

MAINE WHALE RULES SUMMARY

Effective June 1, 2015 (except Jeffreys, Jordan and Isles of Shoals gear marking areas, effective date TBD)

Universal Gear Requirements (All Maine trap/pot gear)

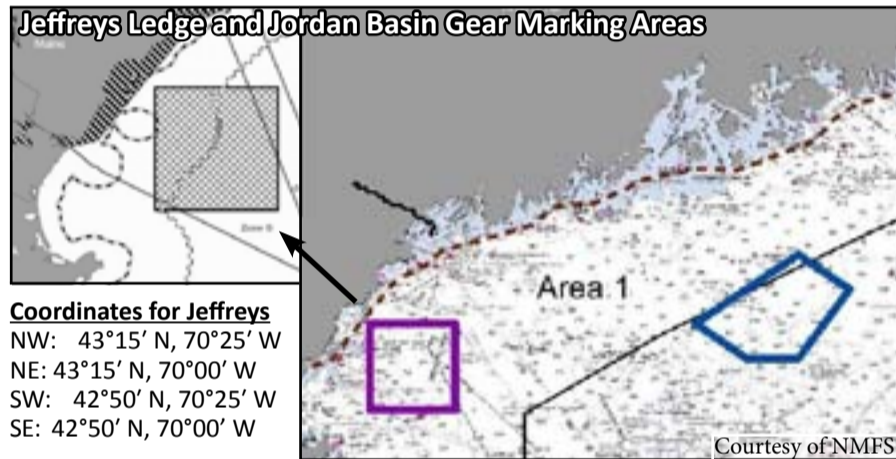
1. No floating line at the surface.
2. No wet storage of gear; it must be hauled every 30 days.
3. Maintaining knot-free buoy lines encouraged.

Trap/Pot Gear Fished in Maine Exempt State Waters

1. Universal Gear Requirements.
2. Lobstermen must comply with one of three options:
 - All buoys must be attached with a weak link no greater than 600 lbs.
 - All buoy lines must be made entirely of sinking line.
 - All groundlines must be made entirely of sinking line.

Trap/Pot Gear Fished in Maine Non-exempt Waters (state & federal)

1. Universal Gear Requirements.
2. Weak Links no greater than 600 lbs.
 - All buoys, flotation and/or weighted devices must be attached with a weak link with a breaking strength of no greater than 600 lbs.
 - Weak link must be designed so that the bitter end of the buoy line is clean and free of knots when the link breaks and installed as close to the flotation and/or weighted device as possible.
3. Sinking Groundline
 - All groundlines must be made of sinking rope, defined as rope with a specific gravity of 1.03 or greater.
 - The attachment of buoys, toggles or other flotation devices is prohibited. Floating bridles and/or short gangions allowed.



Jeffreys Ledge (Red and Green) and Jordan Basin (Red and Purple) gear marking areas

Maine Non-exempt Waters (state and federal), continued

4. Minimum Traps per Trawl
 - Vary by lobster zone and distance from shore. See chart below.
 - No single traps allowed, except in island buffer zones.
 - ⇒ Single traps allowed 1/4 mile around the islands of Monhegan, Matinicus Island Group (Metinic, Small Green, Large Green, Seal, Wooden Ball, Matinicus, Criehaven) and the Isles of Shoals.

Gear Marking Techniques



Shown are three simple methods to create 12" red marks. *Top:* colored twine is seized around the line and woven between the strands. *Center:* dry line is spray-painted. *Bottom:* colored electrical tape wrapped in one direction and then back over itself to form two layers. *Not shown:* wire tie or twine woven between rope strands, dyed rope, plastic or heat shrink tubing or other methods approved by NMFS.

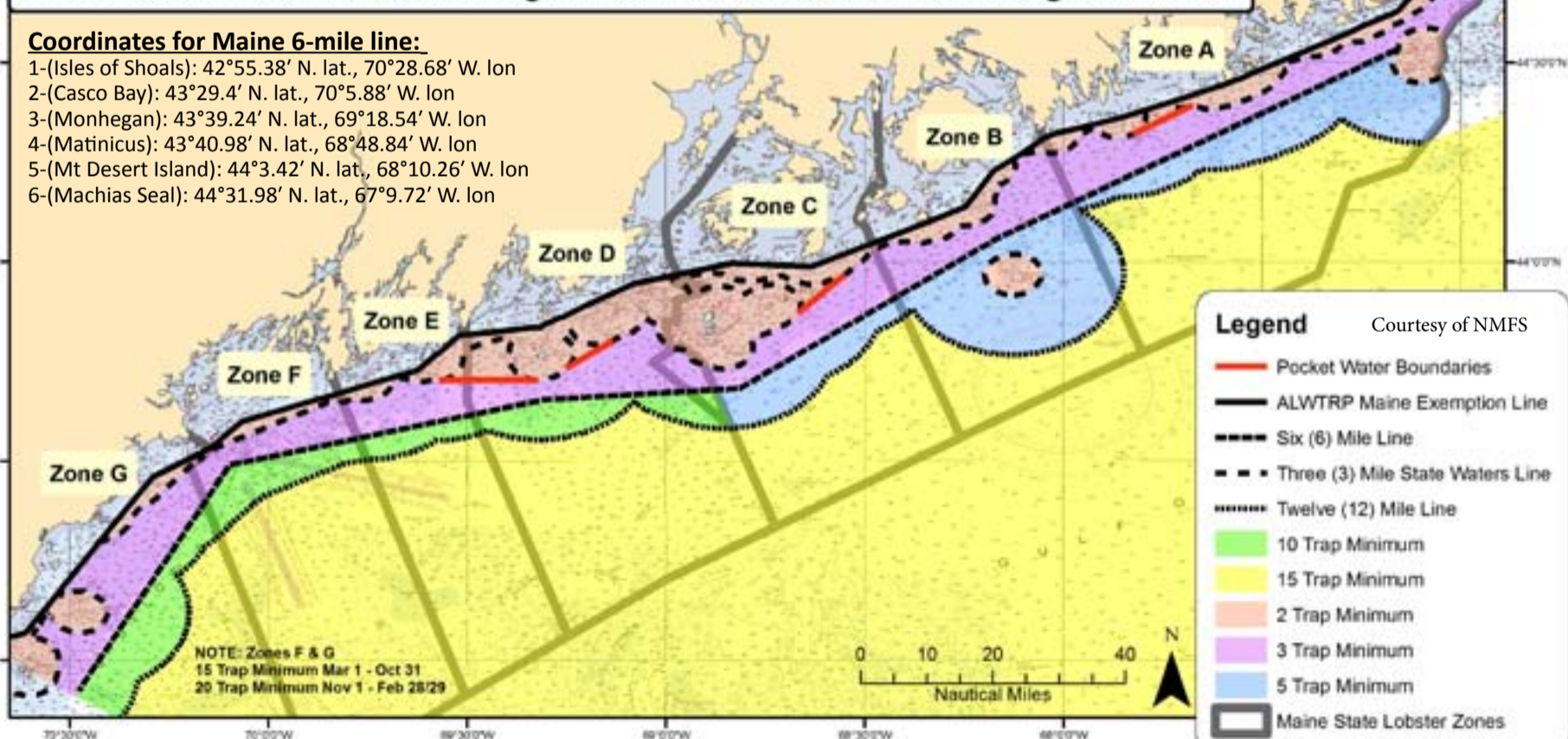
5. Gear Marking
 - All surface buoys must be clearly marked with the owner's lobster license number.
 - Each buoy line must have three 12" colored marks; one at the top, one midway along, and one at the bottom of the line.
 - ⇒ The color must be permanently affixed on or along the line and clearly visible when the gear is hauled.
 - ⇒ If the color of the rope is the same as or similar to the required mark, a white mark may be substituted.
 - ⇒ If the mark consists of two colors then each color mark may be 6" for a total mark of 12".
 - Gear marking colors for Maine Trap/Pot Gear in Gear Marking Areas:
 - ⇒ Maine non-exempt waters: RED
 - ⇒ Jeffreys Ledge: RED and GREEN (Top: 43°15' N, 70°25' W & 70°00' W; Bottom: 42°50' N, 70°25' W & 70°00' W)
 - ⇒ Jordan Basin: RED and PURPLE (North: 43°35' N, 68°20' W; East: 43°15' N, 68°50' W; South: 43°05' N, 68°35' W; West: Area 3 line)
 - ⇒ Isles of Shoals: RED and ORANGE (singles fished in 1/4 mile buffer)
6. One Buoyline
 - Trawls of five traps or less may have only one buoy line.

Minimum Trawling Up Requirements

Maine Lobster Zones & Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan Management Areas

Coordinates for Maine 6-mile line:

- 1-(Isles of Shoals): 42°55.38' N. lat., 70°28.68' W. lon
- 2-(Casco Bay): 43°29.4' N. lat., 70°5.88' W. lon
- 3-(Monhegan): 43°39.24' N. lat., 69°18.54' W. lon
- 4-(Matinicus): 43°40.98' N. lat., 68°48.84' W. lon
- 5-(Mt Desert Island): 44°3.42' N. lat., 68°10.26' W. lon
- 6-(Machias Seal): 44°31.98' N. lat., 67°9.72' W. lon



QUESTIONS ON HOW TO RIG GEAR TO COMPLY WITH WHALE RULES?

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