



NOAA FISHERIES

Sustainable Fisheries

*This summary provides a broad overview of restrictions and requirements; the regulations summarized here may be found at 50 CFR part 648. Please contact the Sustainable Fisheries Division at (978) 281-9315 for more information.
Updated August 26, 2016*

Spiny Dogfish Information Sheet

Spiny dogfish was once considered an incidental species caught in the Northeast (NE) multispecies fishery, but more recently has become a targeted species as groundfish resources have declined and the demand in the European market has risen. The dogfish fishery operates from Maine to North Carolina. The fishing year is May 1 through April 30. Spiny dogfish are managed jointly by the Mid-Atlantic and New England Fishery Management Councils, as well as by NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), and the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission.

What Federal permits are available for dogfish?

An open access commercial dogfish permit is required to possess, land, or sell dogfish. To obtain a permit application, contact our Permits Office at <http://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/aps/permits/index.html> or (978) 281-9370.

What are the permit requirements for dogfish?

In order to possess dogfish in Federal waters, you must have a Federal dogfish permit, and you must also be fishing under one of the following conditions:

- A NE multispecies trip (including day-at-sea (DAS), B DAS, non-DAS sector, Handgear A and B);
- A scallop DAS;
- A monkfish-only DAS (if fishing in a monkfish exemption area as defined in the large mesh information sheet found at http://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/regs/infodocs/large_mesh_exemption.pdf); or
- An exempted fishery (see Tables 2 and 3 on page 3).

Any catch of allocated groundfish stocks by a NE multispecies sector vessel while targeting spiny dogfish will count against its sector's annual catch entitlement, unless the vessel is fishing in an exempted fishery or with exempted gear outside of the DAS program.

How is the quota allocated and managed in Federal waters?

The quota is established annually based upon the estimated size of the dogfish population and sustainable harvest rates. In Federal waters, the quota is allocated coastwide for the fishing year May 1-April 30. All spiny dogfish landings, whether from Federal or state waters, are counted toward that quota and monitored by NMFS. When the annual quota is fully harvested, the dogfish fishery will be closed for the remainder of the fishing year. Commercial landings are not permitted following a closure announcement. Weekly landings reports are available at <http://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/aps/monitoring/spinydogfish.html>.

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission manages dogfish in a slightly different way by setting its own quota and allocating that quota by state or region. Check with your state's fisheries agency to determine if there is a different season or closure than in

Federal waters for the dogfish fishery.

What is the commercial possession limit?

The dogfish possession limit is 6,000 lb in Federal waters; however, individual states may set more restrictive possession limits. Check with your state's fisheries agency. Only one landing per day is allowed.

What is the minimum fish size?

There is no minimum fish size for spiny dogfish.



Figure 1. Regulated Mesh Areas

What are the gear requirements?

There are four regulated mesh areas (RMAs) that serve to determine which gear can be used in each of the following areas (Figure 1): Gulf of Maine (GOM); Georges Bank (GB); Southern New England (SNE); and Mid-Atlantic (MA). For coordinates defining these RMAs, see 50 CFR 648.80 or go to <http://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/nero/fishermen/charts/mul3.html>. Within these RMAs, if you are fishing with gillnet

or trawl gear you must abide by the minimum mesh sizes required by the NE multispecies regulations in Table 1.

If you have a limited access NE multispecies permit, and you are not fishing on a NE multispecies sector trip, you must also comply with the NE multispecies Restricted Gear Areas (RGAs). For coordinates of the RGAs see the Closed Area Information Sheet at <http://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/regs/infodocs/multsclosedareas.pdf>.

There are additional gear requirements for some of the exempted fishing areas which are detailed on the following pages for each specific area.

What are the gillnet requirements for protected species?

In addition to the gear requirements above, protected species requirements may also apply, depending on the season and area being fished. These additional requirements are to reduce incidental interactions

between fishing gear and protected species, such as marine mammals and sea turtles. All vessels fishing with gillnets in Federal waters must comply with the applicable provisions of the:

1. Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan found in 50 CFR 229.32 and on the internet at <http://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/Protected/whaletrp/>. Requirements include time-area closures (with limited exceptions) and gear modifications (e.g., weak links, anchoring requirements, sinking groundline, gear marking) from Maine through the east coast of Florida.

2. Harbor Porpoise Take Reduction Plan found in 50 CFR 229.33 (Gulf of Maine) and 229.34 (Mid-Atlantic) and on the internet at <http://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/Protected/porptrp/>. Requirements include time-area closures and seasonal gear modifications (e.g., pingers in the Gulf of Maine and gear requirements in the Mid-Atlantic) from Maine through North Carolina.

3. Bottlenose Dolphin Take Reduction Plan found in 50 CFR 229.35 and on the internet at <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/interactions/trt/bdtrp.htm>. Requirements include time-area closures and gear restrictions (e.g., prohibited night sets, net tending, gear length requirements, etc.) from New Jersey through the east coast of Florida.

4. Gear Restrictions in the NC/VA Large Mesh Gillnet Fishery for the Protection of Sea Turtles found in 50 CFR 223.206 and on the internet at <http://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/Protected/seaturtles/>. Requirements include seasonal time-area closures to large-mesh gillnet fishing (≥ 7 inches).

For more information, contact NMFS Greater Atlantic Region's Protected Species Division at (978) 281-9328.

What are the record keeping and reporting requirements?

The owner or operator of any vessel issued a Federal dogfish permit must maintain on board the vessel and submit an accurate Federal fishing vessel trip report (VTR) for all fishing trips (regardless of species retained). For vessels not issued a limited access NE multispecies permit, VTRs must be received by NMFS or postmarked within 15 days after the end of the reporting month. For NE multispecies limited access permit holders, VTRs must be submitted weekly and received by NMFS or postmarked by midnight of the Tuesday following the reporting week. Copies of VTRs must be retained on board the vessel for 1 year after the date of the last entry on the log. If no fishing activity took place during a fishing month, then a VTR must be submitted stating that no fishing trips were taken. Instructions for completing VTRs can be found at <http://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/ro/fso/vtr.htm>.

Regulated Mesh Area	Gillnet mesh size requirements	Trawl codend mesh size requirements
Gulf of Maine (GOM)	6.5 inches throughout the entire net	6.5-inch square or diamond
Georges Bank (GB)		
Southern New England (SNE)		
Mid-Atlantic (MA)	6.5-inch square or diamond	

Any change in the permit information such as vessel name, vessel owner, address, etc., must be submitted in writing to NMFS within 15 days of the change, or the permit is void.

If you are a vessel operating a Vessel Monitoring System (VMS), you must make an “out of fishery” declaration through your VMS before starting a trip when fishing for dogfish in an exemption area. If you are fishing on a NE multispecies sector trip, you do not need to declare “out of fishery” to retain dogfish.

All federally permitted seafood dealers are required to report the purchase of dogfish via computer, using one of the approved electronic means, unless otherwise directed by the Regional Administrator. For more information on dealer reporting, please call the dealer electronic reporting help desk at (978) 281-9212 or contact your local NMFS Field Office: <http://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/sed/portagets/index.html>.

What are the exempted fishing areas?

Within the GOM and GB RMAs there are six exempted fishing areas that are summarized in Table 2. More specific details for each area can be found on the following pages of this information sheet. A Letter of Authorization (LOA) is required to participate in some of these

exempted fishing areas. LOAs can be obtained from our Permits Office at (978) 281-9370 or at <http://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/aps/permits/>.

There are two exempted fishing areas in the SNE RMA and one exempted fishing area in the MA RMA that are summarized in Table 3. More specific details for each area can be found on the following pages of this information sheet.

If you are fishing for spiny dogfish in Federal waters, you must also comply with closed areas for other fisheries, including NE multispecies. However, if you are using gear that is defined as not capable of catching NE multispecies, you are exempt from those closed areas and can fish in them. The following is a list of gear defined as not capable of catching NE multispecies: Pelagic hook and line; pelagic longline; spears; rakes; diving gear; cast nets; tong; harpoons; weirs; dipnets; stop nets; pound nets; pelagic gillnets; pots and traps; shrimp trawls (with properly configured grates); and surfclam/ocean quahog dredges.

The NE multispecies Closed Area regulations can be found at <http://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/regs/infodocs/multsclosedareas.pdf>. These include seasonal and year-round closures, Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) closures, and transiting/gear stowage requirements.

More information regarding multispecies regulations is available on the NMFS Greater Atlantic Region website at: <http://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/sustainable/species/multispecies/>.

Nantucket Shoals Dogfish Fishery Exemption Area (EA) (Figure 2 on pg 4)

Area: The Nantucket Shoals Dogfish Fishery EA is defined by straight lines connecting the following points in the order stated:

N. Latitude	W. Longitude
41°45'	70°00'
41°45'	69°20'
41°30'	69°20'
41°30'	69°23'
41°26.5'	69°20'
40°50'	69°20'
40°50'	70°00'
41°45'	70°00'

Season: June 1 through October 15

Gear: A vessel fishing in this area may use gillnet or trawl mesh smaller than required by the GOM and GB RMAs. Trawl gear is not permitted in the portion of the exemption area that overlaps with the Nantucket Lightship Habitat Closure Area (Figure 2 on pg 4).

Requirements: A vessel fishing this area

Area Name	Gear Allowed	LOA Required	Page Number
Nantucket Shoals Dogfish Fishery EA	Trawl, Gillnet	Yes	3-4
Cultivator Shoals Whiting Fishery EA	Trawl	Yes	4
Small Mesh Areas 1 & 2	Trawl	No	5
Raised Footrope Trawl Whiting Fishery Areas	Trawl	Yes	5-6
GOM/GB Dogfish Gillnet EA	Gillnet	No	6
Cape Cod Spiny Dogfish EAs	Gillnet, Longline, Handgear	No	6-7

Area Name	Gear Allowed	LOA Required	Page Number
SNE EA (includes part of GB RMA)	Trawl	No	7
SNE Dogfish Gillnet EA	Gillnet	No	7-8
Mid-Atlantic EA (includes part of SNE RMA)	Trawl, Gillnet	No	8

must have on board an LOA issued by the Regional Administrator. LOAs may be obtained from our Permits Office at (978) 281-9370. While fishing in this EA, vessels may not fish for, possess on board, or land any species of fish other than dogfish and the following:

- Longhorn sculpin;
- Silver hake (whiting) – up to 200 lb;
- Monkfish and monkfish parts – up to 10 percent, by weight, of all other species on board or up to 50 lb tail weight (166 lb whole weight) of monkfish per trip, whichever is less;
- American lobster – up to 10 percent, by weight, of all other species on board or 200 lobsters, whichever is less; and
- Skate or skate parts – up to 10 percent, by weight, of all other species on board.

Transiting: When transiting the GOM or GB RMAs, any nets with a mesh size smaller than the RMA minimum mesh size must be stowed and unavailable for immediate use.

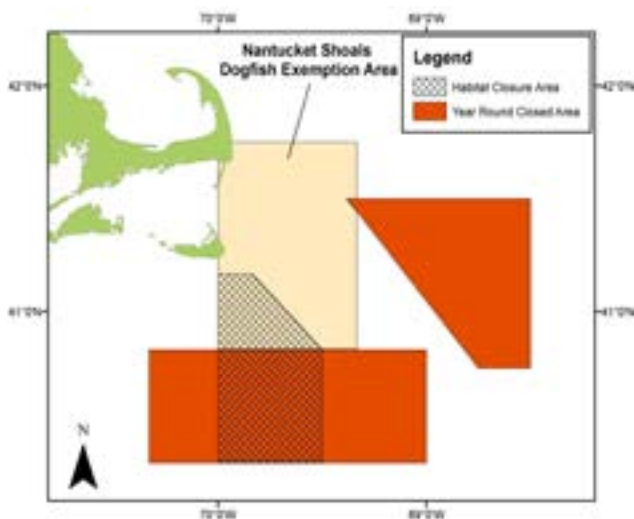


Figure 2. Nantucket Shoals Dogfish EA

Cultivator Shoals Whiting Fishery EA (Figure 3)

Area: This EA is designed for small-mesh multispecies, but spiny dogfish can be possessed or landed incidentally up to the trip possession limit. The EA is defined by straight lines connecting the following points in the order stated:

N. Latitude	W. Longitude
42°10'	68°10'
41°30'	68°41'
41°30'	68°30'
41°12.8'	68°30'
41°05'	68°20'
41°55'	67°40'
42°10'	68°10'

Season: June 15 – October 31, unless otherwise specified by notification in the [Federal Register](#).

Gear: A minimum mesh size of 3-inch square or diamond mesh, applied to the first 100 meshes (200 bars in case of square mesh) for a vessel greater than 60 feet in length, or 50 meshes (100 bars in case of square mesh) for a vessel less than or equal to 60 feet in length, counted from the terminus of the net.

Requirements: A participating vessel must carry an LOA issued by the Regional Administrator, valid for a minimum of 7 days. A participating vessel may withdraw from the program no earlier than 7 days from the date of enrollment. LOAs, and withdrawals, may be obtained from our Permits Office at (978) 281-9370. While fishing in this EA, vessels may not fish for, possess on board, or land any species of fish other than dogfish and the following:

- Silver hake (whiting) and offshore hake, up to 30,000 lb combined;
- Red hake;
- Atlantic herring;
- Longhorn sculpin;
- Squid;
- Butterfish;
- Atlantic mackerel;
- Monkfish and monkfish parts up to 10 percent, by weight, of all other species onboard or 50 lb tail weight (166 lb whole weight) per trip, whichever is less; and
- American lobster up to 10 percent, by weight, of all other species on board or 200 lobsters, whichever is less, unless otherwise restricted.

Transiting: When transiting the GOM or GB RMAs, any nets with a mesh size smaller than the RMA minimum mesh size must be stowed and unavailable for immediate use.

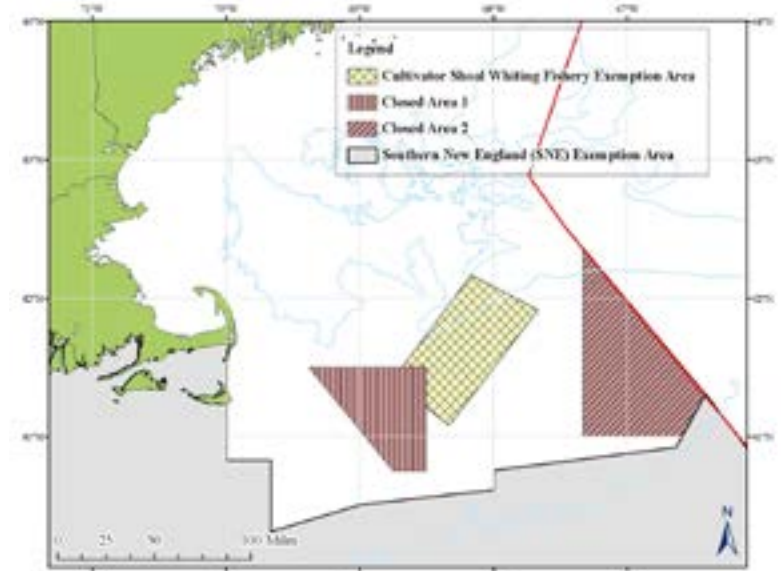


Figure 3. Cultivator Shoals Whiting Fishery EA

Small Mesh Area 1 and 2 EAs (Figure 4)

Areas: These EAs are designed for small-mesh multispecies, but spiny dogfish can be retained incidentally. Small Mesh Areas 1 and 2 are defined by straight lines connecting the following points in the order stated below.

Small Mesh Area 1	
N. Latitude	W. Longitude
43°03'	70°27'
42°57'	70°22'
42°47'	70°32'
42°45'	70°29'
42°43'	70°32'
42°44'	70°39'
42°49'	70°43'
42°50'	70°41'
42°53'	70°43'
42°55'	70°40'
42°59'	70°32'

Note: Portions of Small Mesh Area 1 fall within the state jurisdictions of Massachusetts and New Hampshire. When fishing in state waters, a federally permitted vessel is subject to the more restrictive of Federal or state regulations.

Small Mesh Area 2	
N. Latitude	W. Longitude
43°05.6'	69°55'
43°10.1'	69°43.3'
42°49.5'	69°40'
42°41.5'	69°40'
42°36.6'	69°55'
43°05.6'	69°55'

Note: Portions of Small Mesh Area 2 are affected by Inshore Closure Areas and are thus closed during these time periods.

Season:

Small Mesh Area 1 Season: July 15 – November 15

Small Mesh Area 2 Season: January 1 – June 30

Gear: A trawl vessel is required to use a raised footrope trawl when fishing in Small Mesh Areas 1 and 2, depending on the species of fish targeted. A description of the raised footrope trawl can be found in the NE Multispecies Small Mesh Fishery Exemptions information sheet: http://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/regs/infodocs/small_mesh_exemption.pdf.

Requirements: While fishing in these EAs, vessels may not fish for, possess on board, or land any species of fish other than dogfish and the following species:

- Silver hake (whiting) and offshore hake combined;
- Red hake;
- Butterfish;
- Atlantic herring;
- Atlantic mackerel;
- Scup; and
- Squid.

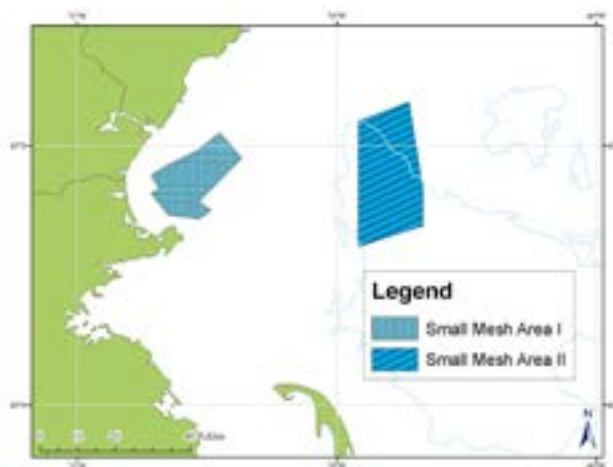


Figure 4. Small Mesh Area 1 & 2 EAs

Raised Footrope Trawl Exempted Whiting Fishery Areas (Figure 5 on pg 6)

Areas and Seasons: This EA is designed for small-mesh multispecies, but spiny dogfish can be retained incidentally. The areas are defined by straight lines connecting the following points in the order stated:

Raised Footrope Trawl Exempted Whiting Fishery Area (September 1 – November 20)	
N. Latitude	W. Longitude
42°14.05'	70°08.8'
42°09.2'	69°47.8'
41°54.85'	69°32.5'
41°41.5'	69°32.85'
41°39'	69°44.3'
41°45.6'	69°51.8'
41°52.3'	69°52.55'
41°55.5'	69°53.45'
41°08.35'	70°04.05'
42°04.75'	70°16.95'
42°00'	70°13.2'
42°00'	70°24.1'
42°07.85'	70°30.1'
42°14.05'	70°08.8'

Raised Footrope Trawl Exempted Whiting Fishery Area (September 1 – December 31)	
N. Latitude	W. Longitude
42°14.05'	70°08.8'
42°09.2'	69°47.8'
41°54.85'	69°35.2'
41°41.5'	69°35.85'
41°39'	69°44.3'
41°45.6'	69°51.8'
41°52.3'	69°52.55'
41°55.5'	69°53.45'
42°08.35'	70°04.05'
42°14.05'	70°08.8'

Gear: All nets must have a minimum mesh size of 2.5-inch square or diamond mesh and vessel must use a raised footrope trawl. A vessel participating in the Raised Footrope Trawl Exempted Whiting Fishery may not use liners, codend covers, and/or outside net strengtheners.

Requirements: A participating vessel must carry an LOA issued by the Regional Administrator, valid for a minimum of 7 days. A participating vessel may withdraw from the program no earlier than 7 days from the date of enrollment. LOAs, and withdrawals, may be obtained from our Permits Office at (978) 281-9370. While fishing in these EAs, vessels may not fish for, possess on board, or land any species of fish other than dogfish and the following:

- Silver hake (whiting) and offshore hake combined, mesh-size dependent (mesh-size must not be smaller than 2.5 inches):

Codend Mesh Size	Possession Limit
Equal to or greater than 2.5 inches but less than 3.0 inches	7,500 lb
Equal to or greater than 3.0 inches	30,000 lb

- Red hake;
- Butterfish;
- Atlantic herring;
- Atlantic mackerel;
- Squid; and
- Scup.

Note: A vessel participating in the Raised Footrope Trawl Whiting Fishery may participate in other small-mesh exemption areas provided it adheres to the more restrictive gear, possession, landing, and other requirements for the entire

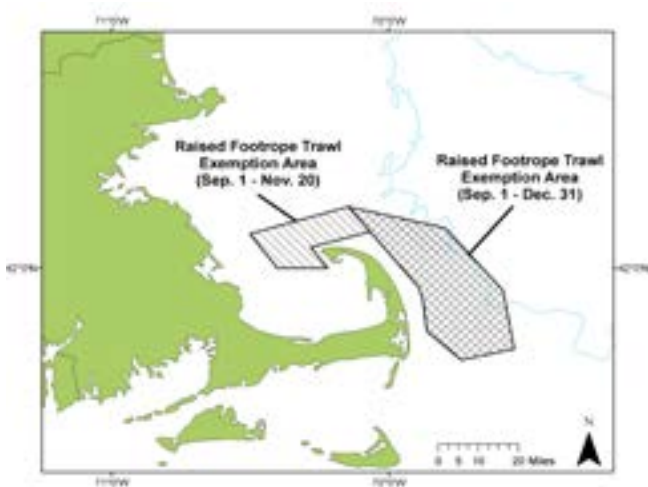


Figure 5. Raised Footrope Trawl Exempted Whiting Fishery Areas

participation period specified in the LOA. Also, a vessel participating in this exempted fishery is exempted from Rolling Closure Area V during October through November.

Transiting: When transiting the GOM or GB RMAs, any nets with a mesh size smaller than the RMA minimum mesh size must be stowed and unavailable for immediate use.

GOM/GB Dogfish Gillnet Fishery EA (Figure 6)

Area: The GOM/GB Dogfish Gillnet Fishery EA is defined by straight lines connecting the following points in the order stated:

N. Latitude	W. Longitude
41°35'	70°00'
42°49.5'	70°00'
42°49.5'	69°40'
43°12'	69°00'
Maine Shoreline	69°00'

Season: July 1 through August 31

Gear: This EA does not exempt vessels from the minimum gillnet mesh size of 6.5-inch diamond mesh throughout the net, but does exempt the vessel from the gear requirements of the GOM and GB RMAs described on page 2.

Requirements: A vessel fishing under this exemption may not fish for, harvest, possess, or land any species of fish other than dogfish, or lobsters in an amount not to exceed 10 percent, by weight, of the total catch on board, or 200 lobsters, whichever is less.

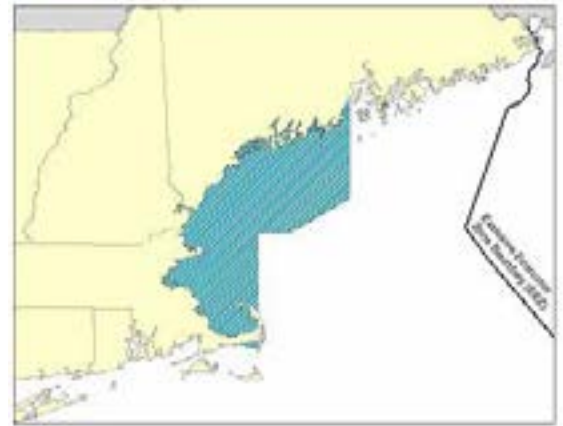


Figure 6. GOM/GB Dogfish Gillnet Fishery EA

Cape Cod Spiny Dogfish EAs (Figure 7 on pg 7)

Areas: The Eastern Area is defined by straight lines connecting the following points in the order stated here:

N. Latitude	W. Longitude
42°00'	70°00'
42°00'	69°47.5'
41°40'	69°47.5'
41°29.5'	69°35.5'
41°29.5'	69°23'
41°26'	69°20'
41°20'	69°20'
41°20'	(1)
(2)	70°00'
(3)	70°00'
(4)	70°00'
42°00'	70°00'

- (1) The eastern coastline of Nantucket, MA at 41°20' N. latitude
- (2) The northern coastline of Nantucket, MA at 70°00' W. longitude
- (3) The southern coastline of Cape Cod, MA at 70°00' W. longitude, then along the eastern coastline of Cape Cod, MA to the next point.
- (4) The northern coastline of Cape Cod, MA at 70°00' W. longitude

The Western Area is defined as the area bounded on the north by 42°11.5' N. latitude, bounded on the east by 70°00' W. longitude, and bounded on the south and west by the coast of Massachusetts.

Seasons: The Eastern Area is open from

June 1 – August 31 for handgear and June 1 – December 31 for gillnets and longlines. The Western Area is open from June 1 – August 31 for longlines and handgear.

Season: All year

Gear: A vessel participating in the SNE EA and not fishing under a NE multispecies DAS may use gear with a minimum mesh size smaller than the minimum regulated mesh size to catch exempted species. Minimum mesh size requirements for this area may be determined by other Federal fishing permits that you have. Please check the gear requirements for your other Federal fishing permits.

- Silver hake;
- Offshore hake; and
- Weakfish.

*Incidental species allowed for retention when fishing for the exempted species above include: Conger eels; sea robins; black sea bass; red hake; tautog (blackfish); blowfish; cunner; John Dory; mullet; bluefish; tilefish; longhorn sculpin; fourspot flounder; alewife; hickory shad; American shad; blueback herring; sea raven; Atlantic croaker; spot; swordfish; monkfish and monkfish parts – up to 10%, by weight, of all other species on board or up to 50 lb tail weight (166 lb whole weight) of monkfish per trip, whichever is less; American lobster – up to 10%, by weight, of all other species on board or 200 lobsters, whichever is less; and skate and skate parts – up to 10%, by weight, of all other species on board.

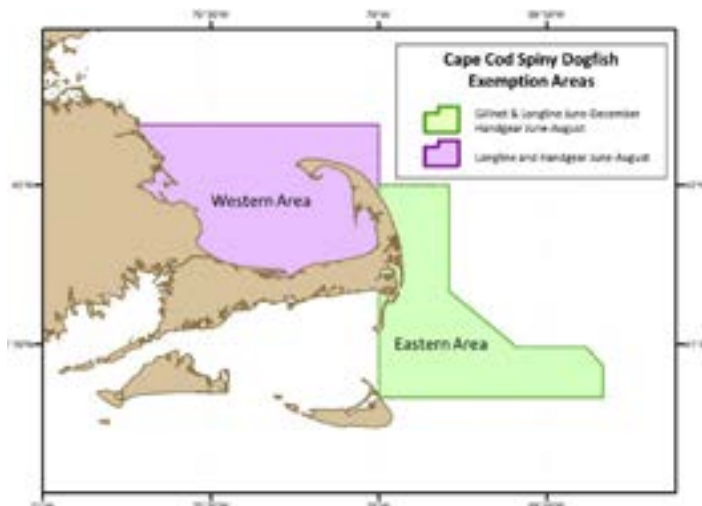


Figure 7. Cape Cod Spiny Dogfish EAs

Gear: In the Eastern Area, you can fish for dogfish for part of the year with handgear, longlines, and gillnets without having to be on a NE multispecies trip. This area does not exempt you from the GOM/GB RMAs minimum mesh sizes for gillnets. In the Western Area, you can fish for dogfish part of the year using longlines and handgear without having to be on a NE multispecies trip.

Requirements: Spiny dogfish

(caught with bottom trawl gear only) is included in the list of species that may be caught in this area along with the following*:

- Butterfish;
- Atlantic herring;
- Atlantic mackerel;
- Ocean pout;
- Scup;
- Shrimp;
- Squid;
- Summer flounder;

SNE EA (Figure 8)

Area: The SNE EA is defined by straight lines connecting the following points in the order stated:

N. Latitude	W. Longitude
41°18.6'	66°24.8'
40°55.5'	66°38'
40°45.5'	68°00'
40°37'	68°00'
40°30.5'	69°00'
40°22.7'	69°00'
40°18.7'	69°40'
40°50'	69°40'
40°50'	70°00'
	70°00' ¹

¹Northward to its intersection with the shoreline of mainland Massachusetts



Figure 8. Southern New England EA

Season: May 1 through October 31

Gear: All gillnets must have a minimum mesh size of 6-inch diamond mesh throughout the net.

Requirements: A gillnet vessel may fishing the SNE Dogfish Gillnet Fishery EA when not operating under a NE multispecies DAS. A vessel fishing under this exemption may only fish for, possess on board, or land dogfish and the following*:

- Butterfish;
- Atlantic herring;
- Atlantic mackerel;
- Monkfish

- Ocean pout;
- Scup;
- Shrimp;
- Squid;
- Summer flounder;
- Silver hake;
- Offshore hake; and
- Weakfish.

*Incidental species allowed for retention when fishing for the exempted species above include: Conger eels; sea robins; black sea bass; red hake; tautog (blackfish); blowfish; cunner; John Dory; mullet; bluefish; tilefish; longhorn sculpin; fourspot flounder; alewife; hickory shad; American shad; blueback herring; sea raven; Atlantic croaker; spot; swordfish; monkfish and monkfish parts – up to 10%, by weight, of all other species on board or up to 50 lb tail weight (166 lb whole weight) of monkfish per trip, whichever is less; American lobster – up to 10%, by weight, of all other species on board or 200 lobsters, whichever is less; and skate and skate parts – up to 10%, by weight, of all other species on board.



Figure 9. SNE Dogfish Gillnet Fishery EA

MA EA

Area: In this area, you may fish for dogfish and do not need to be on NE multispecies trip as long as you do not possess or land any regulated multispecies (i.e., American plaice, Atlantic cod, Atlantic halibut, haddock, ocean pout, pollock, redfish, white hake, windowpane flounder, winter flounder, witch flounder, and yellowtail flounder). The MA Exemption is the area that lies west of the SNE EA described on page 7 and in Figure 8.

Season: All year

Gear: In this area you may use mesh smaller than the required 6.5 inches if not fishing on a NE multispecies trip and not retaining regulated multispecies (listed above). Please check the gear requirements for your other Federal fishing permits for the fisheries in which you are participating.