

WEEKLY NEWSLETTER: 02/15/2019
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

LOSS OF WALTER B. JONES, JR.

The commercial fishing industry lost a huge supporter of our way of life with the death of Walter Jones. Words cannot express the "light at the end of the tunnel" he provided by his encouraging words and unwavering support in sponsoring supporting legislation and fighting measures that would be bad for our fishermen.

NCFA was at Saint Peter's Catholic Church on Wednesday evening as Walter lied in repose as hundreds walked by to give their respects. We offered our condolences to many of his staff and shared some funny stories that gave some respite to the sadness. Walter was well grounded as a Christian so any tears shed should be for us in the loss of such a good and humble servant.

We will honor and remember him also at the funeral service, and sent a spray for the family on behalf of all of us involved in commercial fishing.

We offer his wife, JoeAnne, daughter Ashley and his entire family and staff our most heartfelt condolences and prayers. May his soul and the souls of all of our faithful departed, rest in peace.

(DRAFT DOCUMENT-SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

VII: Recommendation

NCDMF Recommendation

The following management measures from Amendment 1 and Supplement A to Amendment 1 will be incorporated into Amendment 2 management upon adoption of Amendment 2.

- From the Southern Flounder Fishery Management Plan Amendment 1:
 - Management measures to reduce protected species interactions, including restrictions that limit the number of days per week and the amount of yardage allowed for large mesh gill nets in various areas of the state;
 - A minimum distance (area dependent) between gill net and pound net sets, per rule 15A NCAC 03J.0103 (d); and
 - A recreational minimum size limit of 15 inches total length. (TL).

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE:

Again, nothing earth shattering in Raleigh this week. The legislators and staff are still working on a draft shellfish bill, and no fish-related bills have been introduced as of Wednesday.

FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries presented a draft of Amendment 2 to the Southern Flounder Fisheries Management Plan at the Feb 13 Southern Flounder Advisory Panel meeting. The draft contained the Divisions management recommendations (*listed in red*) for North Carolinas Southern Flounder fishery. The recommendations represent a 72% reduction in total removals of Southern Flounder for both the recreational and commercial fisheries. While these recommendations may change, it is important to remember that any recommendation put forth by the Division will have to be significant to achieve the 52% reduction required to meet the minimum statutory requirements.

- From Supplement A to Southern Flounder Fishery Management Plan Amendment 1;
 - A commercial minimum size limit of 15 inches TL;
 - A minimum mesh size of 6.0-inch stretch mesh to harvest southern flounder from a gill net; and
 - A minimum mesh size of 5.75-inch stretch mesh for pound net escape panels.

Additionally, the recreational bag limit of no more than four flounder per person per day is maintained in Amendment 2. This bag limit is required through the N.C. Fishery Management Plan for Interjurisdictional Fisheries to maintain compliance with the ASMFC Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Fishery Management Plan Addendum XXVIII. It is important to note that the discrete December commercial closure period from Amendment 1 is no longer in effect per se, as it is effectively encompassed by the seasonal closure periods implemented by the adoption of Amendment 2.

In concurrence with the incorporated actions from Amendment 1 and Supplement A to Amendment 1, NCDMF

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recommends the following management actions presented in Amendment 2 to reduce fishing mortality in the commercial and recreational fisheries to a level that will rebuild management actions will also end overfishing in the required two years.

Management actions implemented from Amendment 2 will include:

-Three commercial management areas that open:
Northern-September 15 through October 7, Central-September 15 through October 11, and Southern-September 15-October 21.

-An August 16 through September 30 recreational hook-and-line and gig fishery;

-and RCGL large mesh gill nets will be allowed to operate from September 15 through September 30.

Additionally, it is necessary to remove all gears from the water (e.g., commercial and RCGL anchored large mesh gill nets, gigs, and flounder pound nets) in areas and during times outside of the prescribed seasons. This is important as any additional dead discards will negatively impact expected reductions in discards during periods not open for southern flounder harvest and further delay rebuilding of the stock. During the closed season it is unlawful to possess flounder.

CALENDAR

Feb. 20-22, 2019

NCDMF-MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION MEETING

*Senator Bob Martin Eastern Agricultural Center
2900 NC Highway 125 South,
Williamston NC
<http://portal.ncdenr.org/web/mf/nr-15-2019-mfc-meeting>*

Feb. 27 at 6 p.m.

Public Input on Potential Management Measures for Spot and Atlantic Croaker
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission and N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries
N.C. Department of Environmental Quality Southern Regional Office
127 Cardinal Drive Extension, Wilmington
Contacts: Chris Batsavage | Daniel Zapf
Phone: 252-808-8009 | 252-948-3875
Email: Chris.Batsavage@ncdenr.gov | Daniel.Zapf@ncdenr.gov

Feb. 26 at 6 p.m.

Public Input on Potential Management Measures for Spot and Atlantic Croaker
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission and N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries
N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries Central District Office
5285 Highway 70 West, Morehead City
Contacts: Chris Batsavage | Daniel Zapf

Feb. 25 at 6 p.m.

Public Input on Potential Management Measures for Spot and Atlantic Croaker
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission and N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries
Dare County Commissioners Office
954 Marshall Collins Drive, Room 168, Manteo
Contacts: Chris Batsavage | Daniel Zapf