



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Division of Marine Fisheries

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May 9, 2025

Marine Fisheries Advisory

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

This advisory serves as notice that the Massachusetts Seasonal Trap and Gillnet Closures to Protect Right Whales are still in effect until May 15 due to the continued presence of right whales. DMF is closely monitoring visual and acoustic detections of right whales in our coastal waters and may lift these closures (and the small vessel speed limit in Cape Cod Bay) prior to May 15 if right whales have migrated out of Massachusetts waters. The commercial trap gear closure applies to all state waters north of Cape Cod to the New Hampshire border and east of Cape Cod east of 70°00' west longitude (see [map](#)) whereas the commercial gillnet closure and the recreational buoyed trap gear closure applies to all state waters. These closures are designed to prevent endangered right whales from becoming entangled in buoy lines associated with fixed gear. DMF has also extended the seasonal speed restriction in Cape Cod Bay until May 15, given the continued presence of right whales (see [Notice](#)).

From May 1 – May 9, right whales continue to be observed in Cape Cod Bay, the Outer Cape and Boston Harbor, though in lower numbers and less dense aggregations than a few weeks ago (Figure 1). In addition, acoustic detections of right whales continue to occur daily on the near real-time buoy in Cape Cod Bay, though on a less frequent basis than at the peak of the season. More information about acoustic detections can be found [HERE](#). The quality and quantity of the food resource in Cape Cod Bay has also declined. Additional surveillance flights are anticipated to occur over the next several days to update our understanding of whale distribution. DMF will reevaluate the status of this closure based on the presence or absence of whales.

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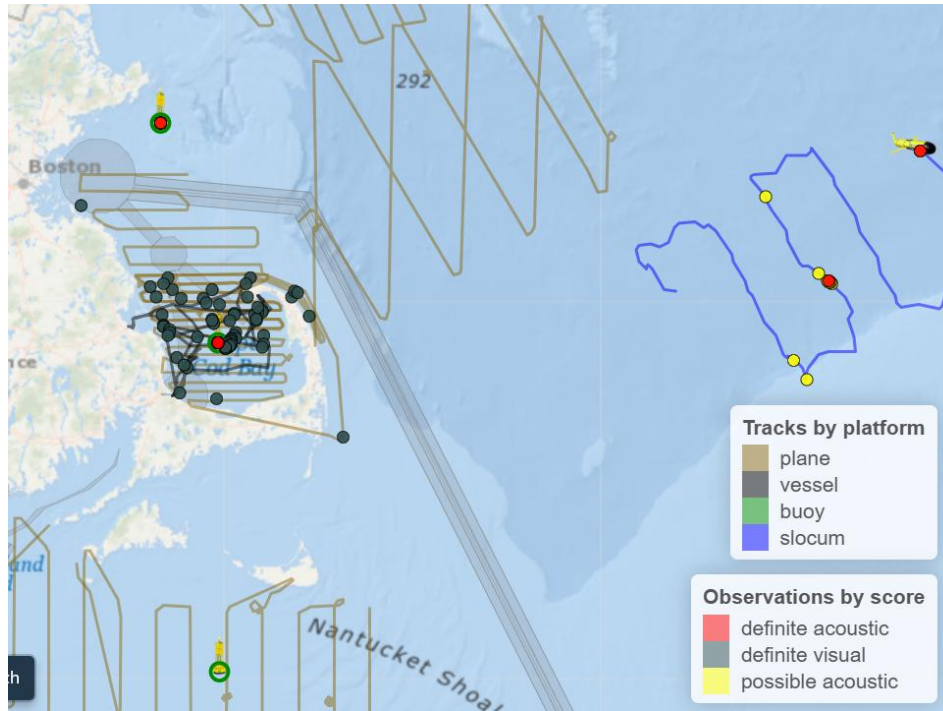


Figure 1. Visual sightings and acoustic detections of North Atlantic right whales May 1, 2025 through May 9, 2025. Black dots are definite visual sightings, while yellow and red represent possible and definite acoustic detections, respectively. (Data source: [Whale Map](#))

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>