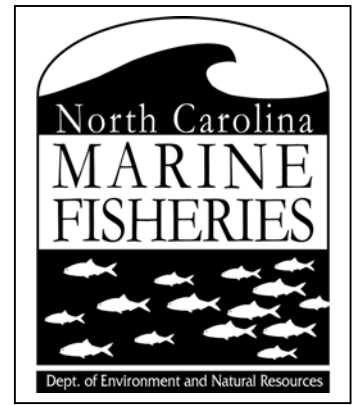


RULES SUMMARY FOR THE RECREATIONAL COMMERCIAL GEAR LICENSE (RCGL)



www.ncdmf.net

The RCGL is an annual license issued by the North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries allowing recreational fishermen to use limited amounts of commercial gear to harvest seafood for personal consumption. The license costs \$35 for North Carolina residents and \$250 for nonresidents and expires one year from the date of purchase.

RCGL REQUIREMENTS

- Seafood harvested ***cannot*** be sold.
- License holders will be held to recreational size and possession limits - for the most up-to-date information call the Division of Marine Fisheries (1-800-682-2632) or visit the website at: www.ncdmf.net. Any additional catch taken over the possession limit must be released overboard where taken.
- The number of possession limits allowed is one per valid RCGL holder whether or not you are on a vessel, except for crabs, where the possession limit is 50 crabs per individual per day, not to exceed 100 crabs per vessel per day. For example, if one valid RCGL holder is fishing their gill net, then only one possession limit is allowed. If five valid RCGL holders are fishing a gill net, then five possession limits are allowed.
- A person under 16 years of age may use authorized RCGL gear and take one possession limit if they are with a parent, grandparent or guardian who holds a valid RCGL, or if the individual under 16 years of age has in their possession the parent, grandparent or guardian's valid RCGL.
- Unlicensed individuals can assist in fishing, but at least one person must have a valid RCGL.
- Only one gear limit per vessel is allowed no matter how many valid RCGL holders are aboard, except for gill nets (see below).

AUTHORIZED GEARS

Gill Nets

Mesh Size – The minimum mesh size in state waters for gill nets is 2 1/2 inches stretch mesh. Some water bodies require larger size mesh - if unsure, call the Division of Marine Fisheries before using gill nets.

Yardage – For an individual, the maximum length allowed is 100 yards, whether the net is set from the shore, a pier or a vessel. Two or more RCGL holders aboard a vessel are allowed to set a maximum of 200 yards and can ***possess*** aboard a vessel no more than 200 yards of gill net less than 5 1/2 inches and no more than 200 yards of gill net 5 1/2 inches or greater. If a person is under 16 years of age, accompanied by a parent, grandparent or guardian who holds a valid RCGL, then they are allowed to use the maximum of 200 yards.

Marking Requirements – There must be two solid yellow buoys and one solid hot pink buoy on each end of the net. Buoys must be no less than five inches in diameter and no less than five inches in length. Engraved in the buoy or engraved in a metal or plastic tag attached to the buoy, must be the RCGL holder's last name and initials and if a vessel is used, one of the following: owner's N.C. motor boat registration number (Wildlife Resources Commission number), or owner's U.S. vessel documentation name.

Attendance - Attendance means being immediately adjacent to the net (either in a vessel, in the water or on the shore) and immediately available to work the net - RCGL holders may be no more than 100 yards from the net at all times and cannot be in a building or structure. Attendance of gill nets with a mesh size less than 5 1/2 inches stretched mesh is required at all times. Attendance of gill nets with a mesh size 5 1/2 inches stretched mesh or greater is required from one hour after sunrise to one hour before sunset.

Pots

Mesh Size - Shrimp pots cannot have a mesh size smaller than 1 1/4 inches stretch or 5/8 inch bar. Crab pots must have two escape rings that are at least 2 5/16 inches inside diameter.

Pot Limits – Valid RCGL holders are limited to a total of five eel, fish, shrimp, or crab pots; of the five, only two can be eel pots. Peeler pots are not allowed.

Buoy Lines – All crab pots must use non-floating line to connect the pot to the buoy.

Marking Requirements – There must be one solid hot pink buoy on each pot. Buoys must be no less than five inches in diameter and no less than five inches in length. Engraved in the buoy or engraved in a metal or plastic tag attached to the buoy, must be the RCGL holder's last name and initials and if a vessel is used, one of the following: owner's N.C. motor boat registration number (Wildlife Resources Commission number), or owner's U.S. vessel documentation name. Only non-floating line can be used.

Attendance - Pots must be attended or fished at least every seven days. Crab pots cannot be fished or retrieved between one hour after sunset and one hour before sunrise.

Designated Areas – There are areas where pots cannot be set from May 1- Oct. 31 each year. Contact the Division of Marine Fisheries to find out where pots can be set in your area. Pots must not be placed in navigation channels marked by state or federal agencies or in any turning basin maintained and marked by the N.C. Ferry Division.

Closed Season - All pots must be removed from internal (non-ocean) waters Jan. 24 - Feb. 7 of each year.

Exemptions - One crab pot per person with properly marked buoys (see marking requirements above) may be attached to the shore along privately owned land or to a privately owned pier without a RCGL. Up to two minnow traps may be set without a RCGL.

Shrimp Trawls

Mesh and Headrope Size - The minimum mesh size is 1 1/2 inches stretched mesh and the maximum headrope size is 26 feet.

Marking Requirements – There must be one solid hot pink buoy attached to the cod end (tailbag) of the trawl. The buoy must be no less than five inches in diameter and no less than five inches in length. Engraved in the buoy or engraved in a metal or plastic tag attached to the buoy, must be the RCGL holder's last name and initials and one of the following: owner's N.C. motor boat registration number (Wildlife Resources Commission number), or owner's U.S. vessel documentation name.

Gear Requirements - Shrimp trawls must be equipped with a bycatch reduction device; check with the Division of Marine Fisheries for specifications. The use of mechanical methods for retrieving a trawl net is prohibited.

Designated Areas - Some areas, primary nursery areas, for example, are never opened to trawling. Other areas are opened and closed to the use of trawls by proclamations depending upon the size of the juvenile finfish and shrimp in the area. Check with Division of Marine Fisheries **before** you go shrimping to find out which areas are open.

Closed Times - It is unlawful to use trawls from 9 p.m. on Fridays through 5 p.m. on Sundays in any internal waters.

Trotlines

Length Limit – A multiple hook or multiple bait trotline cannot exceed 100 feet.

Marking Requirements – There must be one solid hot pink buoy on the end of trotline. The buoy must be no less than five inches in diameter and no less than five inches in length. Engraved in the buoy or engraved in a metal or plastic tag attached to the buoy, must be the RCGL holder’s last name and initials and if a vessel is used, one of the following: owner’s N.C. motor boat registration number (Wildlife Resources Commission number), or owner’s U.S. vessel documentation name.

Seines

Length Limit - A RCGL allows the use of seines 30 feet to 100 feet. The use of mechanical methods for retrieving the seine is prohibited. A seine cannot be deployed or retrieved from a vessel. A seine less than 30 feet, regardless of the mesh size, does not require any license if used for recreational purposes.

Mesh Size - The mesh size must be less than 2½ inches stretch mesh. If taking shrimp, the minimum mesh size is 1 1/4 inches stretch mesh. Seines may not be used to take shrimp from an area closed to trawling.

Marking Requirements - One solid hot pink buoy must be attached to the corkline. The buoy must be no less than five inches in diameter and no less than five inches in length. Engraved in the buoy or engraved in a metal or plastic tag attached to the buoy, must be the RCGL holder’s last name and initials and one of the following if vessel is used: owner’s N.C. motor boat registration number (Wildlife Resources Commission number), or owner’s U.S. vessel documentation name.

LICENSE SALES LOCATIONS

3441 Arendell Street
Morehead City, NC 28557
1-800-682-2632

1367 Hwy. 17 South
Elizabeth City, NC 27909
1-800-338-7805

1107 Hwy. 64 East
Columbia, NC 27925
1-800-405-7774

Industrial Seafood Park
Wanchese, NC 27981
252-473-1512

943 Washington Square Mall
Washington, NC 27889
1-800-338-7804

127 Cardinal Drive Ext.
Wilmington, NC 28405
1-800-248-4536

The Recreational Commercial Gear License will also be sold by Wildlife Resources Commission license agents throughout the state for an additional charge of \$1.

NOTES:

These guidelines are intended to summarize significant applicable rules and statutes to assist RCGL holders in using their gear. They are not the full text of all applicable rules. For a complete copy of the rules, contact the Division of Marine Fisheries, P.O. Box 769, Morehead City, N.C. 28557, or call 252-726-7021 or 1-800-682-2632. Visit our website at www.ncdmf.net for the latest changes in rules by proclamations; for possession, size limits or gear changes.

The NCDMF may contact RCGL holders for statistical information about recreational commercial gear fishing activity. G.S. 113-1703 requires a response to these contacts.

A RCGL is not required when harvesting shellfish recreationally or using the following recreational gears: hook and line or bait and line (except multiple hook or multiple bait trotline), seines less than 30 feet, dip nets, landing nets, cast nets, gigs and spears and up to two minnow traps.

While fishing, it is unlawful to possess any fish without the head and tail attached if that species is subject to size or creel limits, except fishermen can have up to two blueback herring or alewife cut up for bait purposes at one time. If using part of the fish for bait, save the carcass.

Individuals are responsible for any fish, crabs, shrimp or shellfish in their possession during a boarding or inspection.

March 2005