



Gulf Region

Notice to Fish Harvesters

2021 - SOUTHERN GULF OF ST-LAWRENCE LOBSTER CONSERVATION HARVESTING PLAN OF THE LOBSTER FISHERY FOR LOBSTER FISHING AREAS (LFAs) 23, 24, 25, 26A AND 26B

Moncton, NB – April 22, 2021 – Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO), Gulf Region, announces the 2021 management measures for Lobster Fishing Areas (LFAs) 23, 24, 25, 26A and 26B. Unless indicated otherwise, existing management measures remain in place. Please refer to your lobster licence conditions for further details.

Opening Dates in 2021

The fishery in LFA 23, LFA 24, LFA 26A and LFA 26B South will open at 6:00 a.m. on April 30 and will remain open until June 30, 2021. LFA 26B North will open at 6:00 a.m. May 7 and close July 7, 2021. The openings of the fishery are subject to ice and weather conditions.

NEW: The portion of LFA 26A from Point Prim to Victoria, Prince Edward Island (PEI) will also open at 6:00 a.m. on April 30th and will remain open until June 30, 2021, at the request of this fleet.

The fishery in LFA 25 will open at 6:00 a.m. on August 9 and will remain open until October 10, 2021. The openings of the fishery are subject to weather conditions.

Management measures in place for the 2021 fishing season:

Rock Crab Minimum Size (New)

No person shall use as bait in a lobster trap, rock crab of a width less than 102 mm. When using rock crab for bait, the rock crab must be identifiable by sex and width. The crushing or otherwise manipulation of the rock crab where sex or width cannot be readily determined is prohibited.

Crew registry (New)

The inshore regulations require inshore commercial licence holders, and their approved Substitute Operators, to keep records of all the crew members working aboard the vessel on every fishing trip. These records must be maintained by the licence holder for a period of five (5) years. Refer to the March 17th, 2021 Notice to Fish Harvesters for further details and contact the Licensing Office at 1-855-634-2335 or gulfinfo@dfp-mpo.gc.ca for more information.

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Obstruction of Escape Mechanism (Clarification)

A “parlour” is defined as **each separate compartment or holding area in a lobster trap other than the baited entrance location where the lobster first enters the trap.**

No person shall fish with or have on board a vessel a lobster trap unless that lobster trap has, in the exterior wall of each parlour, and not more than 76 mm from the floor of the trap, at least one unobstructed rectangular opening (i.e. escape mechanism) that meets the requirements set out in table 2. **The placement of any material in the parlour of the trap which obstructs access, in any way, to the openings is prohibited.**

Management measures to minimize interactions with North Atlantic Right Whales

The Management measures to minimize interactions with North Atlantic Right Whales (NARW) can be found at the following address: <http://dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fisheries-peches/commercial-commercial/atl-arc/narw-bnan/management-gestion-eng.html>.

Table 1: Key Management Measures in 2021 in Lobster Fishing Areas 23, 24, 25, 26A, 26B

	Minimum legal carapace size (mm) ¹	Window size females (mm) ²	Maximum number of traps	Minimum number of traps per line ³	Maximum hoop size (mm)
23A	77	115-129	300	n/a	152
23B	77	115-129	300	n/a	152
23C	77	115-129	300	In a portion of 23C: 3 traps	152
23D	77	115-129	300	In a portion of 23D: 3 traps	152
24	74	115-129	300	6 traps	n/a
25	77	115	240 PEI 250 NB 225 Gulf NS	n/a	152
26A-1	74	115-129	272 PEI 280 Gulf NS	In a portion of 26A-1 adjacent to PEI: 6 traps 26A-1 (Gulf NS fishers only): 5 traps	n/a
26A-2	76	115-129	255 and 275 ⁴	6 traps	152
26A-3	76	115-129	250	2 traps	n/a
26B South	82.5	n/a	250	n/a	n/a
26B North ⁵	82.5	n/a	250	5 traps	152

Notes: ¹See table 2 for height of escape mechanism corresponding to the minimum carapace size in effect.

²As defined by licence conditions (female Lobster of a length of 115 mm but not more than 129 mm shall be returned to the water immediately in a manner that causes it the least harm).

³As defined by licence conditions.

⁴Commercial licence holders: 255 traps/Some Communal Commercial licence holders: 275 traps.

⁵Closure to fishing of Cheticamp Harbour.

Height and Length of Escape Mechanisms

The height of the escape mechanism as indicated in Table 2 needs to be adjusted according to the minimum legal carapace size in effect in each LFA (refer to Table 1 for minimum legal size).

Table 2

Length of escape opening between 127 mm and less than 254 mm	
Minimum legal carapace size	Minimum height of escape opening
>73 mm to 76 mm	43 mm
>76 mm	44 mm
Length of escape opening equal to or greater than 254 mm	
Minimum legal carapace size	Minimum height of escape opening
>73 mm to 76 mm	42 mm
>76 mm to 80 mm	43 mm
>80 mm	44 mm

Restrictions on the movement of lobster licences

For information on restriction on the movement of lobster licences you can refer to the Commercial Fisheries Licensing Policy for Gulf Region that can be found at the following link:

<http://www.glf.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/Gulf/Licenses-Delivery/Commercial-Fisheries-Licensing-Policy>.

Daily closed time

The daily close time is from 9:00 p.m. to 4:00 a.m. in LFA 23 and LFA 25.

Transit Corridors

The transit corridors remain in effect and a Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) is required (every 5 minutes) if using the transit corridor. The corridor allows fish harvesters to transport their catches through that area to reach their homeport avoiding the use of the smack boat. For this reason, a validity period is added to LFA 23D licences from the date of issuance to June 30. The opening and closing of the season will remain as indicated in the Fisheries Regulations or as announced in a Variation Order. The coordinates for the corridor are identified in the Variation Order and the licence conditions of those using the corridor.

Logbook

Licence holders that will not be using an ELOG are still required to use paper logbooks and submit them to DFO on a monthly basis as in previous years. The list of paper logbook suppliers is available at the following Internet address: <https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fisheries-peches/sdc-cps/nir-nei/log-suppliers-eng.html>.

Before you go fishing

The Department has assembled a list of requirements and documents harvesters will need before they start fishing. This list is available at: <http://www.glf.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/Gulf/Before-start-fishing>

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