

Safe Boating and Angling Practices near Commercial Fishing Activity

* If you observe either of the standardized net-marking aids and/or observe a fishing tug engaged in fishing activities, refer to the information contained on the opposite side of this pamphlet. This information will help you determine the distances you should maintain from the vessels and the fishing gear to ensure your safety.

* If you observe a series of closely spaced floats between markers do not attempt to cross. These floats indicate that the nets are set very near the surface and present a hazard to your vessel and angling gear. This type of activity generally occurs in the Spring or the Fall when the water temperature is cooler. This method of fishing is moderated somewhat during the July-August boating and angling season.

* When you observe an open space that has Doubled Marker Buoys or Single 8 Litre Yellow Jugs on either side of the opening, exercise caution and proceed through this opening.

* If you are utilizing down-riggers in your fishing activities be careful not to entangle your gear in commercial nets. Failure to successfully free your down-rigger(s) from the net may cause the stern of your boat to swing into the wind and allow wave action to swamp your boat. ALWAYS KEEP AN EASILY ACCESSIBLE PAIR OF WIRE CUTTERS NEAR YOUR DOWN-RIGGER(S) TO AVOID A POTENTIALLY SERIOUS ACCIDENT.

* If you lose your tackle in a fishing net, inform the net owner as soon as possible. Fishing lures present a serious safety hazard to the workers on fishing vessels when the catch is harvested. Fishing marker buoys have the owner's licence number or name marked on the surface. In some cases, it may be possible to retrieve the tackle item from the commercial fisherman.

General Boating Safety

* Do ensure you have your vessel equipped with Canadian Coast Guard Approved life-saving equipment and confirm your vessel is in a seaworthy condition prior to departure.

* Do check the weather reports prior to your excursion. All of the Great Lakes, Lake Nipigon and Lake of the Woods are subject to sudden and extreme changes in boating conditions.

* Let a friend, neighbour or the Marina operator know where you are going and at what time you expect to return.

ABOUT THIS PAMPHLET

The Commercial Fishing Industry, in cooperation with the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters, the Canadian Coast Guard and other stakeholders, has established a standardized net-marking system to aid you in your safe boating and angling practices. This system will help you recognize that commercial fishing activities are occurring in the area in which you are operating and REMIND YOU TO EXERCISE ADDITIONAL CAUTION.

Included in this pamphlet is a description of the most common types of gear utilized by the commercial fishermen in Ontario. By understanding how the various kinds of fishing gear are used and where they are located it is our hope that you can prevent possible collision and/or entanglement with commercial fishing gear.

WE URGE YOU TO READ THE ENTIRE CONTENTS OF THIS PAMPHLET CAREFULLY.

By doing so you may avoid collision, entanglement or possible swamping of your recreational vessel.

If you are a boater, this pamphlet's information will help you avoid conflict with commercial fishing vessels making way through the water and possible collision with submerged fishing nets.

If you are an angler, there are a few simple suggestions in this pamphlet which will aid you in your efforts to avoid entanglement of your tackle and/or down-rigger(s) in submerged fishing nets.

Caution!

Fishing Vessels that are engaged in commercial fishing operations have restricted manoeuvring capabilities. Navigational protocol requires other vessels to give way while commercial fishing operations are underway.

Exercise caution when approaching these vessels!

It is an offence under the Canadian Criminal Code to tamper with Commercial Fishing Nets. If you observe anyone tampering with commercial fishing gear please call your nearest MNR office or Crime Stoppers.

Ontario's Commercial Fishery

In Ontario, the fishery resource is allocated by the Minister of Natural Resources. Allocations are allotted to the following areas: resource conservation, the aboriginal food and ceremonial fishery, the commercial fishery, the angling fishery and other stakeholders. Ontario's Commercial Fishery provides the non-angling public access to Ontario's superb quality fish through restaurants, dining rooms, hotels, grocery stores, supermarkets as well as local and dock-side outlets.

In order to assign annual harvest limits to each Commercial Fishing Licence, Ontario's Fishery Management and Scientific Personnel analyze data derived from various assessment and sampling programs. The harvest limits assigned to commercial fishing licences are commonly referred to as "Individual Transferable Quotas." This broad-based Quota Management System was introduced across the province in 1984.

Commercial Fishing Licences in Ontario are limited to specific geographical areas referred to as Quota Zones. Each of the Quota Zones has natural attributes which dictate the common fish species and the relative productivity of the waters in that particular area. Commercial fishing licences authorize each licence holder to harvest specific amounts of Quota species. Quota species can differ from area to area.

All of Ontario's licenced commercial fisheries are subject to inspection or alternative audit procedures prior to landing any portion of their commercial catch, including fish utilized for personal consumption. Fish harvested commercially in Ontario's waters are continually tracked by various supplementary audit procedures until sold in the open marketplace.

The commercial fisheries of Ontario provide approximately 3,200 employment opportunities. Captains, crews, packers, processors and shippers all form an integral team bringing over one-hundred and fifty million dollars worth of fresh or frozen fish products annually to the marketplace in excellent condition.

The industry cooperates with, and acts in partnership with, the Ministry of Natural Resources in a number of assessment, sampling and compliance programs. In addition, the industry provides administrative services to collect harvest Royalties on behalf of Ontario's Minister of Finance.

The Ontario Commercial Fisheries' Association, along with many regional Commercial Fishermen's Associations, acts as a liaison with the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, the Canadian Department of Fisheries and Oceans, the Ontario angling community, other government agencies and various stakeholders throughout Ontario and the Northern United States of America.

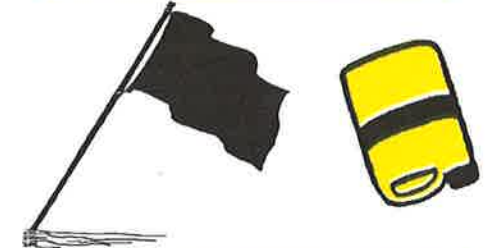
This pamphlet was prepared by the Ontario Commercial Fisheries' Association. Your comments and suggestions are welcome. Further information concerning Ontario's commercial fishing industry and the products available can be obtained by phoning the OCFA office or accessing the OCFA Home Page on the Internet at: <http://www.ocfa.on.ca>

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Safe Boating Safe Angling & Ontario Commercial Fishing

Standardized Marking of
Commercial Fishing Nets



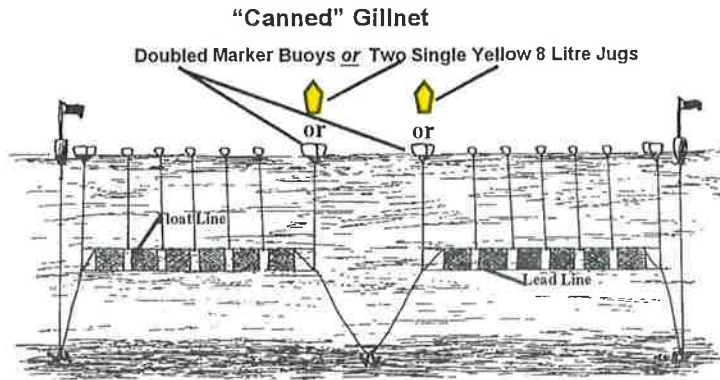
A staff (pole, stake) in the water on which the Uppermost Flag is a 30 cm (12") Square Black Flag signifies that commercial fishing activities are occurring in your immediate area.

or

A Yellow Plastic Marker Jug with a Black Stripe around its perimeter signifies that commercial fishing activities are occurring in your immediate area.

Exercise Safe Boating and Angling Practices! Have a Safe and Pleasant Season!

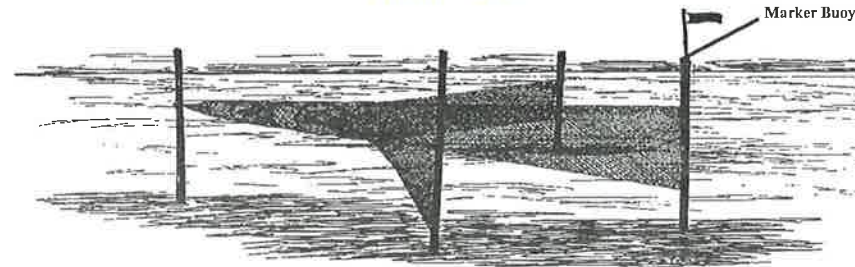
“TRAWL” Fishing



Safe Boating and Angling Practices near “CANNED” Gillnets

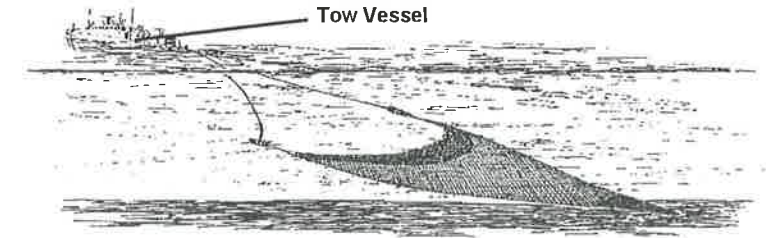
Stay a minimum 25 Metres (80 Feet) away from Marker Buoys. Cross through the net set between Doubled Marker Buoys or the two single 8 Litre Yellow Jugs. Lift your down-riggers when passing through the opening. Avoid angling near any of the flotation “Cans.”

“HOOP” Nets



Safe Boating and Angling Practices near “HOOP” Nets

Boaters should not travel inside any of the Marker Buoys designating a Hoop Net. Anglers should stay a minimum of 75 Metres (245 Feet) away from any of the Marker Buoys on a Hoop Net to avoid tackle entanglement in the netting. (See entrapment gear highlighted below for further information)



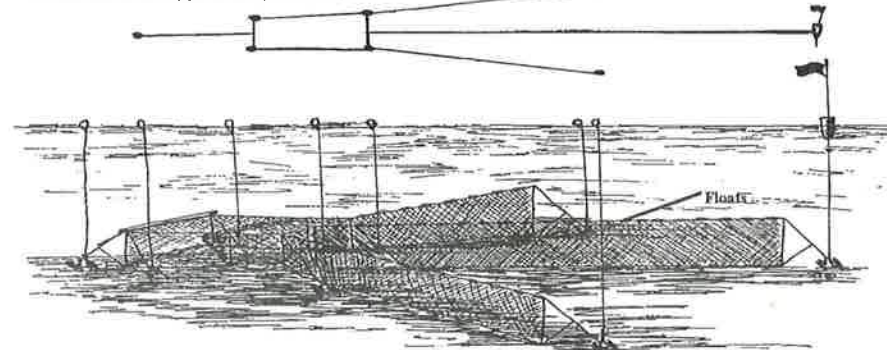
Safe Boating and Angling Practices near “TRAWLERS”

Allow a free space of 300 Metres (1000 Feet) from the stern of a Trawler engaged in fishing. A Trawler engaged in fishing activity has a severely restricted capability to manoeuvre. Give way when encountering this vessel.

Illustrations by Elsie Thoonen

“TRAP” Nets

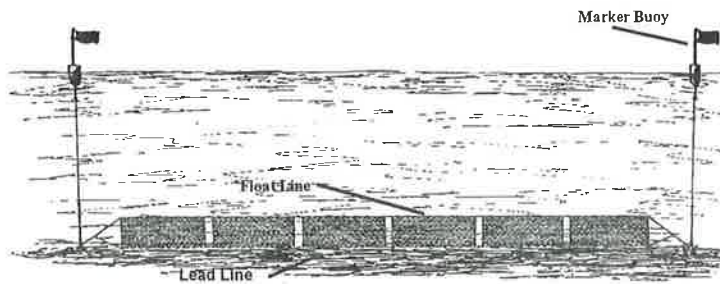
Aerial View of Typical Trap Net Layout



Safe Boating and Angling Practices near “TRAP” Nets

Boaters should not travel inside any of the Marker Buoys designating a Trap Net. Anglers should stay a minimum of 75 Metres (245 Feet) away from any of the Marker Buoys on a Trap Net to avoid tackle entanglement in the netting. (See entrapment gear highlighted below for further information)

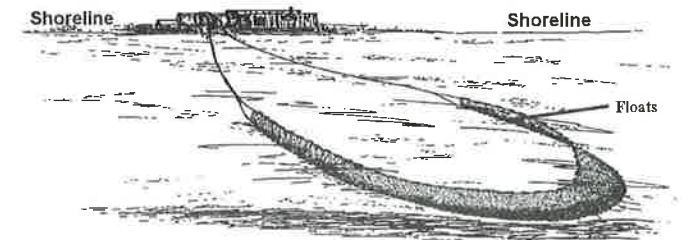
“BOTTOM SET” Gillnet



Safe Boating and Angling Practices near “BOTTOM SET” Nets

Stay a minimum of 25 Metres (80 Feet) away from Marker Buoys. In shallow waters of less than 5 Metres (16 feet) in depth, you should travel around the outside of the end marker of the net. In deeper water your vessel can cross over these nets at any location. Lift your down-riggers and angling gear when crossing these nets.

“SEINE” Net



Safe Boating and Angling Practices near “SEINE” Nets

Seine Net harvest activities are usually a continuous operation. The fisherman is likely near-at-hand during the harvest activity. The floats across the top of the net are visible during the operation and the cables running to the shore-winch are hidden under the water. Angling and boating activity should not take place inside the floats or other markers.



**Established
1945**

O. C. F. A.

“Entrapment” Gear

Trap Nets and Hoop Nets are utilized in the following areas.

St. Lawrence River System, Bay of Quinte, Lake Ontario and Embayment areas, Point Pelee, South Eastern Lake Huron, Manitoulin North Channel and South Shore and various Inland Lakes.

The size of Trap and Hoop Nets differs dramatically from very small to very large. If you wish detailed information regarding the location of these nets please contact local or regional fishermen. You will find telephone listings for fish processors and packers in the Yellow Pages throughout the province.

Alternative Marker

Yellow Jug with a Black Stripe around its Perimeter.

This End-Marker is normally utilized in place of the Black Flag and Staff in areas where the water is relatively shallow or the space is confined (i.e. near shore, embayment area). These areas make it impractical to use a Black Flag on a large staff.