

Connecticut Trawl Gear Characterization
Prepared by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

1.1 TRAWLS

1.1.1 Beam Trawls

1.1.1.1 Gear Description

The trawl net minimum mesh size in Connecticut waters is 5-1/2 inch (14-centimeter) diamond stretched or six-inch (15-centimeter) square stretched mesh in the cod end, with many exceptions depending on targeted species and time of year (CT DEP 2005b). See Connecticut regulations for detailed mesh sizes. For a general description and diagram of a beam trawl see the gear appendix.

1.1.1.2 Targeted Species

Fishermen cannot use trawls to take bait (CT DEP 2005b). Information on specific species caught in beam trawls is confidential due to very low participation in the fishery.

1.1.1.3 Number of Licensed and Active Fishermen

The CTDEP issues several types of licenses that can fish multiple gear types. One of these is the Commercial Fishing License, which allows fishermen to use beam trawls, among other gears. The number of active beam trawl fishermen is confidential.

1.1.1.4 Effort

Trawling is prohibited from March 1 through April 14, except for fly nets targeting sea herring (CT DEP 2005b). For areas closed to trawling, see Connecticut regulations. Geographic area fished and landings and effort by month fished is available, but confidential due to low participation in the fishery.

1.1.1.5 Status of the Fishery

Trends in landings and effort in the beam trawl fishery are confidential due to low participation in the fishery.

1.1.1.6 Sea Turtle Bycatch

There is no state-run observer program for the beam trawl fishery and no other sea turtle bycatch reports were available.

1.1.1.7 Laws and Regulations

The trawl net minimum mesh size in Connecticut waters is 5-1/2 inch (14-centimeter) diamond stretched or six-inch (15-centimeter) square stretched mesh in the cod end, with many exceptions depending on targeted species and time of year. Fishermen cannot use trawls to take bait (CT DEP 2005b).

1.1.2 Bottom Otter Trawls

1.1.2.1 Gear Description

The trawl net minimum mesh size in Connecticut waters is 5-1/2 inch (14-centimeter) diamond stretched or six-inch (15-centimeter) square stretched mesh in the cod end, with many exceptions depending on targeted species and time of year. See Connecticut regulations for detailed mesh sizes. Bottom trawls may not have rollers or cookies more than six inches (15 centimeters) in diameter (CT DEP 2005b). For a general description and diagram of a bottom otter trawl see the gear appendix.

1.1.2.2 Gear Deployment

For a general description of bottom otter trawl deployment see the gear appendix.

1.1.2.3 Targeted Species

Fishermen used bottom otter trawls to take winter flounder, summer flounder, scup, skates, conchs, butterfish, silver hake, loligo squid, tautog, and spiny dogfish (CT DEP 2005a). Fishermen cannot use trawls to take bait species under a marine bait license (CT DEP 2005b).

1.1.2.4 Number of Licensed and Active Fishermen

The CTDEP issues several types of licenses that can fish multiple gear types. One of these is the Commercial Fishing License, which allows fishermen to use bottom otter trawls, among other gears. From 2000 to 2003, the number of active bottom otter trawl fishermen increased from 26 to 46, then decreased to 33 in 2004 (Table 1).

Table 1. Active bottom otter trawl fishermen from 2000 to 2004.

Year	Active Bottom Otter Trawl Fishermen
2000	26
2001	28
2002	36
2003	46
2004	33

1.1.2.5 Effort

In 2004 effort by otter trawls was highest in the late spring and early summer (Figure 1, Table 1-1) (CT DEP 2005a). Effort was highest in Long Island Sound. The depth fished was not available. Trawling is prohibited from March 1 through April 14, except for fly nets targeting sea herring (CT DEP 2005b). For areas closed to trawling, see Connecticut regulations.

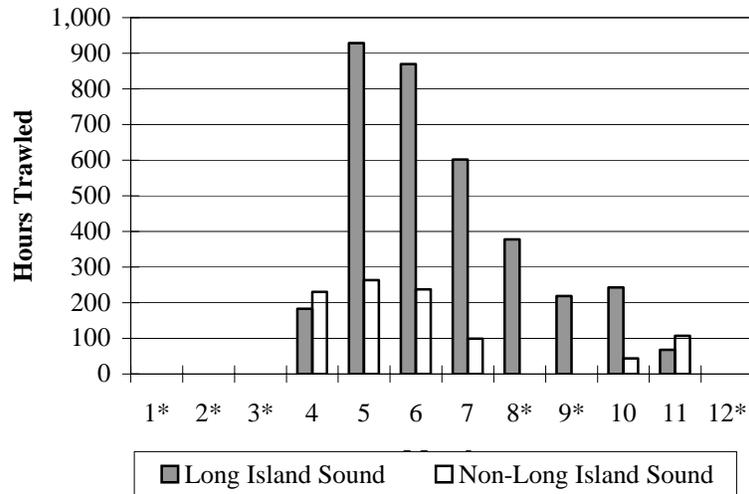


Figure 1. Effort by otter trawls in 2004 by month in Connecticut waters of Long Island Sound and non-federal waters outside of Long Island Sound

*Effort in the non-Long Island Sound Connecticut waters in January, February, March, August, September, and December; and effort in Long Island Sound Connecticut waters in February and December are confidential.

1.1.2.6 Status of the Fishery

From 2000 to 2004, landings in Connecticut from non-federal waters outside of Long Island Sound were greater than landings from Connecticut waters in Long Island Sound (Figure 2, Table 1-2). However, excluding 2000, hours trawled were greater in Long Island Sound. Landings declined from 2000 to 2004. From 2000 to 2004, there was also effort by otter trawl fishermen landing in Connecticut after fishing in the New York waters of Long Island Sound. This effort was 909 hours trawled in 2000, 307 hours trawled in 2001, and 37 hours trawled in 2002 (CT DEP 2005a). Effort in these waters in 2003 and 2004 and landings from these waters for all years is confidential due to the low number of fishermen trawling in the New York waters of Long Island Sound and landing their catch in Connecticut.

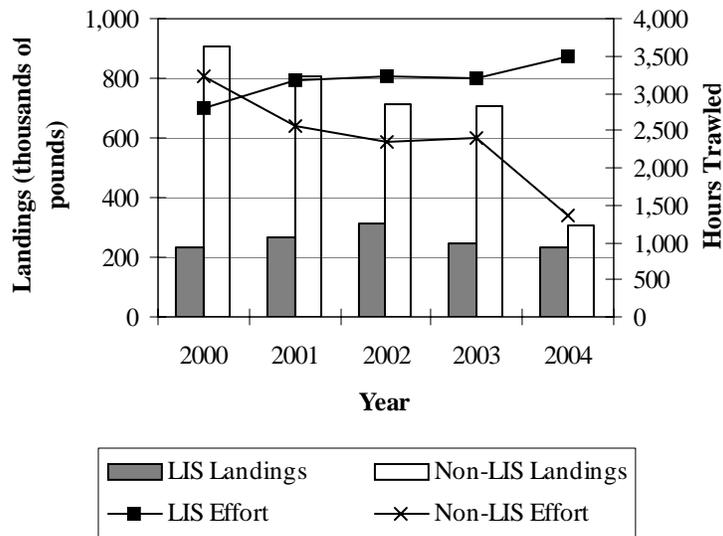


Figure 2. Landings and effort by otter trawls from 2000 to 2004 in Connecticut waters of Long Island Sound and non-federal waters outside of Long Island Sound

1.1.2.7 Sea Turtle Bycatch

There are no state-run observer programs in the otter trawl fishery and no other sea turtle bycatch reports were available.

1.1.2.8 Laws and Regulations

The trawl net minimum mesh size in Connecticut waters is 5-1/2 inch (14-centimeter) diamond stretched or six-inch (15-centimeter) square stretched mesh in the cod end, with many exceptions depending on targeted species and time of year. Bottom trawls may not have rollers or cookies more than six inches (15 centimeters) in diameter. Fishermen cannot use trawls to take bait species under a marine bait license (CT DEP 2005b).

WORKS CITED

CT DEP. 2005a. Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection data. Queries provided by Mathew Gates.

CT DEP. 2005b. State of Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection. 2005 Marine Fisheries Information Circular. <http://dep.state.ct.us/burnatr/fishing/marineinfo/marinecirc05.pdf>.

Gates, M. 2005. Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, Marine Fisheries Division. Personal Communication.

APPENDIX 1. DATA TABLES

Table 1-1. Otter trawl effort in 2004 by month in Connecticut waters of Long Island Sound and non-federal waters outside of Long Island Sound

Month	LIS Effort (hours trawled)	Non-LIS Effort (hours trawled)
1	0	*
2	*	*
3	0	*
4	183	231
5	929	263
6	869	238
7	602	99
8	377	*
9	219	*
10	242	44
11	68	108
12	*	*

*Data is confidential

Table 1-2. Otter trawl landings and effort from 2000 to 2004 in Connecticut waters of Long Island Sound and non-federal waters outside of Long Island Sound

Year	CT LIS Landings (pounds)	Non-LIS Landings (pounds)	CT LIS Effort (hours trawled)	Non-LIS Effort (hours trawled)
2000	235,985	906,019	2,800	3,233
2001	269,920	807,093	3,180	2,547
2002	312,375	710,549	3,231	2,350
2003	243,528	709,061	3,204	2,404
2004	235,773	307,759	3,503	1,372