

## **NMFS Northeast/Mid-Atlantic Vertical Line Risk Reduction Proposal: Reasoning**

December 2011

- NMFS developed the proposal for the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic areas based on oral testimony and written comments received during recent TRT meetings, scoping sessions, and through public comments.
- NMFS proposes to regulate both state and federal waters excluding waters within the previously defined exemption areas.
- Based on comments received, NMFS understands the safety issues associated with using 1 endline on trawls of great length. Therefore NMFS proposes to require 1 endline on trawls of 5 pots or less. Trawls greater than 5 traps may have 2 endlines.
- Due to the concern that there are whale distribution and gear characterization data gaps in the Northeast NMFS proposes to manage based on both right and humpback whale sighting distribution and to manage by Lobster Management Areas and by Maine Lobster Zones in the Northeast Region. These areas are large enough to ensure that potential ‘hot spots’ are included in management measures. See Table below for proposed management measures.
- NMFS intends to evaluate the proposal on an annual basis. The comments received seemed to indicate support for this option.
- The model depicts a low co-occurrence in the Mid-Atlantic region. Therefore, NMFS proposes to monitor and implement a strict gear marking scheme in this area. In the future as more information becomes available NMFS, in consultation with the TRT, may modify the management measures in this region.

### NMFS Proposal for Northeast

Northeast Area (miles)	Minimum Traps/Trawl	Number of Endlines
LMA 1 (0-3)	3	1
LMA 1 (3-12)	10	2
LMA 1 (12+)	20	2
Maine A (non-exempt state waters)	2	1
Maine B (non-exempt state waters)	3	1
Maine C (non-exempt state waters)	3	1
Maine D (non-exempt state waters)	3	1
Maine E (non-exempt state waters)	2	1
Maine F (non-exempt state waters)	4	1
Maine G (non-exempt state waters)	2	1
Maine A (3-12)	5	1
Maine B (3-12)	5	1
Maine C (3-12)	5	1
Maine D (3-12)	5	1
Maine E (3-12)	5	1
Maine F (3-12)	10	2
Maine G (3-12)	10	2
Maine A (12+)	10	2
Maine B (12+)	10	2
Maine C (12+)	10	2
Maine D (12+)	10	2
Maine E (12+)	10	2
Maine F (12+)	20	2
Maine G (12+)	20	2
LMA1/OC Overlap (0-3)	2	1
OC (0-3)	2	1
OC (3-12)	10	2
OC (12+)	20	2
LMA 2 (0-3)	3	1
LMA 2 (3-12)	10	2
LMA 2 (12+)	20	2
LMA 2/3 Overlap (12+)	20	2
LMA 3 (3-12)	10	2
LMA 3 (12+)	20	2