



ROY COOPER
Governor

ELIZABETH S. BISER
Secretary

KATHY B. RAWLS
Director

FF-16-2023

PROCLAMATION

RE: STRIPED BASS – ALBEMARLE SOUND MANAGEMENT AREA – COMMERCIAL HARVEST SEASON OPEN – IMPLEMENT 18–25 INCH HARVEST SLOT LIMIT

This proclamation opens the harvest of striped bass taken for commercial purposes in the Albemarle Sound Management Area and sets the commercial daily harvest limit. The commercial harvest season shall close by proclamation when the harvest allocation is about to be exceeded, or at 11:59 P.M. on Sunday, April 30, 2023, whichever comes first.

Kathy B. Rawls, Director, Division of Marine Fisheries, hereby announces that effective at **12:01 A.M., Friday, March 3, 2023**, the harvest of striped bass taken for **COMMERCIAL PURPOSES IN THE ALBEMARLE SOUND MANAGEMENT AREA WILL OPEN** and the following provisions shall apply:

I. AREA DESCRIPTION

Albemarle Sound Management Area as described in N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission Rule 15A NCAC 03R .0201 (a).

II. SIZE AND HARVEST RESTRICTIONS

- A. It is unlawful to possess striped bass less than 18 inches or greater than 25 inches in total length.
- B. It is unlawful to possess striped bass taken in a commercial operation unless taken with other species of finfish. SCFL holders may not exceed 10 striped bass per day and the weight of their striped bass may not exceed 50% of their total daily catch. The daily harvest limit of 10 striped bass shall not be exceeded, regardless of where taken from Internal Waters, unless the fish are taken in accordance with II. C. below.
- C. It is unlawful for a commercial fishing operation consisting of more than one SCFL holder to be in possession of more than two daily harvest limits. The SCFL holder(s) shall accompany each single daily harvest limit until the time of sale to a dealer possessing a valid 2022/2023 STRIPED BASS DEALER PERMIT validated for the Albemarle Sound Management Area.
- D. The SCFL holder(s) shall accompany and transport each single harvest limit and the other finfish species together until the striped bass are sold to a dealer possessing a valid 2022/2023 STRIPED BASS DEALER PERMIT validated for the Albemarle Sound Management Area.

III. LANDING RESTRICTIONS

- A. Striped bass taken from areas opened by this proclamation may be sold only to and purchased by a dealer possessing a current **2022/2023 STRIPED BASS**

DEALER PERMIT validated for the Albemarle Sound Management Area.

- B. It is unlawful to purchase more than the daily harvest limit of striped bass from an individual or commercial fishing operation.
- C. **It is unlawful to sell, offer for sale or purchase striped bass taken by hook-and-line.**

IV. **SEASON CLOSURE**

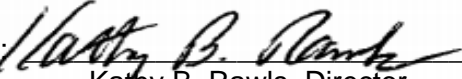
The striped bass season for commercial fishing operations in the Albemarle Sound Management Area **shall close by proclamation when the harvest allocation is about to be exceeded, or at 11:59 P.M. on Sunday, April 30, 2023, whichever comes first.** Dealers will have until two weeks after the closing of the season to sell, offer for sale, transport, or have in possession unfrozen striped bass taken in this fishery.

V. **GENERAL INFORMATION**

- A. This proclamation is issued under the authority of N.C.G.S. 113-134; 113-170.4; 113-170.5; 113-182; 113-182.1; 113-221.1; 143B-289.52; and the N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission Rules 15A NCAC 03H .0103, 03M .0202, and 03O .0500 *et seq.*
- B. It is unlawful to violate the provisions of any proclamation issued by the Fisheries Director under their delegated authority per N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission Rule 15A NCAC 03H .0103.
- C. In accordance with N.C. General Statute 113-221.1(c) All persons who may be affected by proclamations issued by the Fisheries Director are under a duty to keep themselves informed of current proclamations.
- D. It is unlawful for a dealer to possess, buy, sell or offer for sale striped bass taken from the Albemarle Sound Management Area without holding a valid **2022/2023 STRIPED BASS DEALER PERMIT** validated for the Albemarle Sound Management Area from the N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries. Dealers shall abide by all conditions which appear on the permit as well as the general provisions which appear in N.C. Marine Fisheries Rule 15A NCAC 3O .0500 *et seq.*
- E. Striped bass lawfully sold to a permitted dealer may be resold to a non-permitted wholesale or retail market provided the initial permitted dealer records their dealer identification number on each bill of lading or receipts involved in the shipment of striped bass. Any individual or corporation who holds a current finfish dealer license shall obtain a **2022/2023 STRIPED BASS DEALER PERMIT** validated for the Albemarle Sound Management Area in order to sell any striped bass personally harvested.
- F. The intent of this proclamation is to manage the commercial harvest of striped bass in the Albemarle Sound Management Area **in accordance with Amendment 2 of the North Carolina Estuarine Striped Bass Fishery Management Plan.**
- G. Holders of Recreational Commercial Gear Licenses shall follow the size, creel, and season limits of the recreational fishery for striped bass.
- H. All striped bass taken during the season closures **and all striped bass outside the size limit specified in proclamation shall be immediately returned to the water where taken, regardless of the condition of the fish.**
- I. In accordance with N.C. Marine Fisheries Rule 15A NCAC 03M .0201, it is unlawful for a dealer to possess, buy, sell, or offer for sale striped bass taken from the Albemarle Sound Management Area without having a N. C. Division of Marine Fisheries issued Albemarle Sound Management Area striped bass tag affixed

through the mouth and gill cover. In case of striped bass imported from other states, a similar tag that is issued for striped bass in the state of origin shall be affixed.

- J. **Dealers with a Striped Bass Dealer Permit for Quota Monitoring** shall contact the Division of Marine Fisheries Elizabeth City office 252-381-6000 to obtain harvest tags. **Tags shall be picked up from a Division of Marine Fisheries office.**
- K. **For gill net requirements in the Albemarle Sound Management Area, see the most recent M-type proclamations specific to the area.**
- L. Contact the N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries, P.O. Box 769, Morehead City, NC 28557 252-726-7021 or 800-682-2632 for more information or visit the division website at <http://ncmarinefisheries.net>.
- M. **This proclamation opens the harvest of striped bass taken for commercial purposes in the Albemarle Sound Management Area and sets the commercial daily harvest limit. The commercial harvest season shall close by proclamation when the harvest allocation is about to be exceeded, or at 11:59 P.M. on Sunday, April 30, 2023, whichever comes first.**

By: 
Kathy B. Rawls, Director
DIVISION OF MARINE FISHERIES

February 28, 2023
10:30 A.M.