

WEEKLY NEWSLETTER: 12/13/2019
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

FEDERAL:

There's been some publicity about a federal WORKING WATERFRONTS bill passing the US House this past Wednesday. However, that portion is just a part of a much larger bill, HR 729, COASTAL & GREAT LAKES COMMUNITIES ENHANCEMENT ACT, which includes a multitude of issues. At first blush, one would think the passage of WORKING WATERFRONTS is great, but one needs to go through the entire bill to see what it includes. The bill passed 262 – 151 with all Democrats and 34 Republicans voting yes and 150 Republicans voting no. It appears that of North Carolina's delegation, all Democrats voted in favor and all Republicans opposed.

One of the provisions establishes a National Fish Habitat Board and requires a detailed reading to look at the intent and makeup of that Board.

Since the vote in the House was mainly partisan, it will more than likely have a steep hill to climb in the Senate. We'll provide more details in a future update.

FARM BUREAU CONVENTION:

Glenn Skinner attended the Annual Farm Bureau Convention with the highlight being the last one for retiring President Larry Wooten and the election of the new President Shawn Harding.

Many thanks to Larry for his 20 years of leadership as President of the North Carolina Farm Bureau! Congratulations to Shawn Harding of Beaufort County who was elected as the new Farm Bureau President! We look forward to working with you and the entire team at Farm Bureau!



Shawn Harding (L) Larry Wooten (R)

F/V SEA ANGELS:



The Sea Angels lost power and ran aground at Brown's Inlet on Monday morning. All 4 on the vessel were safely evacuated by the Coast Guard, but since then the owners, Chris & Debbie Fulcher of Oriental, have been working with their insurance man, Jackie Ireland with multiple parties including the Coast Guard and Marine Corps to get the vessel off the bar.

NCFA has been involved as well making calls and sending messages to cut through the bureaucratic red tape so the boat and crew can get back to work.

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REMINDER: Division of Marine Fisheries begins scoping period on southern flounder amendment

MOREHEAD CITY – The N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries is seeking input from the public on potential management strategies for an upcoming amendment to the Southern Flounder Fishery Management Plan.

Fishermen and other stakeholders are encouraged to provide input by either attending one of three scoping meetings or providing written comments. The Wilmington meeting has been scheduled since the first announcement on Nov. 7.

The next scoping meeting is scheduled for:

Dec. 17 at 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
Dare County Government Complex
Commissioners Meeting Room
954 Marshall C. Collins Dr., Manteo

The scoping meetings will include a presentation from division staff, followed by a public comment period. Individuals will be allotted three minutes each for comment on a first-come-first-served basis. The meetings will end at 8 p.m., as scheduled.

The public may submit written comments through an online form that can be accessed through the [Southern Flounder Information Page](#) or submit comments by mail to:

Southern Flounder Amendment 3
Scoping Comments
P.O. Box 769
Morehead City, N.C. 28557

Comments should be posted online or postmarked by 5 p.m. Dec. 18. The division will not accept comments submitted by email.

The division is seeking comments on potential management strategies in the southern flounder fishery that have already been identified for development in Amendment 3. The issues are:

- **Sustainable Harvest** – management measures such as quotas, slot limits, size limit changes, gear changes, and fishing days (other management strategies may also be examined and are outlined in the scoping document);
- **Species Specific Management** – separating management of southern flounder, summer flounder, and Gulf flounder for the recreational fishery; and
- **Inlet Corridors** – designating no fishing areas to protect mature female southern flounder.

A scoping document further outlining the potential management strategies can be found on the [Southern Flounder Information Page](#).

The division is proceeding with Amendment 3 based on the 2019 coast-wide stock assessment update (containing data through 2017) that indicated the stock is overfished and overfishing is occurring.

Scoping is the first stage of the amendment process. Additional opportunities to comment on the draft amendment will be announced as the fishery management plan process proceeds.

MEDIA ADVISORY: Division of Marine Fisheries announces scoping period on shrimp

MOREHEAD CITY – The N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries will hold a public scoping period Jan. 7-21, 2020 to solicit public comments on potential management strategies for an upcoming amendment to the Shrimp Fishery Management Plan.

Management strategies to further reduce bycatch of non-target species in the shrimp trawl fishery and potential changes to existing shrimp management strategies are being examined.

Fisheries stakeholders can provide in-person comments at three scoping meetings that will be held:

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Jan. 7 from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
N.C. Department of Environmental Quality
Washington Regional Office
943 Washington Square Mall, Washington

Jan. 13 from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries
Central District Office
5285 Highway 70 West, Morehead City

Jan. 9 from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
N.C. Department of Environmental Quality
Wilmington regional office
127 Cardinal Drive Extension, Wilmington

Beginning Jan. 7, comments can also be submitted through the division's website with an online form or by mail. A news release will be issued closer to the scoping period providing details on how the public can participate.

A scoping document outlining the potential management strategies can be found on the [Shrimp Amendment Information Page](#).