

**NCFA UPDATE: 05/22/2020**  
**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](http://www.ncfish.org)

## FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR- GLENN SKINNER

Earlier this week, the North Carolina Coastal Fisheries Reform Group made public their intent to sue the State of NC and six commercial fishing businesses for violations of the Clean Water Act. They claim discarding juvenile fish back into the waters from which they came and disturbing bottom sediments while shrimp trawling are violations of the Clean Water Act.

I'm no expert when it comes to the Clean Water Act, but I am well versed in the many activities that occur in our waters, and in my opinion most result in discarded fish, disturbing bottom sediments, or both. I'm amazed that while many are discussing how this possible lawsuit will impact shrimp trawling, very few are questioning its impacts to other activities.

We've all seen a tugboat pushing barges down the intracoastal waterway turn miles of crystal-clear waters to "chocolate milk" for hours until the suspended sediments settle back to the bottom. Is this a violation of the Clean Water Act? What about dredging, pleasure boating, passenger Ferries or marine construction? They all have similar impacts. How far could this go? Recreational fishermen discard tens of millions of fish annually into N.C. waters with millions dying from post release mortality. Is this pollution? If so, wouldn't baiting a crab pot or chumming for cobia also be a violation of the Clean Water Act?

We all know this threat to sue is not about clean water; like the past and current Shrimp FMP Amendments and the three failed petitions for rulemaking, this is just another attempt to destroy one of the state's most valuable commercial fisheries.

While I'm not at all surprised by the actions of Joe Albea and his associates, I am disgusted to think **any** North Carolinian would try to put another out of work in these uncertain and unprecedented times. N.C. shrimpers pump tens of millions of dollars into North Carolina's economy and produce millions of pounds of healthy protein in the process. What kind of person would try to shut down this vital food producing industry when meat counters across the country are bare and our state's economy is struggling like never before?

I've heard it said many times that these people would stop at nothing to destroy North Carolina's Fishing industry and if I didn't believe it then, I certainly do now!

What other industries will they destroy in the process? Tourism, Interstate Commerce? Only time will tell.  
-Glenn Skinner -NCFA Executive Director

## **NC COMMERCIAL FISHING RESOURCE FUND LAUNCHES NEW STATEWIDE PUBLIC RELATIONS CAMPAIGN CALLED ALWAYS NC FRESH**

MOREHEAD CITY, NC – The NC Commercial Fishing Resource Fund (NCCFRF) this week launched a statewide public relations campaign called Always NC Fresh. Always NC Fresh, funded by the North Carolina Commercial Fishing Resource Fund (NCCFRF), works to increase awareness of

commercial fishing and fishermen, support existing sustainable fishing practices and help commercial fishermen communicate their contributions – economic, cultural and environmental – to the state and its citizens.

Glenn Skinner, Executive Director of NC Fisheries Association (NCFA) and NCCFRF Committee Member, stated, "The Always NC Fresh public relations campaign could not have come at a better time as many of our fishermen have been hit hard by the impacts of COVID-19." Skinner

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added, "Commercial fishing has been a part of North Carolina's coastal communities and economy for hundreds of years, and it was time for us to reintroduce our fishermen to the citizens of this great state. We have a great story to tell and we're proud to be a part of this new campaign."

"Commercial fishermen are good people who are a fundamental part of the economy and way of life in North Carolina's coastal communities," said Brent Fulcher, NCFA Chairman. "They want nothing more than to provide fresh, wholesome seafood and go to great lengths to care for the natural resources that sustain their way of life. The public should know that, and Always NC Fresh is an important step in reconnecting consumers to the hardworking, responsible men and women who harvest their seafood."

The Always NC Fresh launch includes a new brand, billboards, videos, website ([www.alwaysncfresh.com](http://www.alwaysncfresh.com)) and a robust social media campaign (@alwaysncfresh). The NCCFRF awarded the public relations campaign to two Raleigh-based public relations firms, S&A Communications and Blue Red Marketing.

The Commercial Fishing Resources Fund is composed of a portion of the proceeds from the sale of the commercial fishing licenses issued by the North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries (NCDMF). The NC General Assembly created the fund to support the development of sustainable commercial fishing in the State.

## LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

I went to Raleigh on Tuesday. I was able to discuss fisheries issues with several Senators and

Representatives. The emphasis right now is dealing with the financial issues over the pandemic and concern over state revenues. Any discussions about spending money outside of the bills already introduced will be minimal until they have a better grip on how bad the state revenue situation is. I will go back next week and just play it by ear.

God Bless,  
Jerry

## Survey of COVID-19 impacts on Northeast US commercial fishermen

Scientists at the Rutgers University [Center for Fisheries and Ocean Sustainability](#) are conducting a study of the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on commercial fishermen and their livelihoods in the Northeast US.

Study organizer, Dr. Victoria Ramenzoni says: "There are many media reports of fishermen suffering devastating losses as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and associated market changes and required social distancing measures. We want to hear from fishermen themselves about how they've been impacted, what support they're receiving, and how they're adapting".

All commercial fishermen (including vessel owners, captains, and crew) in the Northeast US (North Carolina through Maine) are invited to complete the 15 minutes anonymous survey online here: [https://rutgers.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_1MiTWJDQDt4atTf](https://rutgers.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_1MiTWJDQDt4atTf)

The survey will remain open until May 31. Please feel free to forward this announcement to relevant individuals or groups.