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*Marine Fisheries Advisory*

**Trap and Gillnet Gear Fishery Closures to Open Effective Saturday, May 9<sup>th</sup>**

Effective Saturday, May 9<sup>th</sup> 2026, all Fixed Gear Seasonal Closures – including the Commercial Trap Gear Closure, Commercial Gillnet Closure and Recreational Lobster and Crab Trap Closure – will be lifted to allow setting and fishing of fixed gear. These closures have been in place throughout the winter and early spring to protect endangered North Atlantic right whales from entanglement risk.

The decision to open the trap gear fishery is based on recent aerial and acoustic monitoring efforts, which indicate that right whales are no longer present in Massachusetts state waters. An aerial survey flight on May 1 and May 7 observed no right whales in Cape Cod Bay and Massachusetts Bay, respectively. In addition, there have been no right whale acoustic detections on the Cape Cod Bay or Cape Ann near real-time buoys for several days. Check this online map to view [recent acoustic detections](#). This follows a typical pattern of right whales departing from Massachusetts coastal waters within the first two weeks of May.

DMF greatly appreciates the cooperation and patience of all fishing industry participants and stakeholders. We are sensitive to the challenges the dynamic closure lifting can have on fishers who are unable to plan the beginning of their trap fishing season. DMF's Spring Trawl Survey is currently ongoing in state waters. Review a live map of [station locations](#). Fishermen are asked not to set gear in the station locations until the survey is complete.

For other questions, please contact DMF at [marine.fish@mass.gov](mailto:marine.fish@mass.gov).