

WEEKLY UPDATE: 11/7/2016
NORTH CAROLINA FISHERIES ASSOCIATION
"Serving the Commercial Fishing Families of North Carolina since 1952"
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WEEKLY UPDATE JUST A LITTLE EARLY THIS TIME...

With the Board meeting on Monday and election day on Tuesday, we wanted to get this out just a little early or it might be very late!

NCFA BOARD TO MEET NEXT MONDAY, NOVEMBER 7th:

Board to meet at noon next Monday, November 7th, at the Civic Center in Washington, NC. All are welcome to attend.

SOUTHERN FLOUNDER LAWSUIT:

We would like to thank all of you who have donated to the Southern Flounder Fund so far. We will send a special update out soon listing those who have contributed to the fund.

As noted previously, we have had two hearings on our lawsuit on southern flounder before two judges. Both judges ruled in our favor. However, it's not over! There will be a hearing at some point and we need to be prepared!

Whether you are a commercial fisherman, dealer, or recreational fisherman, if you are pleased that we took this legal action and your season did not close on October 16th as the MFC planned, we need your help!

Checks can be made payable to:

NCFA Southern Flounder Fund
2807 Neuse Blvd.; Suite 11
New Bern, NC 28562

GOVERNOR MCCRORY ANNOUNCES APPOINTMENTS TO MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION:

As noted in a Wednesday special update, the Governor has released the names of his latest appointments to the Marine Fisheries Commission. They are:

Mark Gorges was reappointed, but moved from a recreational seat to at-large;
Chuck Laughridge was reappointed, but moved from an at-large position to recreational;
Alison Willis was reappointed in a commercial seat;
Brad Koury was appointed to an at-large seat.

PERSONAL NOTE FROM JERRY:

I was asked by media for comments on those appointments, and here is what I released:

Comments from Jerry Schill on the recent appointments to the Marine Fisheries Commission by Governor McCrory:

The appointments announced by Governor McCrory on November 2nd are astounding. Commissioners known to have violated the Open Meetings Laws of this state were reappointed. The two at-large seats were filled by recreational fishermen, meaning that the MFC will now be three from the commercial perspective, five recreational and one scientist. Rather than fill the at-large seats with individuals from a different viewpoint, such as a restaurant owner or seafood consumer, the Governor assures the continuing decimation of commercial fishing communities along our coast.

Coincidentally, a Petition for Rulemaking was filed on November 2nd before the Marine Fisheries Commission by the Southern Environmental Law Center, acting on behalf of the North Carolina Wildlife Federation, that would severely restrict shrimping in North Carolina. Or was it a coincidence? Will fishermen get a fair hearing on the issue now before a stacked Commission?

Commercial fishermen have always played the hand dealt by the good Lord. Hurricanes, noreasters, rogue waves are all part of the experience that gives them a toughness that few Americans have today. They have survived dealing with these adverse conditions, but the political storms are almost too much to bear. Hurricane Matthew is a cakewalk compared to the storm created by Governor McCrory.

And to clarify, this by no means is an endorsement of the Governor's opponent, as his documented positions also give one pause. Sad day when one needs to search for leadership that truly has an appreciation for the working folks of our state.

My comments mention Roy Cooper's documented positions on marine fisheries issues, and you can see them on his website here: <http://www.roycooper.com/marine-fisheries/>

NORTH CAROLINA WILDLIFE FEDERATION FILES PETITION FOR RULEMAKING:

As noted in my comments above, shortly after the Governor's office sent out a notice about the Marine Fisheries Commission appointments, the North Carolina Wildlife Federation filed a Petition for Rulemaking with the Marine Fisheries Commission that would severely restrict shrimp trawling and other types of fishing practices in all state waters by declaring them Special Secondary Nursery Areas. They propose, for example, to restrict shrimp trawls to 90ft of headrope, only allow shrimping three days a week with no nighttime shrimping!

We'll have more info on the Petition later, but you can see it here:

CALENDAR

Nov 7; NCFA Board of Directors; Noon; Civic Center; Washington, NC

Nov 16 – 18; Marine Fisheries Commission; Hilton; Kitty Hawk NC

Dec 5 – 9; South Atlantic Council meeting; Atlantic Beach, NC