

Fisheries Committee



Meeting Summary

November 9, 2011 1:00 PM
Centennial Campus, Raleigh

Meeting Attendees:

Wes Seegars – Chair
Ray White – Vice-Chair
Berkley Skinner III
Mitch St. Clair
Dalton Ruffin
Joe Barker
John Coley
Mark Craig
Hayden Rogers

Steve Windham
Durwood Laughinghouse
Gordon Myers
Mallory Martin
Doug Besler
Brian McRae
Chad Thomas
Kyle Briggs
Bob Curry

Chris Dillon
David Cobb
Jodie Owen
Dale Caveny
Christian Waters
Norman Young

Fred Harris
Greg Culpepper

2012-2013 Regulations Update

- Christian provided a summary of the proposed changes to fishing regulations for 2012-2013:
 - ✓ F14: Retain additional ~0.25 mile based on comments received from landowner wishing to keep section of stream in Public Mountain Trout Waters. Staff consulted with landowner and Town of Bakersville to identify new boundary.
 - ✓ F17: Proposal had mixed support; staff discussed proposal with club; based on further clarification of proposal coupled with significant striped bass fish kill this summer, mutually agreed to withdraw proposal and maintain current size and creel.
 - ✓ F24: Grass carp are currently controlling invasive species and having some impact on native species, specifically water willow. Based on angler observations of vegetation control, additional protection is not warranted. Staff recommends withdrawing proposal.
 - ✓ F26: Considerable discussion regarding potential regulatory impacts; postpone action until all aspects of proposed designation are evaluated. Commission will take action on this proposal separately -Gordon will draft verbiage.

Coastal Recreational Fishing License (CRFL)

- Chad Thomas provided an excellent summary of the CRFL Program and the Commission's responsibility in reviewing project proposals and recommending funding allocations. Chairman Seegars reminded committee members that WRC CRFL members were authorized to approve fund expenditures on behalf of the Commission.

- Chad reported that DMF/WRC staff biologists have reviewed the current project proposals and will present their recommendations to the Joint CRFL committee at their next meeting scheduled for Tuesday, November 29th at the DENR Regional Office in Washington, NC. A total of 26 project proposals requesting \$3.6m were received; ~\$1.9m available to obligate for project this funding cycle.

Fisheries Management Update

- Chad Thomas, Coastal Fisheries Supervisor, provided an update on the NC Estuarine Striped Bass Fisheries Management Plan (FMP); ***Action Item: NCWRC Staff Recommendations for the NC Estuarine Striped Bass Management Plan*** See attached Action Item for consideration by the Commission
- Brian McRae, Piedmont Fisheries Supervisor, provided an overview of Reservoir Fisheries Management Activities
- Doug Besler, Mountain Fisheries Supervisor, provided an update on current efforts to revise the Trout Management Plan

Fisheries Habitat Update

- Doug summarized stream restoration efforts on the Upper South Hominny Creek project funded through the Ecological Enhancement Program

Committee Chairman adjourned the meeting at 2:54 pm.

WRC Fisheries Committee

November 9, 2011

Action Item: NCWRC Staff Recommendations for the NC Estuarine Striped Bass Management Plan

NC Wildlife Resources Commission fisheries staff recommends that the NC Wildlife Resources Commission accepts the preferred management options jointly recommended by NCWRC/NCDMF biological staff for the following striped management issues identified in the NC Estuarine Striped Bass Management Plan and subsequently adopted by the NC Marine Fisheries Commission at their November 2011 meeting:

- Striped bass stocking in coastal rivers;
- Use of single barbless hooks during the striped bass closed season;
- Striped bass management area – Albemarle Sound Management area southern boundary line adjustment;
- Cashie River – Change in joint and coastal waters boundary line;
- Discard mortality of striped bass from commercial set gill nets Central Southern Management Area;
- Hook and line as commercial gear in estuarine striped bass fisheries;
- Central Southern Management Area striped bass management measures;
- Albemarle Sound Management Area and Roanoke River Management Area striped bass management measures.

Although NCWRC/NCDMF biological staff initially recommended a seasonal closure for the Recreational Striped Bass Harvest Closure – Oregon Inlet Area/Atlantic Ocean management issue, the NC Marine Fisheries Commission voted to maintain the status quo (allow the fishery to continue May 1 – October 30) management option. Their decision was based upon modeling data that indicated harvest during the May 1 through October 30 period would have a negligible impact on the Albemarle Sound-Roanoke River striped bass stock. NC Wildlife Resources Commission fisheries staff further recommends that the NC Wildlife Resources Commission concurs with the NC Marine Fisheries Commission's decision to maintain the status quo (allow the fishery to continue May 1 – October 30) management option for the Recreational Striped Bass Harvest Closure – Oregon Inlet Area/Atlantic Ocean management issue and encourages NCDMF to remain vigilant in collecting catch and harvest data necessary to evaluate the effects of the Oregon Inlet Area fishery on the Albemarle Sound-Roanoke River striped bass stock.