

WEEKLY UPDATE: 1/26/2018
NORTH CAROLINA FISHERIES ASSOCIATION
"Serving the Commercial Fishing Families of North Carolina since 1952"
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GOVERNOR AND THE MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION

We've received word that the Governor has decided on the 3 MFC positions that are overdue, but have not received anything "official" yet. We'll get that info out when we confirm that it's official.

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

The Committee, made up of Chairman Sammy Corbett, and Commission members Chuck Laughridge and Mike Wicker, would reduce the numbers of commercial fishermen by tightening the ability to qualify through a minimum percentage of earned income or a minimum number of trip tickets per year. The Committee met last week with the wheels greased to a pre-determined outcome. No public comment was allowed.

Their proposal now goes to the full Marine Fisheries Commission for its consideration at their next meeting February 14 & 15 in Wrightsville Beach at the Blockade Runner. If approved by the full Commission, which is most likely considering the current imbalance on the Commission, the measure must go to the General Assembly for approval.

Here is what was sent out by the Division after the Committee met:

A committee made up of three commission members voted yesterday to recommend the full commission begin deliberations with the following proposed requirements for holding a Standard Commercial Fishing License:

1. Must have 50 percent of earned income from the Trip Ticket Program as in the Fisheries Reform Act of 1997. There is already a statutory precedent for a commercial fisherman in the Fisheries Reform Act.
2. A fisherman must have 36 trip tickets per year.
3. To address crew issues for those who do not have trip tickets, but are bona fide commercial fishermen as crew or any commercial fishing interest in North Carolina or outside the state, proof of income of \$10,000 or more per year. The proof of income should come from a commercial fishing operation, business, etc. doing business in North Carolina. (The commission can decide if items 1, 2 and 3 are stand alone or a combination thereof.)
4. Inactive Standard Commercial Fishing Licenses that do not have any of the above with a three-year running average, would go back into a special pool and these licenses may be reissued to the original holder subject to commitment to 1, 2 and/or 3 above without going through the Eligibility Pool.
5. Create a Heritage Standard Commercial Fishing License that families may want to maintain that are inactive. The license may be maintained for \$100 per year and may be reissued one time to a family member without going through the Eligibility Pool or any of the 1, 2 and 3 requirements listed above. If the reissuance of the license is not wanted, a one-time fee of \$100 will retire that license number.

The proposals would require legislative approval.

If you would rather write your thoughts to the Commission, they must be received by February 9th. You can email to CommercialLicensesComments@ncdenr.gov

Bill Hitchcock wrote an excellent opinion piece on this subject, so if you have not seen it, either reply to this message or call the NCFA office and we'll get it to you.

CALENDAR

Jan. 31; 6:00pm; MFC Blue Crab FMP Advisors; Washington, NC

Feb. 1; 1:00pm; Commercial Fishing Resource Funding Cmte Mtg; Washington NC

Feb. 14 & 15, 2018; NC Marine Fisheries Commission; Blockade Runner, Wrightsville Beach



**Jerry, Dewey & Glenn with Torie Ness & Towers Mingledorff of Senator Thom Tillis's staff
Taken during NCEA DC trip in January 2018**



**Jerry, Glenn & Dewey with Mykel Wedig of Senator Richard Burr's staff
Taken during NCEA DC trip in January 2018**