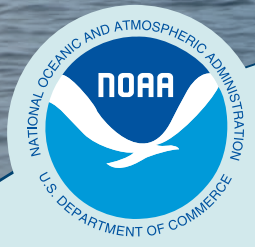




Black Sea Bass Fisherman's Guide to Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan Requirements off Florida



NOAA FISHERIES Southeast

The Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan (Plan)

The purpose of this Plan is to reduce the risk of serious injury and death of large whales caused by accidental entanglement in U.S. commercial trap/pot and gillnet fishing gear. The Plan is a requirement of the Marine Mammal Protection Act and was developed by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Team. The Team consists of fishing industry representatives, environmentalists, state and federal officials, and other interested parties. To learn more about the plan visit: www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov.

This document is a summary of the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan's (Plan) commercial Southeast trap/pot fishing regulations off Florida. Additional regulations apply outside of the area considered by this guide. Because regulations may change, **it is your responsibility as a fisherman** to become familiar with the latest regulatory updates and to comply with the current official regulations. Consult 50 CFR 229.32 for actual Plan regulations.

Trap/Pot Requirements

SPECIFIC AREA	DATES	AREA REQUIREMENTS	ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS
SERA N	Nov 15– Apr 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Line marking: 6" BLUE + 6" ORANGE in state waters and 6" GREEN + 6" ORANGE in Federal waters All buoys, flotation devices and/or weights must be attached to the buoy line with a weak link with ≤ 200 lbs breaking strength in state waters and ≤ 600 lbs in Federal waters Breaking (tensile) strength of vertical/buoy lines must be ≤ 1,600 lbs in state waters and ≤ 2,200 lbs in Federal waters 	<p><u>Buoy lines</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must be made of sinking line No portion may float at the surface Must be marked with one 12" mark or two 6" marks in 3 places: top, middle, and bottom of line. Weak links may be swivels, plastic weak links, rope of appropriate breaking strength, hog rings, rope stapled to a buoy stick, etc. and must be approved by NMFS Weak links must break cleanly leaving a bitter end of the line that is free from knots Knotless lines are preferred <p><u>Other</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gear must be hauled out of the water at least once every 30 days Groundlines must be made of sinking line, and no buoys, toggles, or other flotations devices may be attached to it Only single traps allowed (no trawls)
OFFSHORE TRAP/POT WATERS	North of 29° N: Nov 15 – Apr 15 South of 29° N: Dec 1 – Mar 31	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buoy lines must be marked with a BLACK 12" marks All buoys, flotation devices and/or weights must be attached to the buoy line with a weak link with ≤ 1,500 lbs breaking strength 	
SOUTHERN NEARSHORE TRAP/POT WATERS	Dec 1 – Mar 31	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buoy lines must be marked with ORANGE 12" marks All buoys, flotation devices and/or weights must be attached to the buoy line with a weak link with ≤ 600 lbs breaking strength 	

Plan Requirements off Florida



Hog rings can be used to form an eye in the end of a line that will function as a weak link. Up to 7 may be used to create a 600 pound weak link. Hog rings can be distributed (from 6" to 12") without significantly affecting the strength.



Examples of gear marking methods.

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.

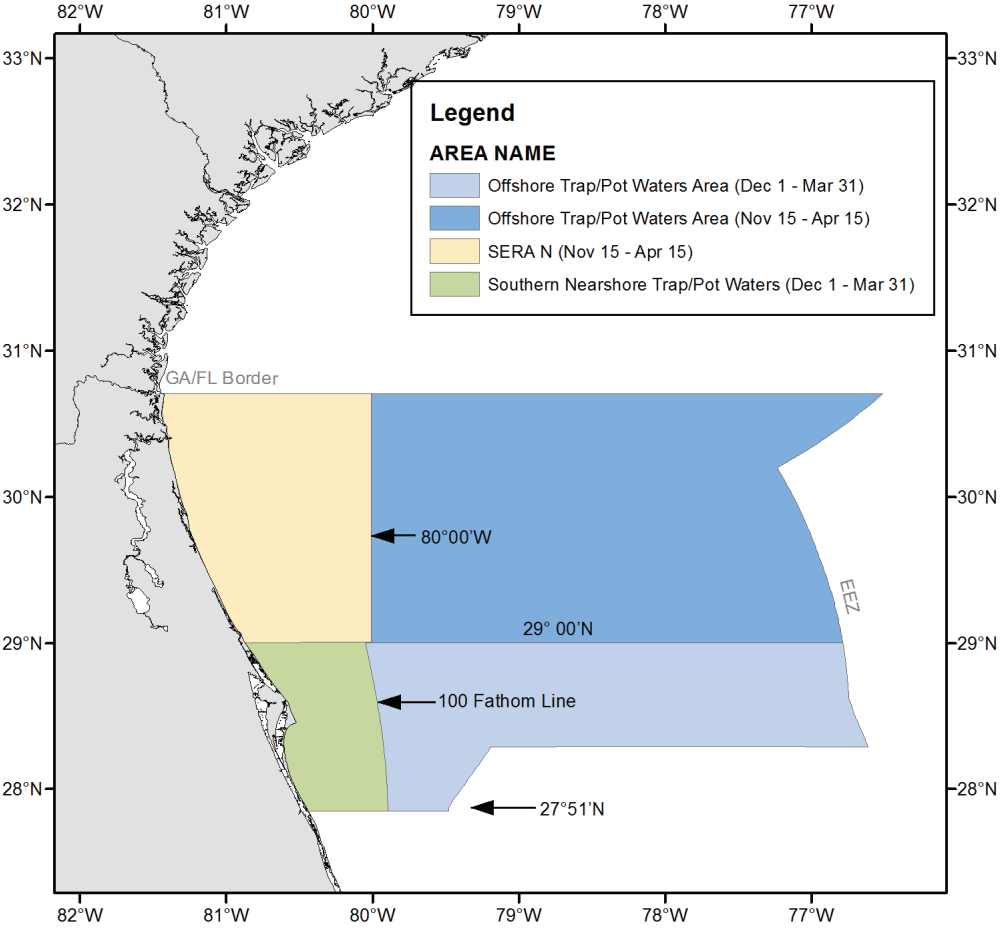
Location Description

Southeast Restricted Area North (SERA N) —off Florida includes all state and Federal waters north of 29°00'N and from the shoreline eastward to 80°00'W

Offshore Trap/Pot Waters Area—off Florida includes all Federal waters of the EEZ offshore of the SERA N and Southern Nearshore Trap/Pot Waters.

Southern Nearshore Trap/Pot Waters –off Florida includes all Federal and state waters south of 29°00'N from the shoreline eastward to the 100 Fathom line.

For complete regulatory area definitions, please see the Atlantic Large Whale Plan at 50 CFR 229.32.



**Report sightings of sightings of live, dead, injured, or entangled right whales to:
1-877-WHALE HELP or U.S. Coast Guard Channel 16.**

