

**WEEKLY UPDATE: 12/5/2014**  
**NORTH CAROLINA FISHERIES ASSOCIATION**  
**"Serving the Commercial Fishing Families of North Carolina since 1952"**  
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**BOARD MEETING SET FOR DEC. 8 AT 2 P.M.:**

The NCFA Board of Directors will meet this Monday at 2 p.m. at the Hampton Inn in Washington, N.C. Anyone who would like to bring issues to the attention of the board or for discussion are, as always, welcome and encouraged to attend.

**ANNUAL NCFA BOARD MEETING SET FOR JAN. 6 AT 2 P.M.:**

The annual Board of Directors Meeting has been scheduled. The board will elect its officers and take other administrative actions at this meeting. The location will be announced soon.

**RED DRUM TRIP LIMITS REDUCED TO FOUR FISH PER DAY:**

As of today, the Division of Marine Fisheries lowered the commercial trip limit to four red drum per day to slow the landings until the trip ticket data for October and November have been entered and finalized. For more information see the [news release](#).

**COBIA HARVEST WILL CLOSE DEC. 11 IN SOUTH ATLANTIC:**

Commercial harvest of cobia in South Atlantic waters will close at 12:01 a.m. Dec. 11, 2014. The 2014 commercial catch limit is 125,712 pounds whole weight. Reports indicate the catch limit will be met by December 11, 2014. Commercial harvest will reopen at 12:01 a.m. on January 1, 2015. For more information see the [news release](#).

**PORGY COMPLEX HARVEST WILL CLOSE DEC. 9 IN SOUTH ATLANTIC:**

Commercial harvest of the porgy complex in South Atlantic waters will close, at 12:01 a.m. on Dec. 9, 2014. The porgy complex is comprised of the following species: jolthead porgy, knobbed porgy, whitebone porgy, scup, and saucereye porgy. Reports indicate that landings are approaching the 2014 commercial sector catch limit of 36,348 pounds whole weight. For more information see the [news release](#).

**NEW STRIPED BASS HARVEST LIMITS SET FOR ATLANTIC OCEAN AND ALBEMARLE SOUND/ROANOKE RIVER MANAGEMENT AREAS:**

The annual commercial harvest quota for the ocean striped bass season will drop from 480,480 pounds in previous years to 360,360 pounds. The minimum size limit for striped bass in the Atlantic Ocean will remain at 28 inches for both the commercial and recreational fishery. In the Albemarle Sound and Roanoke River Management Areas, the striped bass annual harvest limit will drop from 550,000 pounds to 275,000 pounds Jan. 1. For more information see the [news release](#).

**BURR APPLAUDS PASSAGE OF BEACH ACCESS LEGISLATION:**

An amended version of the senator's bill was approved by the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee. The Hatteras legislation will help tourists and sportsmen gain access to

the state's renowned Outer Banks beaches. The legislation will set rules and parameters for the National Park Service to abide by when it considers limiting citizen access to beaches, including off-road vehicle access. For more information see the [news release](#).

#### **LAUREN'S COMMENTS:**

I attended my first South Atlantic Fishery Management Council meeting this week, and it was an eye-opening experience. During my time in the Marine Fisheries Commission office I advocated for clear and straightforward presentations for the public, particularly if the issues were very technical. I often annoyed my former coworkers insisting we could do a better job, but I may owe them an apology. At the Snapper Grouper Committee Meeting I felt like I was drowning in raw data and technical terms. The scientists that present this information are obviously very knowledgeable, but I have to wonder if they realize that their efforts to be completely transparent only serve to cloud the issues.

One issue at the meeting, however, that wasn't hard to follow at all is the ever-tightening stranglehold the Endangered Species and Marine Mammal Protection acts have on the industry. National Marine Fisheries Service staffers came to explain that increasing any further access to the black sea bass pot fishery would increase the likelihood of interacting with right whales and so could trigger a new Section 7 consultation on the entire snapper grouper fishery. NMFS has admittedly not documented right whale entanglement in the pot fishery, however, staff explained they cannot prove it does not happen. This apparently means the council must assume that it does and take measures to reduce (possibly imaginary) interactions. One NMFS staffer used, in so many words, this comparison: I do not see whales entangled at the grocery store, but that does not mean I can say whales do not get entangled. The SAFMC, however, has already taken steps to reduce interactions; but, due to the timing of the process those responsible, proactive measures will not be considered as such. I guess I would say to that, I don't see these pieces of legislation being used to beat fishermen over the head on the dock, but that does not mean I can say fishermen aren't bruised.

#### **MEETINGS:**

*If you are aware of ANY meetings that should be of interest to commercial fishing that is not on this list, please contact us so we can include it here.*

Dec. 8 - Oyster and Hard Clam Fishery Management Plan Advisory Committee Meeting, Washington, 6 p.m.

Dec. 9-11 - Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council Meeting, Baltimore, MD

[MFC/DMF Meeting Schedule](#)

#### **PROCLAMATIONS:**

[STRIPED BASS SEASON - BEACH SEINES: ATLANTIC OCEAN](#)

[RED DRUM-COMMERCIAL FISHING OPERATIONS](#)

2014/2015 MECHANICAL HARVEST OF CLAMS

POUND NET SET CLOSURE PERIOD

HORSESHOE CRABS - COMMERCIAL FISHING OPERATIONS

COBIA - COMMERCIAL CLOSURE- RECREATIONAL SIZE AND CREEL LIMITS-  
TEMPORARY RULE SUSPENSION