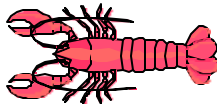




UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
NORTHEAST REGION
One Blackburn Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2298

March 4, 2002

**LOBSTER TRAP TAG PROGRAM
INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS
2002-2003 FISHING YEAR**



Dear Federal American Lobster Permit Holder:

Federal lobster permit holders who intend to fish for lobster with trap gear during the 2002-2003 fishing year (May 1, 2002 - April 30, 2003) are required to designate lobster management areas and tag all lobster traps. Traps fished by Federal lobster permit holders must be affixed with a 2002-2003 lobster trap tag by June 1, 2002. Any tags purchased for the 2001-2002 season will be invalid after May 31, 2002. **Potential revisions to Federal regulations may limit future access to some EEZ management areas. Therefore, any trap tags purchased for the 2002 fishing year may become invalid before the end of the permit year and permit holders may be required to purchase new tags and return old tags if mandated by future rulemaking actions. NMFS will continue to notify Federal permit holders of new or proposed changes to the Federal lobster management program.**

NMFS HAS TRAP TAG AGREEMENTS WITH THE STATES OF: MA, NH, ME, RI, CT, and NY. Specific information on how to order your tags is provided below and is based on the state listed as the mailing address on your Federal permit. If ordering trap tags through NMFS, Federal permit holders must renew their Federal lobster permit for the 2002-2003 fishing year before they will be authorized by NMFS to receive trap tags. Regardless of the amount of tags purchased, Federal lobster regulations require Federal permit holders to abide by the more restrictive of either state or Federal trap limits. The mere issuance of Federal trap tags does not preempt any more restrictive state law that may be applicable to a Federal lobster permit holder with a state lobster license. Therefore, it is recommended that you contact your state fisheries agency for further details.

Maine

If you have a Federal lobster permit and a State of Maine lobster license, you must purchase your lobster trap tags through the Maine Department of Marine Resources (ME-DMR) and you should not purchase trap tags using the enclosed trap tag order form. If your Federal permit has a Maine address and you do not have a State of Maine lobster license, order your tags by completing the enclosed form and submitting it directly to Stoffel Seals.

New Hampshire

If you have a Federal lobster permit and a State of New Hampshire lobster license, you have the option of purchasing your trap tags through either NMFS or the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department. If you decide to order your tags through NMFS, please use the enclosed order form and submit the completed form directly to Stoffel Seals.

Massachusetts

If your Federal permit has a Massachusetts address, you must purchase your tags from the Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries (MA-DMF), regardless of whether you hold a Massachusetts state lobster license. You will receive trap tag ordering materials from MA-DMF.



Rhode Island

If your Federal permit has a Rhode Island address, you must purchase your trap tags from the Rhode Island Division of Fish and Wildlife (RI-DFW), regardless of whether you hold a lobster license from that state. You will receive trap tag ordering materials from RI-DFW.

Connecticut

If your Federal permit has a Connecticut address, you must purchase your trap tags from the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (CT-DEP), regardless of whether you hold a lobster license from that state. You will receive trap tag ordering materials from CT-DEP.

New York

Federal lobster permit holders with a New York State lobster license and **electing to fish in Area 6 only**, are required to purchase their trap tags from the New York Department of Environmental Conservation. If you designate **Area 6 and/or any other management area**, you must purchase your trap tags from NMFS using the enclosed form.

If your Federal permit has a New York address and you do not hold a New York State lobster license, you must purchase your trap tags from NMFS using the enclosed lobster trap tag order form.

Federal Lobster Permit Holders from Other States, Including: New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina

If your Federal permit DOES NOT have a ME, MA, NH, RI, CT, or NY address, you must order your lobster trap tags from NMFS using the enclosed lobster trap tag order form.

AREA DESIGNATION REQUIREMENT

All Federal lobster permit holders electing to fish for lobster with trap gear (gear code 800) must designate at least one lobster management area on their Federal Permit Renewal Application. If you are eligible to use the enclosed form for ordering tags, the lobster management areas you designate on your Federal permit renewal application will be forwarded to Stoffel Seals by NMFS and will appear on your trap tags. Federal permit holders purchasing their tags through a state agency must designate the same lobster management areas on their state tag order forms as they have on their Federal permit renewal application.

NON-TRAP GEAR FISHERMEN

If you do not intend to fish with traps and if trap gear (gear code 800) is not identified as a gear type on your Federal permit, you are not required to elect a lobster management area or complete the enclosed trap tag order form. If trap gear (gear code 800) is identified on your Federal permit, you must designate a lobster management area regardless of whether or not you intend to fish for lobster with trap gear. If fishing with non-trap gear, you may harvest lobster outside of your designated trap gear areas, but must abide by the most restrictive measures in effect of the trap area(s) selected and the area that the vessel is fishing in.

TRAP LIMITS AND TAG ALLOCATIONS

The table below provides a simple breakdown of the trap limits, along with the maximum number of trap tags that may be purchased with respect to the management areas designated for trap fishing by the permit holder.

AREA DESIGNATION	TRAP LIMIT	TRAP TAGS
<p>EEZ Nearshore Only: Designation of one or more of the following EEZ Nearshore Management Areas: Area 1, 2 (includes Area 2/3 Overlap), 4, 5, Outer Cape Management Area.</p>	<p>Vessels may not fish more than 800 lobster traps.</p>	<p>880 (maximum number of traps is 800 plus 10% routine loss allocation).</p>
<p>EEZ Nearshore and EEZ Offshore: Designation of one or more of the following EEZ Nearshore Management Areas: Area 1, 2 (includes Area 2/3 Overlap), 4, 5, Outer Cape Management Area; AND EEZ Offshore Management Area 3 (also includes Area 2/3 Overlap).</p>	<p>Vessels may not fish more than 800 lobster traps.</p>	<p>880 (maximum number of traps is 800 plus 10% routine loss allocation).</p>
<p>EEZ Offshore Only: Designation of EEZ Offshore Management Area 3 only (includes Area 2/3 Overlap).</p>	<p>Vessels may not fish more than 1,800 lobster traps.</p>	<p>1,980 (maximum number of traps is 1,800 plus 10% routine loss allocation).</p>
<p>Nearshore Area 6 Only: Designation of Area 6 only which occurs entirely in the state waters of Connecticut and New York. (For New York and Connecticut state license holders only.)</p>	<p>Vessels are restricted to the applicable state trap limits.</p>	<p>All traps must be tagged even if in state waters only. Number of trap tags is based on state trap limit and associated regulations.</p>
<p>Nearshore Area 6 and <u>any</u> EEZ Area: Designation of Area 6 AND any other Management Areas. (Area 6 is comprised entirely of Connecticut and New York state waters, therefore this option may be selected only by those with either a New York or Connecticut state license.)</p>	<p>Vessels are limited to the most restrictive of EEZ or state trap limits.</p>	<p>All traps must be tagged even if in state waters only. Number of trap tags is based on more restrictive of either Federal or state trap limits.</p>

TRAP TAG ORDERING INSTRUCTIONS

Check the state by state listing on pages 1 and 2 of this letter for details on how to purchase your trap tags.

DO NOT USE THE ENCLOSED LOBSTER TRAP TAG FORM TO ORDER TRAP TAGS IF YOU ARE REQUIRED TO PURCHASE TAGS THROUGH A STATE AGENCY.

I. TO COMPLETE THE ENCLOSED LOBSTER TRAP TAG ORDER FORM, fill out Parts A, B and C of the form and submit to Stoffel Seals, with proper payment, at the address provided on the form.

Part A - Vessel and Permit Holder Information: Complete all fields in this section. It is critical that you accurately enter your Federal vessel permit number.

Part B - Trap Tag Ordering: Indicate in the space provided the number of trap tags you want to purchase. You may purchase trap tags in an amount not to exceed the trap limit authorized for the areas or combination of areas selected, PLUS an additional 10 percent to replace lost or destroyed trap tags (See table on page 3). You are not required to purchase the maximum amount of tags allowable for the area(s) selected.

Example: You have designated one or more of the EEZ Nearshore areas in which to deploy lobster traps. Federal regulations allow you to fish a maximum of 800 traps in the areas designated. You intend to fish the maximum amount, or 800 traps. Therefore, you may order 800 trap tags, plus an additional 10 percent, or 80 tags. This would bring your total tag order to 880 tags.

Unless you purchase your trap tags through your state agency, tags must be purchased directly from the Stoffel Seals Corporation by following the instructions below under part II.

You are urged to make a copy of the blank Lobster Trap Tag Order Form before completing it. This spare copy can be used at a later date if you do not initially order your maximum allocation of trap tags and then decide to order the remaining balance, or for a tag-for-tag exchange (see additional instructions and examples under **SUBSEQUENT TRAP TAG ORDERS**).

Part C - Signature and Date: The Federal lobster permit holder must sign and date the form before submitting. **Forms that are unsigned or undated will not be processed.**

II. PLACE TRAP TAG ORDER BY SUBMITTING THE ITEMS BELOW TO:

Stoffel Seals Corp.
P.O. Box 825 - Dept. 3
Nyack, NY 10960-0825

1. **A COMPLETED Lobster Trap Tag Order Form** indicating the number of trap tags you are purchasing, including the additional 10 percent to replace lost or destroyed trap tags, if desired;
2. **PAYMENT** in the form of either a cashier's check or money order payable to Stoffel Seals, or credit card authorization which includes the credit card type, card number and expiration date in the fields provided in Part B of the order form. **No personal or corporate checks or cash will be accepted.** Payment amount should include the sales tax for your state of residence if you are not tax exempt;
3. **If you are tax exempt, submit a completed state tax exemption form** or other relevant documentation. These forms may be obtained from your state's Department of

Revenue. Orders that do not provide either the sales tax or state sales tax exemption document will not be processed which may substantially delay the processing of your trap tag order.

QUESTIONS CONCERNING TRAP TAG ORDERS - CONTACT STOFFEL SEALS

It is estimated that you will receive your trap tags approximately 14 days after your order has been received by Stoffel Seals. If you have questions concerning orders you have submitted or incorrect shipments, **contact Stoffel Seals at (845) 348-7188**, or you may contact NMFS at (978) 281-9278.

REPORTING LOST OR DESTROYED TRAP TAGS

The vessel owner or operator is accountable for all trap tags. Therefore, vessel owners or operators are required to report all lost or destroyed trap tags, regardless of reason, to NMFS, via fax or letter, within seven days after the tags are known to be lost or destroyed.

To report lost or destroyed trap tags submit a statement of tag loss to NMFS by mail to:

<p>Lobster Trap Tag Replacement Program National Marine Fisheries Service State/Federal Office One Blackburn Drive Gloucester, MA, 01930</p>
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Or by fax to: (978) 281-9117

In your statement of tag loss, include a description of the events that may have resulted in the destruction or loss of trap tags, such as: date the tags were first known to be lost or destroyed; last known latitude and longitude coordinates of traps/tags; weather events or other suspected causes of loss; date traps/tags were last seen; and any other information that will facilitate the ability to assess the circumstances of the loss.

REPLACEMENT OF USED, LOST OR DESTROYED TRAP TAGS

**NOTE, IF NMFS HAS A TRAP TAG AGREEMENT WITH YOUR STATE,
FOLLOW INSTRUCTIONS PROVIDED BY YOUR STATE
REGARDING REPLACEMENT OF USED, LOST OR DESTROYED TRAP TAGS**

You are not required to replace trap tags that are used, lost or destroyed. However, you may not fish with an untagged trap and, therefore, may not deploy any trap that has lost a tag until a replacement tag is secured to the trap.

1. Replacement for Used Tags: You may replace tags that are affixed to gear that is no longer in use and has been removed from the water, by exchanging them on a tag-for-tag basis (minimum tag orders in multiples of 20 tags only e.g., 20, 40, 60, etc.) as described in the next section, **SUBSEQUENT TRAP TAG ORDERS**.

2. Replacement of Lost or Destroyed Tags NOT Exceeding 10 Percent of Your Total Trap Allocation: Your extra 10 percent allocation of trap tags must be used to replace tags if the number of lost or destroyed tags does not exceed 10 percent of your total trap allocation. You may purchase the number of tags equal to 10 percent of your total trap allocation when making your initial trap tag order using the enclosed Lobster Trap Tag Order Form. No NMFS approval for using your additional allocation for routine losses is needed, but you are still required to report all lost or destroyed tags to NMFS. If you have used your entire 10 percent additional allocation and need to replace additional tags, you must obtain approval from NMFS in accordance with the replacement provisions described in #3 below.

3. Replacement of Lost or Destroyed Tags Exceeding 10 Percent of Your Total Trap

Allocation: If the number of lost or destroyed tags exceeds 10 percent of your total trap allocation, indicate in your statement of tag loss or destruction, the number of lost or destroyed trap tags you intend to replace (minimum tag orders in multiples of 20 tags only e.g., 20, 40, 60, etc.). Your statement regarding lost or destroyed tags and request for replacement tags will be reviewed by NMFS and if you provide sufficient credible documentation of the loss or destruction of tags, NMFS will approve your replacement request. Do not include payment for tags when submitting your request to NMFS. You will be notified as to whether or not your request is approved. Upon approval, a Lobster Trap Tag Replacement Authorization Form will be sent to you. Complete the Lobster Trap Tag Replacement Authorization Form and submit, along with payment for the replacement tags (in multiples of 20 tags only e.g., 20, 40, 60, etc.), directly to Stoffel Seals Corporation. Payment should be sent to Stoffel Seals only after you have received approval and a Lobster Trap Tag Replacement Authorization Form from NMFS.

4. State-Specific Replacement Tag Information: Permit holders must purchase replacement tags through the agency that they purchased their initial tag allocation from. This also applies to subsequent tag orders as described in the next section.

SUBSEQUENT TRAP TAG ORDERS

Additional trap tag orders may be placed after receiving your initial tag order under two circumstances by using the Lobster Trap Tag Order Form: 1) to purchase the balance of your trap tag allocation if you did not order your entire allocation of trap tags, including the extra 10 percent, when you initially ordered your tags, or 2) when a tag-for-tag exchange is desired to replace used tags.

1. Orders to Purchase the Balance of Your Tag Allocation: Permit holders are not obligated to purchase the total allowable allocation of trap tags for the areas that they designate for trap fishing, but must order enough tags for the number of traps intended to be deployed. In the event that you do not order the total amount of tags you are allowed now, you may order the remaining tags at a later date by using the Lobster Trap Tag Order Form and submitting it directly to Stoffel Seals.

Example: You designate a Nearshore Area for fishing, such as Area 4, entitling you to a maximum allowable purchase of 880 trap tags. You intend to fish only 500 traps and decide to order only enough tags for those traps. You decide at a later date during the same fishing year to purchase the remaining balance of your allocation, or 380 tags (880-500=380). You then complete and submit to Stoffel Seals your request for the balance of your trap tag allocation using the copy of the Lobster Trap Tag Order Form you made before submitting your initial order.

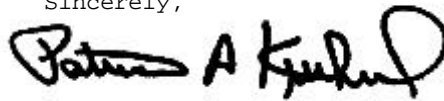
2. Orders for a Tag-for-Tag Exchange: You may remove the tags from traps that have been taken out of the water, return these tags, along with a completed lobster trap tag order form and payment, to Stoffel Seals, and receive an equal amount of tags in return. Tags may be replaced in this manner in multiples of 20 tags only (e.g., 20, 40, 60, etc.).

Example: Your vessel fishes 1,800 traps in EEZ Offshore Area 3. You decide to replace 40 traps that are tagged and deployed for lobster fishing in Area 3, with new traps that are stacked on the wharf. You must retrieve the old traps and remove the tags on land. Submit the 40 used tags from the old traps to Stoffel Seals and request a tag-for-tag exchange. Forty identical tags will be sent to you from Stoffel Seals which you must affix to the new traps before they are deployed for lobster fishing.

3. How to Purchase your Trap Tag Balance or Exchange Trap Tags: Use the enclosed Lobster Trap Tag Order Form for subsequent trap tag orders. Fill out Parts A, B and C, submit your form along with payment (including either state tax or a state tax exemption form) to Stoffel Seals Corporation in accordance with the instructions on the form. Please refer to State-Specific Replacement Tag Information in the previous section regarding requirements for specific state permit holders.

For questions regarding trap limits, lobster management area designations, or the lobster trap tag program, please contact the NMFS at (978) 281-9278 or the NMFS Northeast Region home page at: <http://www.nero.nmfs.gov/ro/doc/nr.htm>

Sincerely,



Patricia A. Kurkul, Administrator
Northeast Region

Enclosures: Lobster Trap Tag Order Form

2002-2003 Lobster Trap Tag Order Form



1. Do not use this form if your Federal lobster permit address is in Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts; or Maine and you possess a Maine state lobster license; or New York and you elect Area 6 only. You must purchase your trap tags through your state agency.
2. If you have a Federal lobster permit and a state of New Hampshire lobster license, you have the option of purchasing your trap tags through either NMFS or the New Hampshire Department of Fish and Game.
3. If you are not required to purchase trap tags through your state agency, and your vessel is endorsed to fish for lobster with traps during the 2002-2003 fishing year, please complete Parts A, B, and C of this form.
4. **Send this completed form and payment directly to:**
Stoffel Seals Corporation, P.O. Box 825 - Dept. 3, Nyack, NY 10960-0825, tel. (845) 348-7188.
5. Make a copy of this blank form for use when placing subsequent tag orders.
6. If you have any questions, please call the NMFS Northeast Regional Office information line at **(978) 281-9278**.

Name _____	PLEASE PRINT	Part A
P.O. Box / Street _____		
City/State/Zip _____		
Telephone Number () _____		
Vessel Name _____	Federal Permit # _____	
Vessel Documentation # or State Registration # _____		

PLEASE INDICATE BELOW THE NUMBER OF TRAP TAGS YOU WISH TO PURCHASE:	Part B
Note: Lobster management area(s) will be based on the trap gear area(s) designated on your 2002-2003 Federal permit renewal application. To order your tags through NMFS, indicate the number of trap tags you wish to purchase in the space provided below. For the 2002-2003 fishing year, the maximum number of tags that may be purchased for any or all EEZ Nearshore Areas is 880, while the maximum number of tags that may be purchased if you elect to fish only in EEZ Offshore Area 3 is 1,980. Area 6 is entirely New York and Connecticut state waters. Trap tag allocations for this area are contingent upon state trap limits. If you are a New York state license holder who selects Area 6 in combination with any other management area, you must abide by the more restrictive of either state or EEZ trap limits and purchase the appropriate amount of tags using this form. Potential revisions to Federal regulations may limit future access to some EEZ management areas. Therefore, any trap tags purchased for the 2002-2003 fishing year may become invalid before the end of the permit year and permit holders may be required to purchase new tags and return old tags if mandated by future rulemaking actions.	
Total Number of Federal Trap Tags Requested: _____	X \$0.14 per tag = \$ _____
	* State Tax = \$ _____
Total Amount Enclosed /Authorized: \$ _____	
Please indicate method of payment: _____ Visa _____ MasterCard _____ Certified Check/ Money Order	
Credit Card Number: _____	Expiration Date: _____
Please make cashier's checks or money orders payable to: Stoffel Seals Corporation . No cash, or personal or corporate checks will be accepted. *If tax exempt, please complete and return a tax exemption form for your state of residence. Orders received without a tax exemption certificate, or applicable sales tax, will not be processed.	

Signature _____

Part C

Date _____

I certify that the information provided on this form is true, complete and correct to the best of my knowledge, and made in good faith. Making a false statement on this form is punishable by law (18 U.S.C. 1001). Forms that are not signed and dated will not be processed.

OMB# 0648-0202

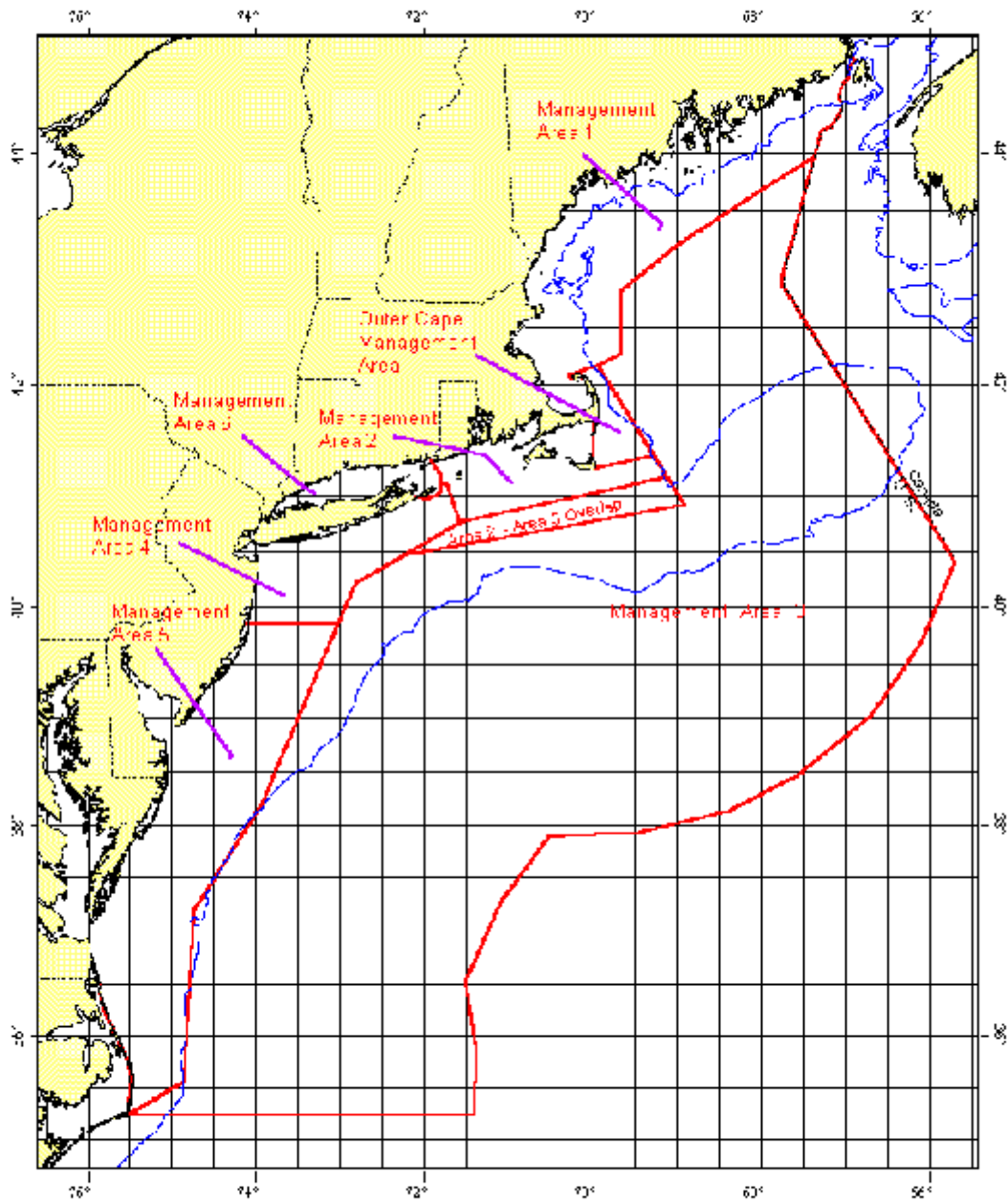
EXP 03-31-2004

This collection is authorized under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Management and Conservation Act (16 U.S.C. 1801 et. seq.). The information will be used in the management of the American lobster fishery. One of the regulatory steps taken by NMFS to carry out its conservation and management objectives is limiting fishing vessel effort. The purpose and use of the lobster trap tagging program is to provide identification of trap ownership, and to limit the number of traps for those vessels that fish traps by issuing lobster trap tags, with a maximum number of tags for each vessel. This assures consistency throughout the fleet of affected vessels. In addition, it allows NMFS to determine the number of traps in use in the fishery to better monitor fishing effort in the future.

Public reporting burden for the collection of information is estimated at 5 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. The public burden for using this form to order additional trap tags is estimated at 2 minutes. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Patricia Kurkul, Regional Administrator, Northeast Region, NMFS, One Blackburn Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930-2298.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person is required to respond to, nor shall a person be subject to the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act, unless that collection of information displays a currently valid OMB Control Number.

American Lobster Management Areas



NOAA Fisheries
Northeast Regional Office
Gloucester, MA

11/13/09