



Caribbean Fishery Bulletin

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Seasonal Prohibition on Fishing for or Possession of Queen Conch in Federal Waters off St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands

WHAT IS HAPPENING AND WHEN:

NOAA Fisheries reminds the public of the upcoming seasonal prohibition on fishing for or possession on board a fishing vessel of queen conch.

- This annually recurring prohibition will take effect at 12:01 a.m. local time on **June 1, 2017**.
- The queen conch harvest season will reopen at 12:01 a.m. local time on **November 1, 2017**.
- The closure applies in federal waters east of 64°34' W longitude, including that portion of the Lang Bank area falling within those federal waters (see map below).
- Possession of queen conch in U.S. Virgin Island territorial waters is prohibited June 1 through October 31.
- Possession of queen conch in Puerto Rico jurisdictional waters is prohibited August 1 through October 31.

WHY THIS CLOSURE IS HAPPENING:

This seasonal closure protects queen conch when they are spawning (reproducing) and therefore more vulnerable to fishing pressure.

During the open season (November 1 – May 31), fishing for queen conch in U.S. Caribbean federal waters is only allowed in waters east of 64°34' W longitude. Remaining federal waters are closed year-round to all fishing for queen conch.

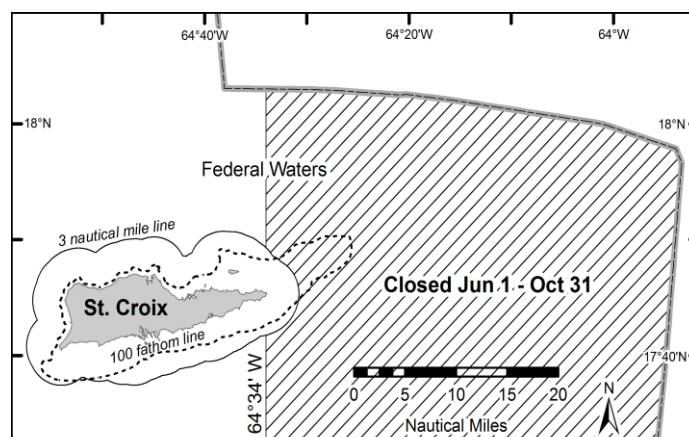


Figure 1. Map showing the queen conch seasonal closure area in federal waters east of St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands