



**Fisheries Committee Summary
August 27, 2014 at 1:00 pm
Commission Room, Raleigh, NC**

Meeting Attendees

Committee Members

Wes Seegars, Chair
Joe Barker, Vice Chair

Neal Hanks
Brian White

Commissioners

Garry Spence
John Coley
Richard Edwards
Tom Berry

John Litton Clark
Tommy Fonville
Ray Clifton

Staff

Bob Curry
Mallory Martin
Kyle Briggs
Christian Waters
David Cobb
Chris Dillon

Kate Pipkin
Betsy Haywood
Jon Evans
Jodie Owen
Gordon Myers

Visitors

Dick Hamilton – NC Wildlife Federation Fred Harris – NCWF
Ned Jones – NC Trout Unlimited

Fisheries Committee Chairman Wes Seegars called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm.

Trout Program Updates

Trout Stocking Notification – Bob Curry presented a protocol for notifying anglers regarding the stocking of Hatchery Supported Trout Waters. A complete list of waters to be stocked by week will be posted on the agency’s website prior to the trout fishing season. Each day at 1:00 pm throughout the season, the streams stocked that day will automatically be uploaded to the website.

Purchasing Trout for Production Capacity – Staff is working on plans to purchase approximately 34,000 10-inch triploid Rainbow Trout annually from a commercial producer starting in fall 2015 for stocking six larger reservoirs/lakes. The fish will be divided between a spring and fall stocking.

Renovations to Upper Armstrong SFH – Staff has identified a critical need for substantial repairs to the upper raceways at Armstrong SFH. Renovations to the lower Armstrong SFH raceways are well underway, and the Office of State Budget has approved the replacement of the upper raceways as part of this existing Capital Improvement project. The additional work is expected to cost \$1 million and will be funded through a Sport Fish Restoration grant and the Endowment Fund. All work at Armstrong SFH should be completed by October/November 2015.

Coastal Fisheries Updates

Striped Bass Stock Assessment – Christian Waters reported that the Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF) in collaboration with Commission staff has completed the most recent stock assessment for Roanoke River/Albemarle Sound Striped Bass. The stock assessment was peer-reviewed and approved by the management board of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission. Formally, the stock is not classified as “overfished”; however, 1) the spawning stock biomass (number of spawning females) has declined close to the threshold levels, and 2) fishing mortality is above the target. DMF staff is currently preparing a white paper that outlines the reductions in recreational and commercial harvest needed to reduce fishing mortality to the target. Commission staff will review options with DMF in September and will present recommendations for management of the spring Striped Bass season on the Roanoke River to the Fisheries Committee in October.

Lake Mattamuskeet – On August 8 Commission staff met with representatives from Ducks Unlimited (DU). They expressed concern over stabilizing water levels and potential impacts to waterfowl production. Staff shared that the Commission continues to engage the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) on a comprehensive approach to managing the lake’s resources. Commission staff is preparing information for the DU newsletter to be published this fall. The Refuge’s technical work group, which includes Commission staff, met on August 26. Most of the meeting focused on activity updates. The USFWS’s 2014 vegetation survey found vegetation at 29% of its sample locations compared to 76% in 2013. The technical work group agreed that bathymetric data are important and supported undertaking a survey to collect the information. Details of the survey and funding options are being considered. Director Myers indicated a meeting with USFWS regional leadership is scheduled for next Wednesday September 3. Commissioners Coley, Edwards, Fonville, Seegars, and White are planning to attend.

2015-2016 Rules Proposals

There are 34 proposed changes to fishing regulations for 2015-2016 that will be presented at the

Committee of the Whole. Bob presented three proposals that are not recommended for further consideration. The proposals addressed trout in the Nantahala River, Largemouth Bass in Cane Creek Reservoir, and Public Mountain Trout Waters on Stone Mountain State Park. An additional proposal to add Public Mountain Trout Waters on the Tuckasegee River near Bryson City is still being evaluated.

Additional Topics of Interest/Discussion

Director Myers informed the Committee that he along with Penny Pritzker, Secretary of the U.S. Department of Commerce; Sally Jewell, Secretary of the U.S. Department of the Interior; Dr. Kathleen Sullivan, Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; Daniel Ashe, Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; John Skvarla, Secretary of the NC Department of Environment & Natural Resources; and Dr. Louis Daniel, Executive Director of the NC Division of Marine Fisheries had been named in a law suit alleging that they have failed to abide by the Endangered Species Act, in the protection of sea turtles relative to recreational fisheries.

Chairman Seegars adjourned the meeting at 1:57 pm.

Fisheries Committee



Meeting Agenda

August 27, 2014

1:00 pm – 2:00 pm

**Commission Room
Centennial Campus, Raleigh**

<i>Welcome/Open Meeting</i>	<i>Wes Seegars</i>
<i>Trout Program Updates</i>	<i>Bob Curry</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Trout Stocking Notification• Purchasing Trout or Production Capacity• Renovations to Upper Armstrong SFH	
<i>Coastal Fisheries Update</i>	<i>Christian Waters</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Striped Bass Stock Assessment• Lake Mattamuskeet	
<i>2015-2016 Rules Proposals</i>	<i>Bob Curry</i>
<i>Additional Topics of Interest/Discussion</i>	<i>Wes Seegars</i>
<i>Adjourn</i>	<i>Wes Seegars</i>