

WORKSHOP
Interactions Between Sea Turtles and Vertical Lines in Fixed Gear Fisheries
Mar. 31 – Apr. 1 2008

There was much discussion on how to alleviate the interaction between fixed gear fisheries and turtles, from Canada, south, to the Carolina's. Of most interest to R.I. is Leatherback turtles and entanglements with up and down /vertical lines. Suggestions were made for research to be done on methods of prevention,(pingers, stiff line at top of u+d lines, changes in tag buoy and flag configuration, and a few others that will be in the summary, when published, in a few weeks). Of most importance to the local lobster fishermen was the suggestion of the formation of a **turtle disentanglement** certification course for fishermen entailing a reporting requirement (time, place, whale condition upon release, type of trap involved, etc). The point was made, several times by fishermen, that reporting a turtle entanglement is considered "a take" and that cooperation will be an issue unless that conditioned is addressed. The last thing that we need to be doing is to put ourselves at risk for future court action while we are trying to save turtles,-
----- although an anonymous, central reporting number was suggested

On a related subject, the new Federal Whale Regulations, that affect Area 2, go into effect on **April 5th 2008** and contain the following;

- a. four inch gear marking half way down the U&D line (red)
- b. 600 lb break away at the buoy (1100 in Area 3)
- c. no middle buoys
- d. sinking ground lines, only (no float rope), effective in Oct.
- e. no single traps of any type (sea bass, welk, scup, crab, lobster)
in Federal waters
- f. trawls consisting of five traps or less are only allowed a
single u+d line in Federal waters
- g. u+d lines must remain as knotless as possible
- h. no more DAMS
- i. SAM gear modifications now allow **two** u+d lines with
1/3 float line on bottom

NOTE;

Five pot trawls and singles of all types **are** allowed within the state waters of R.I. and can be fished by both federal and state permit holders according to the NMFS Northeast Coordinator, Diane Borggaard.

Submitted by,
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ALWTRT
MEMBER

