

National Marine Fisheries Service
Virginia Pound Net Closure Notice
June 18, 2001

Dear Virginia Pound Net Licensee:

On June 18, 2001, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) issued a temporary rule that restricted the use of all pound net leaders of 8 inches or greater (≥ 20.3 cm) stretched mesh and all pound net leaders with stringers in Virginia waters of the mainstem Chesapeake Bay and tributaries. The purpose of this rule is to prevent unauthorized takings of sea turtles listed as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act. Effective June 19, 11:59 PM Eastern Standard Time, through July 19, 2001, all pound net leaders measuring 8 inches (20.3 cm) or greater stretched mesh and all pound net leaders with stringers must be tied up in the Virginia waters of the mainstem Chesapeake Bay (from the Maryland-Virginia State line (approximately 38° N. lat.) to the COLREGS line at the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay) and the tidal waters of the James, York, and Rappahannock Rivers. The leaders must be tied up in such a manner so that the mesh and stringers are not fishing in the water.

You are encouraged to obtain further information or a copy of the regulations by calling (978) 281-9328. A copy of the regulations can also be obtained through a link to the Office of the Federal Register at http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fedreg/frcont01.html. While this temporary rule was issued on June 18, the Federal Register notice will not be published until June 22, 2001.

Thank you for your support in the protection of endangered and threatened sea turtles in the Virginia waters of the Chesapeake Bay.

Sincerely,

Patricia A. Kurkul
Regional Administrator

cc: F/NER3 - Colligan
F/NEC4-PS - Merrick
F/EN2 – Green, Gregory
F/PR3 - Schroeder
F/SER3 - Bernhart
GCNE – Collins
VMRC – Travelsted/O'Reilly

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