

WEEKLY UPDATE: 10/10/2014
NORTH CAROLINA FISHERIES ASSOCIATION
"Serving the Commercial Fishing Families of North Carolina since 1952"

Phone: (252) 745-0225 www.ncfish.org
Jerry Schill, President: jerryschill@ncfish.org Cell: 252-361-3015
Lauren Morris, Membership/Operations Manager: laurenmorris@ncfish.org Cell: 252-725-2468

SPECIAL MFC MEETING: The Marine Fisheries Commission will meet at 10:30 a.m. Oct. 23 at the DENR Regional Office, 943 Washington Square Mall, Washington. See the [news release](#) for more information.

STATE FAIR: The N.C. State Fair is a 10-day event the runs from Oct. 16-26. NCFCA has committed to helping at the booth. Please contact Lauren if you are willing to volunteer or donate seafood for the cooking demos.

FOR-HIRE LOGBOOK STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS: The Division of Marine Fisheries will hold a series of stakeholder meetings to provide information on a proposed for-hire logbook reporting requirement. For meeting dates and times see the [news release](#).

UPCOMING HEARINGS:

Please note the following as it's very important to have a very good representation from commercial fishermen at these meetings.

Oct. 15, 6-8 p.m.
Summer Flounder Scoping Hearing
DENR Regional Office, 943 Washington Square Mall, Washington

Oct. 15, 5-8 p.m.
Smoothhound Shark Public Hearing
Dare Co. Administration Building, 954 Marshall C. Collins Dr., Manteo

N.C. COASTAL FEDERATION ABANDONED GEAR RECOVERY PROJECT: The project will collect abandoned crab pots and other fishing gear from the Currituck Sound south to Hatteras Inlet, including portions of the Albemarle Sound and Alligator River. About 12 vessels will be chosen with a minimum of three working days guaranteed to those fishermen accepted at \$300/day to participating captains and mates at \$100/day.

The deadline for submitting applications is Friday, October 17, 2014. Contact Ladd Bayliss: (252) 473-1607 or laddb@nccoast.org

JERRY'S COMMENTS: Imagine that you have a job depends on what you produce. When you leave for work in the morning you have no idea what your pay might be for the day. It all depends on how many crabs are your crabpots that day. Or what fish might be in your net. Or how many shrimp you might catch.

Now imagine that before you know how much you might earn, you have to spend some money before you do. You have to put fuel in your boat. You might have to replace some crab pots or

nets. You might have to buy ice as well. On top of that, your spouse reminded you the mortgage or rent is due tomorrow. Or the car insurance. Or you have a sick young'un and have no health insurance.

You think of all these things, not to complain, but because you are the man of the house and it's your responsibility to pay the bills. You love fishing, but you have to think of the checkbook too, although you hate it.

But, as the saying goes, "IT'S ALL GOOD". People of faith think that way. They just can't help it. Whatever life gives them, the Lord will provide. That's how you've dealt with things like this in the past and how we deal with it now. We take the ups and the downs, good times and bad, because the Lord is in charge. If we don't catch much today, we'll make up for it tomorrow. If our earnings aren't enough this week to pay the bills, next week will make up for it. It's always worked that way.

Then, all of a sudden your world changes. Rather than leave the dock with all of those questions about how much you'll make, you can't even try. The government says you can't go out and try to earn a penny because another sea turtle was observed a couple of days ago, so the area had to be shut down and you can't work. It doesn't make sense. That's the third turtle that's been observed in a net, but they were all released unharmed. You know there are many more turtles now than in the past, but you're glad that they're coming back after all the restrictions on shrimping and other forms of commercial fishing. But now it's darned if you don't see 'em and darned if you do! If the observers see only one more turtle in your area, it will be totally shut down to your type of fishing until September 1st next year.

Then what? You don't own a shrimp boat. You don't like to crab pot. You are a gillnetter. That's what your Daddy did and what you do. But now you can't. And if you can't you don't make a nickel.

Will it be Walmart? Are you going to have to help your contractor friend hang drywall? The thoughts of those things make you cringe. How will you tell your wife about the recent proclamation that shuts off your income and not knowing when it will open back up? The thoughts of government assistance and food stamps makes you want to puke.

What kind of man am I, that can't provide for my family?

You have nothing against turtles, but knowing your plight you have to wonder: does the government really put a turtle above me? Above my wife and kids? You have always grumbled, but really deep down you respected those folks that work at the Division of Marine Fisheries or the National Marine Fisheries Service or the Coast Guard. Now, you're getting bitter. They keep collecting their paychecks while you struggle. You struggle on a good day, but at least you have the opportunity to fish to make things better for your family. Now, you can't even do that.

Things weren't like this before and you long to bring back those days when your country actually wanted you to work.

All of this makes you seethe. You have a little more time on your hands to send text messages and post on Facebook. You type things that are hurtful and unlike you.

You wonder, when will this end? Or will it ever? Does anybody care?

So.....do they?

God bless,
Jerry

AFFILIATE MEETINGS:

Pamlico County Fisherman's Association will meet Oct. 16. For more information call Wayne Dunbar at 252-670-7467.

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.

Oct. 7-9 - Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council; Philadelphia

Oct. 8 - MFC Southern Regional Advisory Committee - Wilmington, 6 p.m.

Oct. 9 - MFC Northern Regional Advisory Committee - Washington, 6 p.m.

Oct. 13 - MFC Habitat & Water Quality Advisory Committee - Washington, 1:30 p.m.

Oct. 14 - MFC Finfish Advisory Committee - Morehead City, 6 p.m.

Oct. 15 - Smoothhound Shark Hearing - Dare Co. Admin Bldg.; 5-8 p.m.

Oct. 15 - Summer Flounder Hearing - DENR Office, Washington, 6 p.m.

Oct. 16 - MFC Shellfish/Crustacean Advisory Committee - Washington, 6 p.m.

Oct. 16-26 - NC State Fair; NC Catch needs help for the booth!

Oct. 23 - MFC Special Meeting - DENR Office, Washington, 10:30 a.m.

Oct. 27-30 - ASMFC Annual Meeting: Mystic, CT

Nov. 19-21 - Marine Fisheries Commission Meeting - Kitty Hawk

MFC/DMF MEETING SCHEDULE

PROCLAMATIONS:

RULE SUSPENSION-GILL NET RESTRICTIONS: INTERNAL COASTAL WATERS

LARGE MESH GILL NETS PERMITS AND OBSERVERS:

Beginning on Monday, September 1, if you fish gill nets in internal waters, you need a permit.

(Drift gill nets, strike, runaround or drop gill nets are exempt.) The permit wasn't the Division's idea, but came from commercial fishermen. It was thought that if one of the requirements for the federal ITP in the fishery is to have 7 percent of large mesh trips observed, then rather than have more restrictions, why not devise a permit to make sure we get enough coverage. Without the coverage, the feds can shut down the fishery, so a permit can keep that from happening. If a fisherman refuses to take an observer, he can lose his permit.

If you are fishing large mesh gill nets, don't wait to be called to take an observer. Call DMF and volunteer if you haven't taken an observer. Don't let it up to a few to take observers. If everyone does their part, the burden can be spread around a bit and you can do your part in keeping the fishery open.

One other point about fishing and turtles: If you have an interaction with a turtle while you're fishing and you don't have an observer, then call DMF and let them know. That's better for all of us. You won't get penalized for it and it's something that should be done.

POUND NETS:

Most fishermen check their pound nets daily for a number of reasons. One is the quality of the fish is better if fished frequently. NCFA encourages all pound net fishermen to check their nets daily, weather permitting. Fishermen should not be expected to risk their lives when checking their nets, but if the weather allows, we encourage you to check. It just makes sense, but most of you already know that.