

DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES

Chapter 25 Lobster and Crab

25.45 Dragged Crab as Bycatch

1. License Endorsement

It shall be unlawful to harvest crabs by drag from the EEZ unless the harvester holds a Commercial Fishing – Single license with the Dragged Crab Permit endorsement or a Commercial Fishing – Crew license with the Dragged Crab Permit endorsement*. There will be no additional charge for this permit. A lobster and crab fishing license issued pursuant to 12 M.R.S.A. §6421 is not required to obtain this endorsement in accordance with §6421, sub-§4(B).

*DMR License Division telephone (207-624-6550) or for online information select the following link: <http://www.maine.gov/dmr/license/index.htm>.

2. Limits

It is unlawful to take, possess or land more than 200 pounds (90.7 kg) of crabs per day, not to exceed 500 pounds (226.8 kg) per trip.

Basis Statement

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In accordance with 12 M.R.S.A. §6421, sub§4(B), effective May 4, 2009 commercial fishing license holders are allowed to take crab bycatch from otter trawls, taken from the exclusive economic zone, and without holding a lobster and crab license. These regulations establish the requirement that commercial fishing license holders obtain a no cost license endorsement for crabs taken by drag and the catch would be limited to 200 lbs of crabs per day, not to exceed 500 lbs per trip.

These regulations impact commercial fishing license holders who use an otter trawl in the exclusive economic zone by allowing the take and landings of crab species by-catch. The new endorsement requirement is waived for the remainder of 2009 and will begin with licenses issued in 2010. A clarification is also noted that the statute and regulation pertain to whole animal not parts or claws.

Summary of Comments

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A public hearing was held at the Department of Marine Resources in West Boothbay Harbor, June 22, 2009. Glen Libby, Tenants Harbor, Port Clyde Fresh Catch, attended the hearing and expressed support for the rulemaking.