

WEEKLY UPDATE: 5/1/2015
NORTH CAROLINA FISHERIES ASSOCIATION
"Serving the Commercial Fishing Families of North Carolina since 1952"
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JERRY'S LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

There has been some positive activity from a commercial fishing perspective in the General Assembly so far this session. Bills have been introduced that would:

- a.) remove the mandate for a for-hire logbook
- b.) remove the ability of the state to enter into a Joint Enforcement Agreement with the feds
- c.) Strengthen Oyster Industry

There are different versions of legislation that have gone through the Senate and the House. For example, in the Senate version the MFC may come up with a logbook for the for hire industry, but filling them out would be voluntary. (Which makes the whole exercise useless from from a data collection standpoint.) I'll explain the House version below.

In the Senate version of the JEA language, it simply states that the state may not enter in a Joint Enforcement Agreement. I'll explain the House version below.

The two versions of Strengthen Oyster Industry are quite different. We favor the House version which is simpler and does a couple of other things, such as study the issue of the current Core Sound Moratorium on leasing and look at the possibility of allowing leases in certain parts of Core Sound. The House version also brings back the Joint Legislative Study Commission on Seafood & Aquaculture.

The House version of JEA and the for-hire logbook would do away with both but provides for a study. The costs and benefits of a logbook requirement would be studied, and the impacts, costs and benefits of a joint enforcement agreement would be studied. The process would include the establishment of a stakeholder advisory group that would make recommendations to the Environmental Review Commission by October 15, 2016. So, under that version both the logbook and JEA would be temporarily gone, but subject to a study that "could" recommend that they come back. The Senate version just does away with them with no study.

Since the House and Senate versions of these issues are different, they will all be hammered out by conference committees over the next few weeks. We could end up with doing away with the logbook and JEA, or we could end up studying them for a year. Although nothing is certain until they adjourn, it would appear that the for-hire logbook and JEA won't be happening any time soon

While there have not been any bad bills for commercial fishermen introduced, that can always happen with the upcoming budget deliberations, so we have to keep our eyes open as it's very easy to slip bad stuff in the budget.

SAFMC SNAPPER-GROUPER FMP REGULATORY AMENDMENT 20

If implemented this proposed rule would revise the snowy grouper annual catch limits (ACL), commercial trip limits, and recreational fishing season. The proposed rule would increase commercial ACLs for each of the next five years and commercial trip limits from 100 pounds to 200 pounds. The season opening would remain at status quo, Jan. 1. For more information, see the [Federal Register](#). Written comments, identified by "NOAA-

NMFS-2015-003,” must be received on or before May 8 and may be submitted electronically through the Federal e-Rulemaking Portal or by mail to Nikhil Mehta, Southeast Regional Office, NMFS, 263 13th Ave. South, St. Petersburg, FL, 33701.

ASMFC SPRING MEETING NEXT WEEK

The commission will meet from May 4-7 at the Westin Alexandria in Alexandria, Virginia. View the briefing materials and details [here](#).

SCOPING COMMENTS FOR SQUID CAPACITY AMENDMENT DUE MAY 11

The council is collecting scoping comments through May 11 for a potential amendment that would consider options for reducing the capacities of the longfin squid and Illex squid fleets. Additional information and updates on this amendment are available [here](#).

AMENDMENT A-7 SURVIVAL FUND

Members of the pelagic longline fleet and other related businesses have filed suit challenging aspects of Amendment 7 to the Highly Migratory Species FMP fearing further decline of domestic fisheries for rebuilt stocks and the possible resulting transfer of the United States' international quota to foreign fleets.

If you would like to donate to this legal fund, please make checks payable to A-7 Survival Fund and send to: Etheridge Seafood Company PO Box 77, Wanchese NC, 27981. Please include your contact information, best phone number to reach you, and email.

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.

May 4-7 - ASMFC Meeting, The Westin Alexandria, 400 Courthouse Square, Alexandria

May 5 at 6:30 p.m. - Albemarle Fishermen's Association, Leon Nixon's Catering, 749 Virginia Rd., Edenton

May 11 at 2 p.m. - NCFB Board of Directors Meeting, N.C. Estuarium, 223 E. Water St., Washington

May 12 at 10 a.m.- Standard Commercial Fishing License Eligibility Board, NCDMF Central District Office, 5285 Hwy. 70 W, Morehead City, NC

May 30 - Carteret County Fishermen's Association Annual Fish Fry

PROCLAMATIONS:

[STRIPED BASS RECREATIONAL ATLANTIC OCEAN- LANDING/CATCH CARD REQUIREMENTS](#)

[TEMPORARY SUSPENSION OF RULE, HARVEST RESTRICTIONS - AMERICAN EEL](#)

[TEMPORARY SUSPENSION OF PARTIAL RULE - ATLANTIC OCEAN STRIPED BASS COMMERCIAL GEAR PERMIT - DATE OF ACQUISITION](#)

[CRAB, EEL, FISH AND SHRIMP POTS](#)

[GILL NETS AND SEINES - SPOONERS CREEK](#)

[BLACK SEA BASS - RECREATIONAL PURPOSES-NORTH OF CAPE HATTERAS](#)