

2008 Whale Rules for Maine



Gear Modifications Required Under the Final Whale Rule

Maine STATE WATERS Lobstermen Fishing **INSIDE THE EXEMPTION LINE** (chart attached)

- Lobstermen are exempt from all provisions of the Federal Whale Plan, but must comply with the Universal Gear Requirements required by the State of Maine (Regs Chapter 25.20, B):
 - ⇒ No floating line at the surface, but buoy lines can be comprised of any composition of rope as long as it meets this requirement (unless you choose option 2 below); and
 - ⇒ Lobstermen must comply with one of the three following options:
 - 1) All buoys must be attached to the buoy line with a 600 lb weak link.
 - 2) All buoy lines must be made entirely of sinking and/or neutrally buoyant line.
 - 3) All Ground lines must be made entirely of sinking and/or neutrally buoyant line; and
 - ⇒ No wet storage of gear (must be hauled every 30 days); and
 - ⇒ Fishermen are encouraged (not required) to maintain knot-free buoy lines.

Maine STATE WATERS Lobstermen Fishing **OUTSIDE THE EXEMPTION LINE** (chart attached)

- No floating buoy line at the surface, but buoy lines can be comprised of any composition of rope type as long as it meets this requirement; and
- No wet storage of gear (must be hauled every 30 days); and
- Fishermen are encouraged (not required) to maintain knot-free buoy lines; and
- All buoys, flotation and/or weighted devices must be attached with a weak link having a breaking strength of 600 lbs or less
 - ⇒ The weak link must be designed so that the bitter end of the buoy line is clean and free of knots when the link breaks.
 - ⇒ Each weak link must be installed as close to the flotation and/or weighted device as possible; and
- All buoy lines must be marked with 4" long red color midway on the buoy line in the water column and all surface buoys must be marked as defined by Maine law; and
- All ground lines must be comprised of sinking and/or neutrally buoyant rope (defined as rope with a specific gravity of 1.03 or greater).
 - ⇒ The attachment of buoys, toggles or other flotation devices is prohibited.

Maine FEDERAL WATERS Lobstermen Fishing Outside the 3 Mile Line

- You must comply with all provisions required for Maine state waters lobstermen fishing OUTSIDE the exemption line; and also
- No singles allowed, multiple trap trawls only; and
- Limit of one buoy line on all trawls of five traps or less.

**These rules are effective April 5, 2008,
except the sinking ground line provision which is effective October 5, 2008.**

EXEMPTION LINES FOR THE STATE OF MAINE (supplemental graphic)

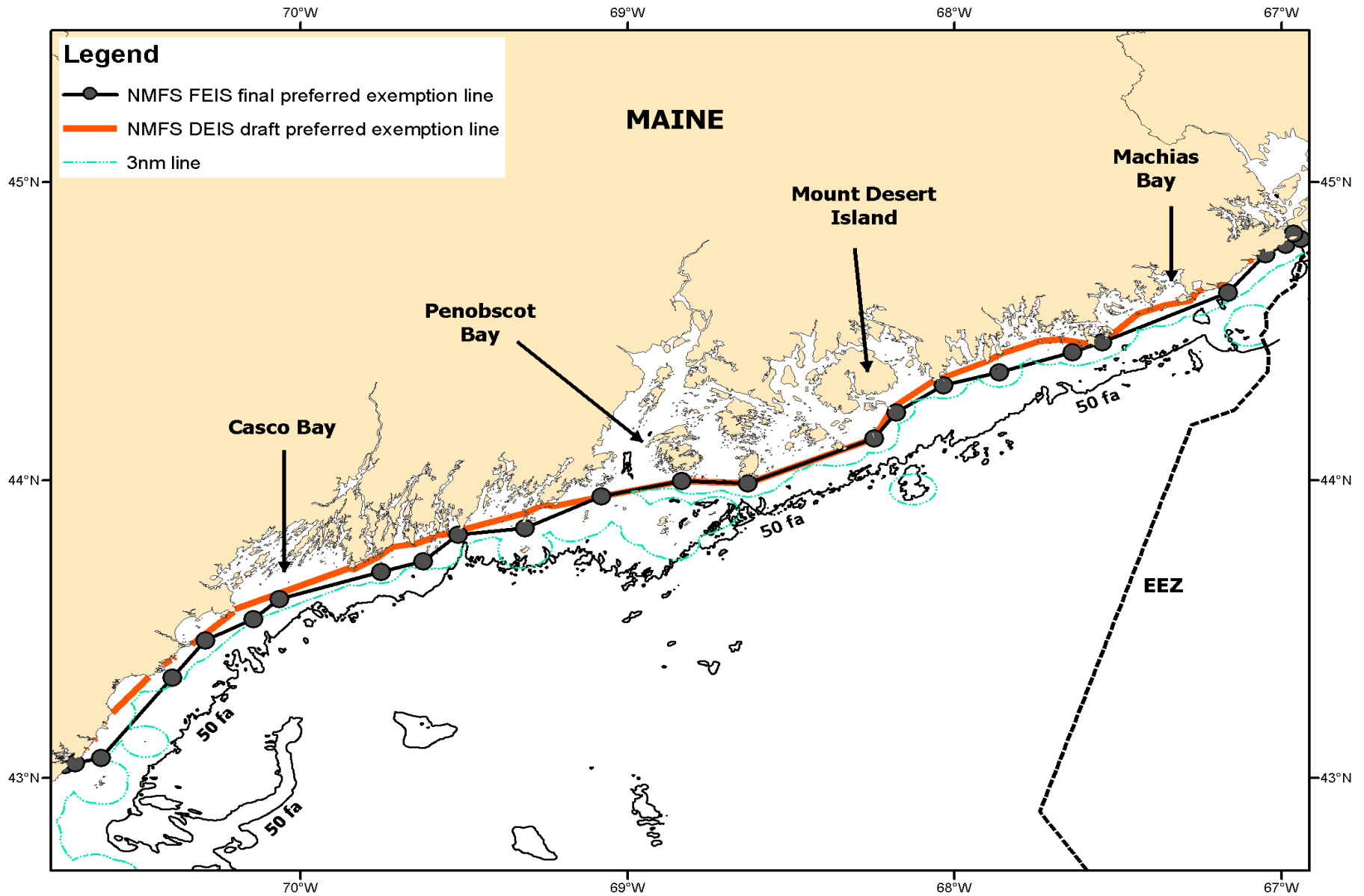


FIGURE 5. FINAL PREFERRED EXEMPTION LINES, FROM THE FEIS, FOR THE STATE OF MAINE (SHOWN AS SOLID, DOTTED LINES). THE DEIS DRAFT, PREFERRED EXEMPTION LINE FOR THE STATE OF MAINE, 3NM LINE, AND 50 FATHOM CURVE ARE ALSO SHOWN. THE EASTERN BOUNDARY OF THE EEZ IS REPRESENTED BY THE DARK, DASHED LINE.