

NCFA UPDATE: 08/20/2021
NORTH CAROLINA FISHERIES ASSOCIATION
"Serving the Commercial Fishing Families of North Carolina since 1952"
PO Box 86; Morehead City, NC 28557
Phone: (252) 726-NCFA (6232)
Fax: (252) 726-6200
www.ncfish.org

MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION MEETS VIA WEBINAR NEXT WEEK:

The MFC was originally scheduled to meet for an in-person meeting but that has been changed to a webinar due to Covid concerns. A couple of important points:

- 1.) The discussion and actions proposed for the Shrimp FMP are NOT on the agenda for this meeting, but will be on their November agenda.
- 2.) There WILL be a discussion and possible vote on further development of options to modify small mesh gill net rules. That means more restrictions! We encourage you to either submit comments in opposition to any attempt at rule-making! Any further restrictions would be based on political decisions rather than based upon science. Instructions on public comment are printed below. You should note that small mesh rules are unnecessary and therefore not supported by NC statutes!

Members of the public may submit comments to the commission in three ways:

1. **Sign Up to Speak at the Meeting** -- Public comment will be accepted beginning at 6p.m. at the Aug. 25 session, and a 30-minute public comment period is scheduled near the beginning of the meeting on Aug. 26. Those who wish to speak during one of the comment periods are required to preregister by 5 p.m., Aug. 23. To accommodate as many speakers as possible and to facilitate the meeting, the chairman may limit the time each speaker may comment. [Click here](#) to register to speak. Those making comments will be asked to speak only once, either at the Aug. 25 or the Aug. 26 session, but not during both public comment periods.
2. **Submit Online Comments** – Public comments will be accepted until 5 p.m. on Aug. 23 through an online form. [Click here](#) to submit comments online.
3. **Mail Comments** – Written comments may be mailed to August 2021 Marine Fisheries Commission Meeting Comments, P.O Box 769, Morehead City, N.C. 28557. Comments must be received by the division by 5 p.m. on Aug. 23.

The Marine Fisheries Commission Office will not accept public comment for this meeting through email.

ORIGINAL MEDIA ADVISORY: Marine Fisheries Commission to meet Aug. 25-26 by web conference

MOREHEAD CITY – The N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission will meet by web conference Aug. 25-26. The meeting will begin at 6 p.m. on Aug. 25 and 9 a.m. on Aug. 26.

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The meeting was originally scheduled as in-person but has been changed to a web conference meeting based on current guidance to minimize the spread of COVID-19.

"With the increasing spread of the Delta variant across North Carolina, and some that have received the vaccine still contracting it, there is a legitimate concern regarding public safety when participating in a large-scale meeting such as ours," said Commission Chairman Rob Bizzell. "With this in mind, we will have this upcoming meeting virtually."

Additionally, the discussion and votes on the Shrimp Fishery Management Plan (FMP) Amendment 2 that were scheduled for this meeting will be delayed until the November meeting.

"I feel that the discussion on the Shrimp FMP needs to be in person to completely and fairly provide an opportunity for the public to voice their thoughts and concerns," Bizzell said. "Hopefully within the next three months, vaccination rates will improve and the spread of Covid will be controlled so we can safely meet in person."

The public may listen to the meeting by phone or listen and view presentations online. For links to join the meeting, go to the [Marine Fisheries Commission Meeting webpage](#). Following the meeting, an audio recording will be posted online.

Agenda items include:

- Approving the Draft Coastal Habitat Protection Plan 2021 Amendment for public comment and advisory committee review.
- Adopting the five-year fishery management plan schedule.
- Establishing the annual cap on the number of commercial fishing licenses available through the Eligibility Pool.
- Approving notice of text to begin the re-adoption process of 109 rules and give final approval for the re-adoption of nine rules in 15A NCAC 03Q .0100 for the subject "General Regulations: Joint" under a mandatory periodic review schedule (G.S. 150B-21.3A).
- Discussing and a possibly voting on further development of options to modify small mesh gill net rules.
- Electing a vice chairman.
- Receiving a presentation on the division's annual Stock Overview Report.
- Hearing an update on the development of the Southern Flounder Fishery Management Plan Amendment 3.

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A full meeting agenda, briefing book materials, and web conference links and call-in numbers are posted on the [Marine Fisheries Commission Meetings webpage](#).

WHO:	N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission
WHAT:	Quarterly Business Meeting
WHEN:	Aug. 25 at 6 p.m. Aug. 26 at 9 a.m.
WHERE:	Meeting by Web Conference Click Here for WebEx Links and Phone Numbers

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE for 8/20/2021

Throughout this “long” session, we have kept you abreast of those fisheries related bills that have been introduced and included those that have passed either the House or the Senate or both and then sent to the Governor. Several did not survive the crossover date. There are others that may have passed one chamber but have languished in the other but have been inserted in either the Senate or House versions of the budget. Outside of the concerns about “money” in the budget, this is why one needs to watch the budget carefully for these special provisions.

For those provisions that are in both the Senate and House budgets, the wording and funding are not necessarily the same so will be hammered out in conference before approval by both chambers and forwarded to the Governor.

H-181 WILDLIFE RESOURCES COMMISSION AMENDMENTS;
sponsored by Adams, Yarborough & Wray;

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Passed the House, will be heard by the Senate Agriculture, Energy & Environment Committee on Tuesday at 10:00.

<https://www.ncleg.gov/Sessions/2021/Bills/House/PDF/H181v6.pdf>

H-161 ADDRESS ABANDONED AND DERELICT VESSELS;

sponsored by Hanig, McElraft, Iler & Shepard;

In Senate and House budgets

H-182 INCREASING MEAT PRODUCTION AND CAPACITY;

sponsored by McNeely, Gillespie, Hanig, and Elmore;

In Senate and House budgets

S-296 COLLABORATORY/FISHERIES STUDY;

sponsored by Lee, Sanderson, Lazzara, Garrett, Mayfield, Steinburg

In Senate budget but not House

NOMINEE FOR SECRETARY OF DEQ:

As noted previously, Elizabeth Biser was nominated as Secretary for the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), and subject to confirmation by the Senate. This week two committee hearings were held where she was unanimously given favorable votes. The full Senate will now vote on her confirmation.