



Sea Scallop Gear Requirements



Introduction

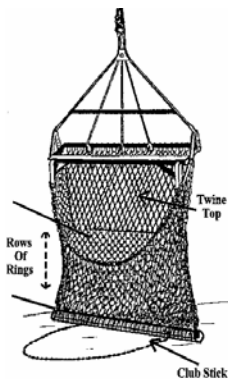
This summary provides a broad overview of restrictions and requirements, and is not a substitute for the regulations. You are strongly encouraged to read the regulations in conjunction with this information sheet to fully understand how this fishery is managed. This information sheet will be updated when regulations are revised, and posted on the NMFS scallop information webpage at: www.nero.noaa.gov/sfd/sfdscallop.html.

Scallop Dredge Gear Requirements (50 CFR 648.51)

Maximum dredge width

Limited access vessels (excluding vessels in the Small Dredge Program), and limited access general category (LAGC) dredge vessels fishing in the Mid-Atlantic

Exemption Area, Elephant Trunk Access Area (ETAA), and Delmarva Access Area (DMAA) may not use a dredge(s) with a combined dredge width of more than 31 ft, measured at the widest point in the bail of the dredge.



Limited access vessels enrolled in the Small Dredge Program, and LAGC vessels fishing in the Gulf of Maine, Great South Channel or

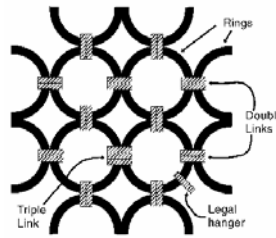
Southern New England Dredge Exemption Areas, or fishing in Closed Area I, Closed Area II, or Nantucket Lightship Access Areas, may only fish with one dredge, and the dredge width may not exceed 10.5 ft, measured at the widest point in the bail of the dredge.

Minimum mesh size

The mesh size of any material on the top of any scallop dredge (twine top) may not be smaller than 10-inch square or diamond mesh.

Minimum Ring Size: The ring size in any scallop dredge possessed or used by scallop vessels may not be smaller than 4 inches.

Link restrictions: No more than double links between rings may be used in or on all parts of



the dredge bottom portion and the diamonds.

Damaged links that are connected to only one ring, *i.e.*, “hangers,” are allowed if they occur between two links that

both couple the same two rings. Dredge rings may not be attached via links to more than four adjacent rings. Thus, dredge rings must be rigged in a configuration such that, when a series of adjacent rings are held horizontally, the neighboring rings form a pattern of horizontal rows and vertical columns.

Gear Restrictions and Obstructions

No material, device, or link configuration may be used if it results in obstructing the release of scallops that would have passed through a legal sized and configured net and dredge. No chafing gear or cookies may be used on the top of the dredge.

In addition, limited access vessels that are fishing for scallops are subject to the following restrictions: (A) If a vessel is rigged with more than one dredge, or if a vessel is rigged with only one dredge and such dredge is greater than 8 ft in width, there must be at least seven rows of non-overlapping steel rings unobstructed by netting or any other material between the terminus of the dredge (club stick) and the net material on the top of the dredge (twine top); (B) If a vessel is rigged with only one dredge, and such dredge is less than 8 ft in width, there must be at least four rows of non-overlapping steel rings unobstructed by netting or any other material between the club stick and the twine top of the dredge.

Seasonal Turtle Chain Mat Requirement

Between May 1 and November 30, scallop vessels fishing south of 41°09.0' N. latitude must have a chain mat on each dredge. The mat must cover the entire opening of the dredge bag. The vertical and horizontal chains must be hung to cover the opening of the dredge bag such that the vertical chains extend from the back of the cutting bar to the sweep. The horizontal chains must intersect the vertical chains such that the length of

each side of the openings formed by the intersecting chains is less than or equal to 14 inches with the exception of the side of any individual opening created by the sweep. The sweep is defined as a chain extending, usually in an arc, from one end of the dredge frame to the other which the ring bag including the diamonds, is attached. The sweep forms the edge of the opening of the dredge bag.

Component parts

Component parts (i.e., pieces of dredges) may be on board the vessel, provided that the metal ring bag, mouth frame, and bail are not attached, and no more than one complete spare dredge could be made from these component parts.

Scallop Dredge Gear Stowage Requirements

Scallop vessels may transit closed areas and access areas (excluding CAII, unless there is a compelling safety reason to do so) on either a scallop access area or open area trip, provided gear is properly stowed. For gear stowage requirements, see the *Gear Stowage Requirements* Information Sheet posted at <http://www.nero.noaa.gov/sfd/sfdscallop.html>.

Scallop Trawl Gear Restrictions

Some vessels may fish for scallops with trawl gear. Vessels that are permitted to use trawl gear to harvest scallops must comply with the maximum sweep, minimum mesh, and gear obstruction requirements.

Limited access scallop vessels fishing under the Days-at-Sea (DAS) Program may use trawl gear if they have been previously permitted to do so, and must comply with the regulations below.

In addition, LAGC scallop vessels fishing west of 72°30' W. longitude in the Mid-Atlantic Exemption Area, and in the ETAA, and DMAA, may fish for scallops with trawl gear provided they comply with the regulations.

Vessels participating in the Northeast Multispecies DAS Program with trawl gear may possess up to 400 lb of shucked or 50 U.S. bu of in-shell scallops. Trawl gear is not allowed in the CAI, CAII, or NLCA Access Areas.

Maximum sweep

The trawl sweep of nets shall not exceed 144 ft, as measured by the total length of the footrope

that is directly attached to the webbing, unless the net is properly stowed and not available for immediate use (see *Gear Stowage* Information Sheet).

Minimum mesh size

The mesh size for any scallop trawl net in all areas shall not be smaller than 5.5 inches. However, if a vessel possesses other species, other mesh size restrictions may apply.

Chafing gear and other gear obstructions

A vessel authorized to use trawl gear may not use any device or material on the top of a trawl net, except one splitting strap and one bull rope (if present), consisting of line and rope no more than 3 inches in diameter, may be used if such splitting strap and/or bull rope does not constrict in any manner the top of the trawl net. Such vessels fishing vessel may not use any mesh configuration, mesh construction, or other means on or in the top of the net if it obstructs the meshes of the net in any manner. A fishing vessel may not use or possess a net capable of catching scallops in which the bars entering or exiting the knots twist around each other.

Scallop Trawl Gear Stowage

Scallop vessels may transit closed areas and access areas (excluding CAII, unless there is a compelling safety reason to do so) on either a scallop access area or open area trip, provided gear is properly stowed. Vessels on an access trip must stow their gear upon departing the access area in which they fished. For gear stowage requirements, see the *Gear Stowage Requirements* Information Sheet.