

This is an additional advisory due to numerous inquiries about the following new rules. Please be advised that regulations adopted by the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Team and implemented by NOAA Fisheries have changed. Gear marking colors remain the same and are defined below under each individual management area; however the frequency and size of the markings have changed.

All buoy lines for **ALL traps set in trawls** must be marked with **three 12 inch RED** colored marks: one at the top 1/3 of the buoy line, one midway along the buoy line, and one at the bottom 1/3 of the buoy line. This marking rule for traps set in trawls pertains to all state waters south of the Narragansett Bay COLREGS DEMARCATION LINES and south of the inlets to all South Shore Coastal Ponds.

**ALL single trap/pot fisheries in State waters** will need an additional color marking. The color sequence should be at least a **6 inch RED** mark followed by a **6 inch BLUE** mark located on the top 1/3 of the buoy line, the middle of the buoy line, and the bottom 1/3 of the of the buoy line. This rule would apply to ALL single fish, lobster, crab, and conch traps set in State waters outside of the currently exempted areas. This marking rule for single traps/pots pertains to all state waters south of the Narragansett Bay COLREGS DEMARCATION LINES and south of the inlets to all South Shore Coastal Ponds.

The areas of state waters north of the COLREGS DEMARCATION LINES and north of the inlets to the south shore coastal ponds are exempted from both of these marking rules.

The reason for these changes to the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan is to better identify the gear associated with a large whale interaction, should one occur. This finer scale and increased frequency identification marker will allow the Team to adjust its management strategy to avoid interactions and minimize entanglement risk.

The attached provides additional detail as well as the required number of traps needed per trawl.

## 2015 North Atlantic Large Whale Management Plan

### Northeast Trap/Pot Management Changes Effective June 1, 2015

**Gear marking colors remain the same and are defined under each individual management area, however the frequency and size of the markings have changed. Now all buoy lines must be marked with three 12 inch, colored marks: one at the top 1/3 of the buoy line, one midway along the buoy line, and one at the bottom 1/3 of the buoy line.**

Each color code must be permanently affixed on or along the line and each color code must be clearly visible when the gear is hauled or removed from the water.

Options for gear marking can be but are not limited to colored tape, colored twine and paint.

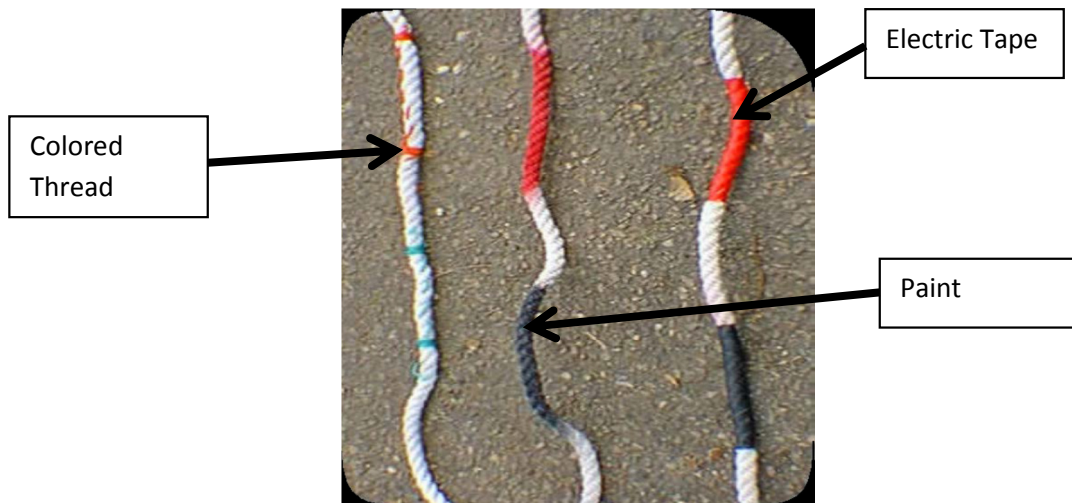
Colors:

**BLACK** - Offshore Trap/Pot Waters - LMA 2/3 Overlap and/or LMA 3

**RED** - Northern Nearshore Trap/Pot Waters / Northern Inshore State Trap/Pot Waters - Area (LMA) 2

### Northeast Trap/Pot Management Changes Effective July 1, 2015

**RED** and **BLUE** - ALL single trap/pot fisheries in State waters will need an additional color marking. The color sequence should be at least a 6 inch **RED** mark followed by a 6 inch **BLUE** mark located on the top 1/3 of the buoy line, the middle of the buoy line, and the bottom 1/3 of the of the buoy line. This rule would apply to ALL single fish, lobster, crab, and conch traps set in State waters outside of the currently exempted areas. This marking rule for single traps/pots pertains to all state waters south of the Narragansett Bay COLREGS DEMARCATION LINES and south of the inlets to all South Shore Coastal Ponds.



Please be advised the Minimum Number of Traps per trawl requirement has changed. The Large Whale Take Reduction Team has decided to use minimum number of traps per trawl as a mechanism to reduce the overall number of vertical lines in the water and therefore reduce the potential risk of entanglement.

#### Minimum Number of Traps Per Trawl Requirements

RI State Waters - trawls including 5 traps or fewer must only have 1 buoy line.

LMA 2 (3-12 miles) = 10 traps/trawl

LMA 2 (12 + miles) = 15 traps/trawl

LMA 2/3 Overlap (12+ miles) = 20 traps/trawl

LMA 3 (12+ miles- North of 40° 20') = 20 traps/trawl

For more information, please visit NOAA Fisheries at:

<http://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/protected/whaletrp/outreach/index.html>

Or

Scott Olszewski

RIDEM Marine Fisheries

(401)423-1934

[Scott.olszewski@dem.ri.gov](mailto:Scott.olszewski@dem.ri.gov)