



Maura T. Healey
Governor

Kimberly Driscoll
Lt. Governor

Rebecca L. Tepper
Secretary

Thomas K. O'Shea
Commissioner

Daniel J. McKiernan
Director

May 1, 2026

Marine Fisheries Advisory

Reminder: Seasonal Trap and Gillnet Gear Closure to Protect Right Whales Remains in Effect

This advisory serves as notice that the Massachusetts Seasonal Trap and Gillnet Closures to Protect Right Whales remain in effect due to the continued presence of right whales. Visual and acoustic detections over the last week show that right whales are still present within the Massachusetts state waters portion of the Massachusetts Restricted Area, including in Cape Cod Bay, Massachusetts Bay, and coastal areas around Cape Ann and adjacent areas (Figure 1).

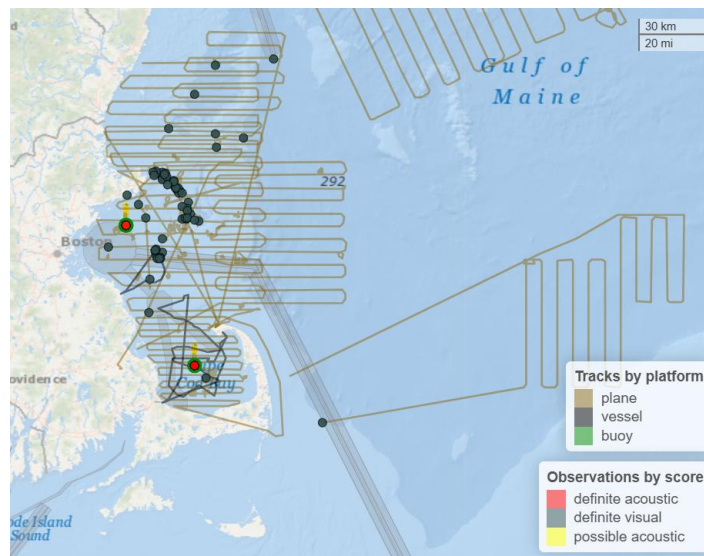


Figure 1. Detections of North Atlantic right whales April 23, 2026 through May 1, 2026. Black dots are definite visual sightings, while red points with green outline represent definite acoustic detections of right whales.

The Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF) is closely monitoring the presence of North Atlantic right whales in our coastal waters and may lift these closures if detection data demonstrate right whales are not present in Massachusetts waters. DMF and the Center for Coastal Studies will be conducting additional surveillance flights over the next several days to update our understanding of whale distribution. DMF will reevaluate the status of this closure based on the detected presence of right whales.

The commercial trap gear closure applies to all state waters north of Cape Cod to the New Hampshire border and east of Cape Cod to 70°00' W longitude (refer to [fixed gear closure map](#)) whereas the commercial gillnet closure and the recreational buoyed trap gear closure apply to

all state waters. These closures are designed to prevent endangered right whales from becoming entangled in fixed gear and associated buoy lines. For more information regarding the management of protected species in Massachusetts, please visit our website:

www.mass.gov/marinefisheries