



# Greater Atlantic Region Bulletin

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<http://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov>  
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## **Federal Lobster Permit Holders**

Trap Transfer Program Information

*Effective Date: August 1, 2019*

The Lobster Trap Transfer Program allows permit holders the flexibility to buy and sell trap allocation for Lobster Conservation Management Areas 2, 3, and the Outer Cape. We are continuing this program for the 2020 Fishing year. A detailed guide about the program, transfer applications, and individual trap allocations is available under the “Trap Transfer Program” tab on our website at: <http://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/sustainable/species/lobster/>.

### *Frequently Asked Questions*

<b>Have any Trap Transfer Program rules changed since last year?</b>	No. The regulations governing trap transfers and the process of transferring traps are the same as last year.
<b>Are there regulatory changes that could affect this program in the future?</b>	Yes. We are considering future changes to the Federal lobster regulations as recommended by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission. These changes include the use of a control date to limit the number of traps or lobster permits a Federal permit holder can have in Areas 2 and 3. Any new measures could impact your trap allocations as early as fishing year 2021. We are also discussing potential measures that would minimize threats to North Atlantic right whales, including measures that might restrict and reduce trap caps, trap allocations, and buoy lines (end lines). You should stay informed of potential changes, and know that you transfer traps at your own risk. You can follow lobster management updates at: <a href="https://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/sustainable/species/lobster/index.html">https://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/sustainable/species/lobster/index.html</a> and <a href="http://www.asmfc.org/species/american-lobster">http://www.asmfc.org/species/american-lobster</a>
<b>Who can I contact if I have questions?</b>	If you have any questions about your application, permit, or trap allocation, please contact APSD at 978-282-8483. Please contact the Sustainable Fisheries Division at 978-281-9315 for information about the regulations and requirements of the Trap Transfer Program.
<b>What information is available online?</b>	We posted several items on our website, including: An updated version of the Trap Transfer Program Guide; a worksheet of examples that walk you through the transfer process; the application form; and a list of contact information and trap allocations for Area 2, 3, and Outer Cape permit holders. Hard copies of this information are available by request from the contacts listed above.
<b>What do the allocations posted on the website represent?</b>	The allocations posted represent the number of traps available for the 2020 fishing year. This includes a 5-percent reduction in Areas 2 and 3.
<b>Is any of this information confidential?</b>	No. All information posted on the website is publicly available information.
<b>Will NMFS help broker trap transfers?</b>	No. Potential trap transfer participants must contact each other directly to negotiate trap transfers.
<b>Will NMFS provide price information?</b>	No. We do not regulate the value of transfer transactions and are not asking participants to provide price information. Potential trap transfer participants must negotiate trap transfers and prices before submitting an application.

*For small entity compliance guides, this bulletin complies with section 212 of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement and Fairness Act of 1996. This notice is authorized by the Regional Administrator of the National Marine Fisheries Service, Greater Atlantic Region.*

**When may I submit an application?**

We will accept applications from August 1, 2019, through September 30, 2019.  
Approved transfers will take effect May 1, 2020.