



RULES SUMMARY

RECREATIONAL COMMERCIAL GEAR LICENSE (RCGL)

February 9, 2009

The RCGL is an annual license issued by the N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF) allowing recreational fishermen to use limited amounts of commercial gear in coastal and joint waters to harvest seafood for personal consumption. The license is \$35 for state residents and \$250 for nonresidents, expiring one year from date of purchase.

RCGL REQUIREMENTS

- Seafood harvested **cannot** be sold.
- Recreational size and possession limits apply - for the latest information call the DMF (1-800-682-2632) or visit the website at: www.ncdmf.net.
- One possession limit per RCGL, whether or not you are on a vessel, except for crabs, which are 50 crabs per individual per day, not to exceed 100 crabs per vessel per day.
- A person under 16 years of age may use RCGL gear and take one possession limit if they are with a parent, grandparent or guardian who holds a RCGL, **or** if the individual under 16 years of age has a parent, grandparent or guardian's RCGL in their possession.
- Unlicensed individuals can assist in fishing, but at least one person must have a RCGL.
- One gear limit per vessel, except for gill nets (see below).

AUTHORIZED GEARS

Gill Nets

Mesh Size – Minimum is 2 1/2 inches stretch mesh. Some areas require larger mesh or have a maximum mesh size, if unsure call DMF.

Yardage – For an individual, the maximum length is 100 yards, for nets set from 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 net less than 5 ½ inches and no more than 200 yards 5 ½ inches or greater. If a person is under 16 years of age, accompanied by a parent, grandparent or guardian who holds a RCGL, they are allowed the maximum of 200 yards.

Marking Requirements – Two solid yellow buoys and one solid hot pink buoy at each end of the net (see Buoy Requirements).

Attendance – Must be immediately adjacent to the net (either in a vessel, in the water or on shore) and immediately available to work the net and no more than 100 yards from the net at all times (not in a building or structure). Effective April 1, 2009, during the months of June through October, all unattended gill nets 5 ½ inches stretched mesh or greater must be set a minimum of 10 feet from any point on the shoreline. (Shoreline is defined as the mean high water line or marsh line, whichever is most seaward).

North and east of the Emerald Isle (Hwy. 58) Bridge in Carteret County attendance of gill nets less than 5 1/2 inches stretched mesh is required at all times. Attendance of gill nets 5 1/2 inches stretched mesh or greater is required from one hour after sunrise to one hour before sunset.

South and west of the Emerald Isle (Hwy. 58) Bridge in Carteret County to the South Carolina line attendance of gill nets is required **at all times**.

Pots

Mesh Size - Shrimp pots cannot have a mesh smaller than 1 1/4 inches stretch or 5/8 inch bar. Crab pots must have two escape rings at least 2 5/16 inches inside diameter, on opposite sides of the upper chamber.

Pot Limits – 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.

Marking Requirements – One solid hot pink buoy on each pot (see Buoy Requirements).

Attendance - Fished at least every five days. Crab pots cannot be fished or retrieved from one hour after sunset to one hour before sunrise.

Designated Areas – There are areas where pots cannot be set from May 1- Nov. 30 each year. Contact DMF to find out about 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. 15 - Feb. 7 of each year.

Exemptions - One crab pot per person with properly marked buoys may be attached to the shore on privately owned land or to a privately owned pier without a RCGL. Up to two minnow traps may be set without a RCGL.

Shrimp and Skimmer Trawls

Gear Requirements - Shrimp trawls must have a bycatch reduction device; check with DMF for specifications. After April 1, 2009, mechanical methods for retrieving a trawl net will be allowed if proper Turtle Excluder Device (TED) requirements are met. Maximum headrope size is 26 feet. Minimum mesh is 1 1/2 inches stretched mesh.

Marking Requirements – One solid hot pink buoy attached to the cod end (tailbag) of the trawl (see Buoy Requirements).

Designated Areas - Some areas are never opened to trawling, check with DMF **before** you go shrimping.

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

Shrimp Pound (Effective April 1, 2009)

Gear Requirements – One pound used to take shrimp. Each lead must be 10 feet in length or less with a minimum mesh size of 1 ½ inches. Enclosures are to be constructed of stretched mesh of 1 ¼ inches or greater and all dimensions must be 36 inches or less.

Attendance – Shrimp pounds must be attended at all times and must be removed from the water when not being fished.

Marking Requirements – one floating buoy any shade of hot pink (see Buoy Requirements) attached to the offshore lead of the pound.

Distance Requirement – A RCGL shrimp pound must not be set within 100 yards of another RCGL shrimp pound or within 300 yards of an operational commercially permitted pound.

Shrimp Possession Limit

48 qts. (heads on) 30 qts. (heads off) one RCGL holder aboard vessel

96 qts. (heads on) 60 qts. (heads off) more than one RCGL holder aboard vessel

Trotlines

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

Marking Requirements – One solid hot pink buoy on the end of trotline (see Buoy Requirements).

Seines

Length Limit - 30 feet to 100 feet. Mechanical methods for retrieving seines are prohibited. A seine cannot be deployed or retrieved from a vessel.

Mesh Size - Not less than 2½ inches stretch mesh. If taking shrimp, the minimum 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 (see Buoy Requirements).

Buoy Requirements

Not less than five inches in diameter and not 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.

NOTES:

Guidelines are intended to summarize 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 DMF, P.O. Box 769, Morehead City, N.C. 28557, or call 252-726-7021 or 1-800-682-2632. Visit www.ncdmf.net for the latest changes to this document.

RCGL holders are required to respond to DMF surveys regarding statistical information about recreational commercial gear fishing activity.

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), collapsible traps, seines less than 30 feet, dip nets, landing nets, cast nets, gigs, spears and up to two minnow traps.