

New Rule, R.1995 d.82, effective February 6, 1995.

See: 26 N.J.R. 4277(b), 27 N.J.R. 487(a).

Administrative Correction.

See: 27 N.J.R. 2739(a).

Amended by R.1996 d.587, effective December 16, 1996 (operative January 1, 1997).

See: 28 N.J.R. 3998(a), 28 N.J.R. 5231(a).

Changed section name from "Striped bass trophy program"; and substantially amended section.

7:25-18.14 Otter and beam trawls

(a) All trawl net doors possessed on the waters of the State of New Jersey must contain the official documentation number or the state registration number of the vessel to whom they belong indelibly branded or stamped in block letters no less than two inches in height on the surface of each door.

1. Trawl doors shall be used only by the vessel which corresponds to the branded or stamped numbers. A vessel may utilize another vessel's trawl doors provided the vessel owner utilizing such doors contacts the Division's Bureau of Law Enforcement at 609-748-2050 in advance and provides the following information: name of owner and vessel borrowing doors, name of owner, vessel and branded or stamped number of borrowed doors. The vessel owner borrowing the trawl doors shall also be responsible for contacting the Bureau of Law Enforcement in advance to indicate when he will begin utilizing his own trawl doors.

(b) No vessel may have available for immediate use any otter or beam trawl while on the marine waters of this State during the hours between sunset and sunrise except on the Atlantic Ocean, at a distance of greater than two miles from the coast line. An otter or beam trawl that conforms to one of the following is considered not "available for immediate use":

1. A net stowed below deck, provided:

i. It is located below the main working deck from which the net is deployed and retrieved;

ii. The towing wires, including the "leg" wires are detached from the net; and

iii. It is fan-folded (flaked) and bound around its circumference;

2. A net stowed and lashed down on deck, provided:

i. It is securely fastened to the deck of the vessel;

ii. The towing wires, including the leg wires are detached from the net; and

iii. It is fan-folded (flaked) and bound around its circumference; or

3. A net is on a reel and is covered and secured; provided:

i. The entire surface of the net is covered with canvas or other similar material and held in place by

line bound securely around the entire net in such a manner so that no section of the net is exposed;

ii. The towing wires or towing lines located between the net and the trawl doors shall be completely detached from the trawl doors; and

iii. The cod end closure rope shall be removed from the cod end.

(c) To determine compliance with any established minimum mesh requirement for an otter or beam trawl, the following procedures shall be employed. Stretched mesh sizes are measured by a wedge-shaped gauge having a taper of two centimeters in eight centimeters and a thickness of two and three-tenths millimeters, inserted into the meshes under pressure or pull of five kilograms. The mesh size of the cod end of the net will be the average measurement of any series of 20 consecutive meshes measured at least 10 meshes from the lacings, beginning at the after end and running parallel to the long axis.

(d) No person shall use any device or method which would have the effect of reducing an established minimum mesh size; provided, however, that chafing gear which does not obstruct the meshes of the top half of the cod end may be attached and net strengtheners may be attached to the cod end of the trawl net if such net strengtheners consist of mesh material similar to the material of the cod end and have a mesh size of at least twice the authorized minimum mesh size.

(e) A vessel or person utilizing a roller rig trawl gear shall not utilize rollers greater than 18 inches in diameter.

(f) The operator of, or any other person aboard, any fishing vessel shall immediately comply with instructions and signals issued by an authorized law enforcement officer and comply with instructions to facilitate safe boarding and inspection of the vessel, its gear, equipment, and catch, for the purpose of enforcement of this section.

(g) Any vessel in the act of fishing, upon being boarded and instructed by an authorized law enforcement officer, shall haul back, or retrieve from the waters for inspection, all gear being utilized. After being so instructed, the operator of the vessel, or any other person so instructed, shall have a 30 minute time period to commence haul back and shall continue haul back or retrieval at an ordinary rate and without interruption until the gear is on board and available for inspection.

(h) Possession of an otter trawl and doors shall subject said vessel to inspection for compliance with this section by authorized enforcement personnel. Any nets or doors possessed or used in violation of this section shall be subject to forfeiture under authority of N.J.S.A. 23:10-21.

(i) Violation of any section of this subchapter, or any license or order issued pursuant to it, shall subject the violator to the penalties prescribed in N.J.S.A. 23:2B-14. Penalties consist of \$100.00 to \$3,000 for the first offense and \$200.00 to \$5,000 for any subsequent offense.

(j) Special provisions applicable to the commercial harvest of summer flounder are as follows:

1. The possession of more than 100 pounds of summer flounder during the period of May 1 through October 31 or the possession of more than 200 pounds of summer flounder during the period of November 1 through April 30 on board a vessel or landed from a vessel shall constitute a directed fishery for summer flounder.

2. A person shall not possess any summer flounder less than 13 inches in length, or as modified in (j)3 below, which have been harvested by vessels in a commercial fishery for summer flounder except that summer flounder taken under a hook and line summer flounder permit shall not be less than the size limit specified at N.J.A.C. 7:25-18.1.

3. A person utilizing an otter or beam trawl in the directed fishery for summer flounder shall not use a net of less than 5.5 inches stretched diamond mesh or 6.0 inches minimum stretched square mesh, inside measurement applied throughout the cod end for at least 75 continuous meshes forward of the terminus of the net. Any vessels violating the minimum mesh restrictions shall forfeit the owner and the vessel's privilege to land any summer flounder less than 14 inches in length in addition to any civil or criminal penalties prescribed by law. Loss of a vessel's privilege to land any summer flounder less than 14 inches will apply regardless of vessel ownership. The possession of any net less than the minimum specified above in this paragraph, on board a vessel engaged in a directed fishery for summer flounder is prohibited unless such net is not available for immediate use as defined in (b) above or is one of the following:

i. Vessels fishing in the fly net fishery are exempt from the minimum mesh size requirement. A fly net is a two seam otter trawl with the following configuration:

(1) The net has large mesh webbing in the wings with a stretch mesh measure of eight inches to 64 inches;

(2) The first body (belly) section of the net consists of 35 meshes or more of eight inch stretch mesh webbing or larger; and

(3) In the body section of the net the stretch mesh decreases in size relative to the wings and continues to decrease throughout the extensions to the cod end, which generally has a webbing of two inch stretch mesh.

4. A vessel shall not land more than 100 pounds of summer flounder during the period of May 1 through October 31 or more than 200 pounds of summer flounder during the period of November 1 through April 30, in New Jersey on any one trip unless said vessel is in possession of a valid New Jersey Summer Flounder Permit to participate in the directed fishery for summer flounder. Vessels fishing under the special terms of a quota transfer or combination program as provided in (j)6 below shall be exempt from this requirement if such terms specify that a New Jersey Summer Flounder Permit is not necessary to land summer flounder in New Jersey. The permit shall be issued in the name of the vessel and the owner and for the specific gear type(s) used to qualify for the permit.

i. Applicants for a New Jersey Summer Flounder Permit shall complete an application provided by the Department. Applicants applying to use hook and line shall submit their applications no later than May 31, 1994. Applications for a New Jersey Summer Flounder Permit for hook and line received after the above date shall be denied.

ii. To be eligible for a New Jersey Summer Flounder Permit the vessel's owner shall meet the following criteria:

(1) The vessel shall have landed and sold at least 1,000 pounds of summer flounder in New Jersey in each of two years during the period of 1985-1992;

(2) The vessel shall have possessed a valid New Jersey otter trawl, pound net, or gill net license or a valid Federal summer flounder permit during each of the two years it qualified based upon the pounds of summer flounder landed and sold in (i)4ii(1) above. Vessels providing documentation regarding the amount of summer flounder landed for two years between January 1, 1985 to November 2, 1988 or vessels providing documentation of harvest by hook and line are exempt from this requirement; and

(3) Applicants shall provide weigh out slips to document the amount of summer flounder landed and copies of their New Jersey otter trawl, pound net or gill net license or Federal summer flounder permit for the respective years.

iii. The New Jersey Summer Flounder Permit shall be on board the vessel to which it is issued at all times. The permit is valid from the date of issuance and for any subsequent years unless revoked as part of a penalty action. The vessel, when engaged in the directed summer flounder fishery, may only have on board the gear type(s) listed on the New Jersey Summer Flounder Permit.

(1) The owner of a permitted vessel may transfer his or her New Jersey Summer Flounder Permit, upon application to the Department, as follows:

(A) To his or her replacement vessel, provided the replacement vessel is of equal or less gross registered tonnage and vessel registered length. The vessel being replaced shall no longer be eligible for a New Jersey Summer Flounder Permit, or

(B) Along with the sale of his or her vessel to a new owner. The owner selling the vessel shall no longer be eligible for a New Jersey Summer Flounder Permit based on the harvesting history of the vessel being sold.

(2) Transfer of a permit to a new vessel shall be limited to the same gear type(s) of the originally permitted vessel.

(3) Applicants for permit transfer shall complete an application provided by the Department, and no permit may be transferred without the prior approval of the Department.

iv. A vessel possessing a valid New Jersey Summer Flounder Permit to commercially harvest summer flounder by angling or hook and line and when operating under the permit shall be subject to the following:

(1) Crew size shall be limited to no more than five persons, including the captain;

(2) The vessel shall not carry any passengers for hire. When carrying passengers for hire the New Jersey Summer Flounder Permit is not valid and the recreational possession limits and seasonal restrictions as specified in N.J.A.C. 7:25-18.1 apply.

v. A vessel that does not possess a New Jersey Summer Flounder Permit shall be permitted to land not more than 100 pounds of summer flounder during the period of May 1 through October 31, or not more than 200 pounds of summer flounder during the period of November 1 through April 30 on any trip, except that vessels taking summer flounder by angling or hook and line shall be subject to the possession limits established in N.J.A.C. 7:25-18.1.

5. The annual summer flounder harvest quota for New Jersey shall be determined by the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council as implemented by the National Marine Fisheries Service. All landings of summer flounder in New Jersey shall be applied to the New Jersey annual summer flounder quota unless New Jersey enters into an agreement with another state(s) to transfer or combine summer flounder commercial quotas, as provided for pursuant to (j)6 below, and such agreement indicates otherwise.

i. Ten percent, but not more than 200,000 pounds of the New Jersey annual summer flounder quota, shall be allocated each year for by-catch landings when any of the three seasons for the directed commercial fishery

are closed. The by-catch landings shall be divided between the three seasons (January-April, May-August, September-December) at the same percentage as for the directed fishery specified at (j)5ii below or as modified by the Commissioner.

(1) Any by-catch not landed during the season allocated shall be added to the directed fishery of the following season except during the last season (September-December).

(2) If any of the by-catch allowance has not been landed by December 1 in any calendar year the remaining amount shall be added to the directed summer flounder fishery quota.

ii. The balance of the New Jersey annual quota for the summer flounder fishery remaining after deducting the by-catch allowance specified in (j)5i, above shall be divided into three seasons and daily trip limits as follows:

(1) January-April: 39.28 percent, 10,000 pound trip limit.

(2) May-August: 16.83 percent, 1,000 pound trip limit.

(3) September-December: 43.89 percent, 2,500 pound trip limit.

iii. No vessel shall have in possession or land and no dealer shall accept from any one vessel more than the daily trip limit of summer flounder in any one calendar day.

iv. Any vessel participating in a directed summer flounder fishery shall notify the Department of the time and place of unloading of the vessel at least two hours in advance of such unloading. Notification shall include a phone call to (609) 748-2050 unless changed by notice to permit holders via first class mail.

v. If a minimum of 100,000 pounds of the New Jersey summer flounder quota remains unlanded as of December 1 in any calendar year, then there shall be an unlimited daily trip limit for the remainder of that calendar year or until the quota specified in (j)5ii above is landed, whichever occurs first.

vi. The Commissioner, or his or her designee, shall close the season for the directed and/or by-catch commercial summer flounder fishery upon four days public notice of the projected date the season quota shall be caught. Public notice shall include letters by first class mail to all permitted New Jersey Summer Flounder Dealers and New Jersey Summer Flounder Permit holders.

vii. Once the season has been closed for the directed commercial summer flounder fishery, no vessel shall land any summer flounder and no dealer shall accept any summer flounder landed in New Jersey in excess of the by-catch allowances specified in (i)1 and 4 above and provided the amount of summer flounder landed from any vessel shall not exceed 10 percent, by weight, of the total weight of all species landed and sold. All vessels taking summer flounder by hook and line during a closed season for the directed commercial fishery shall be subject to the possession limits specified in N.J.A.C. 7:25-18.1 or as modified by the Commissioner. If the entire season and/or annual quota including the by-catch allowance has been landed, then no vessel or person shall land or sell any summer flounder and no dealer or person shall accept or buy any summer flounder landed in New Jersey.

viii. If the Commissioner, or his or her designee, closes the season prematurely because of unanticipated environmental events resulting in the quota not being landed by the projected date and at least one month remains in the current season, then the Commissioner, or his or her designee, may reopen the season for a specified period of time upon seven days public notice. Public notice shall be made as specified in (i)5ii above.

ix. If the quota for a particular season is not taken, the balance shall be reallocated for the following season, except that any balance existing as of December 31 of any year shall not be reallocated.

x. If the quota for either of the first two seasons is exceeded, the amount overharvested shall be deducted from the third season.

xi. If the quota for any year is exceeded, the amount over harvested will be deducted from the following year's annual quota. The remaining annual quota will then be allocated as defined in (j)5i and ii above.

xii. Beginning in 1994, the Department shall notify the holders of New Jersey Summer Flounder Permits of the season allocations no later than January 31 of the year to which the allocation applies. Notification shall be accomplished by first class mail to permit holders.

xiii. All New Jersey Summer Flounder Permit holders shall be required to complete monthly reports supplied by the Department. The monthly report shall be signed by the permittee attesting to the validity of the information and be submitted so it is received by the Department no later than 15 working days following the end of the reported month at the following address:

New Jersey Summer Flounder Program
Nacote Creek Research Station
P.O. Box 418
Port Republic, NJ 08241

(1) The monthly report shall include, but not be limited, to the following information: name, New Jersey Summer Flounder Permit number of the vessel, total amount (in pounds) of each species taken, dates caught, time at sea, duration of fishing time, gear type used to harvest, number of tows, area fished, crew size, landing port, date sold and buyer. This information shall be provided for any trip in which summer flounder are landed. New Jersey Summer Flounder Permit holders who also possess a Federal summer flounder permit and are required to report monthly to the Federal government may submit the "STATE" copy of their Federal log book in satisfaction of the New Jersey reporting requirements.

(2) If no trips for summer flounder were taken and no summer flounder were landed during the month, a report to that effect shall be required.

6. Pursuant to Amendment 5 of the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council's Summer Flounder Management Plan, the Commissioner may enter into agreements with other states to transfer or combine summer flounder commercial quotas. Such agreements shall specify the terms and conditions under which vessels not in possession of a New Jersey Summer Flounder Permit may land summer flounder in New Jersey, as well as how the landings will be applied to the quota. Any agreement developed by the Commissioner and any other state is not valid until such time as it has been reviewed and approved by the Northeast Regional Director of the National Marine Fisheries Service.

7. No fish dealer shall accept any summer flounder from any vessel or harvester unless such dealer is in possession of a valid New Jersey Summer Flounder Dealers Permit. A New Jersey Summer Flounder Dealers Permit may be obtained by completing an application supplied by the Department and submitting it to:

New Jersey Summer Flounder Dealers Permit
Nacote Creek Research Station
P.O. Box 418
Port Republic, NJ 08241

8. No dealer shall accept from any vessel more than the by-catch amounts of summer flounder specified at (j)4 above unless said vessel is in possession of its valid New Jersey Summer Flounder Permit.

9. No vessel shall land and no dealer shall accept any summer flounder which have been frozen, filleted or processed in any way. Only whole, fresh summer flounder may be landed.

10. Any harvester or vessel landing summer flounder in New Jersey for the purpose of sale shall sell all summer flounder to a permitted New Jersey Summer Flounder Dealer.

11. All permitted New Jersey Summer Flounder Dealers shall provide weekly reports to the Division listing the amount of summer flounder landed on a daily basis by size category and any other information that may be required by the Commissioner or as a result of an agreement with other states pursuant to (j)6 above. Such report shall be FAXed to the Division at 609-984-1408 no later than two days following the week's end or sent by any other method approved by the Department. For the purpose of this provision, the week shall begin on Sunday and end on Saturday.

12. Any person violating the provisions of this section shall be subject to the penalties prescribed in N.J.S.A. 23:2B-14 in addition to the following:

i. Failure to submit the application by June 30, 1993 for use of otter trawls, pound nets, gill nets or scallop dredges or by May 31, 1994 for use of hook and line or to attach the required documentation to the application shall result in the denial of the permit.

ii. Falsification or misrepresentation of any information on the application including documentation provided to verify the amount of summer flounder landed as specified in (i)4 above shall result in the denial or revocation of the permit in addition to any civil or criminal penalties prescribed by law.

iii. Failure to comply with the provisions of (j)3 above, minimum mesh size, (i)5iii above, landing, possessing or accepting in excess of the daily trip limit for summer flounder, (j)5iv, failure of notification of landing of summer flounder, (j)5vii above, landing summer flounder after the directed fishery and/or by-catch season has been closed, or (j)5xiii above, failure to submit accurate and timely monthly reports, (j)8 accepting more than by-catch amounts from non-permitted vessels, (j)9 accepting any summer flounder other than fresh product, or (a), (b), (d), (e) or (f) above or N.J.S.A. 23:3-46 through 23:3-47 shall result in the suspension or revocation of the vessel's New Jersey Summer Flounder Permit or the dealers New Jersey Summer Flounder Dealers Permit according to the following schedule:

- (1) First offense: 60 days suspension
- (2) Second offense: 120 days suspension
- (3) Third offense: permanent revocation

iv. Any person who has had his or her New Jersey Summer Flounder Dealers Permit suspended or revoked shall not land or permit the landing of any summer flounder at his or her facility during the suspension or revocation under the provisions of another permittee's New Jersey Summer Flounder Dealers Permit.

(k) Special provisions applicable to a directed weakfish fishery are as follows:

1. The possession of more than 100 pounds of weakfish on board a vessel or landed from a vessel shall constitute a directed fishery for weakfish.

2. A person shall not possess any weakfish less than 12 inches in length that have been harvested by otter or beam trawl during the period from September 1 through December 31. During the period of January 1 through August 31, the minimum size limit for weakfish harvested by otter or beam trawl is 13 inches in length pursuant to N.J.A.C. 7:25-18.12(a).

3. A person utilizing a beam or otter trawl in a directed fishery for weakfish shall not use a net of less than 3.75 inches stretched diamond mesh or 3.375 inches stretched square mesh, inside measurement, applied throughout the cod end for at least 75 continuous meshes forward of the terminus of the net. The possession of any net less than the minimum mesh specified above in this paragraph, or as modified by the Commissioner pursuant to (p) below, on board a vessel in a directed fishery for weakfish is prohibited.

4. A person shall not land any weakfish harvested by otter trawl except during the open seasons of January 1 through July 31 and October 13 through December 31 or as modified by the Commissioner pursuant to (p) below. No dealer shall accept any weakfish landed in New Jersey taken by otter trawl except during such open seasons or as modified by the Commissioner pursuant to (p) below.

(l) Special provisions applicable to a directed winter flounder fishery are as follows:

1. The possession of more than 100 pounds of winter flounder on board a vessel or landed from a vessel shall constitute a directed fishery for winter flounder.

2. A person shall not possess any winter flounder less than 12 inches in length that have been harvested by otter or beam trawl, or any other net, trap, dredge or commercial gear.

3. A person utilizing an otter or beam trawl in a directed fishery for winter flounder shall not use a net of less than 5.0 inches stretched mesh inside measurement applied throughout the cod end for at least 75 continuous meshes forward of the terminus of the net.

4. No person shall fish for or land any winter flounder taken by otter trawl or by any other net, trap, dredge or commercial gear in New Jersey waters, except during the open season of December 1 through May 31 or as modified by the Commissioner pursuant to (p) below. No dealer shall accept any winter flounder taken in New Jersey waters except during such open season or as modified by the Commissioner pursuant to (p) below. The harvest of winter flounder by the use of fyke nets is subject to the provisions of N.J.A.C. 7:25-18.5(g)2.

5. Except during the open season specified at (l)4 above, a vessel with any winter flounder on board shall

not have any otter or beam trawl available for immediate use while on the marine waters of this State. An otter or beam trawl that conforms to the provisions at (b)1 through 3 above is considered not "available for immediate use."

(m) Special provisions concerning the harvest of bluefish are as follows:

1. The annual bluefish allocation to the otter trawl fishery shall be 14.7 percent of New Jersey's annual commercial bluefish quota as allocated by the National Marine Fisheries Service.

2. A person shall not land any bluefish by otter trawl except during the open season of January 1 through December 7 or as modified by the Commissioner pursuant to (p) below.

(n) Special provisions applicable to a directed scup fishery are as follows:

1. The possession of more than 4,000 pounds of scup on board a vessel or landed from a vessel shall constitute a directed fishery for scup.

2. A person utilizing an otter or beam trawl in a directed fishery for scup shall not use a net of less than 4.0 inches stretched mesh inside measurement applied throughout the cod end for at least 75 continuous meshes forward of the terminus of the net.

(o) For the purpose of this section, "land" shall mean to begin offloading fish, to offload fish or to enter port with fish.

(p) The Commissioner, with the approval of the New Jersey Marine Fisheries Council, may modify quotas, mesh sizes, minimum size limits and seasons specified in this section by notice in order to maintain compliance with any fishery management plan approved by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission pursuant to 16 U.S.C. § 5104(b). The Department shall publish notice of any such modification in the Division's commercial regulation publication and the New Jersey Register.

New Rule, R.1993 d.56, effective January 19, 1993.
See: 24 N.J.R. 4249(a), 25 N.J.R. 303(a).
Amended by R.1994 d.44, effective January 18, 1994.
See: 25 N.J.R. 2167(a), 26 N.J.R. 353(a).
Amended by R.1995 d.82, effective February 6, 1995.
See: 26 N.J.R. 4277(b), 27 N.J.R. 487(a).
Administrative Correction.
See: 27 N.J.R. 1794(a).
Administrative Change.
See: 27 N.J.R. 2390(b).
Administrative Correction.
See: 27 N.J.R. 3420(a).
Administrative Correction.
See: 27 N.J.R. 3420(b).
Administrative Change.
See: 27 N.J.R. 4916(c).
Emergency amendment R.1996 d.299, effective May 31, 1996 (to expire July 30, 1996).
See: 28 N.J.R. 3182(a).

Administrative Change.
See: 28 N.J.R. 3786(a).
Adopted concurrent proposal, R.1996 d.392, effective July 24, 1996.
See: 28 N.J.R. 3182(a), 28 N.J.R. 3956(a).
Administrative change.
See: 28 N.J.R. 4784(a).
Amended by R.1996 d.587, effective December 16, 1996 (operative January 1, 1997).
See: 28 N.J.R. 3998(a), 28 N.J.R. 5231(a).
Substantially amended section.

7:25-18.15 Atlantic sturgeon management

(a) An individual shall not take or attempt to take, possess or land any Atlantic sturgeon in the State, without a valid Atlantic Sturgeon Commercial Gill Net Permit or a valid Atlantic Sturgeon By-Catch Permit issued by the Department. No holder of either permit shall land an Atlantic sturgeon unless such sturgeon has a valid, properly affixed possession tag as specified at (g) and (h) below. No person shall possess any Atlantic sturgeon that does not have a valid, properly affixed possession tag. "Land" shall mean to begin offloading fish, to offload fish or to enter port with fish.

(b) An Atlantic Sturgeon Commercial Gill Net Permit may be transferred to another individual eligible for a gill net license for the purpose of taking Atlantic sturgeon with gill nets. The permittee shall request approval to transfer the permit in writing to the Department, and no such transfer shall be valid until the transferee has received a valid permit issued in his or her name from the Department. An Atlantic sturgeon commercial gill net possession tag may be transferred to another Atlantic Sturgeon Commercial Gill Net Permit holder. The permittees shall list on the permittee's annual report pursuant to (l) below the name of the permittee or permittees to whom the permittee transferred any possession tag. The recipient of the transferred possession tag or tags shall list in the annual report pursuant to (l) below each such transferred tag received.

(c) To qualify for an Atlantic Sturgeon Commercial Gill Net Permit, an applicant shall comply with the provisions below by April 2, 1993:

1. The applicant shall complete an application provided by the Department, listing the dressed weight of Atlantic sturgeon harvested by gill net during 1988, 1989 or 1990, whichever year he landed the greatest dressed weight, or the number of nine-inch or greater stretched mesh gill nets purchased between January 1, 1989 and January 10, 1991 with the intent of entering a directed Atlantic sturgeon fishery.

2. The applicant shall attach documented proof of the dressed weight of Atlantic sturgeon harvested by gill net during 1988, 1989 or 1990, whichever year he landed the greatest dressed weight, or the number of nine-inch or greater stretched mesh gill nets purchased between January 1, 1989 and January 10, 1991. Documented proof shall consist of one or more of the following: