



ROY COOPER
Governor

ELIZABETH S. BISER
Secretary

KATHY B. RAWLS
Director

FF-11-2024

PROCLAMATION

RE: WEAKFISH – COMMERCIAL - COASTAL AND JOINT FISHING WATERS

This proclamation supersedes proclamation FF-55-2012, dated November 9, 2012. It maintains the commercial weakfish fishery in N.C. Coastal and Joint Fishing Waters in accordance with Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission Addendum IV to Amendment 4 to the Weakfish Fishery Management Plan.

Kathy B. Rawls, Director, Division of Marine Fisheries, hereby announces effective at **12:01 A.M., January 1, 2024**, the following restrictions will apply to **commercial fishing operations in North Carolina Coastal and Joint Fishing Waters**:

I. SIZE RESTRICTIONS

- A. It is unlawful to take, possess, sell, or offer for sale weakfish less than 12 inches total length in N.C. Coastal and Joint Fishing Waters except as provided in Section I.B. below.
- B. From April 1 through November 15, weakfish 10 inches total length or greater may lawfully be taken in N.C. Internal Coastal and Joint Fishing Waters by use of long-haul seines or pound nets only and possessed, transported, sold, or offered for sale.
- C. It is unlawful for commercial fishing operations using finfish trawls to land more than 100 weakfish less than 12 inches total length.
- D. It is unlawful to sell or offer for sale weakfish less than 12 inches total length from finfish trawls.

II. GEAR AND HARVEST RESTRICTIONS

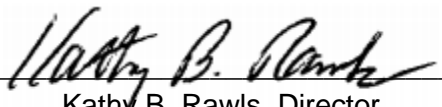
It is unlawful to possess more than 100 pounds of weakfish in a commercial fishing operation per day or trip, whichever is more restrictive, in N.C. Coastal or Joint Fishing Waters, except:

- A. It is unlawful for a commercial fishing operation using hook and line to possess more than one (1) weakfish per person per day or per person per trip, whichever is more restrictive.
- B. It is unlawful for a commercial fishing operation using gill nets with a stretched mesh length less than 2 7/8 inches to take or possess weakfish that exceeds 50 percent of the total weight of the combined catch, not to exceed 100 pounds of weakfish.
- C. It is unlawful for a commercial fishing operation using shrimp or crab trawls to possess weakfish that exceeds 50 percent of the total weight of the combined catch, not to exceed 100 pounds of weakfish.
- D. It is unlawful for a commercial fishing operation using finfish trawls to possess weakfish that exceeds 50 percent of the total weight of the combined catch, not to exceed 100 pounds of weakfish, unless fishing with nets that have a minimum stretched mesh size throughout the body of the net and tailbag of 3 1/2 inches hung on the square or 3 3/4 inches hung on a diamond.

III. GENERAL INFORMATION

- A. This proclamation is issued under the authority of N.C.G.S. 113-134; 113-134.1; 113-170.4; 113-170.5; 113-182; 113-182.1; 113-221.1; 143B-289.52; and N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission Rules 15A NCAC 03H .0103 and 03M .0512.

- B. It is unlawful to violate the provisions of any proclamation issued by the Director under their delegated authority pursuant to N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission Rule 15A NCAC 03H .0103.
- C. The intent of this proclamation is to maintain compliance with the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission Addendum IV to Amendment 4 to the Weakfish Fishery Management Plan.
- D. 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.
- E. Contact the N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries, P.O. Box 769, Morehead City, NC 28557, phone 252-726-7021 or 800-682-2632 for more information or visit the division website at <https://deq.nc.gov/about/divisions/marine-fisheries>.
- F. **This proclamation supersedes proclamation FF-55-2012, dated November 9, 2012. It maintains the commercial weakfish fishery in N.C. Coastal and Joint Fishing Waters in accordance with Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission Addendum IV to Amendment 4 to the Weakfish Fishery Management Plan.**

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

December 19, 2023
4:00 P.M.