

**FINAL  
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT  
FOR  
AMENDING THE  
ATLANTIC LARGE WHALE  
TAKE REDUCTION PLAN:  
  
VERTICAL LINE RULE  
VOLUME I OF II**



*Photo Courtesy of David Wiley*

**National Marine Fisheries Service  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

**Prepared by:** Industrial Economics, Incorporated, and  
NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service

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RESPONSIBLE AGENCY:

Assistant Administrator for Fisheries  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
U.S. Department of Commerce  
Washington, DC 20235

PROPOSED ACTION:

Implementation of amendments to the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan to reduce the risk of serious injury and mortality to Atlantic large whales due to incidental interactions with commercial fishing gear from Maine to Florida's east coast.

ABSTRACT:

The Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan (ALWTRP) was developed pursuant to Section 118 of the Marine Mammal Protection Act to reduce the serious injury and mortality of right, humpback, and fin whales due to incidental interactions with commercial fisheries. NMFS is preparing a Final Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed amendments to the ALWTRP regulations (50 CFR 229.32). The proposed gear set modifications are designed to further reduce the risk of serious injury and mortality to Atlantic large whales due to incidental interactions with commercial fishing gear.

TYPE OF STATEMENT:

( ) DRAFT                      ( X ) FINAL

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GUIDANCE FOR SUBMITTING COMMENTS:

Comments on the FEIS may be submitted by mail to the above address. Please add the line:

**ATTN: Large Whale Rule**

Comments on the FEIS must be received within 30 days of the publication of the Notice of Availability.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0	INTRODUCTION AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	CHAPTER 1
1.1	Status of Large Whales and the Nature of Entanglements .....	1-2
1.2	Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan .....	1-4
1.2.1	Current ALWTRP Requirements.....	1-4
1.2.2	Alternatives Considered.....	1-5
1.3	Major Conclusions and Preferred Alternative .....	1-11
1.3.1	Biological Impacts of Alternatives .....	1-11
1.3.2	Economic Impacts of Alternatives.....	1-14
1.3.2.1	Estimated Vessel Compliance Costs.....	1-14
1.3.2.2	Total Industry Compliance Costs.....	1-14
1.3.2.3	Economic Impact Results .....	1-15
1.3.3	Social Impacts of Alternatives .....	1-17
1.3.3.1	Potentially Affected Communities.....	1-17
1.3.3.2	Comparison of Vessel Compliance Costs to Ex-Vessel Revenues .....	1-17
1.3.3.3	Other Socioeconomic Impacts .....	1-19
1.3.4	Preferred Alternative.....	1-20
1.4	Changes from DEIS to FEIS.....	1-24
1.5	Areas of Controversy .....	1-25
1.6	Report Structure .....	1-27
1.7	References.....	1-29
2.0	PURPOSE AND NEED FOR ACTION.....	CHAPTER 2
2.1	Statutory and Regulatory Context.....	2-1
2.1.1	The Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) and Atlantic Large Whales .....	2-2
2.1.2	The Endangered Species Act (ESA) and Atlantic Large Whales .....	2-3
2.1.2.1	ALWTRP and Biological Opinions.....	2-7

2.2	Overview of the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan (ALWTRP) .....	2-8
2.2.1	Affected Fisheries and Fishing Areas .....	2-9
2.2.2	Gear Modification Requirements and Restrictions .....	2-15
2.3	Rationale for Rule Making.....	2-29
2.3.1	Nature of Large Whale Entanglements.....	2-29
2.3.2	History of Large Whale Entanglements.....	2-30
	2.3.2.1 Entanglement Data.....	2-31
	2.3.2.2 Right Whale Entanglements .....	2-32
	2.3.2.3 Humpback Whale Entanglements.....	2-34
	2.3.2.4 Fin Whale Entanglements .....	2-36
	2.3.2.5 Minke Whale Entanglements.....	2-37
	2.3.2.6 Summary of Recent Entanglements: Right, Humpback, Fin, and Minke Whales .....	2-38
2.3.3	Purpose and Need for Action.....	2-40
2.4	References.....	2-44
Appendix 2A: Waters Exempted from ALWTRP		
3.0	REGULATORY ALTERNATIVES .....	CHAPTER 3
3.1	Alternatives Considered.....	3-1
3.1.1	Non-Regulator Components.....	3-6
3.1.2	Alternative 1: No Action Alternative.....	3-6
3.1.3	Alternative 2.....	3-6
3.1.4	Alternative 3 .....	3-8
3.1.5	Alternative 4.....	3-8
3.1.6	Alternative 5.....	3-9
3.1.7	Alternative 6 (Draft).....	3-9
3.1.8	Alternative 6 (Preferred) .....	3-9
3.1.9	Proposed Gear Marking Scheme.....	3-10
3.2	Alternatives Considered but Rejected.....	3-25
Appendix 3A: Rationale for Rejecting Proposed Gillnet Measures		

4.0	AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT .....	CHAPTER 4
4.1	Status of Atlantic Large Whale Species.....	4-1
4.1.1	North Atlantic Right Whale .....	4-1
4.1.1.1	Range .....	4-4
4.1.1.2	Life History and Reproductive Success .....	4-5
4.1.1.3	Abundance .....	4-6
4.1.1.4	Factors Affecting Survival .....	4-7
4.1.1.5	Behavior and Susceptibility to Entanglement.....	4-9
4.1.2	Humpback Whale.....	4-10
4.1.2.1	Range .....	4-11
4.1.2.2	Life History and Reproductive Success .....	4-12
4.1.2.3	Abundance .....	4-12
4.1.2.4	Factors Affecting Survival.....	4-13
4.1.2.5	Behavior and Susceptibility to Entanglement.....	4-13
4.1.3	Fin Whale.....	4-14
4.1.3.1	Range .....	4-15
4.1.3.2	Life History and Reproductive Success .....	4-15
4.1.3.3	Abundance .....	4-16
4.1.3.4	Factors Affecting Survival.....	4-16
4.1.3.5	Behavior and Susceptibility to Entanglement.....	4-17
4.1.4	Minke Whale.....	4-17
4.1.4.1	Range .....	4-18
4.1.4.2	Life History and Reproductive Success .....	4-18
4.1.4.3	Abundance .....	4-18
4.1.4.4	Factors Affecting Survival.....	4-19
4.1.4.5	Behavior and Susceptibility to Entanglement.....	4-20
4.2	Overview of Affected Fisheries .....	4-20
4.2.1	American Lobster.....	4-23
4.2.2	Northeast Multispecies.....	4-27
4.2.3	Monkfish.....	4-31
4.2.4	Spiny Dogfish .....	4-34
4.2.5	The Directed Shark Gillnet Fishery .....	4-37
4.2.6	Coastal Migratory Pelagic Species .....	4-39
4.2.7	Black Sea Bass.....	4-41

4.2.7.1	Northern Fishery .....	4-42
4.2.7.2	Southern Fishery .....	4-45
4.2.8	Hagfish .....	4-46
4.2.9	Red Crab .....	4-48
4.2.10	Scup .....	4-50
4.2.11	Jonah Crab .....	4-53
4.2.12	Conch and Whelk .....	4-56
4.2.13	Other Affected Fisheries .....	4-58
4.3	Other Affected Species .....	4-58
4.3.1	Species Not Likely to be Affected .....	4-59
4.3.1.1	Atlantic Salmon .....	4-60
4.3.1.2	Shortnose Sturgeon .....	4-61
4.3.1.3	Roseate Tern and Piping Plover .....	4-62
4.3.2	Species Potentially Affected .....	4-62
4.3.2.1	Whales .....	4-62
	Blue Whale .....	4-62
	Sei Whale .....	4-64
	Sperm Whale .....	4-65
4.3.2.2	Harbor Porpoise .....	4-67
4.3.2.3	Dolphins .....	4-69
	Western North Atlantic Coastal Bottlenose Dolphin ...	4-69
	Atlantic White-Sided Dolphin .....	4-72
	Risso's Dolphin .....	4-72
	Pelagic Delphinids (Spotted Dolphin, Striped Dolphin Pilot Whale, Offshore Bottlenose Dolphin, Common Dolphin) .....	4-73
4.3.2.4	Seals .....	4-76
	Harbor Seal .....	4-76
	Gray Seal .....	4-77
	Harp Seal .....	4-78
4.3.2.5	Sea Turtles .....	4-79
	Kemp's Ridley Sea Turtle .....	4-80
	Loggerhead Sea Turtle .....	4-81
	Leatherback Sea Turtle .....	4-82
	Green Sea Turtle .....	4-83
	Hawksbill Sea Turtle .....	4-85
4.3.2.6	Atlantic Sturgeon .....	4-85
4.4	Habitat .....	4-87
4.4.1	Identification of EFH .....	4-87
4.4.2	Identification of HAPCs .....	4-88

4.4.2.1	New England Fishery Management Council (NEFMC) HAPCs .....	4-89
4.4.2.2	Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (MAFMC) HAPCs.....	4-89
4.4.2.3	Atlantic Highly Migratory Species (HMS) HAPCs.....	4-90
4.4.2.4	South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (SAFMC) HAPCs .....	4-90
4.4.3	American Lobster Habitats .....	4-94
4.4.3.1	Inshore Lobster Habitats .....	4-94
4.4.3.2	Offshore Lobster Habitats.....	4-98
4.4.4	Impact of Fishing on EFH.....	4-99
4.4.4.1	Alteration of Physical Structure.....	4-100
4.4.4.2	Mortality of Benthic Organisms .....	4-101
4.4.4.3	Changes to Benthic Communities and Ecosystems ....	4-101
4.4.4.4	Sediment Suspension .....	4-101
4.4.4.5	Chemical Modifications.....	4-102
4.5	References.....	4-103
Appendix 4A: Species Landed With Trap/Pot Gear in 2011		
Appendix 4B: Northeast Multispecies Fishery Complex: Species Information		
5.0	BIOLOGICAL IMPACTS.....	CHAPTER 5
5.1	Evaluating Impacts Through the Use of NMFS' Co-Occurrence Model.....	5-2
5.1.1	Overview.....	5-2
5.1.2	Limitations and Uncertainties.....	5-5
5.1.3	Peer Review.....	5-6
5.2	Impacts to Atlantic Large Whales.....	5-8
5.2.1	Impacts of Gear Modification Requirements.....	5-8
5.2.1.1	Buoy Line Requirements .....	5-8
5.2.1.2	Weak Link Requirements .....	5-12
5.2.1.3	Set Restrictions Requirements .....	5-14
5.2.1.4	Gear Marking.....	5-15
5.2.2	Impacts from Changes to Restricted Times and Areas.....	5-16
5.2.2.1	Seasonal Closures .....	5-16
5.2.2.2	Addition Exempted Waters and Buffers.....	5-19

5.2.3	Comparison of Biological Impacts Across Regulatory Alternatives .....	5-20
5.2.3.1	Comparison Criteria .....	5-21
5.2.3.2	Comparison of Regulatory Alternatives .....	5-23
5.3	Other Impacts .....	5-26
5.3.1	Impacts to Other Protected Species .....	5-32
5.3.1.1	Buoy Line Requirements .....	5-33
5.3.1.2	Weak Link Requirements .....	5-34
5.3.1.3	Set Restrictions Requirements .....	5-34
5.3.1.4	Gear Marking Requirements .....	5-35
5.3.1.5	Seasonal Closures .....	5-35
5.3.1.6	Addition of Exempted Waters .....	5-36
5.3.2	Impacts to Essential Fish Habitat .....	5-38
5.3.2.1	Exempted and Buffer Waters .....	5-38
5.3.2.2	Buoy Line Requirements .....	5-38
5.3.2.3	Weak Link Requirements .....	5-39
5.3.3	Impacts to Directed Catch and Bycatch .....	5-40
5.3.3.1	Major Gear Modification Requirements .....	5-40
5.3.3.2	Seasonal Closures .....	5-40
5.3.3.3	Addition of Exempted Waters and Buffers .....	5-41
5.3.4	Summary of Impacts .....	5-41
5.4	References .....	5-43
	Appendix 5A: Co-Occurrence of Vertical Lines and Right/Humpback Whale SPUE Baseline Monthly Values	
	Appendix 5B: Sensitivity of the Co-Occurrence Analysis to the Use of Adjusted Whale Sightings Values	
6.0	ECONOMIC IMPACTS .....	CHAPTER 6
6.1	Introduction .....	6-1
6.2	Analytic Approach: Gear Configuration Requirements .....	6-3
6.2.1	Development of Model Vessels .....	6-4



6.2.2	Gear Conversion Costs.....	6-5
6.2.2.1	Equipment Costs.....	6-5
6.2.2.2	Labor for Gear Conversion and Associated Costs.....	6-8
6.2.2.3	Caveats and Uncertainties.....	6-11
6.2.3	Catch Impacts Associated with Trawling Requirements.....	6-11
6.2.4	Other Potential Impacts Associated with Gear Configuration Requirements.....	6-13
6.2.4.1	Gear Loss Costs.....	6-16
6.2.4.2	Addition of Crew.....	6-17
6.2.4.3	Vessel Modification.....	6-20
6.2.4.4	Requirements for Southeast Trap/Pot Fisheries.....	6-21
6.2.4.5	Exemption for New Hampshire State Waters.....	6-23
6.2.4.6	Buffer Areas for Maine Islands.....	6-23
6.3	Analytic Approach: Seasonal Closures.....	6-24
6.3.1	Review of the Literature on Closure Impacts.....	6-25
6.3.2	Costs of Suspending Fishing.....	6-26
6.3.2.1	Catch per Trip.....	6-26
6.3.2.2	Revenue per Trip.....	6-27
6.3.2.3	Transition Costs.....	6-28
6.3.2.4	Caveats.....	6-29
6.3.3	Relocation Costs.....	6-31
6.3.3.1	Fuel Costs.....	6-31
6.3.3.2	Time Costs.....	6-32
6.3.3.3	Transition Costs.....	6-33
6.3.3.4	Catch Impacts.....	6-33
6.3.3.5	Caveats.....	6-34
6.3.4	Analysis of Specific Closure Scenarios.....	6-34
6.3.4.1	Jordan Basin Restricted Area.....	6-35
6.3.4.2	Cape Cod Restricted Areas.....	6-39
6.3.4.3	Jeffreys Ledge Restricted Area.....	6-46
6.3.4.4	Summary.....	6-48
6.4	Analytic Approach: Gear Marking Requirements.....	6-49
6.5	Estimated Compliance Costs by Alternative.....	6-50

6.6	Estimated Compliance Costs by Fishery.....	6-53
6.7	References.....	6-56

Appendix 6A: Gear Conversion Cost Methodolgy

7.0	SOCIAL IMPACTS .....	CHAPTER 7
7.1	Background.....	7-1
7.2	Methodology.....	7-2
7.3	Characterization of Community Vulnerability .....	7-3
7.3.1	Factors Affecting Vulnerability .....	7-3
7.3.1.1	Exposure.....	7-5
7.3.1.2	Sensitivity.....	7-5
7.3.1.3	Capacity to Respond to Change.....	7-5
7.3.2	Assessment of Community Vulnerability.....	7-6
7.3.3	Caveats.....	7-7
7.4	Socioeconomic Impacts of Alternatives .....	7-11
7.4.1	Comparison of Vessel Compliance Costs to Ex-Vessel Revenues.....	7-11
7.4.1.1	Vessel Distribution by Geographic Area.....	7-11
7.4.1.2	Number of Affected Vessels.....	7-11
7.4.1.3	Vessel Revenue.....	7-11
7.4.1.4	Vessel Compliance Costs.....	7-12
7.4.1.5	Comparison of Costs and Revenues.....	7-12
7.4.2	Landings and Employment Impacts.....	7-19
7.4.2.1	Landings Impacts.....	7-19
7.4.2.2	Employment Impacts.....	7-20
7.4.3	Impacts on Unique Subgroups.....	7-21
7.4.4	Caveats.....	7-22
7.5	Other Potential Social Impacts.....	7-23
7.5.1	Potential Negative Social Impacts .....	7-23
7.5.2	Potential Positive Social Impacts.....	7-25
7.6	Summary and Comparison of Alternatives.....	7-28

7.7	References.....	7-32
	Appendix 7A: Description of County Socioeconomic Characterization Database	
	Appendix 7B: Estimated Impact of Action Alternatives on Annual Lobster Landings	
8.0	SUMMARY AND INTEGRATION OF IMPACT ANALYSIS FINDINGS .....	CHAPTER 8
8.1	Biological Impacts .....	8-2
8.1.1	Impacts on Whales.....	8-2
8.1.2	Other Biological Impacts .....	8-3
8.1.3	Comparison of Biological Impacts Across Alternatives.....	8-4
8.2	Economic Impacts.....	8-5
8.2.1	Compliance Cost Estimation Methods.....	8-5
8.2.1.1	Gear Configuration Requirements.....	8-5
8.2.1.2	Seasonal Closure Requirements.....	8-6
8.2.1.3	Gear Marking Requirements.....	8-7
8.2.2	Economic Impact Results .....	8-7
8.3	Social Impacts of Alternatives.....	8-10
8.3.1	Potentially Affected Communities.....	8-10
8.3.2	Comparison of Vessel Compliance Costs to Ex-Vessel Revenues.....	8-11
8.3.3	Other Socioeconomic Impacts .....	8-11
8.4	Integration of Results.....	8-14
9.0	CUMULATIVE EFFECTS ANALYSIS.....	CHAPTER 9
9.1	Background.....	9-1
9.2	Valued Ecosystem Components .....	9-2
9.3	Geographic and Temporal Scope.....	9-3
9.4	Effects of Past, Present, and Reasonably Foreseeable Future Actions.....	9-4
9.4.1	Atlantic Large Whales .....	9-5
9.4.1.1	Commercial Whaling.....	9-5
9.4.1.2	Entanglement .....	9-8
9.4.1.3	Ship Strikes.....	9-11
9.4.1.4	Water Pollution.....	9-16
9.4.1.5	Noise Pollution.....	9-21
9.4.1.6	Climate Change.....	9-26

9.4.1.7	Prey Availability .....	9-28
9.4.1.8	Summary of Factors Affecting Atlantic Large Whale Survival .....	9-29
9.4.2	Other Protected Species .....	9-32
9.4.2.1	Whales.....	9-33
9.4.2.2	Harbor Porpoise .....	9-35
9.4.2.3	Dolphins.....	9-37
9.4.2.4	Seals .....	9-44
9.4.2.5	Sea Turtles .....	9-48
9.4.2.6	Summary of Commercial Fishing Interactions Affecting Other Protected Species .....	9-55
9.4.3	Affected Fisheries .....	9-59
9.4.3.1	American Lobster.....	9-59
9.4.3.2	Northeast Multispecies.....	9-65
9.4.3.3	Monkfish.....	9-73
9.4.3.4	Spiny Dogfish .....	9-76
9.4.3.5	Directed Shark .....	9-79
9.4.3.6	Coastal Migratory Pelagic Species .....	9-83
9.4.3.7	Black Sea Bass .....	9-86
9.4.3.7.1	The Northern Fishery.....	9-86
9.4.3.7.2	The Southern Fishery.....	9-90
9.4.3.8	Hagfish.....	9-92
9.4.3.9	Red Crab .....	9-93
9.4.3.10	Scup.....	9-95
9.4.3.11	Jonah Crab .....	9-97
9.4.3.12	Conch/Whelk .....	9-98
9.4.3.13	Summary of Factors Affecting Fishery Resources .....	9-98
9.4.4	Habitat.....	9-100
9.4.4.1	Management History.....	9-101
9.4.4.2	Past, Present, and Reasonably Foreseeable Future Actions Affecting Essential Fish Habitat.....	9-102
9.4.4.3	Management Actions Affecting EFH .....	9-106
9.4.4.3.1	External Management Actions Affecting EFH ...	9-107
9.4.4.3.2	Internal Management Actions Affecting EFH ....	9-108
9.4.4.4	Summary of Factors Affecting Habitat.....	9-112
9.4.5	Fishing Dependent Communities.....	9-112

9.4.5.1	American Lobster.....	9-113
9.4.5.2	Northeast Multispecies.....	9-115
9.4.5.3	Monkfish.....	9-120
9.4.5.4	Spiny Dogfish.....	9-123
9.4.5.5	Directed Shark.....	9-124
9.4.5.6	Coastal Migratory Pelagic Species.....	9-127
9.4.5.7	Black Sea Bass.....	9-129
	9.4.5.7.1 Northern Fishery.....	9-129
	9.4.5.7.2 Southern Fishery.....	9-131
9.4.5.8	Red Crab.....	9-134
9.4.5.9	Scup.....	9-136
9.4.5.10	Summary Factors Affecting Fishing Dependent Communities.....	9-138
9.5	Consequences of the Alternatives Considered.....	9-140
9.5.1	Atlantic Large Whales.....	9-140
9.5.2	Other Protected Species.....	9-140
9.5.3	Affected Fisheries.....	9-140
9.5.4	Habitat.....	9-140
9.5.5	Fishing Dependent Communities.....	9-140
9.6	Cumulative Effects of the Alternatives Considered.....	9-140
9.7	References.....	9-155
Appendix 9A: Supplementary Information For Cumulative Effects Analysis		
10.0	REGULATORY IMPACT REVIEW.....	CHAPTER 10
10.1	Introduction.....	10-1
10.2	Objectives and Legal Basis of Proposed Regulations.....	10-2
10.3	Problem Addressed by ALWTRP.....	10-5
10.4	Affected Fisheries.....	10-8
10.5	Regulatory Alternatives.....	10-10
10.6	Economic Analysis of Alternatives.....	10-16
10.6.1	Benefit-Cost Framework.....	10-16
10.6.2	Economic Benefits of Large Whale Protection.....	10-17
	10.6.2.1 Non-Consumptive Use Benefits.....	10-17
	10.6.2.2 Non-Use Benefits.....	10-18
	10.6.2.3 Relative Ranking of Alternatives.....	10-20
10.6.3	Fishing Industry Compliance Costs.....	10-21

10.6.3.1	Compliance Cost Estimation Methods.....	10-21
10.6.3.2	Economic Impact Results .....	10-23
10.7	Social Impacts of Alternatives .....	10-27
10.7.1	Potentially Affected Communities.....	10-27
10.7.2	Comparison of Vessel Compliance Costs to Ex-Vessel Revenues.....	10-28
10.7.3	Other Socioeconomic Impacts .....	10-29
10.8	Integration of Results.....	10-31
10.9	References.....	10-36
11.0	INITIAL REGULATORY FLEXIBILITY ANALYSIS.....	CHAPTER 11
11.1	Introduction.....	11-1
11.2	Objectives and Legal Basis of Proposed Rule .....	11-1
11.3	Problem Addressed by ALWTRP.....	11-5
11.4	Regulatory Alternatives .....	11-8
11.4.1	Overview.....	11-8
11.4.2	Preferred Alternative.....	11-14
11.4.3	Public Comments and NMFS Response.....	11-14
11.4.3.1	Comments during Scoping Process.....	11-14
11.4.3.2	Comments on DEIS and Associated IRFA.....	11-15
11.5	Small Entities Affected.....	11-16
11.5.1	Fishing Operations.....	11-17
11.5.2	Other Small Entities.....	11-18
11.6	Impacts of Regulatory Alternatives on Small Entities.....	11-20
11.6.1	Impacts on Fishing Operations.....	11-20
11.6.1.1	Impacts of Gear Configuration and Gear Marking Requirements.....	11-21
11.6.1.2	Vessels Affected by Closures.....	11-21
11.6.2	Impacts on Dealers and Processors.....	11-27
11.7	Rules that may Duplicate, Overlap, or Conflict with Proposed Rule.....	11-28
11.8	References.....	11-29

12.0	APPLICABLE LAWS .....	CHAPTER 12
12.1	Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act including Essential Fish Habitat .....	12-1
12.2	National Environmental Policy Act .....	12-1
12.3	Endangered Species Act .....	12-1
12.4	Marine Mammal Protection Act .....	12-2
12.5	Coastal Zone Management Act.....	12-3
12.6	Administrative Procedure Act.....	12-3
12.7	Information Quality Act (Section 515).....	12-3
12.8	Paperwork Reduction Act.....	12-5
12.9	Executive Order 13132 – Federalism .....	12-5
12.10	Executive Order 12866 .....	12-6
12.11	Regulatory Flexibility Act .....	12-6
12.12	Executive Order 12898 – Environmental Justice.....	12-6
12.13	Executive Order 13158 – Marine Protected Areas .....	12-7
13.0	LIST OF PREPARERS AND CONTRIBUTORS .....	CHAPTER 13
14.0	DISTRIBUTION LIST .....	CHAPTER 14
15.0	GLOSSARY AND ACRONYMS .....	CHAPTER 15
15.1	Glossary .....	15-1
15.2	Acronyms.....	15-13
15.3	Index.....	15-16

(Volume II contains the written comments, responses to comments received on the DEIS and proposed rule, and a summary of comments received during the initial scoping period)

## LIST OF EXHIBITS

Exhibit 1-1:	Serious Injury Entanglements.....	1-3
Exhibit 1-2:	Fatal Entanglements.....	1-4
Exhibit 1-3:	Proposed ALWTRP Management Alternatives.....	1-8
Exhibit 1-4:	Northeast Region Lobster Management Areas .....	1-10
Exhibit 1-5:	Comparison of Impacts by Alternative.....	1-12
Exhibit 1-6:	Estimated Compliance Costs by Fishery .....	1-16
Exhibit 1-7:	Key Communities Affected .....	1-18
Exhibit 1-8:	Summary of Socioeconomic Impacts by Alternative.....	1-23
Exhibit 2-1:	Endangered Species Act (ESA) Section 7 Decision Process.....	2-4
Exhibit 2-2:	Fishing Gear and Areas Regulated Under the ALWTRP .....	2-11
Exhibit 2-3:	Areas Affected by the ALWTRP: Lobster Traps/Pots .....	2-12
Exhibit 2-4:	Areas Affected by the ALWTRP: Gillnets .....	2-13
Exhibit 2-5:	List of Fisheries, Category I and II Designations .....	2-14
Exhibit 2-6:	Lobster Trap/Pot Gear Modification Requirements and Restrictions Under the ALWTRP, By Area.....	2-16
Exhibit 2-7:	Anchored Gillnet Gear Modification Requirements and Restrictions Under the ALWTRP, By Area.....	2-22
Exhibit 2-8:	Other Gillnet Gear Modification Requirements and Restrictions Under the ALWTRP, By Area.....	2-25
Exhibit 2-9:	Right Whale Entanglements .....	2-33
Exhibit 2-10:	Outcome of Right Whale Entanglements .....	2-34
Exhibit 2-11:	Humpback Whale Entanglements.....	2-35
Exhibit 2-12:	Outcome of Humpback Whale Entanglements.....	2-35
Exhibit 2-13:	Fin Whale Entanglements.....	2-36
Exhibit 2-14:	Minke Whale Entanglements.....	2-37
Exhibit 2-15:	Serious Injury Entanglements.....	2-38
Exhibit 2-16:	Fatal Entanglements.....	2-39
Exhibit 2-17:	Average Annual Human-Caused Serious Injury and Mortality, 2006 through 2010 .....	2-40
Exhibit 2-18:	Potential Biological Removal (PBR) Levels .....	2-40
Exhibit 2-19:	Preliminary Entanglement Summary 2010 and 2011 .....	2-41
Exhibit 2A-1:	Exemption Lines for Coastal Waters of RI, CT, and NY.....	2A-3
Exhibit 2A-2:	Exemption Lines for ME.....	2A-4
Exhibit 2A-3:	Exemption Line for Chesapeake Bay.....	2A-5
Exhibit 2A-4:	Exemption Line for Delaware Bay.....	2A-6
Exhibit 3-1:	Proposed ALWTRP Management Alternatives 2-6 .....	3-3
Exhibit 3-2:	Proposed Gear Marking .....	3-11
Exhibit 3-3:	Alternative 1 Management Areas .....	3-13
Exhibit 3-4:	Northeast Region Traps/Trawl Proposal under Alternatives 2 and 4 .....	3-15
Exhibit 3-5:	Proposed Southeast Region Trap/Pot Management Areas .....	3-16
Exhibit 3-6:	Proposed Regulatory Language Changes for Alternative 2-6 .....	3-17
Exhibit 3-7:	Maine Department of Marine Resources Trap/Trawl Proposal under	



	Alternatives 3,5,6.....	3-17
Exhibit 3-8:	Proposed Exempt Waters Under Alternatives 3,5,and 6.....	3-19
Exhibit 3-9:	Proposed Closures Under Alternatives 3,4, 5, and 6 .....	3-20
Exhibit 3-10:	Description of Maine Pocket Waters Under Alternative 6 (Preferred).....	3-24
Exhibit 3-11:	Proposed ¼ Mile Buffer Around Maine Islands Under Alternative 6 (Preferred). 3-25	
Exhibit 3-12:	Alternatives Considered but Rejected.....	3-27
Exhibit 3A-1:	Trap/Pot vs Gillnet Gear .....	3A-2
Exhibit 3A-2:	Effects of Proposed Closures on Trap/Pot vs Gillnet Gear.....	3A-3
Exhibit 4-1:	American Lobster Management Areas .....	4-25
Exhibit 4-2:	Federal Commercial Lobster Trap/Pot Permits by Lobster Management Area, FY 2011.....	4-26
Exhibit 4-3:	Landings and Revenue for the American Lobster Fishery: 2006-2011 .....	4-26
Exhibit 4-4:	Lobster Landings and Revenue by State: 2011.....	4-27
Exhibit 4-5:	Lobster Landings Value by Port, FY 2011 .....	4-27
Exhibit 4-6:	Species/Stocks Managed Under the Northeast Multispecies Fishery Management Plan.....	4-28
Exhibit 4-7:	Permitted Northeast Multispecies Vessels, FY 2011.....	4-29
Exhibit 4-8:	Landings for the Northeast Multispecies Fishery by Gear, FY 2011 .....	4-30
Exhibit 4-9:	Value of Landings for the Northeast Multispecies Fishery by Port, FY 2011 .....	4-30
Exhibit 4-10:	Permitted Monkfish Vessels, FY 2011 .....	4-32
Exhibit 4-11:	Monkfish Landings by Gear Type, FY 2011 .....	4-33
Exhibit 4-12:	Value of Monkfish Landings by Port, FY 2011 .....	4-33
Exhibit 4-13:	Permitted Spiny Dogfish Vessels, FY 2011 .....	4-35
Exhibit 4-14:	Spiny Dogfish Landings by Gear Type, FY 2012 .....	4-36
Exhibit 4-15:	Value of Spiny Dogfish Landings by Port, FY 2011.....	4-36
Exhibit 4-16:	Common Shark Species, by Shark Class.....	4-38
Exhibit 4-17:	Gillnet Effort in the Southeast Atlantic .....	4-40
Exhibit 4-18:	Vessels Possessing Atlantic Coastal Migratory Pelagic Permits in 2012.....	4-41
Exhibit 4-19:	Permitted Northern Black Sea Bass Vessels, FY 2011.....	4-43
Exhibit 4-20:	Northern Black Sea Bass Landings by Gear Type, FY 2011 .....	4-44
Exhibit 4-21:	Value of Northern Black Sea Bass Landings by Port, FY 2011 .....	4-44
Exhibit 4-22:	Black Sea Bass Pot Endorsements in Southeast Atlantic .....	4-45
Exhibit 4-23:	Active Black Sea Bass Pot Tags in Southeast .....	4-46
Exhibit 4-24:	Northern Hagfish Landings by Gear Type, FY 2011 .....	4-47
Exhibit 4-25:	Value of Hagfish Landings by Port, FY 2011 .....	4-48
Exhibit 4-26:	Northeast Permitted Red Crab Vessels, FY 2011 .....	4-49
Exhibit 4-27:	Red Crab Landings by Gear Type, FY 2011 .....	4-50
Exhibit 4-28:	Value of Red Crab Landings by Port, FY 2011.....	4-50
Exhibit 4-29:	Permitted Scup Vessels, FY 2011.....	4-52
Exhibit 4-30:	Scup Landings by Gear Type, FY 2011.....	4-53
Exhibit 4-31:	Value of Scup Landings by Port, FY 2011 .....	4-53
Exhibit 4-32:	Jonah Crab Landings by Gear Type, FY 2011 .....	4-55
Exhibit 4-33:	Value of Jonah Crab Landings by Port, FY 2011 .....	4-55
Exhibit 4-34:	Conch/Whelk Landings by Gear Type, FY 2011 .....	4-56

Exhibit 4-35: Value of Whelk Landings by Port, FY 2011 .....	4-57
Exhibit 4-36: Other Species Potentially Affected by ALWTRP Modifications .....	4-59
Exhibit 4-37: Abundance Estimates for the Western North Atlantic Coastal Bottlenose Dolphin by Management Unit .....	4-70
Exhibit 4-38: Estimated Mortality and Current PBR Estimates for Western North Atlantic Coastal Bottlenose Dolphin Stocks .....	4-71
Exhibit 4-39: Summary of American Lobster Habitats and Densities.....	4-96
Exhibit 4A-1: Total Landings Caught with Trap/Pot Gear in 2011.....	4A-3
Exhibit 4B-1: Name, Distribution, Biology and Commercial Uses of Species Comprising The Northeast Multispecies Fishery Complex.....	4B-2
Exhibit 4B-2: Images, Northeast Multispecies Fishery Complex .....	4B-9
Exhibit 5-1: Co-occurrence of Vertical Lines and Right/Humpback Whale SPUE-Northeast Region.....	5-3
Exhibit 5-2: Co-occurrence of Vertical Lines and Right/Humpback Whale SPUE-Mid-Atlantic Region.....	5-4
Exhibit 5-3: Co-occurrence of Vertical Lines and Right/Humpback Whale SPUE-Southeast Region.....	5-4
Exhibit 5-4: Average Number of Vertical Lines.....	5-9
Exhibit 5-5: Annual Reduction in Number of Vertical Lines.....	5-10
Exhibit 5-6: Annual Reduction in Co-occurrence.....	5-10
Exhibit 5-7: Effects of Seasonal Closures Presuming 100% Suspend Fishing.....	5-17
Exhibit 5-8: Effects of Seasonal Closures Presuming Some Relocation .....	5-17
Exhibit 5-9: Annual Reduction in Co-Occurrence Presuming 100% Suspend Fishing.....	5-18
Exhibit 5-10: Annual Reduction in Co-Occurrence Presuming Some Relocation .....	5-18
Exhibit 5-11: Risk Reduction Indicators.....	5-22
Exhibit 5-12: Comparison of Impacts by Alternative Presuming 100% Suspend Fishing.....	5-24
Exhibit 5-13: Comparison of Impacts by Alternative Presuming Some Relocation .....	5-25
Exhibit 5-14: Impacts of Regulatory Alternatives on Other Protected Species, Essential Fish Habitat, Directed Catch, and Bycatch.....	5-27
Appendix 5-A: Co-occurrence of Vertical Lines and Right/Humpback Whale SPUE Baseline Monthly Values.....	5A-1 to 5A-15
Exhibit 5B-1: Overview of Analytic Approach.....	5B-3
Exhibit 5B-2: Northeast SPE Minima by Species.....	5B-6
Exhibit 5B-3: Functions Employed in Developing Adjusted Sightings Values.....	5B-7
Attachment 5B-1: Northeast Sightings Comparison: Combined Right/Humpback Whale.....	5B-10 to 5B-21
Attachment 5B-2: Northeast Baseline Co-occurrence Comparison: Combined Right/Humpback Whale.....	5B-23 to 5B-34
Attachment 5B-3: Impact of Regulatory Alternatives on Coastwide Co-occurrence Scores: Combined Right/Humpback Whale.....	5B-36
Exhibit 6-1: Economic Impact Assessment Methodology.....	6-4
Exhibit 6-2: Methodology Used to Calculate Gear Conversion Costs .....	6-6
Exhibit 6-3: Calculation of the Implicit Value of a Trap/Pot Fishermen’s Time .....	6-10
Exhibit 6-4: Parameters for Assessing Landings Reduction and Associated Revenue Impacts	

	For Vessels Converting to Longer Trawls .....	6-14
Exhibit 6-5:	Summary of Findings from Massachusetts DMF Gear Loss and Ghost Gear Survey .....	6-17
Exhibit 6-6:	Influence of Configuration on Gear Loss: Massachusetts DMF Gear Loss and Ghost Gear Survey.....	6-17
Exhibit 6-7:	Maine Lobster Licenses as an Indicator of Crew Size.....	6-19
Exhibit 6-8:	Distribution of Vessels by Crew Size: Active Lobster and OTP Vessels in Massachusetts .....	6-19
Exhibit 6-9:	Typical Sternman Costs .....	6-20
Exhibit 6-10:	Literature on Fishery Closure Impacts.....	6-25
Exhibit 6-11:	Catch per Trip Estimates Based on GMRI Survey .....	6-26
Exhibit 6-12:	Catch per Trip Estimates for Cape Cod Closures .....	6-27
Exhibit 6-13:	Operating Costs as a Percent of Gross Revenue.....	6-28
Exhibit 6-14:	Derivation of Lost Revenue per Trap for the Assessment of Closure-Related Economic Losses .....	6-30
Exhibit 6-15:	Summary of Fuel Use Parameters Used in Closure Cost Assessment .....	6-32
Exhibit 6-16:	Jordan Basin Restricted Area.....	6-36
Exhibit 6-17:	Summary of Parameters Affecting Closure Costs: Jordan Basin .....	6-37
Exhibit 6-18:	Cape Cod Closures.....	6-40
Exhibit 6-19:	Features of Cape Cod Closures .....	6-40
Exhibit 6-20:	Percent of Affected Vessels in State Waters that are Assumed to Relocate their Effort During Cape Cod Closures.....	6-41
Exhibit 6-21:	Redistribution of Effort for State Permitted Vessels Affected by Cape Cod Closures.....	6-42
Exhibit 6-22:	Summary of Parameters Affecting Closure Costs: Cape Cod Closures.....	6-44
Exhibit 6-23:	Jeffreys Ledge Restricted Area.....	6-46
Exhibit 6-24:	Summary of Parameters Affecting Closure Costs: Jeffreys Ledge.....	6-48
Exhibit 6-25:	Overview of Potential Closures.....	6-49
Exhibit 6-26:	Number of Vessels Affected by New Requirements Under Each Regulatory Alternative.....	6-51
Exhibit 6-27:	Estimated Annual Compliance Costs by Alternative.....	6-52
Exhibit 6-28:	Annual Costs by Closure.....	6-53
Exhibit 6-29:	Number of Vessels Affected by New Requirements, by Fishery.....	6-54
Exhibit 6-30:	Distribution of Estimated Annual Compliance Costs by Fishery.....	6-55
Exhibit 6A-1:	Methodology for Calculating Costs of Gear Reconfiguration.....	6A-2
Exhibit 6A-2:	Gear Specifications for Major Areas Affected by Trawling Proposals .....	6A-3
Exhibit 6A-3:	Unit Prices and Useful Life Estimate for Gear Elements .....	6A-5
Exhibit 7-1:	Counties Considered in the Social Impact Analysis.....	7-4
Exhibit 7-2:	Socioeconomic Profile of Substantively Affected Counties-Demographic Parameters.....	7-8
Exhibit 7-3:	Socioeconomic Profile of Substantively Affected Counties-Harvest Parameters. ....	7-9
Exhibit 7-4:	Socioeconomic Profile of Affected Counties-Dealer and Processor Parameters.....	7-10
Exhibit 7-5:	Comparison of Vessel Compliance Costs and Gross Revenues Under Alternative 6 (Preferred): Gear Marking and Reconfiguration Only-Lobster Vessels.....	7-14

Exhibit 7-6:	Comparison of Vessel Compliance Costs and Gross Revenues Under Alternative 6 (Preferred): Gear Marking and Configuration Only-OTP Vessels .....	7-16
Exhibit 7-7:	Comparison of Vessel Compliance Costs and Gross Revenues Under Alternative 6 (Preferred): Gear Marking, Reconfiguration, and Closures-Lobster Vessels.	7-18
Exhibit 7-8:	Estimated Employment on Heavily Affected Vessels: Alternative 6 (Preferred), Upper Bound Scenario .....	7-21
Exhibit 7-9:	New England Whale Watching Industry .....	7-27
Exhibit 7-10:	Studies of Non-Use Value Associated with Marine Mammals.....	7-28
Exhibit 7-11:	Summary of Socioeconomic Impacts by Alternative.....	7-31
Exhibit 7A-1:	Database for County Socioeconomic Characterization .....	7A-1
Exhibit 7B-1:	Estimated Reduction in Annual Lobster Landings by Alternative.....	7B-1
Exhibit 8-1:	Summary of Area Closure Provisions.....	8-3
Exhibit 8-2:	Annual Change in Co-occurrence.....	8-4
Exhibit 8-3:	Estimate of Affected Vessels and Annual Compliance Costs by Alternative .....	8-9
Exhibit 8-4:	Summary of Socioeconomic Impacts by Alternative .....	8-13
Exhibit 8-5:	Cost-effectiveness of Alternatives.....	8-16
Exhibit 8-6:	Cost-effectiveness of Curves for Alternative 4 and 6 (Preferred): Lower and Upper Bound Compliance Scenarios.....	8-17
Exhibit 9-1:	Catch History of Minke Whales by IWC Member Nations in the North Atlantic, 2008 Through 2010.....	9-8
Exhibit 9-2:	Total Annual Mortality, Annual Fishing Mortality and Potential Biological Removal (PBR) Levels for Right, Humpback, Fin, and Minke Whales.....	9-9
Exhibit 9-3:	Average Annual Mortalities from Ship Strikes, 1996 Through 2001.....	9-11
Exhibit 9-4:	Right Whale Mortalities from Ship Strikes, 2005 Through 2009.....	9-13
Exhibit 9-5:	Classes and Examples of Contaminants Potentially Affecting North Atlantic Right Whales.....	9-17
Exhibit 9-6:	A Preliminary List of Acoustic Hotspots on the Atlantic Coast.....	9-25
Exhibit 9-7:	Summary of Factors Affecting Atlantic Large Whales .....	9-30
Exhibit 9-8:	Known Fatalities by Species and Cause: 2005-2009.....	9-32
Exhibit 9-9:	Summary of Commercial Fishing Interactions Affecting Other Protected Species .....	9-56
Exhibit 9-10:	Lobster Landings 2006-2011 .....	9-61
Exhibit 9-11:	Amendment 1 and Baseline Quotas for the Atlantic Shark Fishery .....	9-81
Exhibit 9-12:	Northern Black Sea Bass Fishery Closures .....	9-88
Exhibit 9-13:	State by State Black Sea Bass Allocation.....	9-89
Exhibit 9-14:	Scup Landings from 2000 to 2009. ....	9-96
Exhibit 9-15:	Summary of Factors Affecting Fishery Resources.....	9-99
Exhibit 9-16:	Summary of Factors Affecting Habitat.....	9-112
Exhibit 9-17:	Groundfish Landings by Multispecies Vessels by Home Port State .....	9-117
Exhibit 9-18:	Northeast Multispecies Fishing Communities.....	9-118
Exhibit 9-19:	Categorization of Actions by the Level of Impact on Fishing Dependent Communities.....	9-119
Exhibit 9-20:	Monkfish Landings 2000-2009.....	9-121
Exhibit 9-21:	Primary and Secondary Monkfish Ports .....	9-122

Exhibit 9-22: Major Spiny Dogfish Ports .....	9-123
Exhibit 9-23: Status of Shark Species .....	9-125
Exhibit 9-24: Coastal Migratory Pelagic Species Landings .....	9-128
Exhibit 9-25: Southern Black Sea Bass Landings.....	9-131
Exhibit 9-26: Red Crab Landings 2004-2008 .....	9-135
Exhibit 9-27: Commercial Landings of Scup by State from 2000-2009 .....	9-137
Exhibit 9-28: Summary of Factors Affecting Fishing Dependent Communities.....	9-139
Exhibit 9-29: Valued Ecosystem Component: Atlantic Large Whales.....	9-143
Exhibit 9-30: Valued Ecosystem Component: Other Protected Species .....	9-144
Exhibit 9-31: Valued Ecosystem Component: Habitat .....	9-145
Exhibit 9-32: Valued Ecosystem Component: Fishery Resources .....	9-146
Exhibit 9-33: Valued Ecosystem Component: Fishing Dependent/Human Communities ....	9-147
Exhibit 9-34: Summary of Cumulative Effects Across All VECs for Each Alternative .....	9-153
Exhibit 9A-1: Summary of Collisions Between Ships and Whales.....	9A-2
Exhibit 10-1: Summary of Serious Injury Entanglements 1997-2010.....	10-7
Exhibit 10-2: Summary of Fatal Entanglements 1997-2010.....	10-8
Exhibit 10-3: Summary of Proposed Alternatives .....	10-12
Exhibit 10-4: Summary of Gear Restriction Provisions .....	10-13
Exhibit 10-5: Summary of Area Closure Provisions.....	10-14
Exhibit 10-6: Location of Restricted Areas .....	10-14
Exhibit 10-7: New England Whale Watching Industry .....	10-17
Exhibit 10-8: Studies of Non-use Value Associated with Marine Mammals .....	10-19
Exhibit 10-9: Annual Change in Co-occurrence.....	10-20
Exhibit 10-10: Estimate of Affected Vessels .....	10-24
Exhibit 10-11: Estimate of Annual Compliance Cost by Regulatory Component.....	10-25
Exhibit 10-12: Distribution of Compliance by Fishery.....	10-26
Exhibit 10-13: Compliance Cost for Lobster Fishery.....	10-27
Exhibit 10-14: Summary of Socioeconomic Impacts by Alternative .....	10-30
Exhibit 10-15: Cost-Effectiveness of Alternatives .....	10-33
Exhibit 10-16: Cost-Effectiveness Curves for Alternatives and Lower and Upper Bound Compliance Scenarios.....	10-34
Exhibit 11-1: Summary of Serious Injury Entanglements, 1997-2010.....	11-7
Exhibit 11-2: Summary of Fatal Entanglements, 1997-2010.....	11-8
Exhibit 11-3: Summary of Proposed Alternatives .....	11-10
Exhibit 11-4: Summary of Gear Restriction Provisions .....	11-11
Exhibit 11-5: Summary of Area Closure Provisions.....	11-12
Exhibit 11-6: Location of Restricted Areas .....	11-12
Exhibit 11-7: Number of Vessels Affected by New Requirements, by Fishery.....	11-17
Exhibit 11-8: Number of Dealers and Processing Operations Potentially Affected by Changes in ALWTRP Requirements.....	11-19
Exhibit 11-9: Comparison of Vessel Compliance Costs and Gross Revenues Under Alternative 6 (Preferred) : Gear Marking and Reconfiguration Only-Lobster Vessels.....	11-23

Exhibit 11-10: Comparison of Vessel Compliance Costs and Gross Revenues Under Alternative 6 (Preferred): Gear Marking and Reconfiguration Only-OTP Vessels.....11-25

Exhibit 11-11: Comparison of Vessel Compliance Costs and Gross Revenues Under Alternative 6 (Preferred): Gear Marking, Reconfiguration, and Closures-Lobster Vessels.....11-26

Exhibit 11-12: Summary of Impacts by Alternative.....11-28