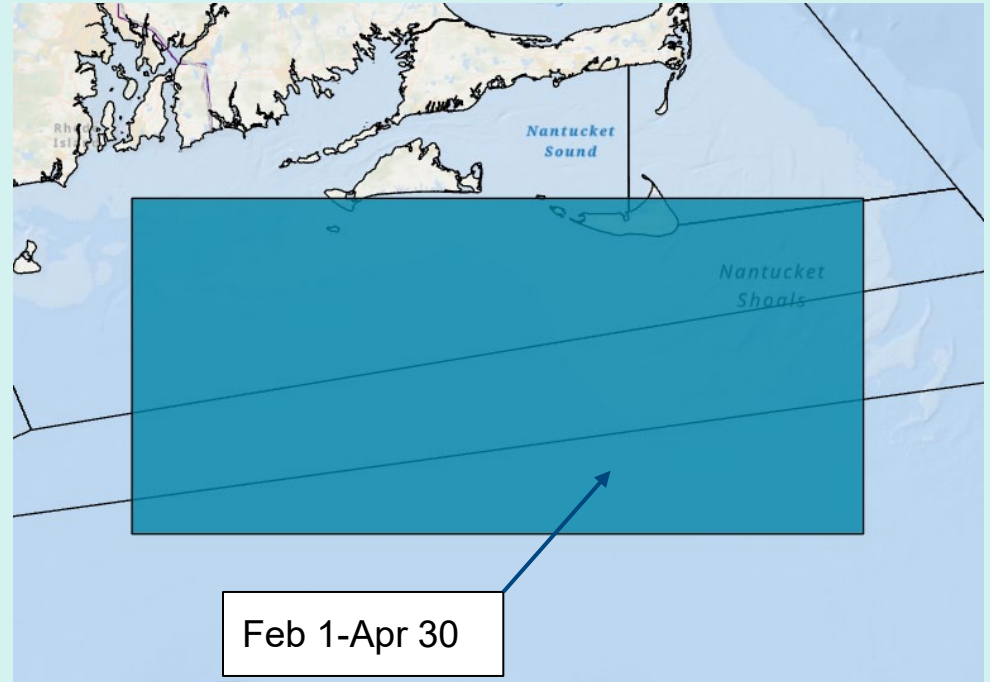


Gillnet Closures

Seasonal Closure west of 70° and north of 42.5° (orange) Apr 1-May 31



Closure of South Islands Restricted Area (blue) to include gillnet Feb 1-Apr 30



Coastwide Gillnet Line Reduction and Weak Rope

Line Reduction:

- GOM and SNE Endline cap of 12 (apply by fishery as derived from trip reports/landings)
- Mid-Atlantic one buoyline (smooth dogfish, spiny dogfish, bluefish) year round NY to VA

Weak Rope:

- GOM: 75% weak in waters <50 fa, 50% weak in waters >50 fa
- SNE: 100% weak (full weak in top, links in bottom)
- Mid Atlantic:
 - NJ-NC 1,100 lb Headrope (full or insert every 75 ft, Nov-Apr in NC)
 - NJ-VA 1,700 lb buoy lines
 - NC Federal Waters: 1,700 lb on both buoy lines (Nov-Apr)
 - NC State Waters: 1,700 lb on one buoy line, one 1,100 lb weak tag line (Nov-Apr)

Package would increase risk reduction to 88% coastwide

Poll: Can you support this team package?

Count (n=45):	Caucus represented in votes :
7% (3) Support	Fishery managers and industry
45% (20) Support with reservations	Fishery managers, industry and academics
32% (14) Could not support/oppose	Fishery manager, industry, NGOs and academics
16% (8) Abstain	Fishery managers and NGOs

Areas of General Support

No strong opposition:

- Gillnet measures
- Mid Atlantic and Southeast measures

Mixed support:

- NGOs and some academics did not support weak rope
- Measures supported would require some progress toward ropeless (sets with one endline, alternatives to large seasonal closures); a statement of support with non-binding deadlines did not achieve consensus
- The addition of some risk reduction for the increased value of the Massachusetts Restricted Area had some verbal support, no direct opposition, but was not included within recommendation package that went to vote.
- There was some support for Maine managed and monitored dynamic closures for Maine Zone A, but wasn't elevated to the recommendations package that went to vote.

Concerns:

- LMA3 request to accept the package proposal as interim until AOLA submits submit a proposal of equal value (by January 20, 2023)

Some Anticipated Next Steps

Consolidated Appropriations Act, December 29 2022*

Research;

- With the Northeast Fisheries Science Center, prioritize efforts to advance ropeless and other technological solutions
 - Essential to implement TRT recommendations to fish with only one buoy line
 - Solution to seasonal closures
- Coastwide - prioritize survey and other data collection to improve model inputs on right whale and fishery distribution to support future decision making

Rulemaking:

- Seasonally close the “wedge” area circumscribed by the Massachusetts Restricted Area.
- Reduce risk of Atlantic gillnet and mixed species trap/pot fisheries
- With Councils and Commission, allow alternative (to buoys) gear marking schemes
- Effective 12/31/2028 develop and propose regulations to reduce US takes to below PBR,

Recent North Atlantic Right Whale Entanglement Incidents

January 2023 Observed Right Whale Entanglement Incidents (last updated January 30, 2023)				
January 2023 sighting date	Identification	Location of 1st 2023 sighting	Last seen	Notes
Jan 8	#4904. 4yr old female	Offshore North Carolina	May 2022, Cape Cod Bay w/ no entanglement	Reportedly serious entanglement with significant trauma. Weather precluded response. Not resighted.
Jan 18	2yr old calf of #3720	Cape Cod Bay	August 2022 Canadian waters, entangled (previously seen w/o gear May 2022 Cape Cod Bay)	Fair condition but serious entanglement. Resighted Jan 22 but weather precluded response
Jan 20	#3812 Nimbus, 15yr old male	Offshore Jekyll Island Georgia	August 2022, Gulf of St. Lawrence, Canada w/o entanglement	Mouth only. Partial disentanglement; 375 ft of rope retrieved, some rope remaining. Whale in fair condition
Jan 27	#1218 Argos >42yr old male	Offshore Surf City, North Carolina	May 2022 Great South Channel w/o entanglement	Tail wrap, evident trauma. Disentanglement, possibly fully. Rope and two traps retrieved.

Updates on right whale incidents are posted [here](#).

Questions?

See fisheries.noaa.gov/ALWTRP for informational webinars and Team meeting summaries

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Draft Addendum XXVII

Increasing Protection of Spawning Stock in the Gulf of Maine/Georges Bank



American Lobster Management Board
November 7, 2022

Outline



1. Background
2. Action Timeline
3. Proposed Management Options
4. Update on Magnuson-Stevens Act Implications
5. Next Steps
6. Tentative Timeline

Background



- Following 2020 benchmark assessment, Board reinitiated work on Addendum XXVII

New objective:

Given persistent low settlement indices and recent decreases in recruit indices, the addendum should consider a trigger mechanism such that, upon reaching the trigger, measures would be automatically implemented to increase the overall protection of spawning stock biomass of the GOM/GBK stock

Action Timeline



Date	Action
Feb 2021	Board reinitiated work on Draft Addendum XXVII
Jan 2022	Board approved Draft Addendum XXVII for Public Comment <i>* Policy Board delayed further action</i>
Nov 2022	Board reviewed Draft Addendum <i>*Rescinded approval for public comment</i>
Jan 2023	Board considers Addendum for Public Comment
TBD	Public hearings and comment period
TBD	Board meeting to consider final approval of Draft Addendum XXIX

November 2022 Board Motions



- *Move that the PDT simplify Section 3.2 of Draft Addendum XXVII to the American Lobster FMP, by creating a single trigger level, that shall act as a backstop, protecting the stock from further declines. The PDT shall use....a three-year running average of the trigger index when it declines by 30-45% from the reference period.*
- *Move to change the years in Issue 2 Option E to 2025 and 2027*



Proposed Management Options

Proposed Management Options



- Proposed Options separated into two issues:

Issue 1: Measures to be standardized upon final approval of Addendum XXVII

Issue 2: Implementing management measures to increase protection of SSB

Issue 1 Options



Issue 1: Measures to be standardized upon final approval of Addendum XXVII

Option A	Status Quo
Option B*	Standardized measures to be implemented upon final approval of addendum
Sub-option B1	standardized measures within an LCMA
Sub-option B2	standard V-notch requirement across all LCMAs
Sub-option B3	standard V-notch possession definition of 1/8" with or without setal hairs for LCMAs 1, 3, and OCC
Sub-option B4	standardize regulations to limit the issuance of trap tags to equal the harvester trap tag allocation for LCMAs 1, 3, and OCC

***Board may select multiple sub-options**

Issue 2



Issue 2: Implementing management measures to increase protection of SSB

- Consider changes to the minimum and maximum gauge sizes along with corresponding vent sizes
- Proposed measures are expected to
 - 1) increase SSB, and
 - 2) result in the minimum gauge size increasing to meet or exceed the size at 50% maturity (L50) for each LCMA
- Vent sizes change to match final minimum gauge size

Issue 2



- Two approaches for implementing management changes:
 - 1) establish a trigger mechanism where pre-determined management changes would be triggered based on observed changes in recruit (71-80 mm carapace length) abundance indices
 - **Options B-D**
 - 2) establish a pre-determined schedule for future changes to the management measures
 - **Option E**

Issue 2 Options



Issue 2: Implementing management measures to increase protection of SSB

Option A	Status Quo
Option B	Gauge size changes triggered by 32% decline in trigger index
Option C	Gauge size changes triggered by 45% decline in trigger index
Option D	Gradual change in gauge sizes triggered by 32% decline in trigger index
Option E	Scheduled changes to minimum gauge size in LCMA 1

Issue 2: Option B



Option B	LCMA 1	LCMA 3	OCC
Single Trigger at 32% decline	Minimum gauge: 3 ³/₈" (86 mm) Maximum gauge: status quo Vent size: 2 x 5 ³/₄" rectangular; 2 ⁵/₈" circular	Minimum gauge: status quo Maximum gauge: 6" Vent size: status quo	Minimum gauge: status quo Maximum gauge: 6" Vent size: status quo

Issue 2: Option C



Option B	LCMA 1	LCMA 3	OCC
Single Trigger at 45% decline	Minimum gauge: 3 ³/₈" (86 mm) Maximum gauge: status quo Vent size: 2 x 5 ³/₄" rectangular; 2 ⁵/₈" circular	Minimum gauge: status quo Maximum gauge: 6" Vent size: status quo	Minimum gauge: status quo Maximum gauge: 6" Vent size: status quo

Issue 2: Option D



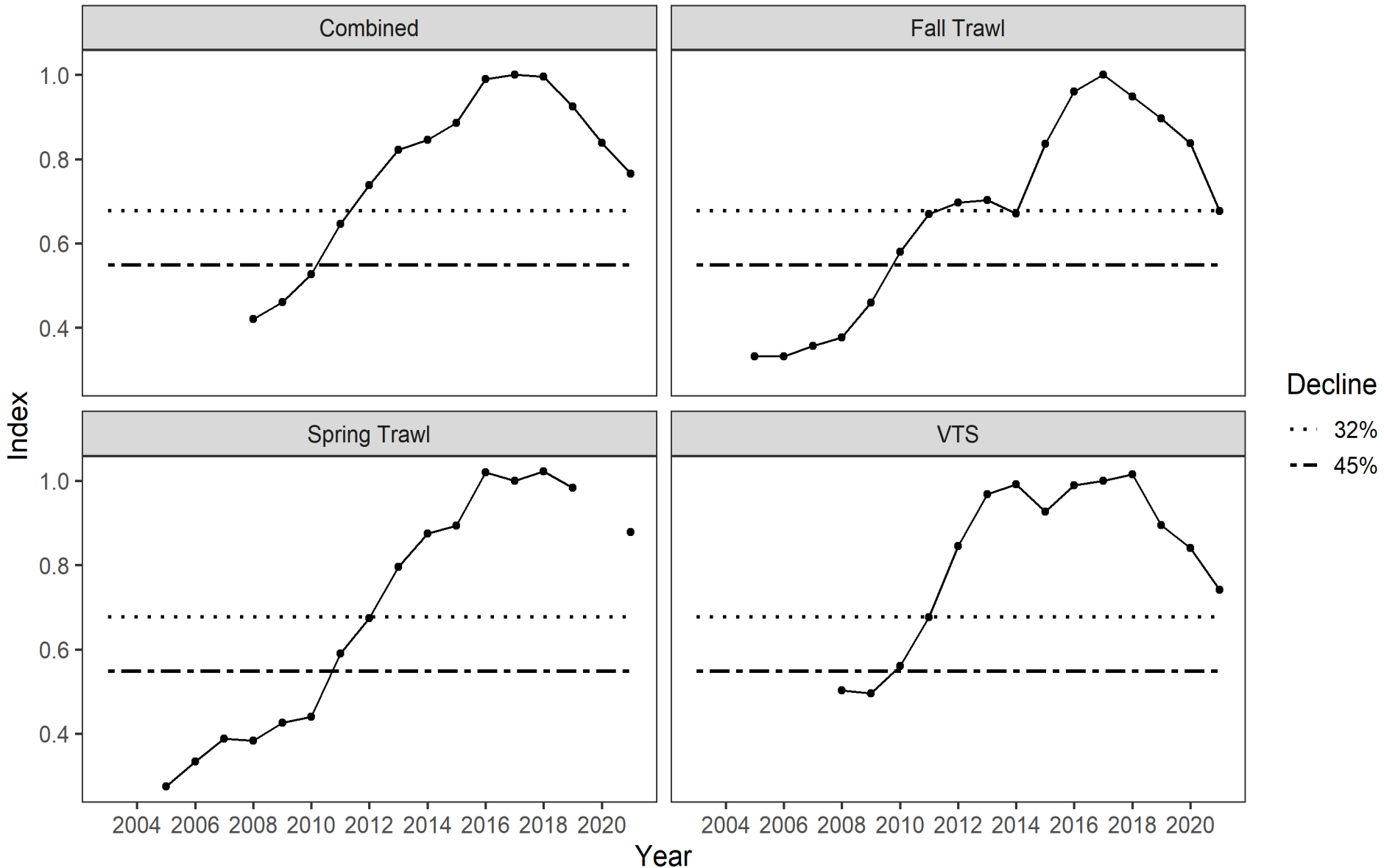
Option D	LCMA 1	LCMA 3	OCC
Current Measures (Year 0)	Min gauge: 3 ¼" Max gauge: 5" Vent size: status quo	Min gauge: 3 ¹⁷ / ₃₂ " Max gauge: 6 ¾" Vent size: status quo	Min gauge: 3 ⅜" Max gauge: 6 ¾" Vent size: status quo
Trigger at 32% decline (Year 1)	Min gauge: 3 5/16" (84 mm) Max gauge: status quo Vent size: status quo	Min gauge: status quo Max gauge: 6 ½" Vent size: status quo	Min gauge: status quo Max gauge: 6 ½" Vent size: status quo
Intermediate gauge sizes (Year 3)	Min gauge: 3 3/8" (86 mm) Max gauge: status quo Vent size: status quo	Min gauge: status quo Max gauge: 6 ¼" Vent size: status quo	Min gauge: status quo Max gauge: 6 ¼" Vent size: status quo
Final gauge and vent sizes (Year 5)	Min gauge: 3 ⅜" Max gauge: status quo Vent size: 2 x 5 ¾" rect.; 2 5/8" circ.	Min gauge: status quo Max gauge: 6" Vent size: status quo	Min gauge: status quo Max gauge: 6" Vent size: status quo

Issue 2: Option E



Option E	LCMA 1	LCMA 3	OCC
2025 fishing year measures	Min: $3 \frac{5}{16}$" (84 mm) Max: status quo Vent size: status quo	Min: status quo Max: status quo	Min: status quo Max: status quo
2027 fishing year measures	Min: 3-3/8 (86 mm) Max: status quo Vent size: 2 x $5 \frac{3}{4}$" rectangular; $2 \frac{5}{8}$" circular	Min: status quo Max: status quo	Min: status quo Max: status quo

Trigger Index through 2021



MSA & Imports



- Draft Addendum XXVII proposes a minimum gauge size of $3 \frac{5}{16}$ " (84 mm) in LCMA 1
 - Current size is $3 \frac{1}{4}$ "
- Magnuson-Stevens prohibits import/sale of lobsters smaller than the minimum possession size in effect under the FMP
- FMP maintains coastwide $3 \frac{1}{4}$ " minimum size, which no LCMA can go below
 - Canadian imports can still be $3 \frac{1}{4}$ "

Next Steps



- Consider Draft Addendum XXVII for public comment
- Request any changes to the document

Next Steps



- If approved for public comment today, next steps are:
 - Finalize and publish addendum for public comment; schedule public hearings (**February**)
 - Conduct state public hearings (**Feb/March**)
 - Convene Advisory Panel (**March/April**)
 - Board meeting to consider final action (**May**)



Questions?

Update on the Implementation of Addendum XXIX / IV

*Electronic vessel tracking in the federal lobster and Jonah
crab fisheries*



January 2023

Timeline



Date	Activity/Action
March 2022	Board approved Addendum XXIX/IV
April 2022	Work Group formed to review trackers
Sept 2022	ASMFC released Request for Applications
Nov 2022	Work Group met to review applications
Winter 2022/2023	WG to type approve devices, work with states to set up administration of devices
Dec 2023	Deadline for state implementation of Addendum requirements

Approved Devices



Company	Device Name
Woods Hole Group	NEMO
Particle Industries	Particle Tracker One
Network Innovations	hiSky Smartellite Dynamic Ku terminal
Viatrix Automation Corporation	BOAT COMMAND VMS

Next Steps



- States up administration of approved devices
 - Purchase trackers
 - Harvesters to install approved tracking devices prior to first fishing trip
- States to implement requirements for federally permitted vessels, if necessary
- ACCSP developing interface for tracking data, testing data submission from vendors
- Federal rulemaking complementary to Commission requirements

Questions?

