

Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan Gear Marking

Why Is Gear Marking Required?

The Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan requires that surface buoys and buoy lines be marked with information that will allow us to better understand where and how whales become entangled in vertical lines associated with trap/pot and gillnet fisheries.

MARKING SURFACE BUOYS



Surface buoys need to be marked to identify your vessel or fishery with one of the following:

- Your motorboat registration number and/or U.S. vessel documentation number;
- The federal commercial fishing permit number; or
- Whatever positive identification marking is required by the vessel's home-port state.

When marking is not already required by state or federal regulations, the letters and numbers to mark gear must be at least 1 inch (2.5 cm) in height, block letters or Arabic numbers, in a color that contrasts with the color of the buoy.

For More Information Contact the

NOAA Fisheries Greater Atlantic Gear Team

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GEAR MARKING REQUIREMENTS



The 12” colored required marks can be accomplished in a variety of ways. Shown are three simple methods that were tested and found to work satisfactorily under normal conditions. At the top, colored twine is seized around the line and woven between the strands. In the center, the line was spray-painted; this method requires that the rope be dry. At the bottom, colored electrical tape was wrapped in one direction and then back over itself to form two layers.

All buoy lines must be marked with three 12 inch (30.48 cm), colored marks: one at the top of the buoy line, one midway along the buoy line, and one at the bottom 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.

For specific management area color requirements, see below:

| Gear Marking Color | Applicable Trap/Pot Management Area |
|---------------------------|--|
| RED | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Massachusetts Restricted Area • Northern Nearshore Trap/Pot Waters • Northern Inshore State Trap/Pot Waters • Stellwagen Bank Jeffreys Ledge Restricted Area • Great South Channel Restricted Area overlapping Lobster Management Area (LMA) 2 and/or the Outer Cape (OC) LMA. |
| ORANGE: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Southern Nearshore Trap/Pot Waters. |
| BLACK | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offshore Trap/Pot Waters; Great South Channel Restricted Area overlapping with the LMA 2/3 Overlap and/or LMA 3 |
| BLUE & ORANGE | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Southeast Restricted Area North (state waters) |
| GREEN & ORANGE | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Southeast Restricted Area North (Federal waters) |



GEAR MARKING REQUIREMENTS

| Gear Marking Color | Applicable Gillnet Management Area |
|-------------------------|--|
| GREEN | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cape Cod Bay Restricted Area • Great South Channel Restricted Gillnet Area • Great South Channel Sliver Restricted Gillnet Area • Stellwagen Bank/Jeffreys Ledge Restricted Area • Other Northeast Gillnet Waters (Northeast & Mid-Atlantic) |
| BLUE | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mid/South Atlantic Gillnet Waters |
| YELLOW | <p><u>Excluding Shark Gillnet:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Southeast US Restricted Area South* • Other Southeast Gillnet Waters* |
| GREEN & BLUE | <p><u>Shark Gillnet (with webbing of 5" or greater)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Southeast US Monitoring Area* • Southeast US Restricted Area South* • Other Southeast Gillnet Waters* |

*Southeast gillnet management areas also require that each gillnet panel be marked along both the floatline and the leadline at least once every 100 yards, unless otherwise required.

