



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Division of Marine Fisheries

(617) 626-1520 | www.mass.gov/marinefisheries



MAURA T. HEALEY
Governor

KIMBERLEY DRISCOLL
Lt. Governor

REBECCA L. TEPPER
Secretary

THOMAS K. O'SHEA
Commissioner

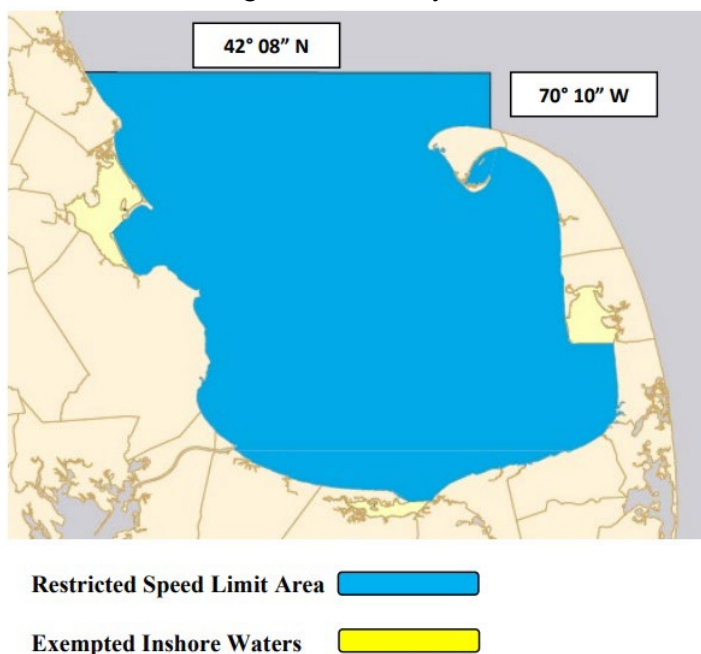
DANIEL J. MCKIERNAN
Director

April 29, 2025

MarineFisheries Advisory

DMF Extends Small Vessel Speed Restriction for Cape Cod Bay to Protect Right Whales

As a result of the ongoing presence of right whales, the Division of Marine Fisheries is extending the small vessel speed restriction in Cape Cod Bay through May 15, 2025 (see [Declaration](#)). Small vessels (less than 65') are required to travel at speeds no greater than 10 knots in this area. Right whales are highly susceptible to injury and death due to vessel collision. A complementary federal speed restriction in the same area applies to vessels 65' and greater until May 15.



During a partial aerial survey on April 29, the Center for Coastal Studies documented 49 right whales in Cape Cod Bay, including one mother/calf pair, all of which were skim feeding at the surface or just below the surface. This feeding behavior makes them highly susceptible to vessel collision. Acoustic detections of right whales on a near real-time monitoring buoy in Cape Cod Bay also shows continued strong presence of right whales in the area. This monitoring buoy is a collaboration between DMF and Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution. Information about those acoustic detections can be found [HERE](#). All mariners are thus advised to follow the 10-knot speed limit and use extreme caution when transiting the area. Additionally, it is unlawful, under state and federal law, to approach a right whale within 500 yards. If you observe a right whale entangled in fishing gear while on the water, report it immediately to the

Center for Coastal Studies (800-900-3622), the state Office of Environmental Law Enforcement (800-632-8075) or the federal Entanglement Hot Line: (866-755-6622).

For more information regarding the management of protected species in Massachusetts, please visit our website: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/conservation-of-protected-marine-species>