total for all three vessels would increase the total number of traps in the fishery by 240 traps, a negligible number when compared to the current number of lobster traps deployed in the fishery.

Modifications to a conventional lobster trap would include a closed escape vent, a smaller mesh size, and a smaller entrance head. All lobsters retrieved from standard and modified traps would remain onboard for a short period of time to allow for sampling, after which they would be returned to the water.

Biological information would be collected on all lobsters, including: Carapace length; sexual determination; cull status; and presence of eggs, v-notches, and shell disease. Bycatch species would also be kept onboard for enumeration, weight collection, and measurement.

If approved, the applicant may request minor modifications and extensions to the EFP throughout the year. EFP modifications and extensions may be granted without further notice if they are deemed essential to facilitate completion of the proposed research and have minimal impacts that do not change the scope or impact of the initially approved EFP request. Any fishing activity conducted outside the scope of the exempted fishing activity would be prohibited.

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1801 et seq.

Dated: July 30, 2013.

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[FR Doc. 2013–18656 Filed 8–1–13; 8:45 am]
BILLING CODE 3510–22–P