



David E. Pierce, PhD.  
Director

# Commonwealth of Massachusetts

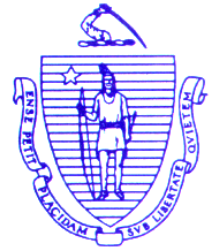
## Division of Marine Fisheries

251 Causeway Street, Suite 400

Boston, Massachusetts 02114

(617) 626-1520

fax (617) 626-1509



Charles D. Baker  
Governor

Karyn E. Polito  
Lieutenant Governor

Matthew A. Beaton  
Secretary

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Commissioner

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January 25, 2017

### Marine Fisheries Advisory

#### Reminder to Trap Fishermen:

#### Large Whale Seasonal Trap Gear Closure is Effective February 1 – April 30

This advisory serves as a reminder to recreational and commercial trap fishermen. The annual large whale seasonal trap gear closure is in effect from February 1<sup>st</sup> through April 30<sup>th</sup>. During this period all trap gear must be removed from the Massachusetts Restricted Area. This area encompasses waters of Cape Cod Bay, Stellwagen Bank and the Eastern Cape Cod. A description of the closed area and its coordinates are in the adjacent map and full regulatory text is located at [322 CMR 12.04 and 12.11](#).

This closure was implemented in 2015 under the federal Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan and subsequently codified in state regulations. Its purpose is to reduce the risk of endangered North Atlantic right whales becoming entangled in trap gear buoy lines while migrating through and aggregating in this important seasonal feeding area.

State officials will be patrolling this area in advance of and during the closure to identify gear and notify its owners. If trap gear remains in this area during the closure the gear may be seized and the owners may be subject to fines, penalties and permit sanctions.

For more information regarding the Large Whale Seasonal Trap Gear Closure and the North Atlantic right whale, please visit our website: [www.mass.gov/marinefisheries](http://www.mass.gov/marinefisheries)

