



# NOAA FISHERIES

## Southeast

# Black Sea Bass Fisherman's Guide to Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan Requirements off North Carolina

**Dates Applicable: September 1 – May 31**

This document is a summary of the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan's (Plan) commercial Mid-Atlantic trap/pot fishing regulations off North Carolina (NC). Additional regulations apply outside of the areas considered by this guide. Because regulations may 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 actual Plan regulations.

### Trap/Pot Requirements

DATES	ALL TRAP/POT GEAR FISHED OFF NC MUST MEET THESE REQUIREMENTS	SPECIFIC AREA	THESE REQUIREMENTS MUST ALSO BE MET IF TRAP/POT GEAR IS FISHED IN THE AREAS OFF NC SPECIFIED IN 50 CFR 229.32
Sep 1 – May 31	<u>Buoy lines</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Must be made of sinking line</li> <li>No portion may float at the surface</li> <li>Weak links may be swivels, plastic weak links, rope of appropriate breaking strength, hog rings, rope stapled to a buoy stick, etc. and must be approved by NMFS</li> <li>Weak links must break cleanly leaving a bitter end of the line that is free from knots</li> <li>Knotless lines are preferred</li> </ul> <u>Other</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gear must be hauled out of the water at least once every 30 days</li> <li>Groundlines must be made of sinking line, and no buoys, toggles, or other flotation devices may be attached to it</li> <li>Only 1 buoy line allowed for trawls with 5 or fewer traps</li> </ul>	Offshore Trap/Pot Waters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Buoy lines must be marked with three 12" BLACK marks –one each at top, middle, and bottom of line</li> <li>All buoys, flotation devices and/or weights must be attached to the buoy line with a weak link with ≤ 1,500 lbs breaking strength</li> </ul>
		Southern Nearshore Trap/Pot Waters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Buoy lines must be marked with three 12" ORANGE marks –one each at top, middle, and bottom of line</li> <li>All buoys, flotation devices and/or weights must be attached to the buoy line with a weak link with ≤ 600 lbs breaking strength</li> </ul>

### The Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan (Plan)

The purpose of this Plan is to reduce the risk of serious injury and death of large whales caused by accidental entanglement in U.S. commercial trap/pot and gillnet fishing gear. The Plan is a requirement of the Marine Mammal Protection Act and was developed by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Team. The Team consists of fishing industry representatives, environmentalists, state and federal officials, and other interested parties. To learn more about the plan visit: [www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov](http://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov).

# Plan Requirements off North Carolina



Hog rings can be used to form an eye in the end of a line that will function as a weak link. Up to 7 may be used to create a 600 pound weak link. Hog rings can be distributed (from 6" to 12") without significantly affecting the strength.



Examples of gear marking methods.

**THREE** 12 inch (30.48 cm) colored marks: one at the top of the buoy line, one midway along the buoy line, and one at the bottom of the buoy line.

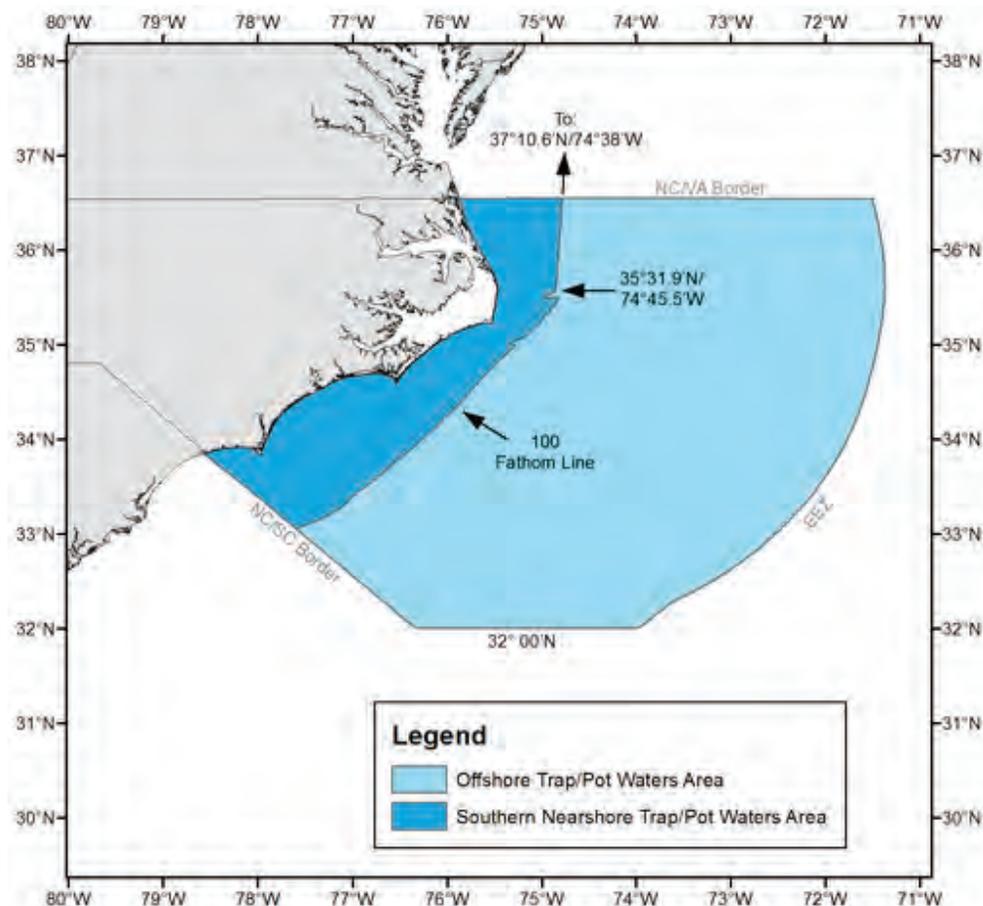
Each color code must be permanently affixed on or along the line and each color code must be clearly visible when the gear is hauled or removed from the water.

## Location Description

*Offshore Trap/Pot Waters Area*—off North Carolina includes all Federal waters of the EEZ Offshore Management Area 3 (as defined in the American Lobster Fishery regulations in 50 CFR 697.18) and waters extending from 35°14' N. lat. south outside the 100-fathom (600 ft or 182.9 m) depth contour to the eastern edge of the EEZ.

*Southern Nearshore Trap/Pot Waters Area*—off North Carolina includes all state and Federal waters which fall within EEZ Nearshore Management Area 5 (as defined in the American Lobster Fishery regulations in 50 CFR 697.18) and inside the 100-fathom (600-ft or 182.9-m) depth contour line and extending inshore to the shoreline or COLREGS line.

For complete regulatory area definitions, please see the Atlantic Large Whale Plan at 50 CFR



**Report sightings of sightings of live, dead, injured, or entangled right whales to:  
1-877-WHALE HELP or U.S. Coast Guard Channel 16.**

