



Northeast Region Bulletin

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Emergency PSP Closure for Whelk Harvesting

Effective Date: Immediately

Effective immediately, the waters referred to as the Temporary Paralytic Shellfish Poisoning Closed Areas are now also closed to gastropod harvesting. Gastropods include, among other species, whelks, conchs, and snails. These areas have been closed to bivalves and whole/roe on scallop harvesting since 2005. The closure is now expanded to also include gastropods. A map of the area and coordinates is available on the next page.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why now?	It appears that the whelk fishery has recently expanded into Federal waters. The area in the chart has been closed to bivalve harvesting since 2005. However, the closure did not include gastropods, because there has never been a Federal fishery for them. Now that there is an expanding fishery, we have been directed by the US Food and Drug (FDA) Administration to close these waters.
How long will this be effective?	It's hard to say. The FDA is actively looking into this issue and how long the closure is kept in place depends largely on the results. NMFS defers to the FDA in matters of public health, so we would need a recommendation from the FDA to lift the closure.
Can I harvest gastropods in other Federal waters?	Yes, but the regulations can get complicated. If you have a Federal lobster permit, any pots or traps used to fish for gastropods are considered lobster traps, and must comply with all Federal lobster regulations. If you do not have a Federal permit, you need to be in compliance with the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan, which regulates lines that are put in the water. There is no Federal fishing permit that is specific to gastropods. Please contact our Sustainable Fisheries Division at (978) 281-9177 for information on the lobster regulations and our Protected Resources Division at (978) 281-9328 for information on vertical line regulations.

For small entity compliance guides, this bulletin complies with section 212 of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement and Fairness Act of 1996. This notice is authorized by the Regional Administrator of the National Marine Fisheries Service, Northeast Region.

Northern Temporary PSP Closure Area		
Closed to harvest of bivalve molluscan shellfish and gastropods fishing, with the exception of sea scallop adductor muscles harvested and shucked at sea.		
Point	Latitude	Longitude
1	43° 00' N	71° 00' W
2	43° 00' N	69° 00' W
3	41° 39' N	69° 00' W
4	41° 39' N	71° 00' W
5	43° 00' N	71° 00' W

Southern Temporary PSP Closure Area		
Closed to the harvest of whole or roe-on scallops and gastropods with all other bivalve shellfish harvests permitted.		
Point	Latitude	Longitude
1	41° 39' N	71° 00' W
2	41° 39' N	69° 00' W
3	40° 00' N	69° 00' W
4	40° 00' N	71° 00' W
5	41° 39' N	71° 00' W

