



ROY COOPER
Governor

ELIZABETH S. BISER
Secretary

KATHY B. RAWLS
Director

SH-3-2022

PROCLAMATION

RE: SHRIMP TRAWL INCREASES MINIMUM TAIL BAG/COD END MESH SIZE, AND BYCATCH REDUCTION DEVICE AND TURTLE EXCLUDER DEVICE REQUIREMENTS – ATLANTIC OCEAN

This proclamation establishes the mesh sizes for the trawl body and tail bag/cod end, and bycatch reduction device and turtle excluder device requirements for taking shrimp with trawls (except as described in Section III.) in Atlantic Ocean Waters.

Kathy B. Rawls, Director, Division of Marine Fisheries, hereby announces that effective at 12:01 A.M. July 1, 2022 the following restrictions apply to shrimp trawls (skimmer trawls are exempt):

I. **AREA DESCRIPTIONS:**

It is unlawful to take shrimp with trawls in the Atlantic Ocean, except as described in Sections II. and III.

II. **GEAR RESTRICTIONS:**

In the area described in Section I., it is unlawful to take shrimp with trawls with mesh lengths less than one and one-half inch stretch mesh in the body of the net, mesh lengths less than **one and three-quarter** inch stretch mesh **in the tail bag/ cod end of the net**, and without authorized North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries (NCDMF) Bycatch Reduction Devices (BRD) properly installed and operational in the tail bag/cod end of **EACH** net as described below (Figure 1):

A. **Double Federal Fisheye (Figure 1, Table 1):**

1. Description: The Double Federal Fisheye BRD is two Federal Fisheye BRDs placed inline as described below. The Fisheye BRD is a pyramid-shaped rigid frame constructed from aluminum or steel rod of at least $\frac{1}{4}$ inch (6.35 mm) diameter, which is inserted into the tail bag/cod end to form an escape opening. Minimum construction and installation requirements stated below.
2. The Federal Fisheye is a four-sided pyramid and has a minimum escape opening dimension of 6 inches (15.2 cm), minimum leg length of 12 inches (30.4 cm), and a minimum total escape opening area of 36 in² (91.4 cm²) [inside dimensions, not bar lengths] (Figure 1).
3. The Federal Fisheye shall be installed on the outside of the trawl. The webbing of the trawl attached to the Fisheye cannot cover more than 50% of the Federal Fisheye.
4. When the Federal Fisheye BRD is installed, no part of the lazy line attachment system (i.e., any mechanism, such as elephant ears or choker straps, used to attach the lazy line to the tail bag/cod end) may overlap the Federal Fisheye escape opening when the Federal Fisheye is installed aft of the attachment point of the tail bag/cod end retrieval system. The escapement opening shall remain unobstructed at all times.
5. The aft Federal Fisheye BRD must be installed at the top center of the tail bag/cod end of the trawl to create an escape opening in the trawl facing the direction of the

mouth of the trawl no further forward than 65% of the functional tail bag/cod end length measured from the tail bag/cod end tie-off rings (Table 1).

6. Placement of the apex (narrow end) of the Federal Fisheye shall be toward the headrope of the trawl (forward).
7. The second Federal Fisheye BRD can be installed no further forward than 5 meshes from the apex of the primary Federal Fisheye BRD with the apex of the second Federal Fisheye BRD facing the headrope of the trawl.

III. **GEAR EXEMPTIONS:**

The gear restrictions in Section II do not apply to the following:

- A. Skimmer trawls; or
- B. A single test trawl net (try net) with a headrope length of 12 feet or less with a mesh size of one and one-half inch stretch mesh or greater, if it is operated under the following conditions:
 1. net is either pulled immediately in front of another net or is not connected to another net in any way;
 2. no more than one net is used at a time; and
 3. net is not towed as a primary net.

IV. **DEFINITIONS:** For the purposes of this proclamation, the following terms are hereby defined:

- A. Bycatch reduction device (BRD) - any gear or trawl modification (including modifications to a TED that would enhance finfish exclusion) designed to allow finfish to escape from a shrimp trawl. BRD is defined based on its ability to facilitate the escape of finfish from a shrimp trawl.
- B. Centerline - The line running from the center point of the headrope to the top center of the end of the tail bag/cod end.
- C. Functional tail bag/cod end length - That length of the tail bag/cod end of a trawl beginning at the tail bag/cod end tie-off rings and extending forward for a maximum of 105 meshes or to the point where the straight extension ends and the trawl body taper begins, whichever is less. Trawls utilizing short tail bag/cod ends may include those meshes of the TED extension that are behind the TED grid and are in-line with the center of the FFE escape opening.
- D. Radial escape section – This BRD features a guiding funnel to concentrate all animals into the middle of the tail bag/cod end and a panel of large square-meshes that extend radially around the tail bag/cod end that allows for fish escapement.
- E. Tail bag/cod end - That portion of the trawl net at which the trawl body's taper ends and the straight extension begins, extending to the terminal end of the trawl.
- F. Skimmer trawl – a trawl that is fished along the side of the vessel and is held open by a rigid frame and a lead weight. On its outboard side, the trawl is held open by one side of the frame extending downward and, on its inboard side, by a lead weight attached by cable or rope to the bow of the vessel.
- G. Trawl – a conical net pulled through the water by one or more boats.
Try net – A net pulled for brief periods of time just before, or during, deployment of the primary net(s) in order to test for shrimp concentrations or determine fishing conditions (e.g., presence or absence of bottom debris, jellyfish, bycatch, seagrasses, etc.).
- H. Turtle excluder device (TED) - An inclined grid or netting panel that prevents the passage of large animals such as sea turtles and large fish into the tail bag/cod end and guides them through an escape opening located in the tail bag/cod end. TED is defined based on its ability to exclude sea turtles from a shrimp trawl.

V. **GENERAL INFORMATION:**

- A. This proclamation is issued under the authority of N.C.G.S. 113-134; 113-134.1; 113-170.4; 113-170.5; 113-182; 113-182.1; 143B-289.52 and N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission Rule 15A NCAC 03J .0104(d).
- B. It is unlawful to violate the provisions of any proclamation issued by the Fisheries Director under their delegated authority per N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission Rule 15A NCAC 03H .0103.
- C. **It is unlawful to use a shrimp trawl that does not conform with the federal requirements for Turtle Excluder Devices (TEDs) per N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission Rule 15A NCAC 03L .0103(h). For more details on approved TEDs please see 50 CFR §223.207 and <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/southeast/bycatch/turtle-excluder-device-regulations>.**
- D. Channel nets, float nets, fixed nets, and butterfly nets are not required to use BRDs.
- E. **The intent of this proclamation is to increase the minimum tail bag/cod end mesh size and require the use of newly approved BRDs identified by a collaborative study that achieved at least a 40 percent finfish bycatch reduction in accordance with the N.C. Shrimp Fishery Management Plan Amendment 2.**
- F. The boundary of state ocean waters is defined in G.S. 141-6.
- G. The demarcation lines between internal and ocean waters are defined in 33 CFR §80.515-530.
- H. Vessels operating in coastal fishing waters outside of those areas described in Section II. or using skimmer trawls must use a minimum of two authorized NCDMF BRDs as described in Proclamation SH-1-2022 and SH-2-2022.
- I. Persons wishing to test BRD designs not covered by this proclamation may submit BRD designs to the NCDMF, Morehead City office, for consideration for field-testing.
- J. This proclamation only sets the gear requirements for taking shrimp with trawls in these areas as described in Section II., area openings and closings are done through separate proclamations. Individuals should check the division website (<http://portal.ncdenr.org/web/mf/>) for proclamations opening and closing specific areas for the taking of shrimp.
- K. Contact N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries, P.O. Box 769, Morehead City, NC 28557; 252-726-7021 or 800-682-2632 for more information or visit the division website at <http://portal.ncdenr.org/web/mf/>.
- L. In accordance with N.C. General Statute 113-221.1(c) All persons who may be affected by proclamations issued by the Fisheries Director are under a duty to keep themselves informed of current proclamations.
- M. **This proclamation establishes the mesh sizes for the trawl body and tail bag/cod end, and bycatch reduction device and turtle excluder device requirements for taking shrimp with trawls (except as described in Section III.) in Atlantic Ocean Waters.**

BY: _____



Kathy B. Rawls, Director
DIVISION OF MARINE FISHERIES

March 16, 2022
1:17 P.M.

Table 1. Required placement of primary Federal Fisheye and Florida Fish Excluder.

Functional Tail bag/cod end Length*	Maximum FFE Placement**	Functional Tail bag/cod end Length**	Maximum FFE Placement**
105 meshes or greater	68 meshes	82	53
104	68	81	53
103	67	80	52
102	66	79	51
101	66	78	51
100	65	77	50
99	64	76	49
98	64	75	49
97	63	74	48
96	62	73	47
95	62	72	47
94	61	71	46
93	60	70	46
92	60	69	45
91	59	68	44
90	59	67	44
89	58	66	43
88	57	65	42
87	57	64	42
86	56		
85	55		
84	55		
83	54		

* Functional Tail bag/cod end Length – That length of the tail bag/cod end of a trawl beginning at the tail bag/cod end tie-off and extending forward for a maximum of 105 meshes or to the point where the straight extension ends and the trawl body taper begins, whichever is less. Trawls utilizing short tail bag/cod ends may include those meshes of the TED extension that are behind the TED grid and are in-line with the center of the FFE escape opening.

** If your tail bag/cod end is not included in this Table, you can figure the maximum placement for your net by following the formula: (mesh count multiplied by 65, divided by 100, using a 50 mesh tail bag/cod end as an example $(50 \times 65) / 100 = 32.5$).

Federal Fisheye

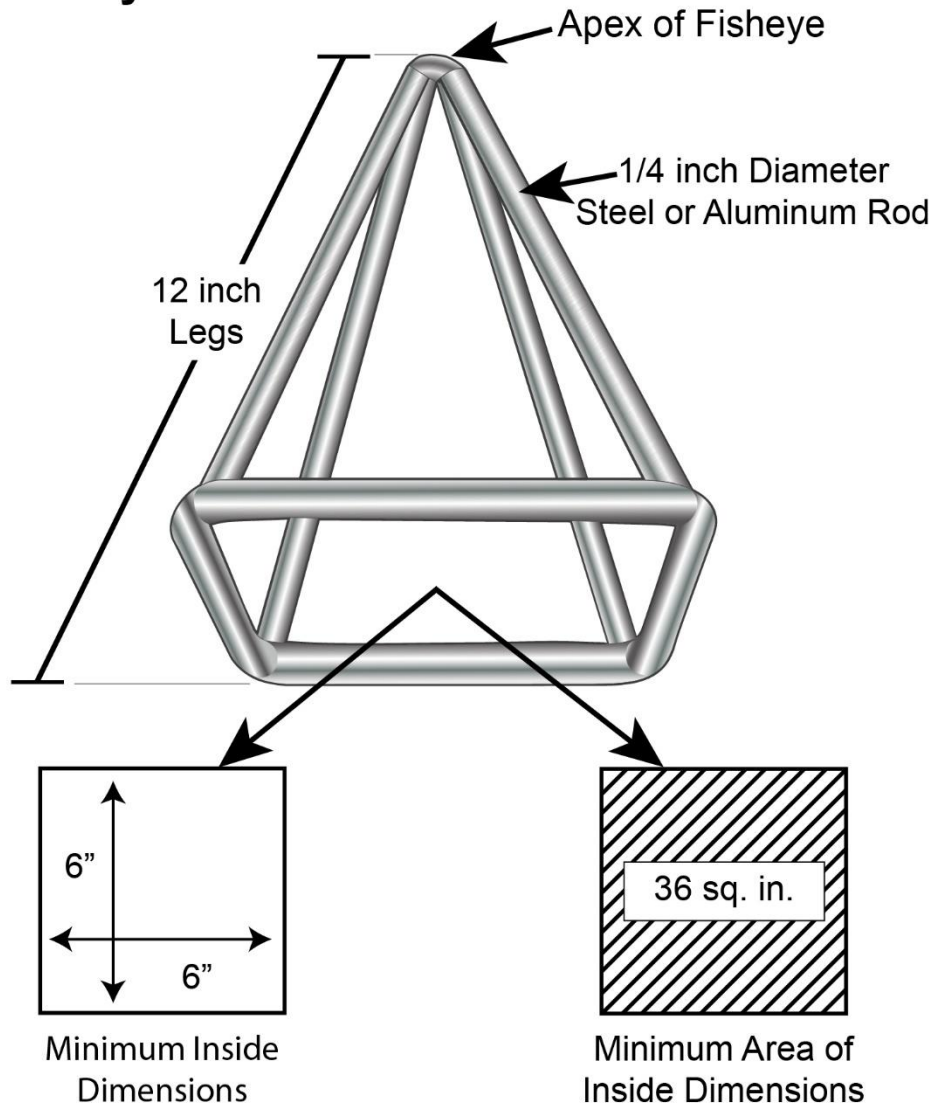


Figure 1. Minimum dimensions of the Federal Fisheye (III.A).