

WEEKLY NEWSLETTER: 12/14/2018
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

Legislative Update

Nothing new to report other than NCFA was in Raleigh on Tuesday to assure that nothing concerning fisheries would be considered. The legislators' big issue this week was changing election, ethics and lobbying laws that have become a bit more complicated due to the controversy in the Ninth Congressional District over the recent election results.

The General Assembly is still in session, so stay tuned for next week's update.

Authorities surveying fishermen, others about hurricane damages –

Fishermen, for-hire boat captains, and others associated with North Carolina's marine fishery may get a phone call from federal or state authorities asking about impacts from Hurricane Florence.

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA-Fisheries) is working with the N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries to evaluate fisheries damages from the storm. The survey is in response to Gov. Roy Cooper's request that the U.S. Department of Commerce declare a federal fishery resources disaster for North Carolina's recreational and commercial fisheries.

The determination of a federal fishery resources disaster could provide federal financial relief to the state's fishing industry.

Surveyors will ask questions about damages to fishing gears and vessels and loss of fishing income. A statistical report based on the information gathered will be sent to the secretary of commerce. If the secretary of commerce declares a fishery disaster, the report will go to Congress, which will decide on financial assistance.

Letters regarding Hurricane Florence assistance mailed to fishermen

MOREHEAD CITY – Many North Carolina commercial fishermen will soon receive letters asking them to verify their landings for a Hurricane Florence Commercial Fishing Assistance Program.

Last week, Gov. Roy Cooper signed a bill that appropriates \$10 million to the Division of Marine Fisheries to compensate commercial fishermen and shellfish harvesters for income losses from harvest reductions due to Hurricane Florence. This is in addition to the \$1.6 million that was appropriated in October for hurricane relief to be distributed by the Division of Marine Fisheries to commercial fishermen.

Distribution of the money will be based on reported landings in September, October, and November for the previous three years.

In preparation for disbursement of the money, the division will send certified letters to commercial fishermen who are residents of North Carolina and who held a valid, current Standard or Retired Standard Commercial Fishing License or a Shellfish License for N.C. Residents without a Standard Commercial Fishing License during September 2018. The letter will invite them to participate in the program and ask them to verify their landings data.

Enclosed with the letters will be a summary of the fisherman's September landings for 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018. Fishermen should review the information and contact the division immediately if there is a dispute about the reported landings.

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Letters regarding landings from October and November will be sent later, after data entry for those months is completed.

Also included with the letter will be a response form and a State of North Carolina Substitute W-9 Form to return to the division by January 4, 2019 confirming participation in the Hurricane Florence Commercial Fishing Assistance Program. Failure to return the response form and W-9 Form to the division by the deadline shall be considered a decision not to participate in the program.

Any resident commercial fisherman or shellfish harvester licensed in September 2018 and who had landings in September 2015, 2016, or 2017 who does not receive a letter from the division by Dec. 31 should contact Brandi Salmon in the division's Morehead City Office at 252-726-7021 or 800-682-2632.

Calendar

Dec. 19 at 6:30 p.m.

Marine Fisheries Commission's Commercial Fishing Resource Fund Committee
Meeting to approve funding from the Commercial Fishing Resource Fund
N.C. Department of Environmental Quality's Washington Regional Office
943 Washington Square Mall, Washington
Contact: William Brantley
Phone: 252-808-8004
Email: William.Brantley@ncdenr.gov

Dec. 18 at 10 a.m.

Marine Fisheries Commission Coastal Recreational Fishing License Advisory Committee
Meeting to Provide advice on the 2018 Request for Proposal Application
N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries' Headquarters Office
3441 Arendell St., Morehead City
Contact: William Brantley
Phone: 252-808-8004
Email: William.Brantley@ncdenr.gov

NCFA would like to thank everyone who generously gave to *Maritime Angels* during this 2018 Christmas season. Because of your charitable heart, many families are now going to have a blessed holiday.