

WEEKLY UPDATE: 10/19/2015

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

DIVISION OF MARINE FISHERIES BEGINS MANAGING INCIDENTAL TAKE PERMITTED SPECIES AS A QUOTA

Going forward, proclamations issued to close management areas in accordance with incidental take permit requirements will be effective immediately as in other species managed under a quota.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

As everyone knows, the North Carolina "long session" of the General Assembly is now history, and the legislators are finished until 2016. The "short session" begins at the end of April next year. We did OK at the state level with the revocation of Joint Enforcement Authority or JEA, between the state's Division of Marine Fisheries and the National Marine Fisheries Service. There were other victories as well, but mainly in keeping bad things from happening. That took a tremendous amount of effort on our part in being vigilant at the Raleigh level. However, we did so at the expense of some of the federal issues.

Two weeks ago I had appointments in Washington, D.C. with some of our Congressional folks including legislators and staffs. At one of our meetings in Senator Tillis's office, there were 3 employees of NMFS and staff members for Senator Burr, Senator Tillis and Congressman Walter B. Jones. The primary topics were Highly Migratory Species and Endangered Species Act issues, with the goal being bringing the staffers up to date on the issues from our perspective. That dialogue will continue.



I'm returning to Washington tomorrow for a Wednesday meeting with our congressional folks about the H2B labor issue affecting our blue crab processors.

We have a very important Board of Directors meeting coming up next Tuesday, the 27th, to prepare for the upcoming Marine Fisheries Commission meeting in November. Please note that NCFAs Board meetings are open to all commercial fishermen, whether you're on the Board or not. If you have any concerns that you would like brought to the Board's attention, contact any of the staff or Board members. We're not mind readers!

God bless,
Jerry

MAFMC VOTES TO REDUCE SPINY DOGFISH QUOTA IN 2016

At last week's meeting in Philadelphia, the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council recommended a substantial cut in the spiny dogfish commercial quota for next year. Following a review of the most recent scientific information, public comments, and advice from the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) and Spiny Dogfish Advisory Panel, the council voted to set the 2016 commercial quota at 25.3 million pounds, a 50% reduction from the 2015 quota of 50.6 million pounds. If approved by the National Marine Fisheries Service, the new measure will go into effect May 1, 2016.

The council's decision was driven by the recent spiny dogfish stock assessment update, which estimated the stock's biomass to be at 87% of the rebuilt target in 2015. Although the stock was found to be neither overfished nor subject to overfishing, the new estimate of stock biomass was a marked decrease from the 2013 update, which indicated that the stock's biomass was at 135% of the target. For more information see the [news release](#).

INDIVIDUAL BLUEFIN QUOTA AND PELAGIC LONGLINE OBSERVER REQUIREMENTS REMINDERS

NOAA Fisheries has released a document to highlight important aspects of the IBQ program and Electronic Monitoring requirements. This information may be of interest to people participating in these programs and can be found [here](#).

NOAA Fisheries is also announcing increased mandatory observer coverage for pelagic longline vessels in the Mid-Atlantic Bight, including the Cape Hatteras Gear Restricted Area, from December 1, 2015 through April 30, 2016. If you are making a trip using pelagic longline gear in the Mid-Atlantic Bight (including the Cape Hatteras Gear Restricted Area) from December 1, 2015, through April 30, 2016, you must contact the Pelagic Observer Program at the NOAA Fisheries Southeast Fisheries Science Center Miami Laboratory in writing (mail or e-mail) at least five business days prior to your departure, and provide information, as described in [this document](#). More information on this can be found [here](#).

NCFAs BOARD OF DIRECTORS RESCHEDULED

The NCFA board meeting scheduled for today was canceled due to inclement weather. It has been rescheduled for Oct. 27 at 2 p.m. at the Washington Civic Center located at 110 Gladden St. in Washington. As a reminder, members are welcomed and encouraged to attend, however, ***the board will be discussing the southern flounder management crisis at this meeting, and so we strongly urge all the fishery's participants who are able to attend.*** We need your input on this critical issue.

REGULATION AND RULE CHANGES:

-[South Atlantic commercial gag daily trip limit decreased to 500 pounds](#) effective Oct. 18

-[Commercial Scup Winter II quota and possession limits increase](#) effective Nov. 1

DEADLINES:

Oct. 19 - [For-Hire Advisory Group](#) Applications

Oct. 29 - [NMFS Proposed Rules for Snapper-Grouper, Dolphin and Golden Crab](#) Comments

Nov. 4 - Atlantic HMS SEDAR Pool Nominations

Nov. 9 - NMFS [Proposed Rule on ICCAT Bluefin Electronic Documentation](#) Comments

Nov. 19 - [Derelict Fishing Gear Recovery Project](#) 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.

Oct. 20-22 - [SAFMC Science and Statistical Committee Webinar](#)

Oct. 21 at 10:30 a.m. - Standard Commercial Fishing License Eligibility Board Meeting, Department of Environmental Quality Regional Office, 127 N. Cardinal Dr. Ext., Wilmington, NC

Oct. 22 at 2 p.m. - Summer Flounder, Scup, Black Sea Bass Advisory Panel Meeting via [webinar](#)

Oct. 23 at 3 p.m. - Marine Fisheries Commission Nominating Committee Meeting, Division of Marine Fisheries Headquarters, 3441 Arendell St., Morehead City

Oct. 27 at 2 p.m. - NCFA Board of Directors Meeting, Washington Civic Center, 110 Gladden St., Washington, NC

PROCLAMATIONS:

[SNAPPER-GROUPER COMPLEX - COMMERCIAL PURPOSES \(GAG GROUPER\)](#)

[RULE SUSPENSION - GILL NET RESTRICTIONS: INTERNAL COASTAL WATERS - CLOSING MANAGEMENT UNIT B EXCEPT SUBUNIT MGNRA](#)

[GILL NETS - ALBEMARLE SOUND AREA - MANAGEMENT UNIT A - CLOSING](#)

