

2021 Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan Requirements

Maine Guide to Regulations for Lobster and Jonah Crab Trap/Pot Fisheries

This guide contains the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan regulations for lobster and Jonah crab trap/pot fisheries. If your principal port is in Maine, the following regulations apply to you, effective May 1, 2022.

	New Whale Rules (effective May 1, 2022)			Whale Rules Still in Place	
	Trawling Up	Weak Points	Gear Marking	Universal Gear Requirements	Sinking Groundlines and Other Measures
State waters Exempt	No changes	1 weak insert ½ way down the buoy line <u>Exempt waters only</u> May use 5/16" rope with knots per DMR regulations in addition to NMFS approved weak inserts	3 purple marks 36" purple mark w/in 2F buoy	No buoy line floating at the surface No wet storage of gear. Gear must be hauled at least every 30 days Maintaining knot-free buoy lines is encouraged	Choose one: 1) sinking rope for buoy line or 2) sinking rope for groundline or 3) 600 pound breakaway at buoy
State waters Sliver	See chart by zone Island exemption remains in place		12" purple mark at middle and bottom <u>Exempt waters <100 feet only</u> 2 marks required at top and bottom only		Groundlines must be comprised of all sinking rope
Federal 3 to 6 miles	See chart by zone	<u>Zones A west, B, C & D</u>	4 purple & 4 green marks		600 pound breakaway below buoy is now OPTIONAL
Federal 6 to 12 miles	See chart by zone	2 weak inserts (1/4 and ½ way down buoy line) <u>Zones A east, F & G</u> 1 weak insert 1/3 down the buoy line	36" purple mark w/in 2F buoy 12" purple mark at top, middle and bottom 12" green mark within 6" of each purple mark		Pocket waters are considered state waters for all whale regulations
Federal 12+ miles	25's/2 EL	1 weak insert 1/3 down the buoy line			

STATE OF MAINE

- Pocket waters are treated as state waters for all whale regulations
- Maine regulations, Chapter 75, detail all whale regulations for the Maine lobster fishery



NOAA
FISHERIES

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).
- Maintain buoy lines as knot free as possible.

MAINE'S EXEMPT WATERS REQUIREMENTS

You must choose one of the following:

- Incorporate 600 pound breakaway link below the buoy, or
- All buoy lines must be made of sinking line, or
- All groundlines must be made of sinking line.



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

QUESTIONS?

For questions about Maine state regulations, contact Lobster.DMR@maine.gov.

For questions about federal regulations, contact:

Marisa Trego, Take Reduction Team Coordinator: (978) 282-8484, marisa.trego@noaa.gov
John Higgins, Northeast Fisheries Liaison: (207) 610-3282, john.higgins@noaa.gov
Rob Martin, Northeast Gear Specialist: (617) 710-6322, robert.martin@noaa.gov
WWW.FISHERIES.NOAA.GOV/ALWTRP

This guide is a summary of the 2021 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. For Maine regulations, consult [www.maine.gov/dmr/laws-regulations/regulations/documents/dmrchapter75_04212020%20\(002\).pdf](http://www.maine.gov/dmr/laws-regulations/regulations/documents/dmrchapter75_04212020%20(002).pdf).

LOBSTER/JONAH CRAB GEAR MARKING FOR MAINE
EFFECTIVE MAY 1, 2022

BUOY LINE MARKING

STATE WATERS (including Maine's exempt waters)

You must have at least 3 **PURPLE** marks.

- One of the marks must be a 3-foot long **SOLID PURPLE** mark within 2 fathoms of the buoy.
- The other two **PURPLE** marks must each be 12 inches long and placed in the top 50% and bottom 50% of the line.

Maine exempt waters exception: Vertical lines less than 100 ft in length may be marked with only two (2) purple marks: one 3-foot mark at the top of the buoy line and one 12 inch mark at the bottom of the buoy line.”

FEDERAL WATERS (Effective May 1, 2022)

You must have at least 4 sets (**PURPLE** and **GREEN**) of marks.

- One set must be a 3-foot long **SOLID PURPLE** mark in the top 2 fathoms of the buoy line along with one 12-inch **SOLID GREEN** mark within 6 inches of the **SOLID PURPLE** mark.
- The other three sets must one 12-inch **PURPLE** mark and one 12-inch **GREEN** mark within 6 inches of each other. The sets of **PURPLE** and **GREEN** marks must be spaced in the top, middle, and bottom of the buoy line.

The **solid 3-foot marks** may be applied with dye, paint, tape, heat-shrink tubing, insertion of a colored rope or braided sleeve. The **12-inch marks** below the surface system 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. Additional marking methods may be approved in writing by the Greater Atlantic Regional Administrator.

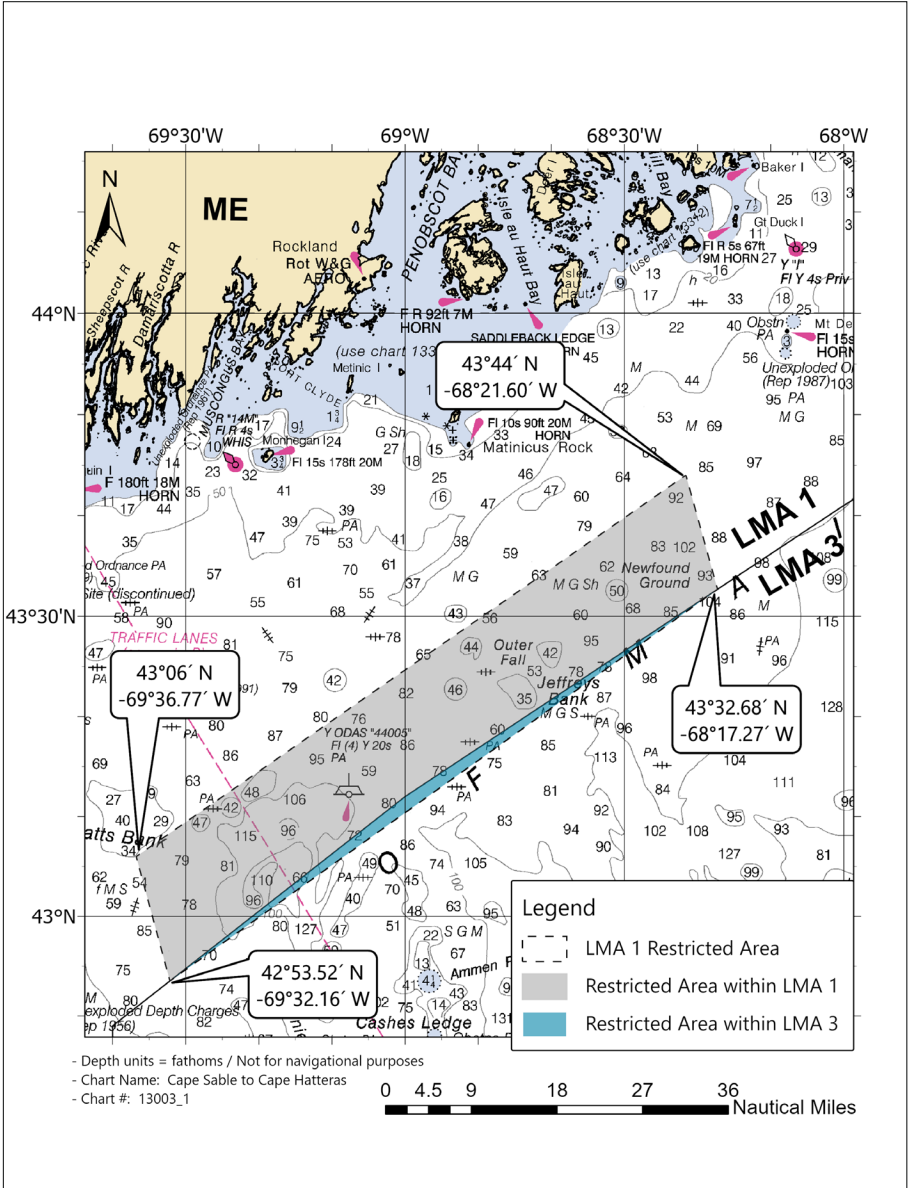
EXAMPLES OF FEDERAL BUOY LINE MARKING REQUIREMENTS



LOBSTER AND JONAH CRAB TRAP/POT CLOSURE AREAS
FOR MAINE

LMA1 RESTRICTED AREA, OFFSHORE MAINE LMA1 ZONES C/D/E:

967-square-mile area closed to buoy lines October 1-January 31 annually.



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
-69° 36.77' W	43° 06.00' N

CHANGES TO CLOSURE AREAS

All whale closures restrict trap/pot fishing that uses persistent (traditional) buoy lines, except for federal waters in the Outer Cape Lobster Management Area, which remains closed consistent with the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) 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 allowed in these areas for research purposes with appropriate state and federal permits.

EXEMPTED FISHING PERMITS

Exempted Fishing Permits (EFPs) are issued in support of fisheries-related research. Federally permitted lobstermen are required to obtain an EFP to participate in research on fishing without vertical lines. Fishing without the use of vertical lines also requires a special permit from Maine DMR. If you are interested in testing ropeless gear or have another idea for research related to reducing the use of persistent buoy lines, please contact your NOAA Fisheries regional office (978-281-9315 or nmfs.gar.researchpermit@noaa.gov) and Maine DMR (Lobster.DMR@maine.gov).

LOBSTER/JONAH CRAB 1700-POUND (WEAK) INSERTS AND LINE REQUIREMENTS

EFFECTIVE MAY 1, 2022

1700-POUND WEAK INSERT REQUIREMENTS BY LOCATION

- **ME Exempt State Waters:** 1 weak insert 50% down the line or top 50% of buoy line weak rope.
- **ME Exempt Line–3 nm:** 1 weak insert 50% down the line OR top 50% of buoy line weak rope
- **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 OR top 33% of buoy line line weak rope
- **Beyond 12 nm:** 1 weak insert 33% down the line OR top 33% of buoy line line weak rope

1700-POUND WEAK INSERTIONS OR LINE

For all state and all federal waters regulated under ALWTRP:

- Weak inserts and line must be chosen from the list of NMFS-approved gear. To see the most updated list of approved weak line and inserts, visit the fisheries.noaa.gov/ALWTRP web page.
- 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 insert breaks. They must be attached with a splice or tuck, and must be a contrasting color.
- Weak rope can also be used on any buoy line down to the lowest point where a weak insert is required. Use of 100 percent weak rope is also allowed in place of inserts.

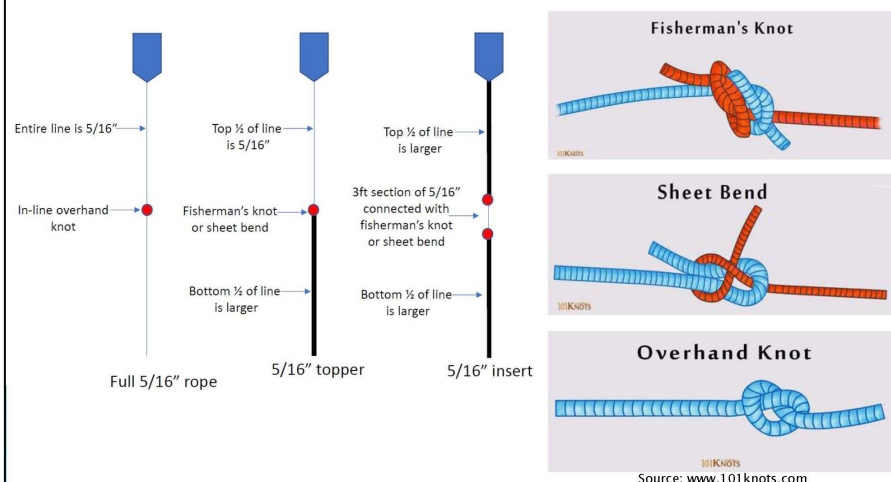
MAINE'S EXEMPT WATERS ONLY

DMR has included three additional weak insert options for gear fished in exempt waters (these are cannot be fished in the sliver):

1. VL comprised of 5/16" line with overhand knot in center,
2. top half VL comprised 5/16" line attached to bottom with sheet bend or fisherman's knot, or
3. 3-foot long section of 5/16" line attached on either side with sheet bend or fisherman's knot.

*these are considered strong rope with a weak connection

Maine Weak Rope Options in Exempt Waters (Not allowed in sliver)



NMFS-APPROVED WEAK INSERTS AND ROPES

INSERTIONS WITH WEAK ROPE



These must be connected with splice or tuck; knots are not allowed
These are considered weak ropes with a strong connection

APPROVED MANUFACTURED WEAK ROPE

Rocky Mount

Red (3/8" diameter, 1,438 lbs)
Candy Cane (3/8" diameter, 1,568 & 1,752 lbs)
Purple [on right] (3/8" diameter, 1752 lbs)

Neocorp

3/8" diameter polyester (1021) (1,530 lbs)

Seaway

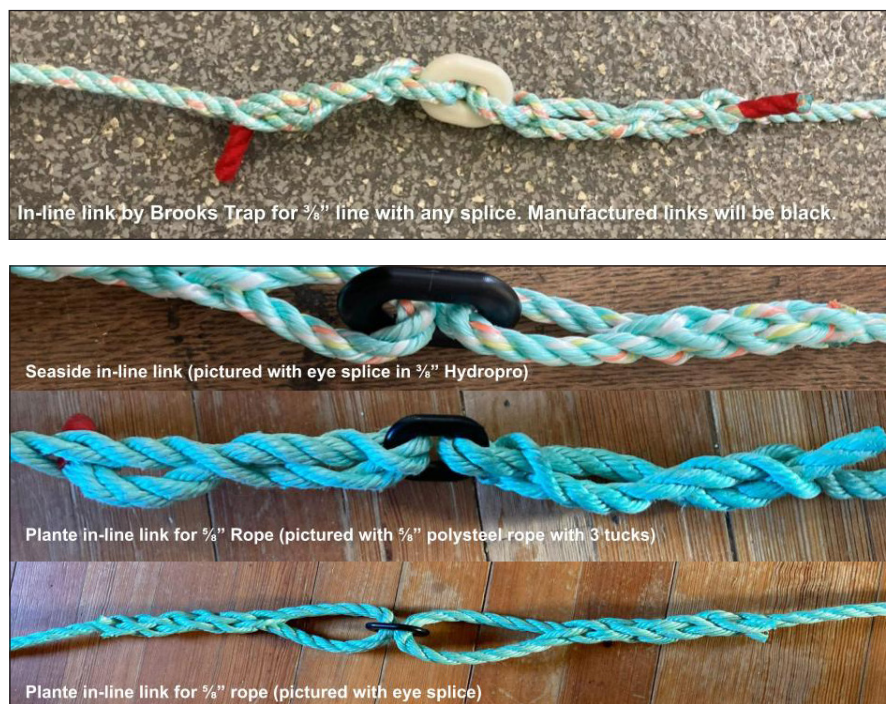
5/16" diameter #10 braid (1,229 lbs)



NOTE: All weak inserts must be at least 3 feet in length and contrasting color. Twisted rope must be attached with a splice or tuck; braided rope may be attached with a knot.

updated 3/25/2022

WEAK LINKS



These must be connected with splice or tuck; knots are not al-

Check [WWW.FISHERIES.NOAA.GOV/ALWTRP](https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/ALWTRP) for more approved weak inserts and rigging methods.

OTHER INSERTIONS (can be used with any rope)



This red sleeve is manufactured by Novabraid.

MINIMUM TRAPS PER TRAWL IN MAINE ZONES

EFFECTIVE MAY 1, 2022

The following trap per trawl limits apply to Maine Zones in Lobster Management Area 1. There are no minimum trap per trawl requirements for Maine Exempt Waters.

ZONE	EXEMPT	EXEMPT WATERS TO 3 NM	3 TO 6* NM	6* TO 12 NM	BEYOND 12 NM
Zone A East	no change singles allowed	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	no change singles allowed	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	no change singles allowed	3 for 1 line	5 for 1 line	5 for 1 line 10 for 2 lines	25 for 2 lines
Zone C	no change singles allowed	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	no change singles allowed	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	no change singles allowed	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	no change singles allowed	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	no change singles allowed	3 for 1 line	5 for 1 line 10 for 2 lines	10 for 1 line 20 for 2 lines	25 for 2 lines

Maine's pocket waters are considered state waters under the ALWTRP

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

