

WEEKLY UPDATE: 12/7/2015
NORTH CAROLINA FISHERIES ASSOCIATION
"Serving the Commercial Fishing Families of North Carolina since 1952"
Phone: (252) 745-0225 - www.ncfish.org
Jerry Schill, President: jerryschill@ncfish.org Cell: 252-361-3015
Lauren Morris, Membership/Operations Manager:
laurenmorris@ncfish.org Cell: 252-725-2468

MFC SEEKS COMMENTS ON DRAFT OYSTER AND HARD CLAM PLANS, 2015 COASTAL HABITAT PROTECTION PLAN

Fishermen and others will get a chance to comment on future management of oysters and clams and coastal habitat at a series of public meetings to be held in the coming weeks.

The N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission will hold four meetings to receive public comments on draft amendments to the Oyster and Hard Clam fishery management plans and on the 2015 Coastal Habitat Protection Plan.

The meetings will be held in conjunction with Marine Fisheries Commission advisory committee meetings scheduled for:

<p>Dec. 8, 5:30 p.m. Shellfish/Crustacean AC N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries Central District Office 5285 Highway 70 West, Morehead City Contacts: Anne Deaton Phone: 252-808-8063 Email: Anne.Deaton@ncdenr.gov Trish Murphey Phone: 252-808-8091 Email: Trish.Murphey@ncdenr.gov Read agenda</p>	<p>Dec. 10, 5:30 p.m. Northern Regional AC Department of Environmental Quality Regional Office 943 Washington Square Mall, Washington Contacts: Katy West Phone: 252-948-3884 Email: Katy.West@ncdenr.gov Holly White Phone: 252-473-5734 Email: Holly.White@ncdenr.gov Read agenda</p>
<p>Dec. 9, 5:30 p.m. Southern Regional AC Department of Environmental Quality Regional Office 127 Cardinal Drive Ext., Wilmington Contact: Trish Murphey Phone: 252-808-8091 Email: Trish.Murphey@ncdenr.gov Read agenda</p>	<p>Dec. 14, 1:30 p.m. Habitat and Water Quality AC Department of Environmental Quality Regional Office 943 Washington Square Mall, Washington Contacts: Anne Deaton Phone: 252-808-8063 Email: Anne.Deaton@ncdenr.gov Katy West Phone: 252-948-3884 Email: Katy.West@ncdenr.gov Read agenda</p>

The draft oyster plan amendment looks at:

- Whether to re-open shallow bays (less than six feet deep) of Pamlico Sound to mechanical harvest.
- Whether to continue the monitoring trigger of 26 percent legal-sized live oysters to determine when to close mechanical harvest (adopted in Supplement A to Amendment 2 to the N.C. Oyster Fishery Management Plan).
- Whether to make hand harvest limits the same statewide.
- How to mitigate harvest effort impacts on oyster resources in the Southern region.

The draft clam plan amendment looks at:

- Whether to increase the recreational maximum daily harvest limit for hard clams.
- Whether to allow the use of power hauling equipment in the hand harvest of hard clams.
- Whether to modify mechanical clam harvest lines to exclude areas no longer fished.
- The draft amendments to the oyster and clam plans also consider multiple changes to the shellfish lease program, changes to the shellfish license, and shading requirements for shellfish.

The draft 2015 Coastal Habitat Protection Plan contains four goals and four priority issues:

- Goal 1 - Improve effectiveness of existing rules and programs protecting coastal fish habitats -- includes five recommendations to enhance permit compliance, monitoring, outreach, coordination across environmental commissions and management of invasive species.
- Goal 2 - Identify and delineate strategic coastal habitats -- includes two recommendations regarding mapping and monitoring fish habitat, assessing their condition and identifying priority areas for fish species.
- Goal 3 - Enhance and protect habitats from adverse physical impacts - includes eight recommendations on expanding habitat restoration, managing ocean and estuarine shorelines, protecting habitat from destructive fishing gear and dredging and filling impacts.
- Goal 4 - Enhance and protect water quality - includes eight recommendations to reduce point and non-point sources of pollution in surface waters through encouragement of best management practices, incentives, assistance, outreach and coordination. This applies not only to activities under the authority of the Department of Environmental Quality, such as development and fishing, but for all land use activities, including forestry, agriculture and road construction.

Priority issues for the plan's implementation actions include oyster restoration, living shorelines, reducing sedimentation in tidal creeks and developing metrics to evaluate habitat trends.

Find the draft amendments to the Oyster and Clam fishery management plans at <http://portal.ncdenr.org/web/mf/fmps-under-development>. Find the draft 2015 Coastal Habitat Protection Plan at <http://portal.ncdenr.org/web/mf/habitat/chpp/downloads>.

For more information, contact Catherine Blum, division fishery management plan coordinator, at 252-808-8014 or Catherine.Blum@ncdenr.gov.

NC MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION SEEKS ADVISERS

The N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission is looking for commercial and recreational fishermen and scientists to advise it on various fisheries issues. For information on the types of committees, requirements and how to apply see the [news release](#). Applications are due by Dec. 15.

REGULATION AND RULE CHANGES:

-[South Atlantic Commercial Hook-and-Line Golden Tilefish Fishery](#) will close Dec. 8

DEADLINES:

Dec. 15 - MFC Adviser Applications

Dec. 16 - NMFS [Draft Ecosystem-based Fishery Management Policy](#) Comments

MEETINGS:

If you are aware of ANY meetings that should be of interest to commercial fishing that is not on this list, please contact us so we can include it here.

Dec. 7-10 - [MAFMC Meeting](#), The Westin Annapolis, 100 Westgate Circle, Annapolis, MD

Dec. 7-11 - [SAFMC Meeting](#), DoubleTree by Hilton Oceanfront Hotel, 2717 W. Fort Macon Rd., Atlantic Beach, NC

Dec. 16 from 8 a.m.-5 p.m. - [MAFMC Northeast Trawl Advisory Panel](#), Radisson Hotel Providence Airport, 2081 Post Road, Warwick, RI, 02886

PROCLAMATIONS:

[SNAPPER-GROUPER COMPLEX - COMMERCIAL PURPOSES \(GOLDEN TILEFISH-HOOK & LINE\)](#)

[POUND NET SET CLOSURE PERIOD](#)

[GILL NETS - ATLANTIC OCEAN SEASONAL MAXIMUM MESH SIZE EXCEPTIONS](#)

[GILL NETS - ALBEMARLE SOUND AREA- MANAGEMENT UNIT A- OPEN LARGE MESH GILL NETS IN WESTERN ALBEMARLE SOUND](#)