

August 18, 2021

Phase 2 of the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan Modifications

We are proposing to modify the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan (Plan) to reduce the incidental mortality and serious injury to North Atlantic right whales (*Eubalaena glacialis*), fin whales (*Balaenoptera physalus*), and humpback whales (*Megaptera novaeangliae*) in U.S. East Coast gillnet, Atlantic mixed species trap/pot, and Mid-Atlantic lobster and Jonah crab trap/pot fisheries to meet the goals of the Marine Mammal Protection Act and the Endangered Species Act. These modifications are Phase 2 of our efforts to reduce risk to North Atlantic right whales and other large whales from U.S. commercial fisheries.

[Phase 1](#) addresses the Northeast lobster/Jonah crab trap/pot fishery, and is currently in review at the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs. We expect it to be finalized shortly. Please check the [Plan](#) page for updates.

We are requesting input and ideas for Phase 2 of our efforts to reduce the risk of entanglement to right, humpback, and fin whales in U.S. commercial fisheries managed under the [Plan](#). As detailed below, stakeholders can participate by attending virtual meetings, calling in by phone on certain days, or sending written comments by email.

The scoping period runs through October 21, 2021.

[Find out more about scoping.](#)

Scoping Meetings Begin September 9, 2021

Scoping meetings will be held via webinar, and will be from 6:30-8:30 p.m. on the days listed below. Days are designated for areas and gear types, though anyone is welcome to attend any meeting and may submit input on any regions/gear types at each meeting. Meetings will be recorded. [To register for a webinar, visit our events page.](#)

- Thursday, September 9, 2021: Delaware, Maryland, Virginia and Northern North Carolina Trap/Pot Fisheries
- Tuesday, September 14, 2021: Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, and New Jersey Trap/Pot Fisheries
- Tuesday, September 21, 2021: Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island Trap/Pot Fisheries

- Thursday, September 23, 2021: Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, and New Jersey Gillnet Fisheries
- Tuesday, October 5, 2021: Southern North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida Trap/Pot and Gillnet Fisheries
- Tuesday, October 12, 2021: Maryland, Delaware, Virginia, and Northern North Carolina Gillnet Fisheries
- Thursday, October 14, 2021: Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island Gillnet Fisheries

Call-In Days

If you would like to speak to someone at the Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office about your input on scoping, please call **(978) 282-8479** on the following days and hours. Your phone call may be recorded to fully capture your input. If the phone line is busy, please leave a voicemail. We will get back to you as soon as possible. Please note that the phone line WILL NOT be operational outside of these days and hours.

- Friday, October 1, 2021, Noon to 6 p.m.
- Monday, October 4, 2021, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- Tuesday, October 12, 2021, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Written Input

You may submit written input by October 21, 2021 to our email address: nmfs.gar.ALWTRT2021@noaa.gov.

Check for Updates

Please check the [Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan](#) page for updates and additional background information, which will be added in the coming weeks.

Questions?

Media: Contact [Allison Ferreira](#), Regional Office, 978-281-9103