



# Public Hearings

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Applying to 2019–2020

Fishing, Hunting, and Trapping Seasons



**January 2019**

**North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission**

[ncwildlife.org](http://ncwildlife.org)

# State of North Carolina

Roy Cooper, Governor

## North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission

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☒ North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission ☒

1701 Mail Service Center, Raleigh NC 27699-1701

**The N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission appreciates the investment of your time and thanks you for attending this public hearing to show your concern for fish and wildlife programs in North Carolina. We welcome your opinions and suggestions about these conservation programs.**

All state regulatory agencies must follow certain procedures that govern how rules are adopted under the *Administrative Procedure Act*. Public notice is required and proposed regulations are published in the *North Carolina Register*. A 60-day comment period follows, which includes nine public hearings. These procedures are designed to give the proposed regulations wide public exposure and to offer the public opportunities to respond with support, opposition, or suggestions.

For fish and wildlife regulations, this process begins at the previous year's hearings and continues throughout the year. We consider all suggestions presented during the past year as starting points for these proposed regulations. The proposals in this document reflect public, staff, and Commissioner input. The Commissioners approved these proposals for publication in the *North Carolina Register* and for presentation at these public hearings.

In February 2019, after considering comments from the public and consulting with staff, the Commission will make final decisions on these proposed regulations. The rules that are adopted will then be available in the *N.C. Inland Fishing, Hunting and Trapping Regulations Digest* for 2019–2020. The digest will be available on August 1, 2019 from your licensing agent and on [eregulations.com/northcarolina](http://eregulations.com/northcarolina).

We appreciate your participation and look forward to hearing your comments. With your help, we will provide the best possible fish and wildlife programs for your enjoyment today and in the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John T. Coley, IV". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the left.

John T. Coley IV, Chairman  
N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission

# THE RULE-MAKING PROCESS

## **Step 1: PROPOSALS**

The public, Commission staff, Commissioners, conservation partners, and other stakeholders propose new or amended fishing, hunting, trapping, land management, and other regulations.

## **Step 2: PROPOSALS VETTED**

Staff analyze and present proposals to the Executive Director for consideration.

## **Step 3: COMMISSION VOTES ON PROPOSALS**

Proposals are presented to and reviewed by the Commission who then votes on the proposals to be noticed for public comment and presented at public hearings.

## **Step 4: PUBLIC COMMENTS ON PROPOSALS**

The public submits comments on proposals online ([ncwildlife.org](http://ncwildlife.org)), by e-mail ([regulations@ncwildlife.org](mailto:regulations@ncwildlife.org)), letter, or in-person at public hearings.

## **Step 5: COMMISSIONERS REVIEW THE COMMENTS AND VOTE ON THE PROPOSALS.**

All comments submitted during the comment period are reviewed and the Commissioners vote to adopt proposals as presented, adopt in a modified form, or reject the proposal.

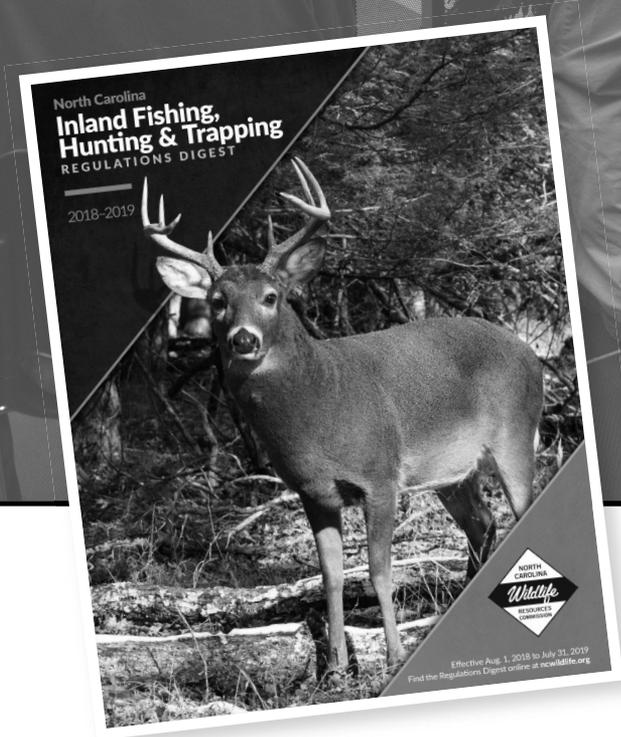
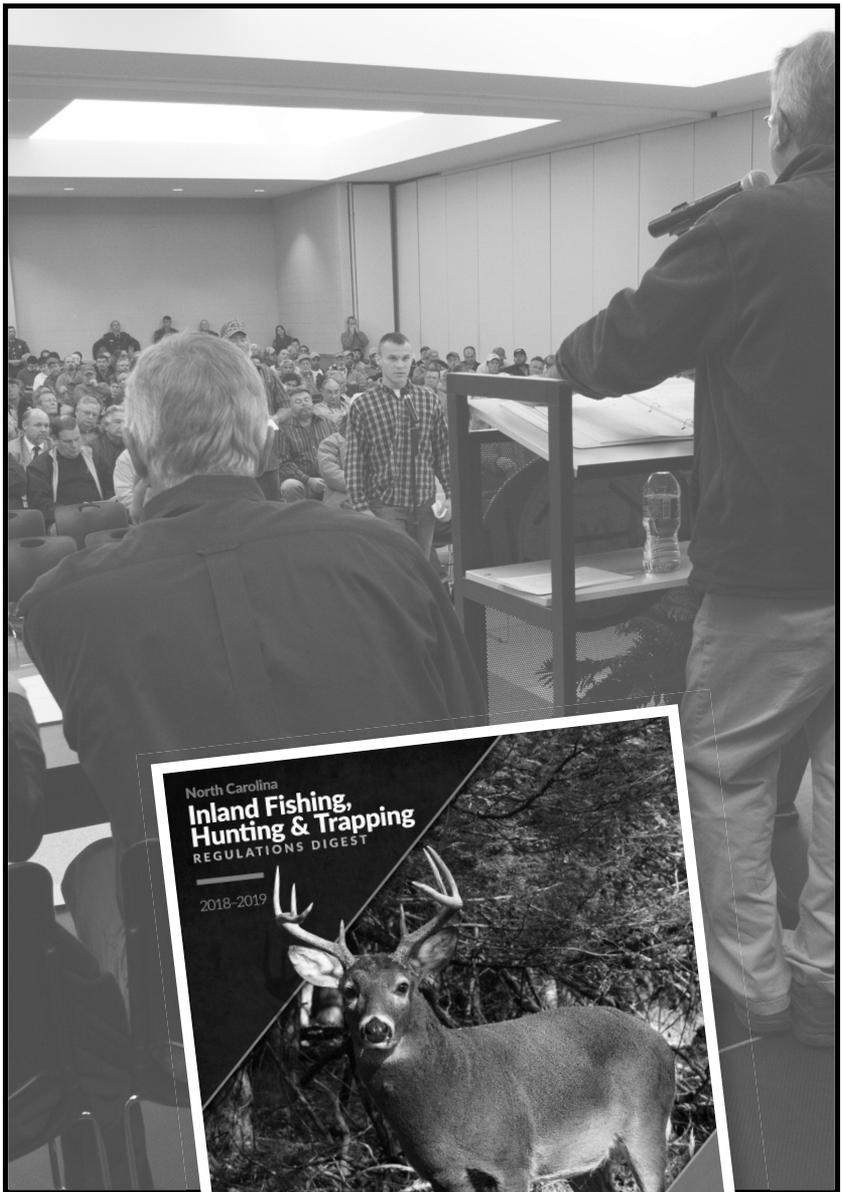
## **Step 6: RULES ARE FILED**

Adopted rules are filed with the Office of Administrative Hearings for approval. The Rules Review Commission approves or disapproves the rules as written.

## **Step 7: APPROVED RULES PUBLISHED**

Approved rules are entered in the *N.C. Administrative Code* and added to the regulations digest.





## Public Hearings

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The Commission has been charged with managing North Carolina's wildlife resources since 1947. The General Assembly, through statute, declares which matters of fish, wildlife, and land management the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission can regulate through rule. Rules are one means of managing resources to serve the recreational and economic interests of the state's citizens. We rely on the public's cooperation and assistance in this endeavor. Thus, we urge you to participate in these public hearings and to submit your comments, either verbally or in writing, to the staff of the Commission.

### Hearing Procedures

Please review the proposals in this booklet when you arrive and complete the record form on the back if you wish to comment. During the hearing, a Commission official will ask for your comments, opinions, or suggestions. Your comments are welcome, and each will be considered. In the interest of time and fairness to others who want to speak, please be concise when commenting.

After the proposed changes in this booklet are presented, time will be allotted to comment on other matters of interest that you may want to present to the Commission for consideration. We earnestly solicit your input and ideas to improve regulations. We also ask you to remember that changing regulations in the *N.C. Administrative Code* can be a lengthy process that often takes more than one year to accomplish. These public hearings are, however, the proper starting point for your suggestions.

### What Happens Next?

You are encouraged to speak at the public hearings or to write to the Commission, if you have recommendations. We will accept public input about proposed changes to the regulations until the close of the public comment period on Feb. 1, 2019.

A written record of all public comments will be compiled and reviewed by staff and the Commissioners. Your recommendations; biological information from field surveys; harvest records; changes in habitat, fish, and wildlife populations; breeding stocks; game lands use; and other conditions that affect wildlife, will all be considered.

# Schedule for the 2019 Fishing, Hunting, and Trapping Public Hearings

*Before you make final plans to attend, check the Commission's website ([ncwildlife.org](http://ncwildlife.org)) for updates, including weather-related rescheduling.*

## Hearing Time: 7 p.m.

<b>Date</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>Location</b>
Tue., Jan. 8	4	Dublin	Bladen Community College
Wed., Jan. 9	5	Graham	Old Alamance Co. Courthouse
Thu., Jan. 10	6	Albemarle	Stanly Co. Agri-Civic Center
Tue., Jan. 15	9	Clyde	Haywood Community College
Wed., Jan. 16	8	Morganton	Western Piedmont Community College
Thu., Jan. 17	7	Elkin	Elkin High School
Tue., Jan. 22	1	Edenton	Chowan Co. Public Safety Center
Wed., Jan. 23	2	New Bern	Craven Community College
Thu., Jan. 24	3	Rocky Mount	Nash Community College

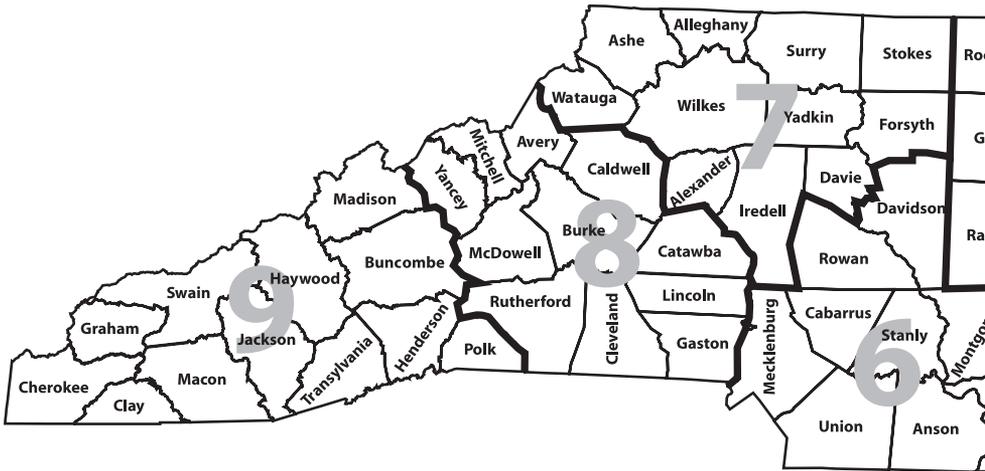
## Limits to the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission Rule-making Process

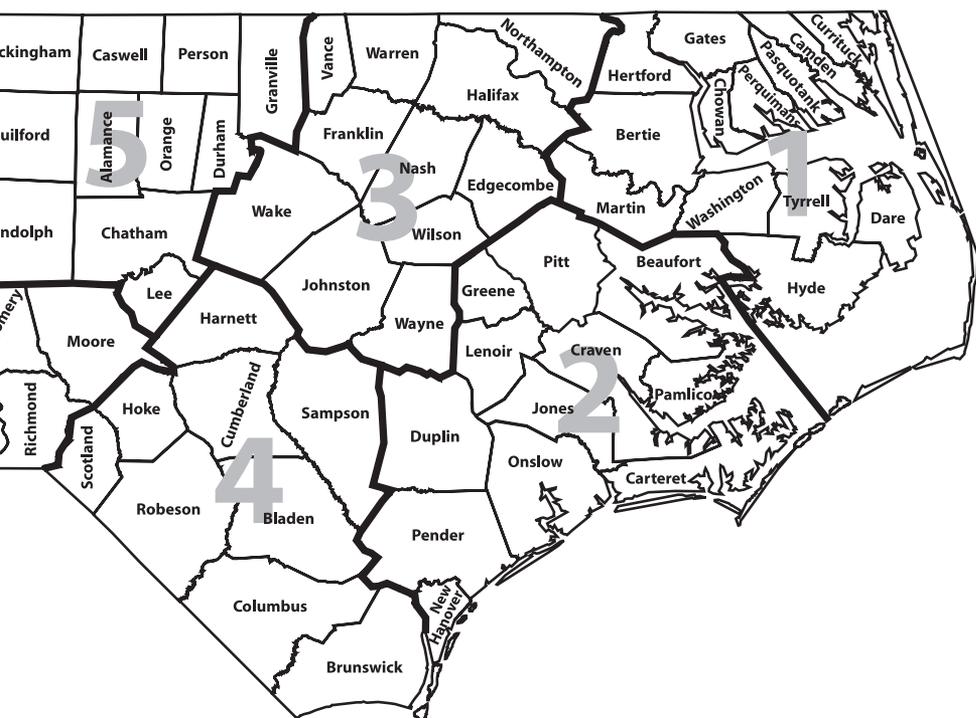
Some aspects of wildlife and fish management, hunting, fishing, and human/wildlife interaction are legislated directly. The N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission appreciates the interest of North Carolina's sportsmen and sportswomen in the state's wildlife resources and respectfully considers all suggestions.

Get email updates on proposed rules and regulations from the  
N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission by subscribing at  
[ncwildlife.org/subscribe](http://ncwildlife.org/subscribe).

# North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission Districts

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The NCWRC established **NC Turn-In-Poachers (TIP)** program as a silent witness, anti-poaching program that encourages the public to report any suspicious activity or knowledge about poaching violations. The multi-optional reporting system is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year.

You can **report a violation online at [ncwildlife.org](http://ncwildlife.org)**. Tipsters can also install a free app. Search for "TipSoft" or "TipSubmit" in the Google Play store or the Apple App Store. To submit an anonymous tip through text messaging, type WILDTIP and your message, then send it to 274637 (CRIMES on most cell phones). Message and data rates may apply. Texting WILDTIP removes all identifying information from a text so tips are completely anonymous unless senders want to identify themselves to claim a reward. Tipsters can also call 855-WILDTIP.

***NOTE: This phone number is only for specific violations. For all other wildlife violations, questions, and concerns please call 800-662-7137.***

# NCWILDTIP

# Proposed Changes to Inland Fishing Regulations for 2019–2020

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*The following changes to the statewide inland fishing regulations are proposed by the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission and are offered for your comments, opinions, or suggestions.*

## **Trout**

**F1.** Designate Apalachia Reservoir in Cherokee County as Public Mountain Trout Waters, classify as Special Regulation Trout Waters, and establish a three-fish daily creel limit including only one trout greater than 14 inches.

**Justification:** Beginning in 2012, Commission biologists conducted a four-year experimental trout stocking at Apalachia Reservoir to evaluate its potential for put-grow-and-take trout management. Research has shown that Brown Trout stocked in the reservoir can reach large sizes (greater than 20 inches), but an angler creel survey revealed that 72 percent of the annual Brown Trout harvest occurs in the three months following stocking. This regulation proposal would improve trout fishing by reducing harvest and allowing more Brown Trout to survive and grow to larger sizes.

**F2.** Modify the upper boundary of Delayed Harvest Trout Waters on Helton Creek in Ashe County removing approximately 1.0 mile from Public Mountain Trout Waters. The designated reach will be from the S.R. 1372 bridge to the North Fork New River.

**Justification:** The upper Delayed Harvest Trout Waters reach of Helton Creek has been posted against trespass. The proposed change would more accurately reflect the portion of the stream that is stocked and accessible to the public.

**F3.** Modify the upper boundary of Hatchery Supported Trout Waters on Big Laurel Creek in Madison County removing 4.7 miles from Public Mountain Trout Waters. The designated reach will be from Puncheon Fork to the S.R. 1318 [Big Laurel Rd.] bridge downstream of Bearpen Branch.

**Justification:** The upper Hatchery Supported Trout Waters reach of Big Laurel Creek has been posted against trespass. The proposed change would more accurately reflect the portion of the stream that is stocked and accessible to the public.

**F4.** Modify the upper boundary of Hatchery Supported Trout Waters on Meadow Fork Creek in Madison County removing 1.0 mile from Public Mountain Trout Waters. The designated reach will be from Meadow Fork Campground to Spring Creek.

**Justification:** The upper Hatchery Supported Trout Waters reach of Meadow Fork Creek has been posted against trespass. The proposed change would more accurately reflect the portion of the stream that is stocked and accessible to the public.

**F5.** Modify the lower boundary of Delayed Harvest Trout Waters on East Fork French Broad River in Transylvania County removing 0.9 miles from Public Mountain Trout Waters. The designated reach will be from East Fork Baptist Church to the downstream S.R. 1107 bridge.

**Justification:** The lower Delayed Harvest Trout Waters reach of the East Fork French Broad River has been posted against trespass. The proposed change would more accurately reflect the portion of the stream that is stocked and accessible to the public.

**F6.** Modify the lower boundary of the upper Delayed Harvest Trout Waters section on the Watauga River in Watauga County removing approximately 0.4 miles from Public Mountain Trout Waters. The designated reach will be from the S.R. 1114 bridge to the Valle Crucis Community Park lower boundary.

**Justification:** The lower end of the upper Delayed Harvest Trout Waters reach of the Watauga River has been posted against trespass. The proposed change would more accurately reflect the portion of the stream that is stocked and accessible to the public.

**F7.** Clarify the upper boundary of Hatchery Supported Trout Waters on Big Hungry River in Henderson County. The designated reach is from S.R. 1885 to the Green River. This proposal will not add or remove any Public Mountain Trout Waters.

**Justification:** This is an administrative change. In 2014, the Commission adopted a rule change that defined the boundaries of the Hatchery Supported Trout Waters reach of the Big Hungry River. The change was inadvertently removed in a subsequent reformatting of 15A NCAC 10C .0205.

## **Black Bass**

**F8.** Remove the closed harvest season of December 1 to March 31 for black bass at Sutton Lake. The minimum size limit is 14 inches, and the daily creel limit is five fish.

**Justification:** Removing the closed harvest season would expand angler opportunities for black bass harvest at Sutton Lake. An angler creel survey conducted 2015–2016 found over 55 percent of anglers opposed the closed harvest season while only 10 percent of the interviewed anglers were in favor of the current closed harvest season for black bass. The creel survey also documented that less than 2 percent of angler-caught black bass are harvested during the open harvest season. Negative biological impacts are unlikely since most anglers practice catch-and-release.

**F9.** Clarify that the exception to the general statewide regulation for black bass establishing a 14-inch minimum size limit with no exception in the Albemarle Sound and its tributaries applies to all associated tributaries and canals of all tributary river systems.

**Justification:** This is a clarifying change. Some anglers have expressed confusion regarding the size and creel limits in tributary rivers. The current wording of this rule allows for ambiguity regarding the limits in waters that are tributary to the example river systems listed in the rule.

## **Crappie**

**F10.** Remove the exception to the general statewide regulation for crappie in B. Everett Jordan Reservoir by reducing the minimum size limit from 10 inches to 8 inches. The creel limit would remain 20 fish per day.

**Justification:** Anglers have expressed interest in aligning the size limit for crappie at Jordan Reservoir with other fishing waters across the state. The proposed change would provide additional angling opportunity. Crappie abundance, size structure, and age structure indicate the population can support the additional harvest.

**F11.** Establish an exception to the general statewide regulation for crappie in the North Carolina portion of John H. Kerr Reservoir by implementing a 9-inch minimum size limit and a 25-fish daily creel limit.

**Justification:** The proposed change was requested by Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fish (VDGIF) to reduce angler harvest and improve the quality of the reservoir's crappie fishery. By agreement, VDGIF is the primary lead for fisheries management activities at John H. Kerr Reservoir. VDGIF staff has observed high harvest rates and a reduced density of crappie.

## **American Shad and Hickory Shad**

**F12.** Modify the general statewide regulation for American Shad and Hickory Shad to establish a daily creel limit of 10 fish in combination, including no more than one American Shad. This proposal will not affect river systems where harvest of more than one American Shad is specifically allowed (Tar River, Cape Fear River, Pee Dee River, and their tributaries) or in select Piedmont reservoirs where no American Shad may be possessed.

**Justification:** The new general statewide regulation as proposed is a conservation measure limiting harvest in smaller river systems where limited American Shad data are available. The proposed change would provide consistency with shad regulations in joint and coastal fishing waters as established by the N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries and within the framework of the N.C. American Shad Sustainable Fishery Management Plan.

## **Striped Bass**

**F13.** Modify the exception to the general statewide regulation for Striped Bass and their hybrids in the portion of the Dan River downstream of the dam at Union Street in Danville, Virginia and in the North Carolina portion of John H. Kerr Reservoir by reducing the minimum size limit from 24 to 20 inches from October 1 to May 31. The daily creel limit would remain two in combination from October 1 to May 31. From June 1 to September 30, there is no minimum size limit and a four-fish daily creel limit.

**Justification:** The proposed change was requested by Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fish (VDGIF) to increase harvest opportunity of Striped Bass in the reservoir. By agreement, VDGIF is the primary lead for fisheries management activities at John H. Kerr Reservoir. VDGIF staff report few Striped Bass reach the current 24-inch minimum size limit, and biological data indicate few larger Striped Bass in the reservoir.

## ***Alewife and Blueback Herring***

**F14.** Extend the upper boundary for the river herring (Alewife and Blueback Herring) harvest moratorium on the Neuse River upstream from Milburnie Dam, which has been removed, to Falls Lake Dam.

**Justification:** The harvest moratorium on river herring applies to coastal rivers where they make annual spawning runs in the spring. In most mainstem coastal rivers, the first impoundment is used as the upstream extent of the harvest moratorium. In winter of 2017, Milburnie Dam on the Neuse River was removed, and the moratorium is proposed to be extended upstream to Falls Lake Dam, the next barrier to anadromous fish migration.

**F15.** Remove the possession restriction for river herring (Alewife and Blueback Herring) in the Little Tennessee River Basin except for waters in and upstream of Lake Santeetlah and Cedar Cliff Lake.

**Justification:** The possession of river herring was originally prohibited in the Little Tennessee River Basin to limit their expansion to new waters. However, Blueback Herring have now been introduced in the basin and were most recently discovered in Lake Nantahala and Lake Fontana. Anglers wish to collect Blueback Herring and use them for bait in the waters where they are established and using them for bait poses no additional ecological risk.

## ***Catfish***

**F16.** Establish an exception to the general statewide regulation for catfish in the Pee Dee River downstream of Blewett Falls Dam to the South Carolina state line and all tributaries by implementing a daily creel limit of five catfish in combination.

**Justification:** This reach of the Pee Dee River supports a popular catfish fishery, and anglers have expressed concern about overharvest, especially given the amount of habitat available varies substantially with flow from dam releases. The proposed daily creel limit for catfish would prevent excessive harvest.

## ***Triploid Grass Carp***

**F17.** Prohibit the possession or take of Grass Carp on the North Carolina portion of John H. Kerr Reservoir and Lake Norman except for scientific study by permit issued by the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission.

**Justification:** Triploid Grass Carp are often stocked as part of efforts to control infestations of hydrilla which is classified as a state and federal noxious weed. Hydrilla eradication efforts including the stocking of sterile Grass Carp have been initiated at John H. Kerr Reservoir and Lake Norman. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Lake Norman Marine Commission have requested the proposed change. Eliminating harvest will help maintain these sterile Grass Carp populations stocked to consume hydrilla.

## **Nongame Fishes**

**F18.** Clarify that the restriction on altering the appearance of nongame fishes subject to a size and/or creel limit such that the fish cannot be identified, measured, or counted applies only to species and associated locations with specific size and/or creel limits.

**Justification:** The restriction on altering the appearance of nongame fishes subject to a size and/or creel limit was intended to apply to the species with specific size and creel limits (freshwater mussels, Blue Crab, river herring in coastal rivers, catfish, American eels, Grass Carp, and Gray Trout). There was confusion among anglers as to when the restriction applied and if it impacted the use of cut bait. The proposed change would clarify the species to which the restriction applies.

## **Equipment**

**F19.** Extend the upper boundary for the use of bow nets as a special device on the Neuse River upstream from Milburnie Dam, which has been removed, to Falls Lake Dam.

**Justification:** Bow nets have been traditionally used to take shad, and by current rule, the open season for bow nets in Wake County on the Neuse River downstream of Milburnie Dam is March 1 to April 30. In winter of 2017, Milburnie Dam was removed, and the use of bow nets is proposed to be extended upstream to Falls Lake Dam, the next barrier to anadromous fish migration.

**F20.** Limit the use of archery equipment on Pee Dee River downstream of Blewett Falls Dam to the South Carolina state line and all tributaries for the take of catfish only.

**Justification:** Robust Redhorse is a rare, large native fish found in this reach of the Pee Dee River. It is classified as state endangered and has been petitioned for listing under the federal Endangered Species Act. The Pee Dee River population of Robust Redhorse is estimated to have less than 50 adults. Bowfishers have been observed harvesting large numbers of Smallmouth Buffalo, Common Carp, and other large-bodied nongame fishes from this reach of the Pee Dee River. The proposed change would help protect Robust Redhorse from being mistakenly taken with archery equipment.

# Proposed Changes to Wildlife Management Regulations for 2019–2020

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*The following changes to the statewide wildlife management regulations are proposed by the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission and are offered for your comments, opinions, or suggestions.*

## **Trapping**

**H1.** Extend the regulated trapping season in and east of Hertford, Bertie, Martin, Pitt, Greene, Lenoir, Duplin, Pender, and New Hanover counties to begin on November 1, instead of December 1. Under this proposal the statewide trapping season would be November 1 through the last day in February.

**Justification:** Furbearer populations are abundant throughout North Carolina. Opening the trapping season in this area of the state on November 1 would extend the season by one month; reduce regulatory complexity by creating one uniform, statewide trapping season; allow trappers that are beaver trapping in November to keep incidentally caught otters and muskrats; and expand opportunities and increase trapping success for trappers targeting coyotes. All trappers would still be required to have written permission before trapping on the land of another person.

## **Rabbits**

**H2.** Extend rabbit hunting season by opening it on the Monday on or nearest October 15, instead of the Saturday before Thanksgiving and running through the last day in February.

**Justification:** Statewide rabbit populations are not significantly influenced by hunting. Population sizes vary annually and are primarily a function of available food resources, protective cover, predators, and disease. Requests to extend the rabbit hunting season were made by hunters attending the 2018–19 public regulation hearings and by other small game hunters in survey responses. Aligning this rabbit season with other small game seasons would provide more hunting opportunities and reduced regulatory complexity for all small game hunters. Moreover, these additional hunting days would give rabbit hunters in the Piedmont, where most rabbit hunting occurs, supplemental small game hunting opportunities outside the regular gun deer season.

## **Fox Squirrels**

**H3.** Open fox squirrel hunting in all 100 counties (versus 27 counties currently open) and extend the season to close on January 31, instead of December 31.

**Justification:** Fox squirrel populations have expanded considerably in recent years into areas with no historical records of occurrence. Fox squirrel hunting regulations and seasons have been very conservative for several decades. But based on current trends in squirrel hunting and harvest, existing rules are more

restrictive than necessary as current harvest levels have little impact on fox squirrel populations. Maintaining the current daily and season bag limits would ensure that populations are not overharvested. Closing the season at the end of January will minimize concerns of harvesting pregnant females. These additional hunting opportunities would allow hunters to pursue fox squirrels outside of deer hunting seasons. Commission goals call for expanding opportunities for all wildlife associated recreation. This proposal expands opportunities for hunter recruitment, retention, and reactivation initiatives and mentored or youth hunts.

### ***Cervid Carcass Importation***

**H4.** Implement as permanent rule, changes in the rule regulating importation of cervid carcass and carcass parts to prohibit importation from any location outside of North Carolina, except as specified.

**Justification:** Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) is a highly infectious, fatal, neurological disease affecting the Cervidae family, which includes all North American species of deer. The source of the disease is an abnormal type of protein that collects in the animal's brain. CWD spreads through animal-to-animal contact as well as contact with infected carcasses and contaminated soils and plants. In May 2006, the Commission limited the importation of hunter-killed cervids from CWD-positive states, provinces, or countries. Currently, 25 states and three Canadian provinces are positive for CWD, and 13 states prohibit the transportation of all cervid carcass and carcass parts originating outside their state borders with exceptions such as deboned meat, clean skull plates, and caped hides.

This proposal will replace the temporary rule adopted in July 2018 to regulate the importation, transportation, or possession of any cervid carcass or carcass parts originating from outside North Carolina.

Based on this proposal, no cervid carcass or carcass part from outside North Carolina, except for South Carolina (as described below), could be imported, transported, or possessed in North Carolina except for deboned meat, caped hides, finished taxidermy products, and cleaned skull plates, antlers, jawbones and teeth. In addition, all parts must be labeled or identified with the individual's name and address, origin of the cervid, date the cervid was killed, and the individual's hunting license number, permit number, or equivalent identification.

All of the above criteria shall be in effect for South Carolina, except, caped hides with only the head attached may be imported from South Carolina if it is delivered to a licensed taxidermist within 24 hours of entering North Carolina. The caped hide and head must be double plastic bagged and labeled with the hunter's identifying information and the county in which the deer was killed. This provision will expire on August 1, 2020 or upon confirmation of CWD in a cervid from South Carolina, whichever comes first.

This proposal is necessary to protect North Carolina's deer herd by reducing the risk of introduction of CWD into the state.

### **Archery Equipment**

**H5.** Modify the rule specifying allowed archery equipment to: a) define archery equipment, b) specify allowed uses for archery equipment utilizing an elastic string, c) add elk, alligators, and feral swine to broadhead and minimum pull requirements, and d) eliminate the prohibition of barbed arrowheads.

**Justification:** Based upon a collaboration between the Commission and the N.C. Bowhunters Association, this proposal would update the rule under which archery equipment is regulated by adding definitions and clarifying equipment that can be used during archery seasons and minimum draw weight requirements.

### **Bear**

**H6.** Correct the *N.C. Administrative Code* to clarify the first segment of the bear season in Dare, Hyde, and Tyrrell counties is two weeks, beginning the second Saturday in November through the third Sunday thereafter.

**Justification:** This is a clarifying change. The intent of the rule, as discussed at public hearings last year, was to add one additional week to the first segment of bear season in Dare, Hyde, and Tyrrell counties; however, as written, the rule text mistakenly creates a three-week season in certain years. This change will align rule text with the agency's intent for a two-week, first segment of bear season.

# Proposed Changes to Game Land Regulations for 2019–2020

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*The following changes to game land regulations are proposed by the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission and are offered for your comments, opinions, or suggestions.*

## **Game Lands – Regulations Applying to Specific Game Lands**

**G1.** Establish a December archery season on South Mountains Game Land and Buffalo Cove Game Land for antlered deer.

**Justification:** The N.C. *Administrative Code* (NCAC) does not include language allowing the extended archery season on South Mountains Game Land or Buffalo Cove Game Land. This proposal will update the NCAC to make the deer season at South Mountains Game Land and Buffalo Cove Game Land consistent with the western deer season and the regulations digest.

**G2.** Establish the Conservative either-sex season on Buxton Woods Game Land.

**Justification:** When Dare County was transitioned to the maximum deer either-sex season in 2009, the intent was for Buxton Woods Game Land to remain in the Conservative Season. This intent was captured in the regulations digest, but this change was never incorporated into the NCAC.

**G3.** Allow deer of either sex to be taken during the first open Saturday of the Deer with Visible Antlers Season at Cold Mountain Game Land.

**Justification:** The Introductory Gun Either-Sex Deer Season dates were shifted to the beginning of the season during the 2018-2019 regulation cycle. For game lands, the open date for the Introductory Season was moved to the first open Saturday of the Gun Season; however, this change was not captured in the NCAC text for Cold Mountain Game Land.

**G4.** Add Hyde County to the list of counties comprising Dare Game Land.

**Justification:** A small portion of Dare Game Land extends into Hyde County and this proposal will correct this administrative oversight.

**G5.** Change the designation of Dan River Game Land in Rockingham County from a Permit Only Area to a Three-Days-per-Week Area with turkey and deer hunting by permit only.

**Justification:** Changing the designation of this property to a Three-Days-per-Week Area will increase hunting opportunities while ensuring a quality user experience for hunters, anglers, wildlife viewers, and other outdoor recreationists. Turkey and deer hunting will still be by permit only to conserve these populations and measure hunter interest.

**G6.** Designate the Little Macedonia Tract of Green Swamp Game Land as a permit-only area for all hunting and trapping.

**Justification:** The Little Macedonia Tract of Green Swamp Game Land is a small, stand-alone tract that is 264 acres in size. Adjacent to this tract, there are 19 dif-

ferent parcels of private property and 13 residences within 150 yards of the boundary. Currently, deer, bear, and turkey hunting are allowed by permits. However, managing all hunting and trapping on this tract with permits will provide better control of access, reduce conflicts between users and adjacent landowners, and prevent overcrowding.

**G7.** Allow the public to camp in designated camping areas during open hunting seasons on Johns River Game Land.

**Justification:** Hunting on Johns River Game Land is by permit only and permittees often travel considerable distances to hunt this game land. Adding designated camping areas will enhance the user experience of the permit holders.

**G8.** Allow camping within 100 yards of the Neuse River on the Turkey Quarter Creek Island Tract of Neuse River Game Lands.

**Justification:** Staff have received public comments requesting camping on the Turkey Quarter Creek Island Tract. This proposal would increase camping opportunities with minimal impacts to the resources.

**G9.** Prohibit target shooting on the Perkins Game Land in Davie County.

**Justification:** This change is being made at the request of the landowner.

**G10.** Add Pender County to the list of counties comprising Whitehall Plantation Game Land.

**Justification:** The Long Ridge tract is an 848-acre tract in Pender County and it is being incorporated into the Whitehall Plantation Game Land.

**G11.** Prohibit the pursuing or chasing of deer or bear with dogs for the purposes of training or hunting on the Long Ridge Tract of Whitehall Plantation Game Land.

**Justification:** The Long Ridge tract is an 848-acre tract that is landlocked with no public road frontage. Without perimeter roads to facilitate the recapture of dogs, it is anticipated that dogs will leave the tract and venture onto adjacent private lands. The lack of an appropriate road system and adjacent private land does not lend this property to pursuing deer or bear with the use of dogs.

**G12.** Prohibit target shooting on White Oak River Game Land.

**Justification:** Numerous complaints have been received about target shooting on this game land. Target shooting on this game land has resulted in a safety hazard. Specifically, the most popular area selected for shooting is at the end of a road where a walking trail leads to the White Oak River. This trail is the access route for users entering the game lands via boat and is down range from the target shooting activity. Opportunities exist for target shooting at alternative sites appropriately constructed and monitored to provide a safe environment for the participants. Specifically, the Holly Shelter Shooting Range is within 45 miles of White Oak River Game Land.

**G13.** Prohibit target shooting on Bertie County Game Land, Brinkleyville Game Land, Chowan Swamp Game Land, Embro Game Land, Lower Fishing Creek Game Land, Roanoke River Wetlands Game Land, Sandy Creek Game Land, Shocco Creek Game Land, Tar River Game Land, Tillery Game Land, and Voice of America Game Land.

**Justification:** The Commission is currently constructing the Odom Shooting Range in Northampton County and the range is scheduled to be open in 2019. These game lands fall within a 45-mile radius from the proposed Odom Shooting Range. Currently, popular shooting areas on these game lands contain no back-stop berms and are often located near boundaries with private property, occupied dwellings, and roads. By prohibiting target shooting on these game lands and allowing it only at the Odom Shooting Range, users will have a safe environment for target shooting and user group conflicts can be avoided.

**G14.** Clarify the definition of a “Six-Days-per-Week Game Land” to indicate that hunting is allowed Monday through Saturday during open seasons.

**Justification:** This administrative change clarifies what days are included in the “Six-Days-per-Week Game Land Areas.”

**G15.** Clarify bear sanctuary rules in the NCAC and update the county locations of existing bear sanctuaries. Additionally, Bombing Range Bear Sanctuary and part of Green Swamp Bear Sanctuary will be renamed Dare Bear Sanctuary and Juniper Creek Bear Sanctuary, respectively.

**Justification:** These administrative changes will allow staff to better track and implement changes to bear sanctuaries. Additionally, the name changes will reduce confusion by aligning sanctuary names with the names of adjacent game lands.

**G16.** Prohibit the use of gasoline powered motors on Ethridge Pond Public Fishing Area and Newbold Pond Public Fishing Area in Edgecombe County.

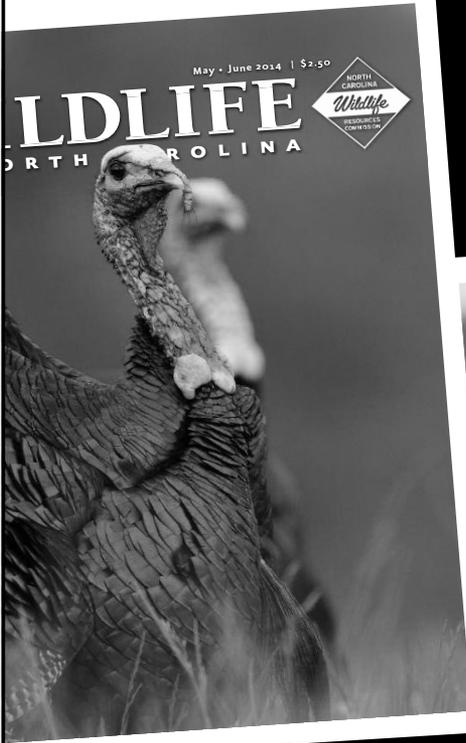
**Justification:** Ethridge Pond (28 acres) and Newbold Pond (53 acres) are relatively small ponds. As a result, numerous reports have been received about wakes from boats with gasoline powered motors negatively impacting kayakers, bank anglers, and anglers using the ADA accessible fishing pier. Prohibiting gasoline powered motors at these areas will provide a safer and more enjoyable user experience.

# WILDLIFE

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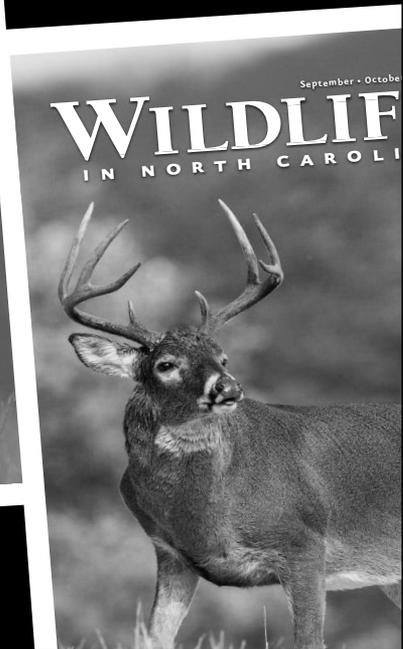


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# Proposed Changes to Enforcement Regulations for 2019–2020

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*The following changes to enforcement regulations are proposed by the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission and are offered for your comments, opinions, or suggestions.*

## **Warning Tickets**

**E1.** Updates the list of offenses for which warning tickets are prohibited and removes the specific list of offenses for which warning tickets may be issued.

**Justification:** Law enforcement officers routinely encounter situations where a violation has occurred and the issuance of a warning ticket instead of a citation is appropriate. However, because specific violations for when warning tickets can be issued are listed in this rule, enforcement options are limited. This proposal will allow enforcement officers more flexibility to issue warning tickets.

## **Summary Disposition**

**E2.** Allows the Commission's Executive Director to determine the disposition of seized fish or wildlife and details the factors to be considered when determining disposition.

**Justification:** Commission staff occasionally must seize unlawfully possessed, live or perishable, fish or wildlife. General statute allows the Commission to determine the disposition of seized fish or wildlife. This rule designates the Executive Director to determine the outcome of those resources on a case-by-case basis.

## 2019–2020 Proposed Season Dates

The Commission provides this table of upcoming season dates for planning purposes ONLY.

Final season dates will be published in the 2019–2020 regulations digest, available Aug. 1, 2019.

<b>Species</b>	<b>Open Dates</b>
<b>Bear</b>	<b>MOUNTAIN BEAR MANAGEMENT UNIT</b> In and west of Surry, Wilkes, Caldwell, Burke and Cleveland: Oct. 14 – Nov. 23, 2019 and Dec. 16 – Jan. 1, 2020
	<b>PIEDMONT BEAR MANAGEMENT UNIT</b> Alamance, Anson, Cabarrus, Caswell, Chatham, Davidson, Durham, Granville, Guilford, Lee, Mecklenburg, Montgomery, Orange, Person, Randolph, Rockingham, Rowan, Stanly and Union: Nov. 16, 2019 – Jan. 1, 2020
	Franklin, Harnett, Hoke, Johnston, Moore, Richmond, Scotland, Vance, Wake and Warren: Oct. 12, 2019 – Jan. 1, 2020
	Alexander, Catawba, Davie, Forsyth, Gaston, Iredell, Lincoln, Stokes and Yadkin: Nov. 23, 2019 – Jan. 1, 2020
	<b>COASTAL BEAR MANAGEMENT UNIT</b> <b>Zone 1:</b> Dare, Hyde and Tyrrell: Nov. 9 – Nov. 24 and Dec. 14 – Dec. 29, 2019
	<b>Zone 2:</b> Camden, Chowan, Gates, Currituck, Pasquotank and Perquimans: Nov. 9 – Nov. 17 and Dec. 14 – Dec. 29, 2019
	<b>Zone 3:</b> Beaufort, Bertie, Craven, Hertford, Jones, Martin, Pamlico and Washington: Nov. 9 – Nov. 17 and Dec. 14 – Dec. 29, 2019
	<b>Zone 4:</b> Edgecombe, Greene, Halifax, Lenoir, Nash, Northampton, Pitt, Wayne and Wilson: Nov. 16 – Dec. 15, 2019
	<b>Zone 5:</b> Bladen, Brunswick, Carteret, Columbus, Cumberland, Duplin, New Hanover, Onslow, Pender, Robeson and Sampson: Nov. 11, 2019 – Jan. 1, 2020
	<b>Wild Turkey Spring Season</b> (bearded or male turkeys only)
<b>Wild Turkey Youth-only Season</b> (bearded or male turkeys only)	Apr. 6 – 12, 2019 Apr. 4 – 10, 2020
<b>Raccoon and Opossum</b>	Oct. 14, 2019 – Feb. 29, 2020
<b>Squirrel</b>	<b>Gray and Red Squirrel:</b> Oct. 14, 2019 – Feb. 29, 2020 <b>Fox Squirrel:</b> Oct. 14, 2019 – Jan. 31, 2020 in all 100 counties
<b>Rabbit</b>	Oct. 14, 2019 – Feb. 29, 2020
<b>Quail</b>	Nov. 23, 2019 – Feb. 29, 2020

<b>Grouse</b>	Oct. 14, 2019 – Feb. 29, 2020
<b>Bobcat</b>	Oct. 14, 2019 – Feb. 29, 2020
<b>Fox</b>	See “Fox Season Hunting and Trapping Seasons” publication at <a href="http://ncwildlife.org/foxseasons">ncwildlife.org/foxseasons</a> .
<b>Crow</b>	June 5, 2019 – Feb. 29, 2020 Wednesday, Friday and Saturday of each week Crows may also be hunted on Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, New Year’s Day, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, and Independence Day; except when these days fall on a Sunday.
<b>Pheasant</b>	Nov. 23, 2019 – Feb. 1, 2020
<b>Trapping</b>	Nov. 1, 2019 – Feb. 29, 2020 in all counties

## Deer Seasons

<b>Locations</b>	<b>Type of Season and Dates</b>
<b>Northeastern</b>	<b>Archery:</b> Sept. 7 – Sept. 27, 2019 <b>Blackpowder:</b> Sept. 28 – Oct. 11, 2019 <b>Gun:</b> Oct. 12, 2019 – Jan. 1, 2020
<b>Southeastern</b>	<b>Archery:</b> Sept. 7 – Sept. 27, 2019 <b>Blackpowder:</b> Sept. 28 – Oct. 11, 2019 <b>Gun:</b> Oct. 12, 2019 – Jan. 1, 2020
<b>Central</b>	<b>Archery:</b> Sept. 7 – Nov. 1, 2019 <b>Blackpowder:</b> Nov. 2 – Nov. 15, 2019 <b>Gun:</b> Nov. 16, 2018 – Jan. 1, 2020
<b>Northwestern</b>	<b>Archery:</b> Sept. 7 – Nov. 8, 2019 <b>Blackpowder:</b> Nov. 9 – Nov. 22, 2019 <b>Gun:</b> Nov. 23, 2019 – Jan. 1, 2020
<b>Western</b>	<b>Archery:</b> Sept. 7 – Sept. 29, 2019 <b>Blackpowder:</b> Sept. 30 – Oct. 12, 2019 <b>Archery:</b> Oct. 13 – Nov. 24, 2019 <b>Gun:</b> Nov. 25 – Dec. 14, 2019 <b>Archery (Antlered Only):</b> Dec. 15, 2019 – Jan. 1, 2020
<b>Gun: Either-Sex Seasons</b>	<b>Introductory Season:</b> First open Saturday of the applicable gun season. <b>Conservative Season:</b> First 6 open days of the applicable gun season. <b>Moderate Season:</b> First 14 open days of the applicable gun season. <b>Maximum Season:</b> All open days of the applicable gun season.
<b>Urban Deer Season</b> (open in participating cities only; see regulations digest for list and contact information)	<b>Archery Only:</b> Jan. 11 – Feb. 16, 2020



### **Purchasing Licenses or Magazine Subscriptions**

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Get **N.C. Wildlife Update**—news including season dates, bag limits, legislative updates and more—delivered to your Inbox from the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission. Go to [ncwildlife.org/enews](http://ncwildlife.org/enews).

### **North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission**

1701 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-1701

Inland Fisheries Division 919-707-0220

Wildlife Management Division 919-707-0050

Land and Water Access Section 919-707-0150

N.C. Wildlife Helpline 866-318-2401

Report Wildlife Violations 800-662-7137

Turn In Poachers (NCWILDTIP) 855-945-3847

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**Additional Comments:**



# PUBLIC HEARING RECORD FORM

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
NCWRC CUSTOMER NUMBER / DISTRICT

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
LAST NAME / FIRST NAME / MIDDLE INITIAL / SUFFIX

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
BIRTH DATE / PHONE NUMBER

\_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
CITY / ZIP CODE / COUNTY

\_\_\_\_\_  
E-MAIL ADDRESS

**Please check "A" for agree or "D" for disagree for the proposals below.  
If you have no opinion do not check a box.**

INLAND FISHING					
	A	D		A	D
F1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	F11	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
F2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	F12	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
F3	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	F13	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
F4	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	F14	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
F5	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	F15	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
F6	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	F16	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
F7	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	F17	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
F8	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	F18	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
F9	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	F19	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
F10	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	F20	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

GAME LAND		
	A	D
G1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
G2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
G3	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
G4	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
G5	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
G6	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
G7	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
G8	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
G9	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
G10	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
G11	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
G12	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
G13	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
G14	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
G15	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
G16	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT		
	A	D
H1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
H2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
H3	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
H4	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
H5	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
H6	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

ENFORCEMENT		
	A	D
E1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
E2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Additional comments can be written on the back of this form. Please tear off your form and give it to a Commission staff member at the end of the hearing.**