



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Division of Marine Fisheries

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May 15, 2022

Marine Fisheries Advisory

Commercial Trap Gear Fishery to Open and Small Vessel Speed Limit to Expire Effective Monday, May 16th

Effective Monday, May 16, 2022, the trap gear fishery is open and small vessel speed limit restrictions are lifted in all state waters north and east of Cape Cod. Beginning tomorrow, commercial trap fishermen may set their gear in those waters under the jurisdiction of the Commonwealth east and north of Cape Cod up to the New Hampshire border. These waters have been closed to trap gear fishing since February 1. Additionally, mariners operating vessels less than 65' overall length may run them at speeds greater than 10 knots.

The decision to open the trap gear fishery is based on recent aerial and acoustic surveys, which have not detected right whales in Massachusetts waters for several days. Additionally, the copepod resource, which right whales feed on, has dispersed in state waters. Right whales have demonstrated a consistent pattern of departing from Massachusetts coastal waters in the first two weeks of May.

DMF appreciates the cooperation and patience of all the fishing industry participants and stakeholders. We are sensitive to the challenges these issues can have on fishers who are unable to make plans to begin their trap fishing season.

Spring Trawl Survey: Fixed gear fishermen in Cape Cod Bay, East of Cape Cod, South of Cape Cod & the Islands, and Buzzards Bay are advised that the DMF Spring Trawl Survey is still working in these areas. On Monday, May 16th, the R/V Gloria Michelle will be working on stations in Cape Cod Bay. Trawl survey locations and progress can be monitored [here](#). All survey stations in Massachusetts Bay, around Cape Ann, and in Ipswich Bay have been completed.