

WEEKLY UPDATE: 9/28/2015
NORTH CAROLINA FISHERIES ASSOCIATION
"Serving the Commercial Fishing Families of North Carolina since 1952"
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NCFA BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MONDAY

The association's board of directors will meet 2 p.m., Monday, Oct. 5 at the Washington Civic Center located at 110 Gladden Street in Washington. As always all 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.

SAMFC MOVES FORWARD TO PROTECT SPAWNING AREAS

Members of the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council held lengthy discussions on the proposed designation of areas to help protect spawning fish and associated habitat during their meeting last week in Hilton Head, South Carolina. After reviewing both written and public comment received during a second round of public hearings, the Council narrowed their preferred alternatives to five Spawning Special Management Zones (SMZs) as proposed in Amendment 36 to the Snapper Grouper Fishery Management Plan. Of the eleven candidate sites included in the amendment, the Council selected the following sites as preferred: 1) a five square mile area off the coast of North Carolina known as the South Cape Lookout site; 2) a 3.1 square mile area off the coast of Georgetown, South Carolina called "Devil's Hole" or "Georgetown Hole"; 3) a 2.99 square mile artificial reef site off the coast of South Carolina known as Area 51; 4) a 2.99 square mile artificial reef site off the coast of South Carolina known as Area 53; and 5) a one square mile area off the east coast of the Florida Keys referred to as the "Warsaw Hole". For more information, see the [news release](#).

NMFS RELEASES DRAFT ECOSYSTEM-BASED MANAGEMENT POLICY

NOAA Fisheries is developing an agency-wide ecosystem-based fishery management policy, which outlines a set of principles to guide its actions and decisions over the long-term. The draft policy goals and framework are informed by NOAA Fisheries' own practices and experience from that of its partners. These ideas are intended to limit neither discussion nor consideration of other potential policy goals. Read the draft policy and learn more about how to comment [here](#). Comments on the proposed policy are due Dec. 16, 2015.

CONGRESSMEN JONES & YOUNG FILE BILL TO PREVENT MARINE MONUMENT DESIGNATIONS WITHOUT CONGRESSIONAL CONSENT

Congressman Walter B. Jones (R-North Carolina) and Congressman Don Young (R-Alaska) have cosponsored H.R. 330, the Marine Access and State Transparency (MAST) Act. The bill would prevent President Barack Obama, or any future president, from unilaterally designating offshore areas as "national monuments" and restricting the public's ability to fish there. Instead, the bill would require a president to get the approval of Congress and the legislature of each state within 100 nautical miles of the monument before any "monument" designation could take effect.

The bill comes in response to increasing speculation that President Obama may follow the example of his predecessor George W. Bush and unilaterally designate large swaths of coastal America as "national monuments." In 2006, President Bush short circuited the established process of public consultation and input and unilaterally designated 84 million acres off the coast of the Northwest Hawaiian Islands as a national monument. The new monument, which is larger than 46 of America's 50 states, was then closed to fishing.

"Presidents from both parties have abused their monument designation authority for far too long," said Congressman Jones. "No president should be allowed to just lock up millions of acres of fishing grounds by fiat, with no public input whatsoever. Frankly, it's un-American, and it must be stopped. I am proud to be the first member of Congress to join my friend Don Young in fighting for this legislation, and I urge the rest of my colleagues to get behind it."

For additional information, please contact Maria Jeffrey in Congressman Jones' office at (202) 225-3415 or at maria.jeffrey@mail.house.gov.

UPCOMING MAFMC COUNCIL MEETING

The public is invited to attend the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council's October 2015 meeting on Oct. 6 - 8, 2015 in Philadelphia, PA. The meeting will be held at the Doubletree Philadelphia Center City, 237 S. Broad Street, Philadelphia, PA 19107, Telephone 215-893-1600. Additional details and briefing materials will be posted on the [October 2015 Council Meeting page](#).

INTERESTED CANDIDATES FOR SAFMC SEAT EXPIRING IN 2016

Members interested in serving in the obligatory seat for the South Atlantic Marine Fishery Commission, please let Lauren know. You can [email](#) or give her a call at 252-725-2468.

REGULATION AND RULE CHANGES:

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

DEADLINES:

Sept. 28 at 5 p.m. - MFC Kingfish and Interjurisdiction FMP Update Comments

Oct. 2 - [MFC Proposed Rules Comments](#)

Oct. 2 - MAFMC [Unmanaged Forage Species Scoping](#) Comments

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.

Sept. 28-29 - [Southeast Data, Assessment and Review Steering Committee Meeting](#) via Webinar

Oct. 5 at 2 p.m. - NCFCA Board of Directors Meeting, Washington Civic Center, 110 Gladden St., Washington

Oct. 6-8 - [MAFMC Meeting](#), Philadelphia, PA

PROCLAMATIONS:

RULE SUSPENSION - GILL NET RESTRICTIONS: INTERNAL COASTAL WATERS

TRAWLING, SPECIAL SECONDARY NURSERY AREA (OPENING: Core Sound, West Bay, and Turnagain Bay)

GILL NETS - ALBEMARLE SOUND AREA- MANAGEMENT UNIT A-OPENING EASTERN PORTION

RULE SUSPENSION - GILL NET RESTRICTIONS: INTERNAL COASTAL WATERS- OPENING MANAGEMENT UNIT B AND E

STOP NETS - MULLET BEACH SEINE FISHERY - ATLANTIC OCEAN - CARTERET COUNTY

GILL NETS - BOGUE BANKS

STRIPED BASS SEASON - COMMERCIAL FISHING OPERATIONS - ALBEMARLE SOUND MANAGEMENT AREA

STRIPED BASS RECREATIONAL SEASON - ALBEMARLE SOUND MANAGEMENT AREA

STRIPED BASS RECREATIONAL SEASON - CENTRAL SOUTHERN MANAGEMENT AREA