

**STATE OF FLORIDA**  
**FLORIDA FISH AND WILDLIFE CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

**Order No. EO 18-12**

**Modification of 2018 Spiny Lobster Post-season Trap Retrieval Period**

The Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission of the State of Florida, acting under the authority of Article IV, Section 9, of the Florida Constitution, and acting through its Executive Director under Paragraph 22 of the Delegations of Authority, hereby modifies the regulations applicable to the possession of spiny lobster traps in Florida Waters as follows:

1. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in Chapter 68B-24, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.), all traps used for the harvest of spiny lobster shall be removed from Florida Waters by April 10, 2018. All spiny lobster found within traps after March 31, 2018 shall be returned to the water free, alive, and unharmed.
2. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in Chapter 68B-24, F.A.C., the Division of Law Enforcement of the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission shall grant an extension for the retrieval of traps from Florida Waters up to a maximum of 10 days after the expiration of the 10-day retrieval period, or a total of up to 20 days after the close of the 2017-2018 spiny lobster season, upon the following conditions:
  - a. A harvester or his lawfully designated agent shall request, in writing, permission for an extension of the 10-day period for retrieval of traps. The request shall specify the harvester's name and the appropriate license or trap number, the approximate number of traps and their location, the identity of the boat to be used for trap retrieval, the boat owner's name, the period of additional time needed for trap retrieval, and the reasons for the request.
  - b. On the day that trap removal begins, and on each subsequent day that it continues, the Commission's Division of Law Enforcement shall be advised in person or by telephone of the remaining trap locations and landing site.
  - c. Reasons for granting an extension shall be limited to hazardous weather (small craft warnings, at a minimum), medical emergencies that make it impossible for the harvester to operate a boat, or equipment breakdown.
3. In order to allow for cooperative trap recovery efforts, persons licensed to harvest spiny lobster using trap gear may sign up to retrieve other harvesters' traps and allow them to retrieve theirs. Harvesters shall indicate their desire to participate on a form provided by the Commission, attached and incorporated by reference, a copy of which shall be filed with a local FWC Law Enforcement office or emailed to [CustomerService@MyFWC.com](mailto:CustomerService@MyFWC.com). All authorized persons shall have a copy in their possession while participating in trap recovery efforts. Possession of the form shall allow the person to possess the listed harvester's traps until they can be returned to the owner.
  - a. Cooperative lobster trap recovery efforts are hereby authorized for spiny lobster harvesters.
  - b. Cooperative trap recovery efforts are hereby authorized to occur beginning April 1, 2018 through April 10, 2018.
4. This order does not authorize the harvest, landing, or sale of any spiny lobster during the closed season.
5. All other rules of the Commission relating to spiny lobster shall remain in effect.

Specific Authority:

Article IV, Section 9, Florida Constitution

Law Implemented:

Article IV, Section 9, Florida Constitution and subsection 120.81(5),  
Florida Statutes



Attest  
Agency Clerk

*Jill Canfield*

Given under my hand and seal of the Florida  
Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission  
on this 22<sup>nd</sup> day of March, 2018.

*Thomas H. Sutton*

*Eric Sutton*  
Eric Sutton  
Executive Director

