

WEEKLY UPDATE: 8/25/2017
NORTH CAROLINA FISHERIES ASSOCIATION
"Serving the Commercial Fishing Families of North Carolina since 1952"
Phone: (252) 633-NCFA (6232) www.ncfish.org
Glenn Skinner, Exec. Director: glennskinner@ncfish.org; 252-646-7742
David Bush, Fisheries Biologist: davidbush@ncfish.org; 910-777-1605
Jerry Schill, Govt. Relations: jerryschill@ncfish.org; 252-361-3015
Aundrea O'Neal, Accounting/Tradewinds Editor: aundrea@ncfish.org;
252-503-8302

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE:

The North Carolina General Assembly is back in session for a few days to deal with those bills that were vetoed by Governor Cooper, and also approve new Senate and House legislative districts. They may also act on some other bills so we'll stay vigilant. They "should" finish up by next Wednesday and then maybe, hopefully, prayerfully, that will be it till the short session that begins in late April 2018.

God bless,

Jerry

NCFA OFFICES TO MOVE!

NCFA's office will move from New Bern to Morehead City next week!

Here is the new **PHYSICAL** address:

101 N. 5th St.
Morehead City, NC 28557

The **MAILING** address is:

P.O. Box 86
Morehead City, NC 28557

Continue to use the same phone number until the move has been completed and then we'll provide the new phone/fax numbers, or you can use the staff cell numbers printed above.

N.C. MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION DOES IT AGAIN!

Last week, the commission voted to ask the N.C. Department of Environmental Quality secretary to authorize it to develop a supplement to the Estuarine Striped Bass Fishery Management Plan to make temporary management changes in the Central-Southern Management Area, excluding the Cape Fear River system.

Specifically, the commission asked to:

- * Reduce the annual commercial quota from 25,000 pounds to 2,500 pounds;
- * Lower the recreational daily bag limit from 2 fish per day to 1 fish per day;
- * Increase the recreational size limit to a 24-inch to 26-inch slot. The current minimum size limit is 18 inches with no possession of fish between 22 inches and 27 inches.

The motion passed 5 to 2 after Braxton Davis and the MFC attorney noted that the Division has already started an amendment to striped bass fishery management plan and the supplement would slow it down and delay the implementation of the amendment.

Heck, the science commissioner noted that the supplement is to be used as an analytical tool, but since the motion on the table is to proceed with a supplement by reducing the commercial quota from 25,000 to 2,500 pounds, **“the decision is pre-determined and seems to be inconsistent with what most people would think is necessary.”** He concluded by saying, **“...it’s just counterintuitive and seems like excessive resources, out of consistency.”** Although the scientist made a very valid argument against the motion to do the supplement, he voted in favor of it anyway! Heaven forbid deviating from the not-so-hidden agenda of this rogue commission!

There is a process to address needed changes in a fishery management plan, and it’s called an amendment. The supplement is to be used only when conditions have changed or they need to adopt emergency measures to protect the species. That was not true in southern flounder and it’s certainly not true with striped bass. Whatever changes that need to be made should be done through an amendment, which is already being done. Unless, of course, there’s some other agenda.

HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES AP TO MEET SEPTEMBER 6 & 7

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) intends to hold a meeting of the Atlantic Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Advisory Panel (AP) on September 6-7, 2017, at the Sheraton Silver Spring Hotel, 8777 Georgia Avenue, Silver Spring, MD 20910. The AP meeting and webinar will be held from 9:00 a.m. to 5:45 p.m. on Wednesday, September 6, and from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 pm on Thursday, September 7.

The meeting on Wednesday, September 6 and Thursday, September 7, 2017, will also be accessible via conference call and webinar. Conference call and webinar access information are available at: http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/advisory_panels/hms_ap/meetings/sept-2017/ap-meeting.html.

Participants are strongly encouraged to log/dial in 15 minutes prior to the meeting. NMFS will show the presentations via webinar and allow public comment during identified times on the agenda.

The intent of this meeting is to consider alternatives for the conservation and management of all Atlantic tunas, swordfish, billfish, and shark fisheries. We anticipate discussing Final Amendment 10 on Essential Fish Habitat; implementation of Final Amendment 7 on bluefin tuna management, including the upcoming three-year review; commercial swordfish pelagic longline fishery issues; recreational fishery issues, such as the use of circle hooks in tournaments, and Charter/Headboat permitted vessels; progress updates regarding the exempted fishing permit requests; and updates on electronic dealer reporting (eDealer) and quota monitoring. We also anticipate inviting other NMFS offices provide updates, if available, on their activities relevant to HMS fisheries with a focus on national policies/guidance that may require an FMP amendment or implementation strategy, such as Standardized Bycatch Reporting Methodology and Ecosystem-Based Fishery Management Policy.

Additional information on the meeting and a copy of the draft agenda will be posted prior to the meeting at: http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/advisory_panels/hms_ap/meetings/ap_meetings.html.

CALENDAR

September 11-15; South Atlantic Council; Charleston, SC

Sept. 6 & 7; NMFS HMS Advisory Panel; Sheraton; Silver Spring, MD

Sept. 19; Noon; NCFA Board of Directors meeting; Civic Center; Washington, NC

Sept. 19; 7:00pm; Cobia public hearing; Hatteras Community Center; Hatteras NC

Sept. 27; 6:00pm; Menhaden hearing; DMF Central Ofc; Morehead City