

NCFA UPDATE:05/09/2025  
NORTH CAROLINA FISHERIES ASSOCIATION  
"Serving the Commercial Fishing Families of North Carolina since 1952"  
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## Call To Action on House Bill 442

House Bill 442, "Restore Flounder/Red Snapper Season" [H.B. 442](#) was filed on March 8, 2025, and had many issues which we won't go into right now.

The NCFA expressed our concerns to the bill sponsors and changes were made but there was still one major issue, the bill only addressed recreational access to the Southern Flounder fishery.

While we certainly agreed that the recreational sector needed a flounder harvest season, we felt it was important to point out that both the commercial and recreational sectors were being managed to reduce removals by 72% and both were based on the same questionable stock assessment.

We continued to work with the primary sponsors of the bill and, on May 7, the third edition of 442 was adopted by the NC House of Representatives containing the following provisions to help both sectors.

- Allow a recreational season (for flounder) not less than six weeks between May 15 and November 15 of each year, with a limit of one fish per person per day and no seasonal limit
- Set a commercial quota with a total allowed catch of 750,000 pounds, with quota overages in one year deducted from the following year's quota and any unused quota from one year added to the following year's quota
- Allow a year-round Red Snapper season with a limit of two fish per person per day and a 20-inch minimum size limit in state waters
- By July 1, 2026, (DMF shall) complete a stock assessment for Southern Flounder based on the most recent years of available data
- DMF shall report the results of the Southern Flounder stock assessment no later than August 1, 2026, to the chairs and members of the House Wildlife Resources Committee and Senate Agriculture, Energy, and Environment Committee. And shall report annually, no later than August 1, thereafter with an assessment of progress in rebuilding the Southern Flounder stock and an estimated timeline for further increasing recreational and commercial access to the Southern Flounder resource
- Effective when it becomes law and expiring August 1, 2029  
While these measures still represent a significant reduction (45% commercial reduction), they should provide some much-needed stability and relief, from the current 72% reduction, over the next four years.

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Given the issues with the recent stock assessment update, the significant reductions achieved in recent years, and apparent improvement in this stock, we believe these measures are warranted and are hopeful the passage of this bill will help start a new conversation on how best to manage this very important fishery.

To that end, we're asking for your help.

HB 442 is now in the Senates hands and requires adoption by that body before being sent to the Governor to be signed into law.

The Senate needs to act quickly in order for the Division and Commission to make the required changes that would allow for at least a six-week recreational flounder season this year!

We're asking everyone to email or call the office of Senate President Pro Tempore, Senator Phil Berger, and your district Senator, letting them know you support the quick approval of HB 442 "Restore Flounder/Red Snapper Season".

Please identify yourself as a recreational fisherman, commercial fisherman, charter/for-hire captain, seafood consumer, or other.

Senator Phil Berger contact information,  
Office phone 919-733-5708  
Email [Phil.Berger@ncleg.gov](mailto:Phil.Berger@ncleg.gov)

The senator representing your county can be found here [Senate Contact List](#) click on their image to view contact information.

Act now, as this is a rare opportunity to support an action that will help both recreational anglers and commercial fishermen!