

**TOURISM, ARTS AND HERITAGE CABINET**  
**Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources**  
**(Amended at ARRS Committee)**

**301 KAR 1:146. Commercial fishing gear.**

RELATES TO: KRS 150.010, 150.025, 150.120, 150.170, 150.175, 150.445, 150.450, 150.990

STATUTORY AUTHORITY: KRS 150.025(1), 150.450

NECESSITY, FUNCTION, AND CONFORMITY: KRS 150.025(1) authorizes the Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources to promulgate administrative regulations regarding the buying, selling, and transporting of fish and wildlife, the restriction of places where taking is allowed, and the application of administrative regulations to a limited area or the entire state. This administrative regulation establishes the legal methods that may be used by commercial fishers to harvest rough fish.

**Section 1. Gear Requirements.**

(1) The gear listed in subsections (2) through (16) of this section shall be the only legal commercial fishing gear allowed in commercial fishing waters established in 301 KAR 1:150 and under the conditions established in 301 KAR 1:155 by a licensed commercial fisher.

(2) A hoop net, wing net, straight net, or heart lead net shall have a minimum bar mesh size of three (3) inches, except that the minimum mesh size shall be one (1) inch in the following waters:

- (a) The Ohio River;
- (b) The Mississippi River; and
- (c) Those portions of the following waters open to commercial fishing pursuant to 301 KAR 1:150:
  - 1. The Cumberland River below Barkley Dam; and
  - 2. The Tennessee River below Kentucky Dam.

(3) A hoop may be made of any:

- (a) Size;
- (b) Shape; or
- (c) Material.

(4) Wings and leads shall be constructed of:

- (a) Natural multifilament; or
- (b) Synthetic multifilament.

(5) Netting used for wings and leads shall:

- (a) Be constructed of twine no smaller than number six (6) nylon or the equivalent;
- (b) Have a breaking strength of fifty-five (55) pounds or greater; and
- (c) Have a bar mesh size no larger than one (1) inch.

(6) Wings and leads may consist of either:

- (a) Knotted construction; or
- (b) Knotless construction.

(7) The maximum length of each hoop net wing or lead shall be sixty (60) feet.

(8) The following nets shall be fished as individual nets:

- (a) Hoop nets;
- (b) Wing nets;
- (c) Straight lead nets; or
- (d) Heart lead nets.

(9) Wings or leads shall:

- (a) Not be tied together to become a continuous multiple net unit; and

- (b) Be used only to lead fish into a hoop net.
- (10) One (1) commercial gear tag shall be attached to the first hoop of each net.
- (11) A gill or trammel net:
  - (a) May be fished:
    - 1. Weighted; or
    - 2. As a flag net; and
  - (b) Shall have one (1) commercial gear tag attached to each 100 feet or part thereof.
- (12) A gill or trammel net shall only be used in:
  - (a) The Ohio River;
  - (b) The Mississippi River; or
  - (c) An overflow lake adjacent to the Ohio or Mississippi rivers if the lake can be accessed from the river by a boat during high flow conditions, except as prohibited:
    - 1. On department Wildlife Management Areas pursuant to 301 KAR 4:020 or 4:050; or
    - 2. Pursuant to the requirements of 301 KAR 1:140.
- (13) The bar mesh size on gill or trammel nets shall be:
  - (a) At least three (3) inches in:
    - 1. The Mississippi River; and
    - 2. Overflow lakes adjacent to the Mississippi River;
  - (b) At least four (4) inches from November 1 through April 30 in:
    - 1. The Ohio River; and
    - 2. Overflow lakes adjacent to the Ohio River; and
  - (c) Between four (4) and four and one-half (4 1/2) inches from May 1 through October 31 in:
    - 1. The Ohio River; and
    - 2. Overflow lakes adjacent to the Ohio River.
- (14) A commercial trotline shall:
  - (a) Have more than fifty (50) hooks placed no closer than eighteen (18) inches apart;
  - (b) Have one (1) commercial gear tag attached to each end of the trotline and, at a minimum, one (1) commercial gear tag attached to every 100 feet of trotline;
  - (c) Not be longer than 1,000 feet; and
  - (d) Be set at least three (3) feet under the surface of the water.
- (15) A seine:
  - (a) Shall have a maximum bar mesh size of one (1) inch;
  - (b) May have knotted netting if constructed of twine that is:
    - 1. No smaller than number six (6) nylon; or
    - 2. An equivalent having a breaking strength of at least fifty-five (55) pounds;
  - (c) May have knotless netting if constructed of twine that is:
    - 1. No smaller than number 147 nylon; or
    - 2. An equivalent having a breaking strength of fifty (50) pounds or greater;
  - (d) Shall be constructed of:
    - 1. Natural multifilament; or
    - 2. Synthetic material;
  - (e) Shall have both float and lead lines;
  - (f) Shall have the following attached at each end:
    - 1. Wood poles;
    - 2. Fiberglass poles; or
    - 3. Brailes;
  - (g) Shall be attended by a person who pulls the seine by hand through the water to entrap fish; and
  - (h) Shall have one (1) commercial gear tag attached to each 100 feet or part thereof.
- (16) A slat trap basket shall:

- (a) Not have wire or other mesh added to any part of the trap;
  - (b) Have at least two (2) openings left between slats:
    - 1. No smaller than one and one-fourth (1 1/4) inches wide in the catch portion of the trap; and
    - 2. That shall not be restricted by cross-bracings to a length shorter than eight (8) inches;
  - (c) Not be larger than two (2) feet in diameter or square-end measure; and
  - (d) Have one (1) commercial gear tag attached to the opening ring or square.
- (15 Ky.R. 1184; eff. 11-23-1988; Am. 16 Ky.R. 1401; 2654; eff. 5-8-1990; 34 Ky.R. 2215; 35 Ky.R. 549; eff. 9-12-2008; 39 Ky.R. 832; eff. 1-4-2013; 42 Ky.R. 97; eff. 9-3-2015; 50 Ky.R. 1758; eff. 6-6-2024.)

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