

## **HAPPY GROUNDHOG DAY!**

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### **MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION APPOINTMENTS** **comments by Jerry Schill, Director of Government Relations**

We sent out a special update last week specifically on the subject of Governor Cooper's appointments to the Marine Fisheries Commission, (MFC). Given the 3 seats that were up for appointment, we knew the makeup of the Commission would remain the same. That is: 5 recreational seats, 3 commercial and a scientist. (No, it's not supposed to be that way, but has been since former Governor McCrory made his appointments a few days prior to the November 2016 election. ) What we were praying for, and worked very hard towards, was a fairer commission, especially with a scientist this understands objectivity and uses that trait from a scientific perspective. That's not what the Governor decided. We still have the same unbalanced MFC, but still lack objectivity in the science seat.

This summer, 3 more seats will be up for consideration: Janet Rose, commercial; Rick Smith, recreational; and Mark Gorges, at-large. Since Mr. Gorges is a recreational fisherman, it is a possibility that the Governor could replace him with someone that truly represents "at-large". While not a legal issue, NCFA has consistently advocated for at-large positions be filled with those who do NOT fit the commercial or recreational categories, such as seafood consumers or chefs for example.

I recently responded to a commentary by Russ Lay at the Outer Banks Voice. To completely understand my response, you need to read Russ's commentary, and you can access them both here:

NCFA invested a considerable amount of time and effort on these appointments with various individuals in the Governor's office. The discussions continued even after the announcement was made last week, but the work continues in other areas. If the Governor wishes to ignore the plight of the working class, then perhaps the General Assembly should remind him how important those folks are. As I've noted in my response to the commentary, if commercial fishermen are expected to be happy with a regulatory commission headed by a pharmacist, perhaps we should work toward getting a commercial fisherman appointed to head up the North Carolina Board of Pharmacy! (You'll need to read my response to put it in the proper context.)

NCFA is a trade association that has had its share of frustrations over its 65 year old history. While the Governor's actions are at the top of the list of hurdles, we will continue to push forward in proudly representing the working class of this state. Stay tuned!

God bless,

Jerry

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### **MARINE FISHERIES COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS CHANGING COMMERCIAL LICENSE CRITERIA** **Proposal would change definition of a commercial fisherman**

This information has been shared for the past couple of weeks, so we won't list all of the specifics again, but if you would like more information please respond to this email or call the office.

The Commission meets on February 14 & 15 at the Blockade Runner in Wrightsville Beach. To offer your opinions in writing, they must be received by February 9<sup>th</sup>. You can email to [CommercialLicensesComments@ncdenr.gov](mailto:CommercialLicensesComments@ncdenr.gov)

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## CALENDAR

Feb. 14 & 15, 2018; NC Marine Fisheries Commission; Blockade Runner, Wrightsville Beach  
Feb. 26; Noon; NCFCA Board of Directors; Civic Center; Washington, NC

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Jerry, Dewey & Glenn with Alex Vargo of Congressman Ted Budd's staff. Mr. Budd represents North Carolina's 13<sup>th</sup> Congressional District.

Jerry & Alex are Steeler fans and went into mourning shortly after this photograph was taken.  
Taken during NCFCA DC trip in January 2018



Dewey & Glenn with Ian Whitson of Congressman David Rouzer's staff. Mr. Rouzer represents North Carolina's 7<sup>th</sup> Congressional District, which includes Brunswick County.

Taken during NCFCA DC trip in January 2018