

North Carolina Division
of Marine Fisheries

Employee Operational Handbook



2023

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1.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of this handbook is to provide employees of the Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF) an overview of the division's mission, structure, programs, processes, committees, and other information employees may find useful. This handbook offers a brief summary of some of the major cross-sectional processes within the division and provides sources for employees to reference for more detailed information, including specific individual Standard Operating Procedures (SOP), guidelines, committee charters, and policy manuals. In addition, the handbook gives a brief understanding of how the division is organized within the Department of Environmental Quality and within the mission of the department.

A valuable tool that will help you as you read this handbook and other DMF documents is the Acronym list, which is found at the end of the Employee Handbook.

Revision History:

Original – 2012

Revised – July 2015

Revised – February 2020

Revised – June 2023

2.0 DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

The Division of Marine Fisheries is one of several divisions within the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). DEQ is an executive level branch of state government (i.e., organized under the Governor). The DEQ is the lead stewardship agency for the protection of North Carolina's environmental resources. The organization, which has offices from the mountains to the coast, administers regulatory programs designed to protect air quality, water quality, and the public's health, and also works to advance an all-of-the-above energy strategy that fits North Carolina's needs. DEQ also offers technical assistance to businesses, farmers, local governments, and the public and encourages responsible behavior with respect to the environment through education programs provided at DEQ facilities and through the state's school system. DEQ touches the lives of all North Carolinians in many ways to enhance and ensure our quality of life.¹

For information on other DEQ divisions and their missions, please reference the following link.

<https://DEQ.nc.gov>

3.0 DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY MISSION STATEMENT

DEQ Mission Statement: Providing science-based environmental stewardship for the health and prosperity of all North Carolinians.

4.0 DIVISION OF MARINE FISHERIES ADMINISTRATION AND ORGANIZATION

4.1 Introduction

The Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF) is a state agency, under the N.C. Department of Environmental Quality, responsible for managing the state's marine fisheries resources. The division collects and analyzes data necessary to recommend management actions to the Marine Fisheries Commission and implements rules and policies passed by the commission. The division monitors estuarine and marine fish and their health; enforces statutes and rules governing fishing in coastal waters; monitors and protects fisheries habitat, including resource enhancement; protects public health from illnesses from shellfish consumption and recreational water use; and encourages public responsibility through information,

¹ Information on DEQ taken from <https://deq.nc.gov>

technical assistance, and education. The DMF’s most important tools are fair and consistent enforcement of statutes and rules, accurate data, objective analyses, public service, and professional staff.

The division has six offices along the coast and is comprised of seven sections that collectively work together to ensure sustainable marine and estuarine fisheries and habitats for the benefit and health of the people of North Carolina.

4.2 Administration

Division Director: Katherine “Kat” B. Rawls
 Deputy Director: Michael S. Loeffler

Number of Employees: Approximately 300 employees on payroll and located in six different offices - Morehead City Headquarters {includes staff working out of our South River facility}, Morehead City Central District Office (CDO), Elizabeth City, Manteo, Washington (WARO), and Wilmington (WIRO).

Budget: Approximately \$34,000,000 comprised of state appropriations, federal assistance, commercial fishing license receipts, recreational fishing license receipts, recreational fishing license receipts and other sources

4.3 Sections

There are seven sections within DMF: Director’s Office (Director, MFC Office, Assistants for Councils), Fisheries Management, Habitat and Enhancement, Marine Patrol, License and Statistics, Shellfish Sanitation and Recreational Water Quality and Administrative and Maintenance Services.

Director’s Office – The Administration Section is composed of the Director, Deputy Director, Office Staff, MFC Commission staff, and Fishery Management Council Liaisons, and is responsible for establishing fisheries policies through state and federal fishery management agencies, strategic planning and supporting the Marine Fisheries Commission.

Fisheries Management Section – The Fisheries Management Section (FM) is responsible for conducting fisheries and gear research, stock assessments, resource monitoring, collection of biological information and analyzing and distributing data for evaluation. This work is carried out in two coastal districts, which separate the state's uniquely different fisheries. Fisheries Management develops fishery management plans and conservation regulations and houses the Fishery Management Plan coordinator. This section is responsible for coordinating federally-issued protected species permits, reporting interactions, and coordinating the At-Sea-Observer Program. This section also administers the popular Saltwater Fishing Tournament.

Habitat and Enhancement Section – The Habitat and Enhancement Section (H&E) is charged with conserving and managing coastal habitats of the state required by the FRA. The H&E’s objective is to enhance, restore, and protect North Carolina's coastal habitats to promote sustainable fisheries and coastal resilience. The H&E staff is a diverse group of scientists, managers, technicians, and vessel captains. They manage a wide range of programs, including aquaculture permitting, shellfish leases, habitat mapping, the coastal habitat protection plan, oyster restoration, and artificial reefs. The H&E programs that accomplish this work are grouped into three general categories (enhancement, habitat, and aquaculture) and include: Shellfish Rehabilitation (Oyster Sanctuary, Cultch Planting), Artificial Reef,

Shellfish Lease and Aquaculture, Coastal Habitat Protection (Estuarine Benthic Mapping Program, Habitat Permit Review, Coastal Habitat Protection Plan (CHPP)). H&E conducts large-scale habitat restoration efforts for shellfish, including maintaining 43 ocean artificial reefs and 25 estuarine reefs, 14 of which serve as oyster sanctuaries and enhancing wild shellfish harvest by creating numerous small oyster reefs in open-harvest waters. The CHPP is administered by H&E for managing and conserving coastal habitats throughout North Carolina. H&E is responsible for the administration of shellfish cultivation, aquaculture, and mariculture within North Carolina including public trust waters. H&E is also responsible for reviewing habitat permits to minimize habitat impacts from development and other upland activities, mapping the distribution of different bottom habitats, and jointly responsible for managing oysters through the North Carolina Oyster Fishery Management Plan.

Marine Patrol Section – The Marine Patrol Section (MP) currently has over 55 officers that work in three law enforcement districts along the coast. Marine Patrol ensures compliance with conservation regulations and protects the state's fisheries and habitat resources by inspecting fishermen who harvest fish and fish houses that buy North Carolina seafood. Their jurisdiction includes all coastal waters, extends to 3 miles offshore, and ranges to 200 miles offshore for some federally regulated species. Officers monitor 2.5 million acres of water and over 4,000 miles of coastline. In addition to checking commercial and recreational fishermen, officers patrol waterways, piers, and beaches in coastal areas. They also inspect vehicles transporting seafood and restaurants all over the state to make sure everyone is complying with fisheries rules. Officers use a variety of different size boats, aircraft and patrol vehicles to accomplish these tasks.

License and Statistics Section – The License and Statistics Section (L&S) collects, processes, and analyzes commercial and recreational fisheries catch, effort, and socioeconomic statistics, and is responsible for the sale of fishing licenses and issuance of agency permits. This section also administers the Marine Fisheries Commission's license eligibility process.

Shellfish Sanitation and Recreational Water Quality Section – The Shellfish Sanitation and Recreational Water Quality Section (SSRWQ) is responsible for monitoring the quality of coastal shellfishing and recreational swimming waters, surveying and evaluating actual and potential pollution sources to these waters, and inspecting and certifying shellfish and crustacean processing facilities to protect the health of shellfish consumers and recreational bathers.

Administrative and Maintenance Office – The Administrative and Maintenance Office (AMO) is responsible for managing the division's budget, fiscal accounting, purchasing, contracts, federal and aid, fund other grant programs including the Coastal Recreational Fishing License (CRFL) and Commercial Fishing Resource Fund Programs. Additionally, this office is responsible for purchasing and procurement and administration of state policies, procedures and guidelines. The section provides support for the day-to-day operations of DMF facilities, including property management, boat and vehicle maintenance and repair, and is responsible for repairs and renovations of division-owned property.

In addition to the sections of DMF, several Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) offices are housed in DMF headquarters, including:

Department of Information Technology – Information Technology (IT) provides development and maintenance of database applications in support of the agency mission, complies with state IT enterprise architecture and business needs and provides GIS support services. It maintains the computer needs for both DMF and Division of Coastal Management (DCM).

Division of Human Resources Morehead City – Human Resources provides support for recruiting/hiring, compensation, benefits, leave, performance management and policy interpretation for the divisions of Marine Fisheries and Coastal Management.

Department of Public Affairs – Public Affairs is responsible for the distribution of information about DMF and DCM activities and oversees an educational outreach to user groups and the general public. Also, included in this section are photography services, graphic design and the agency's web site.

4.4 Office Locations

DMF has several office locations throughout the state. The main location is the headquarters building (HQ) at 3441 Arendell Street in Morehead City. There is also Central District Office (CDO) located at 5285 Highway 70 West in Morehead City. To provide better service to our customers, DMF also has staffed offices in Washington, Wilmington, Manteo, Elizabeth City, South River and Wake Forrest. A Field Staff List is located on the Share Drive under Field Staff List.

5.0 DIVISION OF MARINE FISHERIES MISSION-VISION

5.1 Mission

The Division of Marine Fisheries is dedicated to ensuring sustainable marine and estuarine fisheries and habitats for the benefit and health of the people of North Carolina.

5.2 Vision

As a model fisheries management agency, the North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries:

- Ensures healthy, sustainable marine and estuarine fisheries and habitats through management decisions based on sound data and objective analyses.
- Monitors and evaluates coastal waters for the safe harvest of molluscan shellfish and recreational uses to safeguard the public health of shellfish consumers and recreational bathers.
- Provides excellent public service by motivated employees in an open and healthy working environment.
- Views public participation as essential for successful management of North Carolina’s fisheries resources.
- Enforces Marine Fisheries statutes and rules fairly and consistently.

5.3 Values

Trust	<i>Reliance on integrity of a person or organization</i>
Respect	<i>Esteem, avoid interference, show consideration/appreciation</i>
Accountability	<i>Answerable for what you do or do not do</i>

Teamwork	<i>Cooperative effort by group to achieve a common goal</i>
Integrity	<i>Steadfast allegiance to strict ethical standards</i>
Loyalty	<i>Steadfast allegiance to our mission and each other</i>
Leadership	<i>Guidance by example and direction</i>
Objectivity	<i>Not influenced by prejudice or biases; unbiased</i>
Excellence	<i>Of the highest or finest quality showing initiative and innovation</i>

5.4 Key Result Areas

KRA 1: Direct, control and continuously improve internal processes for effective, efficient, and equitable use of division resources

Implementing Strategies

- Develop internal processes that consistently deliver the highest quality products and services to our customers.
- Develop and implement accountability tracking system for all resources to obtain the best possible use of taxpayer monies.
- Develop and nurture a cooperative, coordinated, mutually supportive operating team.
- Evaluate processes and make proper staffing allocations (a continuous process as things change and funding varies).
- Maximize use of all resources to support delivery of services without regard to sectional and district boundaries.

KRA 2: Manage coastal fisheries and associated habitats to maintain and enhance their quality, diversity and availability of fishery resources in sufficient quantity for present and future generations

Implementing Strategies

- Establish Fishery Management Plans (FMP) as a cornerstone for management actions for all priority recreational and commercial species.
- Establish and enforce priorities for fish management based upon standardized evaluations.
- Promote active public collaboration in the fisheries management process as a catalyst for conservation success.
- Establish processes and/or programs for management actions not associated with FMPs.
- Educate public about key coastal fisheries management issues to promote individual ethics.
- Seek professional collaboration with academia and other environmental resource agencies.
- Provide fair and consistent enforcement of fisheries statutes and rules.
- Protect and enhance fish habitat by execution of the Coastal Habitat Protection Plan (CHPP) implementation plan, incorporation of new habitat related information into Fishery Management Plans and Coastal Habitat Protection Plan updates, restoration and enforcement

of shell bottom habitat, and establishment of sampling and analysis processes to scientifically assess the need for additional habitat protection, restoration, or enhancement.

KRA 3: Monitor, survey, and evaluate quality of coastal shellfishing and recreational swimming waters for actual and potential pollution and certify and inspect shellfish and crustacean processing facilities to protect the health of seafood consumers and recreational bathers.

Implementing Strategies

- Collect and analyze water samples from coastal recreational waters for safe bodily contact and notify the public when standards are exceeded.
- Collect and analyze water samples and survey shoreline shellfish growing areas in compliance with the required elements of the National Shellfish Sanitation Program Model Ordinance for proper classification of shellfish harvesting waters.
- Inspect and certify shellfish processing plants in compliance with the required elements of the National Shellfish Sanitation Program Model Ordinance to ensure that shellfish are handled and processed in a sanitary manner for human consumption.
- Inspect and certify crustacean processing plants in compliance with NC rules for handling, packing and shipping of crustacea meat.

KRA 4: Create a working environment that maximizes employee satisfaction, morale, and performance

Implementing Strategies

- Promote and hire the best-qualified employees, based upon skills, training and experience necessary to provide high quality service.
- Provide employees with opportunities for career advancement to appropriately recognize employee contribution.
- Provide appropriate and timely employee training.
- Provide a safe, healthy, and comfortable working environment.
- Provide meaningful recognition for outstanding performance and exemplary service as well as real consequences for sub-standard performance.
- Promote organizational development based upon sound supervision, management and leadership (accountability).

KRA 5: Provide high quality customer service

Implementing Strategies

- Determine needs and expectations of our customers.
- Demonstrate our division's values to all customers through our interactions.
- Create, simplify, and consolidate processes that affect our customers.
- Establish media and marketing strategy for services provided.
- Provide up to date information on the division's website to inform the public.

KRA 6: Pursue and acquire technology to provide efficient high quality products and services

Implementing Strategies

- Continually improve technology.
- Develop and implement an integrated, centralized database system and technology support.
- Provide user-friendly services by use of technology.
- Achieve a high level of computer literacy across all staff.

6.0 PROCESSES AND MANUALS

The Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF) has a variety of processes and manuals that ensure efficient and effective division operation, establish standards for employees, and allow DMF to meet its mission. These hold DMF staff accountable to the DMF values listed in the Strategic Plan. All employees are expected to be aware of these processes, manuals, and committees. Below are major processes, manuals, and committees all employees are to know. Each has a brief description.

6.1 *Inside Fisheries and Website*

Inside Fisheries is the division's employee web portal. It houses easily retrievable information necessary to keep employees informed of policies, processes, access to forms, training materials, etc. Employees are to reference this portal often and keep it bookmarked (many keep as their home page). It directly links the DMF public website, DEQ website, and provides shortcuts to FIORI, webmail, etc.

In 2021, DMF transitioned to a new web content management system housed under the main DEQ website in order to be more uniform with other state agencies.

<https://deq.nc.gov/inside-fisheries>

6.2 *DMF Policy Manual*

The purpose of the DMF Policy Manual is to identify specific policy and implementation for DMF employees. This manual complements the Department of Environmental Quality and Office of State Human Resources' policies. DMF policies do not supersede department and state policies and may not always reflect the most recent changes in those over-riding policies. Specific standard operating procedures for specific job functions or processes are separate from this manual and are to be developed and maintained by individual work units, programs, sections, or committees. This manual provides the general policies that all DMF employees are to follow.

Supervisors are to provide these policies and procedures to all staff and to incorporate this manual into all new employee orientations provided by Human Resources and by the hiring manager. Employees are to review these policies and procedures, annually, to update themselves on any policies that may have been revised.

The effective dates of the policies and procedures denote the date the policy was last revised. Revisions will be distributed as new or revised policies are approved by the division director.

This manual is available electronically on the division's shared drive under Policy Manual and on the division's intranet employee portal:

<https://www.deq.nc.gov/marine-fisheries/inside-fisheries/administration/dmf-policy-manual/open>

The Department of Environmental Quality’s policies and procedures can be found on the Department of Environmental Quality website:

<https://deq.nc.gov>

The Office of State Human Resources policies and procedures can be found at:

<http://www.oshr.nc.gov>

6.3 Safety

Safety is a shared responsibility for all employees. Each employee, regardless of position, is empowered to correct areas where policies are not being followed and to take action to correct unsafe conditions, behavior, etc. It is every employee’s responsibility to adhere to the division’s safety policies that are found in the DMF Safety Manual (see website link at the end of this section). Safety training is occasionally required for all staff or specific staff with specific responsibilities. Every year, DMF coordinates a variety of exercises and events to recognize Safety Week for its employees.

The Safety Committee publishes four important documents that each employee should be familiar with: **The DMF Safety Manual, the Hazard Communication Plan, the Bloodborne Pathogen Plan, and a separate Emergency Action Plan for each location.** All these documents can be found on the DMF shared drive in the Safety Committee folder. When there are multiple copies of a plan read the file with the most current date.

The DMF Safety Committee, chaired by a DEQ Safety Consultant, is the highest-level safety committee at the division level and is responsible for maintaining the Safety Manual and the various safety processes and programs. The Safety Committee is comprised of members representing each section in the division as well as the outside offices. The members include technical, administrative, law enforcement, and managerial staff to ensure a broad perspective regarding safety issues. DEQ has a Safety Consultant who assists division safety committees. Each employee is to review the Safety Manual, processes, and programs housed on *Inside Fisheries*, at least annually, and as directed. Employees should be familiar with the location of his/her “Muster Station” and the safety protocol for their section.

There are several subcommittees directed by the Safety Committee. In addition, there are processes that must be followed, some immediately such as after an accident, that are outlined in the policy or other processes located on *Inside Fisheries* or directed by DEQ or state policies. All employees are encouraged to participate by joining the main Safety Committee or one of the subcommittees. The primary safety rule at DMF is that employees will immediately report any unsafe conditions to their supervisor. All DMF employees are required to follow safety protocols and to use and maintain and personal protective equipment (PPE) assigned to them.

<https://www.deq.nc.gov/about/divisions/marine-fisheries/inside-fisheries>

6.4 DMF Strategic and Annual Operational Plan

The DMF monitors estuarine and marine fish and their health; enforces statutes and rules governing fishing in coastal fishing waters; monitors and protects fisheries habitat, including resource enhancement; protects public health from illnesses from shellfish consumption and recreational water use; and encourages public responsibility through information, technical assistance, and education. The DMF's most important tools are fair and consistent enforcement of statutes and rules, accurate data, objective analyses, public service, and professional staff.

The DMF achieves these mandates and responsibilities by establishing a strategic plan and annual operational plan. Annually (fiscal year), the DMF develops a set of priorities and an annual operational plan implementing strategies outlined in the strategic plan.

The annual operational plans and reports are listed on the DMF shared drive under '**Strategic Plan**'.

6.5 Fisheries Reform Act Overview

The North Carolina General Assembly passed the Fisheries Reform Act (FRA) in 1997 (S.L. 1997-400 and House Bill 1097). Signed August 14, 1997, by Governor James B. Hunt, the act completely changed the way North Carolina approaches coastal fisheries management.

The FRA legally recognized the importance of balancing interests of both commercial and recreational fishermen with the need to protect the marine and estuarine resources for the benefit of all people. It also linked the protection of marine fisheries with the conservation and enhancement of coastal habitat. The FRA recognized that to ensure sustainable fisheries, habitat and water quality needs must be addressed, as well as regulating fisheries.

It is a crucial law that led the state to make ecosystem management a central theme in its conservation strategy. It also required a cooperative approach to conservation with the development of the state's Coastal Habitat Protection Plan (CHPP). The CHPP was mandated by the FRA requiring the NC Marine Fisheries, Environmental Management, and Coastal Resources commissions to adopt and revise the CHPP every five years to reflect changes in the status of habitat protection in NC. The CHPP is a multi-agency ecosystem management plan developed and implemented by agencies within DEQ and was originally adopted in December 2004. The CHPP provides information on the coastal habitats' distribution and abundance, ecological functions and importance to fish production, status and trends, threats to the habitats, and includes recommendations to address threats. Staff work to address these needs through numerous activities to support the implementation of the CHPP. Since most fish migrate throughout NC's estuarine and marine waters throughout their lifecycle, a complex of habitats must be maintained to ensure survival and growth, from the headwaters to the sea. The CHPP was the first of its kind in the country and is being used as a blueprint for other ecosystem management plans on the state and national level.

One of the requirements of the act was for the DMF to redesign the commercial fishing license system, capping the total number of Standard Commercial Fishing Licenses and Retired Standard Commercial Fishing Licenses to be issued at 8,896. The law required the licensing system to distinguish between commercial fishermen who sell their catch and those who fish with commercial fishing gear for recreational purposes. The new commercial fishing license system was implemented on July 1, 1999. The cap on commercial fishing licenses has never been met.

The act also expanded data collected through the existing Trip Ticket Program, allowing DMF to cross-reference landings reports, commercial fishing licenses, and commercial vessel registrations to track when, what and where fishermen were catching seafood and what fishing gears were used. This detailed tracking ability has provided vital information used in fisheries management decisions. Unforeseen benefits of this change have been the use of the detailed data in helping fishermen gain financial assistance through Hurricane commercial fishing assistance programs and shrimp and blue crab economic assistance programs.

The act directed DMF to prepare draft fishery management plans to be adopted by the Marine Fisheries Commission for all commercially and recreationally significant marine species or fisheries in North Carolina. It required establishment of an advisory committee process through which these plans are adopted by the Marine Fisheries Commission.

The result was fishery management plans were adopted only after a comprehensive, thorough, and public review of the fishery that took into account the species' life history, stock status, and commercial, recreational, economical, and sociological issues.

6.6 Coastal Recreational Fishing License Overview

The Fisheries Reform Act changed the way North Carolina approached coastal fisheries management. It restructured the Marine Fisheries Commission, mandated development of Fishery Management Plans and Coastal Habitat Protection Plan, and restructured the commercial fishing license system. One critical component of fisheries management was not included in the FRA – a license for recreational anglers. This license was needed to allow better data collection about North Carolina's coastal recreational fishing activity so the DMF can manage fish stocks more effectively. Fisheries managers need better estimates on how many people are recreationally fishing and how many and what types of fish they are catching. Sampling and surveys help provide this information.

The North Carolina General Assembly passed an act to Provide for the Implementation of the Coastal Recreational Fishing License in 2005 (S.L. 1997-400 and House Bill 1097). The Coastal Recreational Fishing License (CRFL) went into effect on January 1, 2007. The license can be purchased on a 10-day, annual, or lifetime basis, or combined with a variety of inland fishing and hunting licenses issued by the Wildlife Resources Commission (WRC). The DMF administers the licenses, but they are also sold through WRC license agents statewide, including on the Internet and over the phone.

The license allows recreational fishermen to take finfish for personal consumption; finfish harvested under this license cannot be sold. Fishermen using this license are held to the state's recreational size and possession limits. The license cannot be assigned or transferred. Fishermen holding the CRFL are required to comply with all DMF sampling and survey programs.

The license is required to recreationally fish and to take finfish in the state's Coastal Fishing Waters, which include sounds, coastal rivers and their tributaries, and out to three miles in the ocean. Recreational anglers who catch fish in the Exclusive Economic Zone (3 miles – 200 miles offshore) are required to have this license to transport and land fish in state waters. Fishing in Joint Fishing Waters (areas managed by both the Marine Fisheries and Wildlife Resources Commissions) will require either the CRFL or a WRC inland fishing license.

Proceeds from the sale of these licenses go into two marine resource funds managed by the DMF. Revenue must be used to manage, protect, restore, develop, cultivate, conserve, and/or enhance North Carolina's marine resources. Net revenue from the lifetime licenses are deposited into the Marine Resources Endowment Fund and only the interest can be dispersed. Net revenue from the ten-day and annual licenses is deposited in the Marine Resources Fund and the principal and interest can be dispersed.

6.7 Fisheries Management Plan Process

North Carolina General Statute 113-182.1 sets out the statutory framework for the development of fishery management plans (FMP's) in North Carolina. The Department of Environmental Quality is required to prepare proposed FMPs for all commercially or recreationally significant species or fisheries that comprise North Carolina marine or estuarine resources. N.C.G.S. § 113-182.1 (a). Where statutory provisions related to fishery management plans refer to the department, the Division of Marine Fisheries is the responsible agency of the department for issues related to marine and estuarine resources. The goal of the plans shall be "to ensure the long-term viability of the state's commercially and recreationally significant species or fisheries." N.C.G.S. § 113-182.1 (b). Each plan shall be reviewed at least once every five years. N.C.G.S. § 113-182.1 (d).

All first-order plans have been developed and the division is now in a review phase where plans are updated with the latest available data and information and are amended if management changes are needed. Staff involved in the FMP process is expected to review and follow all standard operating procedures, guidelines, deadlines, training, etc. as directed by the FMP guidelines and management directives. The FMP review process is deliberate by design and takes approximately two years to complete.

6.8 DMF Fishery Management Plan Guidelines

The purpose of the division's *Fishery Management Plan Internal Guidance Document* is to describe procedures and policies regarding the internal fishery management plan process and to put in one place information needed by plan writers to successfully prepare the plans. This document complements the Marine Fisheries Commission's *Guidelines for North Carolina Fishery Management Plans*. These guidelines and any updates/revisions are located on the division's shared drive under 'FMP Guidelines'.

6.9 Marine Fisheries Commission Fishery Management Plan Guidelines

The purpose of the *Guidelines for North Carolina Fishery Management Plans* is to define the Marine Fisheries Commission role in development of fishery management plans, the contents of the plans, and the process involved in reviewing and adopting such plans. The commission's guidelines are required to be established by North Carolina General Statute 143B-289.52(a)(10). These guidelines are located on the division shared drive under "FMP Guidelines."

6.10 Coastal Habitat Protection Plan Process

North Carolina General Statute 143B-279.8 sets out the statutory framework for the development of

Coastal Habitat Protection Plans (CHPP) in North Carolina. The Department of Environmental Quality is required to coordinate the preparation of draft CHPPs for critical fisheries habitats. The Department shall use the staff of those divisions within the Department that have jurisdiction over marine fisheries, water quality, and coastal area management in the preparation of the CHPP and shall request assistance from other federal and State agencies as necessary. Where statutory provisions related to the CHPP refer to the department, the Division of Marine Fisheries is the lead agency of the department for issues related to coastal habitats. The CHPP includes descriptions of North Carolina's coastal fish habitats, their ecological functions, value, status, and threats, as well as recommended actions to protect, enhance, and restore them.

The goal of the CHPP “shall be the long-term enhancement of coastal fisheries associated with each coastal habitat identified in subdivision (1) of this subsection (N.C.G.S. § 143B-279.8 (a)(1)). The CHPP focuses on six basic fish habitats: 1) water column, 2) shell bottom, 3) submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV), 4) wetlands, 5) soft bottom, and 6) hard bottom. Each plan shall be reviewed at least once every five years (N.C.G.S. § 143B-279.8 (a)). The Marine Fisheries, Coastal Resources, and Environmental Management commissions must approve the plan and any revisions, updates, or amendments. The CHPP Steering Committee (CSC), consisting of two commissioners from each commission, has served as the decision-making body regarding this determination, reviewing draft plans, and providing final approval. The initial CHPP was completed and approved in 2005, with updates in 2010, 2016, and 2021. Originally, the CHPP was a single document with recommendations that were broad by design to allow each division to determine what specific actions are needed and feasible within a given budget cycle. Previously, these recommendations were compiled every two years in separate implementation plans. For the 2016 update, the plan was organized into two documents:

1. The *CHPP Source Document* provided a chapter on each of the six habitat types and provides the information specified in the Act. These chapters describe the function of each habitat necessary for production of economically important fish stocks, threats to each habitat, and the links between those habitats and various life stages of the fish. This document provides the science and data to support recommended actions and information in the *CHPPlet*.
2. The *CHPPlet* provided succinct information on past implementation progress, priority issues, and management actions to be taken by the Coastal Resources, Environmental Management, Marine Fisheries commissions, APNEP, and DEQ's divisions.

For the 2021 update, the CSC determined that an amendment was most appropriate for the current CHPP cycle and decided that the 2021 CHPP Amendment should focus on five specific priority areas of need with a 5-year implementation plan.

6.11 DMF Coastal Habitat Protection Plan Guidelines

The purpose of the division's *Coastal Habitat Protection Plan Process Framework Document* is to describe procedures and policies regarding the internal CHPP process and to put in one place information needed by plan writers to successfully prepare the plans. This Process Framework provides internal guidelines for staff from DEQ divisions who comprise the CHPP Team who participate in the development and implementation of the CHPP.

6.12 Marine Fisheries Commission Coastal Habitat Protection Plan Role

The Marine Fisheries Commissions role in the Coastal Habitat Protection Plan is established by North Carolina General Statute 143B-279.8 and includes:

- The MFC Chair appoints two members of the MFC to the CSC,

- Review draft plans as revised by the CSC to consider for adoption at least every five years,
- If any of the three commissions is unable to agree to any aspect of a CHPP, the chair of each commission shall refer that aspect of the CHPP to a six-member conference committee to facilitate the resolution of any differences,
- In carrying out their powers and duties, the MFC shall ensure, to the maximum extent practicable, that their actions are consistent with the CHPP as adopted by the three commissions,
- The commissions shall adopt rules to implement the CHPP in accordance with Chapter 150B of the General Statutes,
- If any of the three commissions concludes that another commission has taken an action that is inconsistent with a CHPP, that commission may request a written explanation of the action from the other commission,
- The commissions shall report to the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Agriculture and Natural and Economic Resources, the Fiscal Research Division, and the Environmental Review Commission on progress in developing and implementing the CHPP, including the extent to which the actions of the three commissions are consistent with the CHPP, on or before September 1 of each year in which any significant revisions to the CHPP are made.

6.13 Marine Fisheries Commission

The N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission is a nine-member board, separate from DMF, and is appointed by the governor. The Commission implements laws relating to coastal fisheries and coastal fishing and adopts rules and policies to be followed in the management, protection, preservation and enhancement of marine and estuarine resources within its jurisdiction. The commission meets at least quarterly and may hold additional meetings at the call of the chair.

Function and Purpose

The function, purpose and duties of the commission are set out in statute. G.S. 143B 289.51 directs the commission to:

- Manage, restore, develop, cultivate, conserve, protect, and regulate the marine and estuarine resources;
- Implement state laws relating to coastal fisheries by the adoption of rules and policies;
- Implement management measures regarding ocean and marine fisheries; and
- Advise the state regarding marine fisheries within the jurisdiction of regional and federal boards and councils.

Powers and Duties

The powers and duties of the commission are also found in statute. G.S. 143B 289.52 authorizes the commission to adopt rules to be followed in the management, protection, preservation and enhancement of the marine and estuarine resources within its jurisdiction, including commercial and sports fisheries. To view or download the commission’s rules, visit <https://www.deq.nc.gov/dmf-rules>.

Some, but not all, of the other powers and duties of the commission include:

- Authorize, license, regulate, prohibit, prescribe, or restrict all forms of marine and estuarine resources in coastal waters, with respect to:
 - Time, place, character, or dimensions of any methods or equipment that may be employed in taking fish.

- Seasons for taking fish.
- Size limits of and maximum quantities of fish that may be taken.
- Provide fair regulation of commercial and recreational fishing groups in the interest of the public.
- Govern mariculture of shellfish and other marine resources involving the use of public grounds.
- Close waters to shellfishing for propagation.
- Adopt relevant federal laws and regulations as state rules.
- Delegate to the fisheries director the authority by proclamation to suspend or implement a particular rule that may be affected by a variable condition.
- Comment on permit applications received by state agencies that affect marine resources.
- Adopt fishery management plans.
- Approve the Coastal Habitat Protection Plan.
- Approve rules to define recreational and commercial fishing gear.
- Regulate participation in a fishery that is subject to a federal fishery management plan, if that plan has a quota.
- Establish advisory committees (G.S. 143B 289.57).
- Adopt rules establishing sanitation requirements for the harvesting, processing and handling of scallops, shellfish and crustacean of in-state origin (G.S.113-221.2).
- Regulate scallops, shellfish and crustacean shipped into North Carolina. (G.S.113-221.2).
- Adopt rules to provide for a water quality monitoring program for coastal recreation waters of the state and implement the federal Beaches Environmental Assessment and Coastal Health Act of 2000. (G.S.113-221.2).

Commission Make-up

Composition of N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission	
SEAT	QUALIFICATIONS
Commercial Fisherman	Individual currently or recently deriving at least 50 percent of annual earned income from taking and selling fishery resources in coastal fishing waters of the state. Spouses of qualified individuals may be appointed.
Commercial Industry	Individual currently or recently deriving at least 50 percent of annual earned income from activities involving the buying, selling, processing, or distributing of seafood landed in this state. Spouses of qualified individuals may be appointed if he or she is actively involved in the qualifying business.
Recreational Fisherman	Individual actively engaged in recreational sports fishing in coastal waters of the state who does not derive more than 10 percent of annual earned income from sport fishing activities.
Sport Fishing Industry	Individual deriving at least 50 percent of annual earned income from selling goods or services related to the sport fishing industry in the state. Spouses of qualified individuals may be appointed.
At-large	Individual having general knowledge of and experience related to subjects and persons regulated by the commission.
Scientist	Individual who is a fisheries scientist having special training and expertise in marine and estuarine fisheries biology, ecology, population dynamics, water quality, habitat protection, or similar knowledge. He or she may not receive more than 10 percent of annual earned income from either the commercial or sport fishing industries.

Jurisdiction

The Marine Fisheries Commission’s jurisdiction includes all coastal waters out to three (3) miles from shore, including 2.9 million acres of marine and estuarine waters and 12,000 miles of shoreline. This contains the shoreline of estuarine rivers and sounds, as well as the ocean.

North Carolina’s location along the Atlantic Coast presents unique management opportunities. Just offshore of Cape Hatteras, the warm waters of the Gulf Stream collide with the colder waters of the Labrador Current. This creates a mixing zone that produces a diversity of catch. The state is the southern-most migratory range of many northern species of fish, like tautog and summer flounder, and the northern-most range of many tropical species, like gag grouper and tarpon. Additionally, the Albemarle-Pamlico Sound system is the second-largest estuary on the East Coast, behind the Chesapeake Bay.

Advisory Committees (AC)

The Marine Fisheries Commission (MFC) uses a series of advisory committees (AC) to help develop fisheries management policies and rules, as set out in the 1997 Fisheries Reform Act (FRA).

There are three types of ACs - Regional, Standing, and Subject Matter (such as Blue Crab, Shellfish, Flounder, etc.) - assisting the MFC or DMF in the performance of its duties. There are also several MFC committees comprised solely of commissioners. DMF staff are assigned to the various committees (i.e., staff leads).

The MFC chairman appoints committee members and convenes other ACs as the MFC deems necessary to deal with emerging issues. Staff leads are selected by the DMF director.

ACs discuss items of regional scope and importance or items pertaining to a specific topic. Regional and Standing ACs review all matters referred to them by the MFC, such as draft fishery management plans, making recommendations on these matters; however, they may also make findings and recommendations to the MFC on any matter related to their subject area. During the five-year review/amendment of FMPs the pertinent Standing AC may serve as the FMP AC who will assist the DMF in developing draft FMPs; for example, the Shellfish AC served as the AC for an amendment of the Oyster FMP. The ACs advise the MFC only on specific issues.

All AC meetings are open to the public. The MFC has business meetings approximately four times a year and ACs usually meet at least once between the MFC business meetings, but they can meet more or less frequently, if necessary. Advisory committee meetings are not scheduled two weeks prior to an MFC business meeting and at least one week after the MFC business meeting.

Regional and standing committee meetings are run according to *Roberts Rules of Order* and require a quorum to vote. In our case, a quorum is a simple majority (51%). If an AC is going to be discussing/voting on an important issue and there is not going to be a quorum present, it is best to postpone the meeting until there is a quorum. If an AC is meeting and a quorum is not present, the group can agree to an issue by consent, but it must be noted in the meeting summary. FMP committees operate in a workshop meeting led by a moderator.

DMF staff lead responsibilities:

- Working with the AC chair, along with MFC staff, to develop meeting agendas. The chair must be consulted.
- Sending agenda, issue papers and meeting materials to MFC staff for mail outs two weeks prior to the AC meeting.
- Checking in with MFC staff prior to the meeting to ensure a quorum will be present and cover any particular meeting needs.
- Recording the meeting (digital recorders are located at each district office or the MFC staff office).
- Summarizing the meeting and sending via e-mail to MFC staff within five working days after each meeting, along with the digital recording. Summaries should include a list of meeting attendees, any action items and motions approved, and a brief overview of any major discussions.
- Sending copies of any PowerPoint presentations or handouts not in the original meeting mail-out to the MFC staff for inclusion in the meeting file.

- Following up on any meeting assignments or issues, ensuring they are completed.
- Sending FMP updates (drafts going out for public comment, amendments, etc.) to the DMF web master so changes can be made to on-line information.
- Sending final Fliers to DMF Webmaster to post online.
- Securing needed audio-visual equipment for the meeting.

MFC staff responsibilities:

- Holding planning and debriefing meetings for each MFC business meeting. Staff/AC assignments are normally dispersed at these meetings.
- Summarizing and distributing MFC business meeting overviews.
- Copying and distributing meeting materials to ACs, approximately two weeks prior to meetings.
- Sending meeting information to the Web master and PIO for public notice.
- Calling AC members to remind them of meetings.
- Maintaining files and recordings of all AC meetings.
- Maintaining rosters of all AC members and their contact information and ensuring the rosters on the DMF website are up-to-date.
- Working with the MFC Chairman to appoint/reappoint AC members as needed.
- Completing and submitting travel authorizations to DMF travel coordinator.
- Handling travel reimbursements for AC members.
- Providing new AC members with orientation packages.
- Securing meeting locations for ACs.

6.14 Interjurisdictional Fisheries

The goal of the N.C. Fishery Management Plan for Interjurisdictional Fisheries (IJ FMP) is to adopt FMPs, consistent with North Carolina law, approved by the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (SAMFC), Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (MAMFC) or Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) by reference and implement corresponding fishery regulations in North Carolina to provide compliance or compatibility with approved FMPs and amendments, now and in the future.

Interjurisdictional (IJ) fisheries are fisheries managed through the IJ FMP by the above adoption or incorporation by reference of SAMFC, MAFMC or ASMFC FMPs and their implementing regulations, consistent with North Carolina law. For these species, DMF appoints an IJ lead. To help facilitate internal coordination, review, and action, the IJ FMP lead is responsible for contacting staff housed in multiple sections. Communication with all the IJ assigned staff needs to be consistent and coordinated through one individual, while keeping in mind the supervisory chain of command. To facilitate this, the coordinator will keep the IJ lead biologist's supervisor, district manager and section chief involved in the communication through copying them on all communication. The IJ lead biologist's chain-of-command will need to allow time and help schedule requests from the IJ lead and hold the lead staff accountable for following the process and completing assignments.

Ensure the correct staff is identified on the list serve. Any e-mails related to IJ species (e.g., meeting memos/fliers, communication, etc.) will be sent to the primary person and copied to this entire group so everyone can be informed on all actions.

FMP Shared Drive

Additionally, the IJ coordinator will set up and organize folders on the FMP shared drive to standardize housing of information related to IJ species. The IJ lead will communicate these to the list serve as developed.

Technical Committee Memos

All staff serving on technical committees (i.e., below the Board or Council level) are to draft meeting memos outlining outcomes of the meetings. Each memo will contain a short (1-3 sentences) summary statement that can be used for external distribution to the MFC, advisors or the public. These need to be sent to the IJ lead who in turn will forward through the IJ FMP list serve. Additionally, summary memos from ASMFC/Council meeting weeks will be distributed to the IJ staff through the list serve.

Upcoming Issues

After each MFC, ASMFC, or council meeting, lead staff provide a debriefing during a called meeting with appropriate staff.

6.15 Confidential Data

The DMF collects information through licenses, permits, mandatory reporting programs, surveys, and other sources. Some of this information is considered confidential by state law. The following is a brief summary of how confidential data is managed, but it is best to consult the DMF Policy on Confidential Information for details.

General Statutes

There are three chapters of North Carolina General Statutes that apply to confidential data and personal identifying information. The first two apply primarily to license data and were a result of the Coastal Recreational Fishing License (CRFL) legislation while the third applies primarily to commercial fisheries statistics.

Chapter 143B-289.52 Marine Fisheries Commission – Power and Duties under subchapter (h) states that Social Security numbers and identifying information obtained by the Commission or the Division of Marine Fisheries shall be treated as provided in G.S. 132-1.10. It further defines personal identifying information as a person’s mailing address, residence address, e-mail address, date of birth, and telephone number.

Chapter 132 is the Public Records Law – States that all records are public records unless specifically stated otherwise. Section 1.10 of this chapter addresses the obtaining of social security numbers and other personal identifying information. It states that if State and local governmental agencies possess social security numbers or other personal identifying information, the governments should minimize the instance this information is disseminated either internally within government or externally with the general public. It further states that the distribution of such information does not apply if social security numbers or other identifying information disclosed to another governmental entity or its agents, employees, or contractors

if disclosure is necessary for the receiving entity to perform its duties and responsibilities. The receiving governmental entity and its agents, employees, and contractors shall maintain the confidential and exempt status of such numbers.

Chapter 113-170.3 – Record Keeping Requirements states that license holders may be required to keep records or additional statistical data relating to location of catch as may be needed for conservation policy. It further states that this information is confidential and shall be used only for the “equitable and efficient administration and enforcement” of the Article or for conservation purposes and shall not be disclosed unless under order of a court of competent jurisdiction. The types of documents and data that are not public records include: assets, liabilities, inventories, revenues, and profits; the number, capacity, capability, and type of fishing vessels owned and operated; the type and quantity of fishing gear used; the catch of fish or other seafood by species in numbers, size, weight, quantity, and value; the areas in which fishing was engaged in; the location of catch; the time of fishing, number of hauls, and the disposition of the fish and other seafood. “Equitable and efficient administration and enforcement of this article” refers to Article 14A and includes the following (it does not apply to Marine Fisheries Rules but can be broadly used for enforcement of Marine Fisheries Rules):

- G.S. 113-170 Exportation and importation of fish and equipment
- G.S. 113-170.1 Nonresidents reciprocal agreements
- G.S. 113-170.2 Fraud or deception as to licenses, permit or records
- G.S. 113-170.3 Record-keeping requirements
- G.S. 113-170.4 Rules as to possession, transportation, and disposition of fisheries resources

Examples of equitable and efficient administration of this article include Eligibility Board requests and economic assistance programs.

A Court of Competent Jurisdiction includes almost all courts but may not include administrative hearings. All court orders and subpoenas are to be forwarded to the division’s general counsel and/or assistant attorney general for ruling of determination whether to comply or not before releasing any information. Subpoenas from attorneys are normally not honored but should be forwarded to the assistant attorney general.

In the case of Internal Revenue Service summons for commercial harvest records, federal law takes precedent over state public records law and thus DMF is obligated to release, if requested. Requested information is to be reviewed by the assistant attorney general for review before it is released.

Electronic Mail

All e-mail is considered public record unless its content is exempt from inspection by statute or other regulation. The Division of Marine Fisheries Policy Manual (PR-4) outlines the division e-mail policy. The policy establishes e-mail use and retention in accordance with state and department policy. DMF employees will treat electronic mail messages, sent or received through government accounts, as public records and will maintain these records in compliance with the Public Records Act and records retention policies in the same manner as paper documents or other tangible records.

DMF Policy on Releasing Confidential Data

DMF policy is to release confidential data under certain circumstances according to G.S. 113-170.3. The DMF is charged with the protection of confidential commercial catch/effort landings data, recreational

catch/effort harvest survey data, license and permit contact information, socioeconomic surveys and other miscellaneous surveys conducted by the division that directly or indirectly identifies a licensee submitting information to the section.

The division will consult the division's assigned assistant attorney general when confidential or potentially confidential data are requested by those not working on behalf of the division for conservation management.

DMF Staff Access to Confidential Data

To ensure all DMF employees are aware of the confidential nature of data housed within the division, the Confidentiality Policy will be included in all new employee orientations. If the employee's position (biologists, technicians, Marine Patrol officers, deputy director, director, assistant to the director, License and Statistics staff, and Information Technology staff) may require the use of confidential data, the employee will be requested to read this policy, complete and submit the Release Form for Confidential Information during orientation (contact the License and Statistics section for policy and form). If other DMF staff needs access to confidential data later, at that time, the employee will be requested to complete and submit the Release Form for Confidential Information.

During exit interviews, the employee will be reminded that all confidential data seen during their employment is to remain confidential and are not to be revealed subsequently as outlined in general statute. Individuals shall not possess confidential data after employment.

6.16 Rules Advisory Team (RAT)

The purpose of the Rules Advisory Team (RAT) is to manage rulemaking activities and functions, assist in legislative drafting and evaluation, provide advice and assistance in implementing rules to division staff, and complete other duties and/or tasks assigned by the director. Adoption of rules is the primary mechanism to implement management measures contained in fishery management plans. Rules passed are published in the *North Carolina Marine Fisheries Commission Rules* book.

In 2016, RAT began conducting a review of all Marine Fisheries Commission rules in accordance with North Carolina General Statute 150B-21.3A. This process will take approximately seven years to fully complete and will periodically necessitate more frequent meetings.

Information on RAT's organization, processes, documents, templates, etc. are located on the division's shared drive under **Rules Advisory Team**.

6.17 Biological Review Team (BRT)

The purpose of the Biological Review Team (BRT) is to promote cross-section cooperation and communication, establish guidelines as needed and to review DMF's programs and proposals that specifically address biological and fisheries related issues. Objectives include review of biological programs, proposals and final reports recommending new areas of work and seek funding sources, review and approve the annual Stock Status Review (Report), recommend training, select technical monitors for division funded grants, and review DMF Library and associated documents. There are several subcommittees with specific charges that report to BRT.

Editorial Guidelines

The BRT maintains the DMF's **Editorial Guidelines**. The purpose of these editorial guidelines is to aid DMF writers and typists in the preparation of reports and publications. The intent is to standardize various writing styles and answer questions concerning report style and format. The DMF documents should follow these guidelines and supervisors are to assure that these standards are met. Examples include federal grant reports, CRFL reports, fishery management plan, and issue papers (FMP and rules review), etc. Generally, DMF guidelines follow those of the American Fisheries Society (a copy can be found on the DMF shared drive, [BRT/Editorial Guideline/AFS style guide.pdf](#)), however, the DMF guidelines should be followed wherever there are differences. All information and documents on BRT is located on the DMF shared drive under BRT.

6.18 Director's Advisory Team (DAT)

The DMF's Director's Advisory Team (DAT) meets on an as-needed basis to provide recommendations on development of management-related positions (fishery management plans, interjurisdictional), and supports other activities of the DMF Mission and Vision. Membership is comprised of policy level DMF staff and relevant subject-matter experts.

DAT provides oversight to several formalized groups with specific expertise in a functional area in the Division.

6.19 DMF Library

The division's Library Subcommittee reviews and makes recommendations to the BRT, DAT, and the Division Deputy Director on issues related to the management and retention of division-produced documents and reference materials. Subcommittee activities include: Organizing, cataloging, and managing all Division publications, reports, and other documents; maintaining an electronic library for staff and public use; maintaining a hard-copy library of non-division produced reference materials; maintaining and providing information to staff on the division's records retention policy; and providing customer service to staff and the public on library related topics. Information relating to the Library Subcommittee is available on the DMF shared drive under BRT\Subcommittees, and the subcommittee also maintains source documents and other library materials on a separate library server that is available only to subcommittee members. Staff and the public can access documents through the DMF Digital Library at: <https://deq.nc.gov/dmf-library>, or by submitting an email request to the library chair at SVC_DENR.DMF.Library@ncdenr.gov. ***Division Employees who generate written reports or other publications are responsible for submitting those documents to the Library Chair for inclusion in the DMF Library.***

6.20 *Communication Advisory Team (CAT)*

The Communications Advisory Team (CAT) was created to better engage the public, improve knowledge, and develop relationships with stakeholders. The CAT developed a communication and engagement strategy and can be found on the CAT Microsoft Teams Channel. The objectives of the CAT are to:

- Engage with stakeholders to better understand their perceptions, interests, and needs, and find ways to make outreach content more relevant.
- Educate stakeholders to improve their understanding of fisheries science, and how it is used to inform management and regulatory processes in North Carolina.
- Promote the importance, necessity, and public benefit of DMF research programs, and other activities through direct communications, social media, news media, education, and outreach efforts.
- Collaborate with partners to develop networks that benefit DMF and our partners. Ensure consistent messaging by considering the unique aspects/situations of each partner and by developing clear guidelines.

6.21 *Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP)*

The purpose of the Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) is to concisely outline priorities and procedures to restore DMF operations following events that may include, but are not limited to, extreme weather events, catastrophic accidents, civil unrest, floods, pandemic disease outbreaks, terrorism and other acts of war. N.C. General Statute §147–33.89 requires each agency to develop and annually update a plan to maintain and/or restore business functions following a disruption or crisis. Plans are well-exercised and tested.

The specific objectives of the COOP are:

- To ensure the safety of DMF employees;
- To ensure the continuous performance of DMF essential operational and business functions during an emergency;
- To protect essential equipment, records and other assets;
- To reduce disruption of operations;
- To minimize damage and losses;
- To achieve orderly recovery from emergency operations;
- To identify relocation sites and ensure operational and managerial requirements are met before an emergency occurs.

The COOP is a confidential document because it contains personal information such as personal telephone numbers to be used by authorized users during an emergency, but all employees need to know of its existence. To make sure everyone is aware of the COOP, orders of succession and alternate worksites, a PowerPoint has been updated to reflect the general governance and overview of the DMF's COOP. All employees need to review this PowerPoint, annually. It's located on the Division's Intranet at <https://www.deq.nc.gov/marine-fisheries/inside-fisheries/disaster-procedures/coop-overview/open>

Hard copies of the COOP will be maintained at the office and home locations of the Director, Deputy Director, Section Chiefs, and other identified staff.

6.22 Budget

All employees should have a basic understanding of the state's budget. The state has several sources of revenue including state appropriations, commercial fishing license receipts, Coastal Recreational Fishing License (CRFL) receipts/grants, and various federal grants/contracts. Once the funds are designated, they cannot be used for any other item.

State Appropriations Budgets

The state operates on a fiscal year basis, July 1 – June 30. The state budget is developed in two-year cycles, termed the Biennium Budget. The N.C. General Assembly meets twice during the Biennium in a long session (starts in January) and short session (starts in April) to establish a budget for the two-year Biennium that starts on July 1. The long session develops the two-year Biennium Budget and the short session updates that budget for the second year of the biennium. Below are some of the different types of state budgets and terminology. Once appropriations are established in these various budgets, they must only be used for those identified projects.

- *State Appropriations* – an enactment by the N.C. General Assembly authorizing the withdrawal of money from the State Treasury.
- *Results Based Budgeting* – encourages more efficient and effective government and solidifies a budget process that emphasizes performance and accountability.
- *Carry Forward Budget* – taking the available state appropriations from one fiscal year to the next. Must be approved by the Office of State Budget and Management and has very strict parameters to be requested.
- *Continuation Budget* – part of the state budget necessary to continue the current level of services when adjusted for inflation, mandated increases such as retirement, health insurance, annualizing programs, and operation of new facilities. Only occurs in the fall of even numbered years before the start of the long session to develop the biennium budget.
- *Expansion Budget* – provides for new programs or expansion of existing programs. Agencies develop expansion budgets during the fall prior to the General Assembly convening.
- *Capital Improvement Budget* – provides for construction of new facilities, land purchases, and improvements to infrastructure. Can be used for repairs and renovations.
- *Repair and Renovation (R&R) Budget* – major building projects to accommodate increasing staff or purchase land for new facilities as a result of expansion of current programs.

Federal Aid

Federal Aid represents money received by the DMF through various federal programs and agencies that enables us to manage fisheries and accomplish other DMF activities. The NC DMF Federal Aid Coordinator and Federal Grants Fiscal Manager work to help DMF researchers find funding opportunities, apply for aid, manage aid programs, and ensure that all grant conditions and requirements are met. DMF researchers are responsible for helping to identify funding opportunities, write grant narratives, prepare budgets, conduct the research, and write reports. Federal Aid funds many DMF salaries. Without these grants, there would be far fewer people available to do the work and there would be less information available to manage fisheries. Federal Aid accounts for about one third of the operating expenses of DMF.

Contracts Received (similar to Federal Aid)

Staff of the DMF regularly seek and receive funding from other federal and state government entities and non-governmental organizations to supplement existing division data collection and research programs, support regional cooperative program data collection and research programs, or develop new innovative research programs that will further the division's mission and goals. In order to ensure that the administrative and financial management of these contracts meets all contract terms and conditions, and state laws and procedures for their management, all contract agreements that the DMF enters into will be managed by the Grants Office. These procedures detail how contract grants will be managed by the Grants Office.

Coastal Recreational Fishing License Receipts

Revenue generated from the sale of the ten-day and annual Coastal Recreational Fishing Licenses (CRFL) are deposited in the Marine Resources Fund. Revenue from the lifetime CRFL is deposited in the Marine Resources Endowment Fund. The funds can only be used to manage, protect, restore, develop, cultivate and enhance the marine resources of the state. The Strategic Plan for the Conservation and Improvement of North Carolina Marine Resources sets forth a framework of objectives and strategies to meet this goal. The North Carolina Marine Fisheries approves projects to be funded from these funds in consultation with staff of the Wildlife Resources Commission. Annually, a request for proposals is released that identifies project areas and priorities eligible for funding by the Marine Resources Fund in accordance with the Strategic Plan for the Conservation and Improvement of North Carolina Marine Resources.

Commercial Fishing License Receipts

Revenue generated from the sale of commercial fishing licenses help fund several programs within the division.

6.23 Purchasing and Contracting

Employees involved in purchasing any item for the state must follow all state, department, and division purchasing and contracting policies and procedures. Employees purchasing items on behalf of the division need to know all purchasing policies and procedures for:

- State Term Contracts
- Correction Enterprises (items provided by the Prison system)
- DEQ Contracting System
- DEQ P-Card Policy
- DEQ Purchasing Manual

Many of these procedures are located on the DMF employee Intranet under the 'Budgeting, Purchasing, and Grants' section. Training is offered at different times throughout the year to new employees.

The **DEQ Purchasing Manual** provides information and instruction to those individuals responsible for acquiring commodities and services. The document provides some background information about the evolution of purchasing in North Carolina state government and various programs/services offered through the Department of Administration, Division of Purchase and Contract (DOA P&C).

It is policy (1) to solicit competitive prices for commodities, (2) to purchase commodities at the best price, (3) obtain the quality needed, (4) procure items in a timely manner, (5) conduct on-going training for users, and (6) conduct periodic quality assurance reviews. It is imperative that Historically Underutilized Businesses (HUB) are given an opportunity to bid on commodities and services. It is also the responsibility of this division to ensure that purchases comply with Statutes, Administrative Code and meet compliance reviews.

DOA P&C is responsible for issuing bids on our behalf for all open-market/non-term contract commodities, which are projected to exceed DEQ's current purchasing delegation of \$25,000.00. Purchasing procedures are supplemental to Chapter 143 of the North Carolina General Statutes, Part I-VII of the North Carolina Administrative Code. The North Carolina General Statutes related to purchasing are primarily found in Chapter 143, Article 3 and 3C. The North Carolina Administrative Code, Title 1, Chapter 5, <http://www.doa.state.nc.us/PandC/admcode.htm> sets forth the primary operating rules for purchasing.

6.24 Inventory, Fixed Assets, and Surplus

All equipment within DMF over \$2,500 should be assigned a fixed asset number, with some exceptions. See current policies regarding exceptions to the \$2,500 or more set for assets. Each asset will be added to the appropriate section's inventory for the division.

Annually, all equipment with a fixed asset number is to be verified in person by visually cross referencing serial, model, and fixed asset number on the item. The division has a fixed asset coordinator who provides training and coordinates fixed asset transactions generated by sections throughout the year and during the annual inventory process. Each section designates one or multiple persons who are responsible for maintaining and organizing fixed assets for the division and works with the coordinator. This person annually completes the proper transactions forms and meets with the coordinator to submit these forms and the final accounting of their inventory.

It is imperative that any equipment that is being relocated have the proper forms completed at the time of move. This makes the annual verification smoother and reduces missing assets.

Any missing assets must be justified. Staff should try to locate their missing asset prior to the next annual inventory. In order to remove items from inventory, the *DEQ Fixed Asset* policy must be followed to surplus or transfer to another agency. When equipment or material is no longer used by the DMF, it should be placed on state surplus.

State surplus is advertised on the open market for the public to purchase through a bid process. Funds from these items go back to the state general fund, unless other specifics are mandated. In addition, annually at the end of the fiscal year (last week of June), agencies must inventory office supplies (consumables).

Employees that are responsible for equipment inventory are to know all procedures and how to locate forms on the employee intranet under 'Inventory, Fixed Assets, and Surplus.'

6.25 Handling Media Inquiries

Every employee needs to remember that ALL media inquiries (newspaper, radio, television) go to the Public Information Officer first. Even though the question may relate to your specific job, you will still need to forward the media call to the Public Information Officer. In addition, you should always alert your supervisor(s) that you had a media call in case they wish to follow up with the Public Information Officer.

6.26 Legislative Inquiries

During the year, DMF employees receive calls from legislative offices regarding a variety of topics. There are two ways to handle these calls. If they involve the Commission, they go straight to the Commission Office. If they ask for any other information, you are to transfer them to the Public Information Office. In addition, anytime you receive a legislative call, you should send the Commission office an e-mail stating the caller, phone number, date of call, time of call, subject of call and any information they have provided. The Commission office keeps a record of incoming calls.

7.0 INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY PROCESSES

The Department of Information Technology (DIT) supports DMF with two teams and has staff located in DMF offices. The Operations team handles all hardware & software items, from reimaging your computer to installing required drivers for printers and software. The Development team is responsible for developing new programs to meet the needs of DMF (FINWeb, BDB, GIS, etc.).

To facilitate and prioritize needs, a variety of Information Technology (IT) processes have been established and must be followed. Below are processes all employees need to know. Each has a brief description. But first, learn a few terms and procedures that will help you understand how technology works at DMF.

System List

- FIORI – this was renamed to the Integrated HR-Payroll System, but most people still refer to the BEACON name. This is where HR, Benefits, Training, and Time Tracking are handled. [FIORI Link](#)
- DOTS – DEQ One-Ticketing System – This is the system to use to submit IT Service requests. If IT related processes or systems are broken, request help through this system. <https://dots.deq.nc.gov>
- LMS – Learning Management System – A lot of your training occurs in this system, and it is accessed through the FIORI portal. [FIORI Link](#)
- NCID – North Carolina Identity – This is credentials used to log into most systems. The State’s goal is to be able to access all applications through this one username/password. One exception is accessing any O365 products; email, SharePoint, OneDrive, etc., uses your email address as the username but still utilizes the NCID password for access.

- NCVIP – North Carolina Valuing Individual Performance – This NC’s performance management system. Accessed through the FIORI . [FIORI Link](#)
- VPN – Virtual Private Network – This allows access to State network resources, like network drives, while you are remote. This requires your manager’s approval. Request VPN access via a DOTS ticket. The use of One Drive and SharePoint reduces the need for VPN.

Most systems are accessed through one of two username/passwords

- Use NCID for FIORI, VPN, DOTS, LMS, NCVIP and most other systems
- Use Email Address and NCID password for O365 Office/SharePoint/OneDrive
- How to unlock or reset your NCID
 - NCID Website Link: <https://ncid.nc.gov/idmdash/>
 - NCID Self-Service: https://nconnect.sharepoint.com/sites/deq/it_servicedesk/Shared%20Documents/NCID%20Quick%20Reference%20for%20SSRP.PDF?csf=1&e=Djyfsn

The DEQ Home Page & IT Self Help Wiki can help you with most of your common questions

- DEQ Intranet: <https://nconnect.sharepoint.com/sites/deq2/SitePages/Home.aspx>
- DEQ IT Self Help: https://nconnect.sharepoint.com/sites/deq/it_servicedesk/SitePages/Home.aspx

Network Wi-Fi/ Guest Wi-Fi

- Network Wi-Fi “DEQEmployee” is only for State owned devices
- Guest Wi-Fi is for visitors and your personal devices

7.1 Information Technology Steering Committee

The purpose of the Information Technology (IT) Steering Committee is to identify and communicate major division information technology needs and requirements. Further, this committee shall prioritize these activities and coordinate with IT staff to initiate, manage, and document IT development and maintenance. IT will in turn make recommendations to the committee regarding IT requirements and work with the committee to develop division requirements. The committee’s objectives are:

- Participate in division strategic planning related to IT programs, projects, and priorities
- Define and communicate overall IT direction for the division
- Provide top management support and leadership for integrated data management projects
- Facilitate and enhance communications to facilitate priorities and performance
- Reduce project risks and optimize project performance
- Delegate and authorize IT policy-making to the IT Steering Committee

Several subcommittees, directly or indirectly, are organized under the committee, including Biological Users Group (BUG), Software Change Control Board (SCCB), and Mapping Advisory Team (MAT).

There are several processes and procedures outlining the committee operations, project management and IT priorities. Projects are prioritized by the appropriate subcommittee and will have a project charter,

statement of work (SOW), or other documentation developed. This is a joint effort developed by the project sponsor (DMF) and DIT.

7.2 DEQ One Ticketing System (DOTS)

All IT related requests are to be submitted electronically to the DEQ DOTS system. DOTS is located on the DEQ web portal of [INSIDE FISHERIES](#). You will need to log into DEQ Portal to access DOTS. In the event the DOTS system cannot be accessed by the requestor, obtain assistance from DIT by phone. Use the information below to request IT assistance.

TO SUBMIT A DOTS TICKET for DEQ Helpdesk:

You have to be on the State Network to access the system, either on-site or on VPN. The username is your **NCID** and **NCID** password beginning with EADS\ (example EADS\rdchapman).
<https://dots.deq.nc.gov> (IT request for yourself or for another user)

Note – if you use your email address and NCID password, it appears to work, but it does not, you will just get a screen that looks like the system but with no functionality.

DOTS submissions include the majority of IT requests (Operations, Applications, Network, Projects, New Hire requests, Portal, etc.). When a DOTS request is submitted, it will be assigned an ID number. Keep the ID number as a reference in case you have to follow up on your DOTS request. There is a specific form to submit a DOTS for the FINWeb application. See link below.

FINWeb DOTS

Use this link - [FINWeb DOTs](#) - to request a report, report an issue, have a suggestion or need functionality within the FINWeb application.

NCID locks can be resolved by user with NCID self-service – use below link for instruction.

<https://it.nc.gov/services/service-directory/core-services/nc-identity-management-ncid/ncid/ncid-self-service-password>

Assistance by Phone

DEQ Helpdesk (business hours only – M-F 8 AM-5 PM): **919-707-8900**

DIT Helpdesk (is only for NCID unlocks if not able to use NCID self-service 24/7): **800-722-3946**

7.3 E-mail, Calendar, Conference Room, and Conference Calls

Electronic Mail

The Division of Marine Fisheries Policy Manual (PR-4) outlines the division e-mail policy. The policy establishes e-mail use and retention in accordance with state and department policy. DMF employees will treat electronic mail messages, sent or received through government accounts, as public records and will maintain these records in compliance with the Public Records Act and records retention policies in the same manner as paper documents or other tangible records.

All outgoing e-mails sent from state e-mail accounts shall include language notifying the recipient(s) that the message is subject to the Public Records Law and may be disclosed to third parties. This includes e-mail sent through state e-mail accounts via hand-held smart devices and tablets such as an iPhone, Ipad, tablet, etc. The disclosure statement shall say:

E-mail correspondence to and from this address is subject to the North Carolina Public Records Law and may be disclosed to third parties.

All e-mail (sent and received) is electronically archived in the states' archive system that helps ensure e-mails are retained for public record requests, but this does not eliminate employees from following proper archiving of e-mails on a daily basis.

Each employee is provided a specific limit on amount of storage available through the e-mail system. It is the employee's responsibility to ensure routine e-mail 'clean-up' activities are performed. This includes deleting sent and deleted e-mails, moving e-mails to personal folders, etc. Employees can send and receive e-mail remotely through the use of webmail. A link to webmail is provided on the DMF employee web portal once you log in.

Calendar

Outlook provides an electronic calendar and is an efficient tool to use to communicate schedules and availability to others. Employees are to maintain their calendars to inform their supervisors, managers, and co-workers of their status for scheduling purposes (e.g., if scheduled to attend a meeting, place it on the calendar). Employees are to share their calendars with their supervisors and appropriate work units or committees. The "Meeting Invite" feature is useful for placing meetings and other items on other employees' calendars.

For soliciting appropriate times to meet with a large group, employees are encouraged to first look at other's calendars (via "Scheduling Assistant" on the meeting invite) to identify common dates and times or use the 'doodle' calendar to poll those who need to attend instead of sending and replying to multiple e-mails. This is a free internet service and is available at:

<https://doodle.com>

Scheduling Conference Rooms and Conference Calls

DMF Headquarters and Central District Office (CDO) conference room calendars and phone service is managed through Outlook. You will need to use the provided form, fill it out and submit your request. You may also call the conference room coordinator.

To set up:

Headquarters (HQ): To view the HQ conference room and phone service availability, go to the Outlook Calendar named [DENR_DMF.HQ_ConfRm&Phone_Reservations](#). Instructions for participants and hosts using the telephone are located on the DMF share drive at [DMF\Conf Room Calendar HQ](#).

Send requests by using the form located in the Conf Room Calendar HQ folder to reserve the room and phone. Someone will respond to your request.

Central District Office (CDO): To view CDO conference room and phone service availability, go to the Outlook Calendar named [DENR_DMFCONFROOMCDO](#). Instructions for conference call participants and hosts are located on the DMF share drive at [DMF\Conf Room Calendar CDO](#).

Send requests by using the form located in the Conf Room Calendar CDO folder to reserve the room and phone.

When you are ready to make your reservation, provide the following information in an e-mail:

1. Date of reservation
2. Start and End times of meeting
3. Total time of reservation (including set-up and break-down)
4. Name of meeting
5. Contact person
6. Using the:
 - Room: Yes / No
 - Phone: Yes / No
 - Phone Service Only: Yes/No
 - Account Code, if using the phone (example: 1315-3155)

WebEx and TEAMS

DMF has WebEx and TEAMS if you need to host an audio or visual meeting. There are two coordinators for WebEx: Kimberly Diaz (CDO) and Hope Wade (HQ). They will set the meeting up for you or provide you with the information and passwords you need.

Helpful Tips

DEQ DIT has developed several tutorials, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), and tips to help employees understand and use IT functions. These are available to employees through the DMF shared drive at: DMF Share:\IT_TIP

In addition, in the IT_TIP folder, you will find a folder named “**Training Sites**”. When you open this folder, you will see GCF LearnFree.Org. There are a variety of free online courses you can take including, computer skills, Access, Excel, PowerPoint, Word, Image Editing, even learn different languages. This is a wonderful resource for any employee at any stage of his/her career.

7.4 Shared Drives, Servers, and List Serves

Employees have several network drives (AD Security Groups), and e-mail distribution groups they will need to access to perform their duties. Supervisors are to ensure employees have access to appropriate drives or distribution groups and are to request access through the [MOOSE](#) form (new employees). Employees who find they need access to additional shared drives or distribution groups need to gain permission from their supervisor and then request access through a [DOTS](#) request.

Below is a general list of types of network drives, and distribution groups but more may be available and not included in the list; however, the division prefers use of OneDrive and SharePoint to help reduce electronic storage cost and to allow remote access.

Shared Drives

All shared drives are LAN-based and are backed-up routinely according to IT policy and procedures. Information stored on the individual hard drive (usually the C drive) is not backed-up by DEQ DIT and is at risk of being permanently lost. DEQ DIT recommends employees store files on OneDrive instead of the C drive. Employees are to use the hard drive cautiously to reduce the risk of permanent loss of information. DMF work should reside on the shared drives. Security policy ensures these drives are protected from non-authorized access. Employees failing to protect data by not using shared drives on the LAN or other appropriate and documented back-up system and losing DMF information can be liable for loss of data and appropriate action may be taken. Also, all information on computers, with a few legal exceptions, such as personnel, client/attorney information, is considered public record and subject to access. **All information is to be work-related.**

Description of the shared drive is provided, but letters (i.e., G, H, etc.) are not provided because the letter may be different for individuals depending on how the computer is mapped, office is mapped, etc.

- Section drive – each section has a drive that is unique to the section only (other sections do not have access). This is to facilitate coordination within the section.
- Individual drive – each individual has a drive that only they have access too. This is similar to the computer’s hard drive (C – drive) but is backed up on the LAN. Information that is not to be shared with others is to be placed on this drive.
- DMF Shared drive – this drive is accessible to anyone within DMF and is to be used to facilitate coordination within the division and across sections.
- Stock Assessment drive – used to house stock assessment data.
- FMP drive – used to house information related to development of fishery management plans.
- Library drive – used to house final documents according to the Library Committee processes.
- GIS drive – used to house information related to GIS (Geographical Information Systems)
- Other drives may be available (inquire with section and/or DEQ DIT)

Distribution Groups and Simplelists

There are two types of e-mail lists (Distribution Groups and Simplelists). DIT handles distribution groups and DMF staff manage Simplelists.

Simplelists

This list is managed by a specified owner(s) paid by DEQ. If the list is for external public e-mail accounts, you must create a Simplelist. Simplelists can only receive e-mails from members and/or owners of the list. If a non-member sends to list, owner(s) will receive notification to accept, deny or ban user.

Distribution Group

This is only managed by Mail Administrators (no cost). If the list is comprised of NC State Government e-mail accounts only, create a Distribution Group. Distribution Groups have a size limit of (200) e-mail accounts and anyone with knowledge of e-mail account may send to the group.

All employees will belong to a list. Supervisors are to ensure the employee is on the appropriate list through a DOTS request. At a minimum, employees are to be added to the division list and appropriate office list (i.e., Morehead City, Elizabeth City, etc.).

In addition, employees may be signed to the teams, committees, etc. Supervisors or the team/committee chairman need to make sure the assigned employees are added to the appropriate list by completing a DOTS request. Examples include Blue Crab FMP, Managers/Supervisors, RAT, BUG, FIN SCCB, MRT, etc.

A SOP and current list of distribution lists is available on the division's shared drive under IT_TIP. Each section should review their mail lists and distribution lists annually.

DEQ IT recommends moving critical files to SharePoint or OneDrive during inclement weather. If your regional office has a server on-site and power goes down, files will be inaccessible. OneDrive and SharePoint are cloud solutions and all you need is an Internet connection to access your files.

SharePoint and OneDrive

SharePoint is a cloud-based collaboration tool, it is available to all DEQ employees and in a government cloud to ensure data security.

OneDrive is a cloud storage solution, similar to Dropbox and Google Drive; it is the approved cloud storage solution for DEQ and the state.

Start at DEQ's Intranet on SharePoint; login using your email and NCID password.

<https://ncconnect.sharepoint.com/sites/deq2>

Here are some of the items you need to review prior to requesting a SharePoint Site - [Link on Preparing for a new SharePoint Site](#). Click on this to request a new SharePoint Site - [SharePoint Workspace Request Form](#). SharePoint Online page describes what SharePoint is and links to tutorials, training videos and the SharePoint knowledge base:

https://ncconnect.sharepoint.com/sites/deq/it_servicedesk/SitePages/SharePoint.aspx?web=1

Antivirus Updates

Antivirus updates automatically. Staff should log-off (not shutdown), computers at the end of work on weekdays to allow for these automatic updates.

7.5 Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Program

DMF GIS staff are based at the Marine Fisheries office in Morehead City. The Mapping Advisory Team (MAT) prioritizes GIS tasks and projects and has quarterly meetings with representatives from each Section to monitor and manage tasks and projects. The GIS staff provides and maintains a variety of

software, hardware, data, training, technical support, analysis, and products/deliverables for geospatial needs.

GIS staff supports the requests from all DMF sections. Specific projects and programs include the following: Shellfish Mapping Program, the Oyster Sanctuary program, the Artificial Reef Program, Estuarine Benthic Habitat Mapping (EBHM), Fishery Management Plans (FMPs), the Coastal Habitat Protection Plan (CHPP), Strategic Habitat Area (SHA) development, DMF rules, DMF proclamations, and biological database analyses. Additional support tasks include data updates, map products, and analysis for the following: shellfish leases, Under Dock Oyster Culture (UDOC) program, Marine Patrol violations, pound net locations, oyster cultch planting sites, scanning large paper products, printing large posters, and creating web applications.

GIS staff also supports and consults to the Biological User Group (BUG) and the Rules Advisory Team (RAT) and interact with GIS issues on an NC and DEQ level. For more specific information on GIS resources and contact information, refer to the DMF GIS User Manual posted on *Inside Fisheries* (Click on IT, Maps Contact Info, Other Links).

7.6 Biological Database (FIMSS)

DMF IT staff is responsible for the maintenance, operation and enhancement of the Fisheries Information Management and Support System (FIMSS) that provides access to biological, life history, monitoring, habitat use, and classification data collected by the North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries.

There are three critical management programs dependent on the availability of biological data to develop recommendations for management of the marine and estuarine resources of the state: Coastal Habitat Protection Plan Program, Fishery Management Plans Program, and Conservation of Protected Species Program.

For additional information and assistance, contact the biological database support staff in the DMF IT Section located on *Inside Fisheries* (Click on IT, Maps Contact Info, Other Links).

7.7 Fisheries Information Network (FIN)

FIN is a software application (typically referred to as “FINWeb”) that supports the core functions of the NCDMF mission of sustaining marine and estuarine fisheries and habitats for the benefit and health of the people of North Carolina. FINWeb provides for the sale of new licenses, issuing permits, managing commercial fishing landings data (trip tickets), managing lease and franchise data, recording violation data, incorporating license data issued by the Wildlife Resource Commission, and tracking submerged lands claims.

The FIN Web application requires no software installation and can be accessed via any computer, laptop, smart phone, or tablet with access to the internet.

Access to FIN by DMF staff can be obtained by submitting a [FINWeb DOTS ticket](#). The supervisor of the staff requesting access must submit the FINWeb DOTS ticket and identify which areas of FIN access is requested. Special approval must be obtained from the owner of the data if the area requested is not part of the staff member’s routine work process. Requests for data in FIN can be made via a [FINWeb DOTS ticket](#). Requests are subject to approval by the owner of the data is considered confidential.

For additional information and assistance, contact the FIN support team in the DMF IT Section located on *Inside Fisheries* (Click on IT, Maps Contact Info, Other Links).

8.0 GET INVOLVED – INTERNAL COMMITTEES

Below is a list of internal division committees that a new staff member could consider participating in as a way to get more involved and learn more about the division. In conjunction with communication and approval from your supervisor, these committees reach across the division and require only general knowledge to get started (as long as there is a vacancy that needs filling):

- **Employee Recognition Program.** Meets twice a year to review nominations for awards in prescribed categories for staff contributions that go above and beyond normal job duties.
- **Goodwill Committee.** Our Goodwill Committee is a dedicated group of employees who are committed to promoting goodwill, camaraderie, and appreciation within our organization. They believe that by nurturing a positive atmosphere, it can enhance job satisfaction, productivity, and overall well-being. They plan events for the division, like the holiday luncheon, Red Cross blood drives, and other events throughout the year.
- **Library Committee.** Manages the division’s electronic library, including citations, cataloging, and online records.
- **Safety Committee.** Includes input on and review of policies, training, the DMF Safety Week held each March, and several subcommittees like Incident and Injury, New Equipment, and Off the Job Safety.

9.0 ACRONYM LIST

This is one of the most valuable list you will have while working at DMF. Employees speak the language of “Acronyms” here so be familiar with as many of these as you can.

LIST OF COMMONLY USED ACRONYMS

A/R	Albemarle/Roanoke
AC	Advisory Committee
ACCSP	Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program
ACFCMA	Atlantic Coastal Fisheries Cooperative Management Act
ACFHP	Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership
AFS	American Fisheries Society
AFSA	Anadromous Fish Spawning Area
ALWTRT	Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Team
AP	Advisory Panel
APNEP	Albemarle-Pamlico National Estuary Program

ArcGIS	Computer Software to make Maps
ASMA	Albemarle Sound Management Area
ASMFC	Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
BIG	Boating Infrastructure Grant
BIOGIS	Fish Sampling Database
BRD	Bycatch Reduction Device
BRT	Biological Review Team
BUG	Biological User Group (BRT subcommittee for Biological Database)
C/S	Central/Southern
CAP	Compliance Advisory Panel
CCA	Coastal Conservation Association
CEBA	Comprehensive Ecosystem-Based Amendment
CEP	Carolina Environmental Program
CFRF	Commercial Fishing Resource Fund
CFVR	Commercial Fishing Vessel Registration
CHPP	Coastal Habitat Protection Plan
CICEET	Cooperative Institute for Coastal and Estuarine Environmental Technology
CIOERT	Cooperative Institute for Ocean Exploration, Research & Technology
CMAST	North Carolina State University Center for Marine Sciences and Technology
CRC	Coastal Resources Commission
CRFL	Coastal Recreational Fishing License
CWMTF	Clean Water Management Trust Fund
DCM	North Carolina Division of Coastal Management
DEQ	North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality
DMF	North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries
DR	Disaster Recovery
DUML	Duke University Marine Lab
EA	Environmental Assessment
EAP	Employee Assistance Program
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
EFP	Experimental Fishing Permit
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
ESA	Endangered Species Act
FIN	Fisheries Information Network
FMP	Fishery Management Plan
FRA	NC Fisheries Reform Act of 1997
FRG	Fishery Resource Grant
FWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
GIS	Geographical Information Systems
GOOS	Global Ocean Observing System
GSMFC	Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission
HMS	Highly Migratory Species
HWQ	Habitat and Water Quality

IAFWA	International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
II	Incident and Investigation (DMF Safety Committee)
IJA	Interjurisdictional Area (relative to an FMP)
IMS	University of North Carolina Institute of Marine Sciences
IOOS	Integrated Ocean Observing System
IRC	Intercommission Review Committee
ITQ	Individual Transferable Quotas
ITS	Information Technology Services (OITS is state-level)
ITSC	DMF Information Technology Steering Committee
JLCOG	Joint Legislative Commission on Governmental Operations (replaced JLCSA, then certain duties were moved under JLOCANER)
JLCSA	Joint Legislative Commission on Seafood & Aquaculture (replaced by JLCOG)
JLOCANER	Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Agriculture & Natural and Economic Resources (replaced JLCSA)
LAPP	Limited Access Privilege Program
MAFMC	Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council
MAT	Mapping Advisory Team (ITSC Subcommittee)
MFC	North Carolina Marine Fisheries Commission
MMPA	Marine Mammal Protection Act
MOA	Memorandum of Agreement
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MP	Marine Patrol
MPA	Marine Protected Area
MRFSS	Marine Recreational Fisheries Statistics Survey
MRIP	Marine Recreational Information Program
MRT	Management Review Team
MSA	Magnuson Stevens Act
MSY	Maximum Sustainable Yield
NCAC	North Carolina Administrative Code
NCCF	North Carolina Coastal Federation
NCFA	North Carolina Fisheries Association
NFHAP	National Fish Habitat Action Plan
NFHI	National Fish Habitat Initiative
NMFS	Former National Marine Fisheries Service, now NOAA Fisheries
NOAA	National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
OAH	North Carolina Office of Administrative Hearings
OITS	Office of Information Technology Services (state level)
OY	Optimum Yield
PDT	Plan Development Team (for FMPs)
PNA	Primary Nursery Area
PSAT	Protected Species Advisory Team
PSGNRA	Pamlico Sound Gill Net Restricted Area

RAT	Rules Advisory Team
RCGL	Recreational Commercial Gear License
R&R	Repairs and Renovations
RRC	North Carolina Rules Review Commission
RSCFL	Retired Standard Commercial Fishing License
RTNCF	Roanoke-Tar-Neuse-Cape Fear Ecosystem Team, now Eastern North Carolina/ Southeast Virginia Strategic Habitat Conservation Implementation Team
SAA	(Governor's) South Atlantic Alliance
SAFMC	South Atlantic Fishery Management Council
SARP	Southeast Aquatic Resources Partnership
SARRP	South Atlantic Regional Research Plan
SAV	Submerged Aquatic Vegetation
SCFL	Standard Commercial Fishing License
SEAFWA	Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
SEANC	State Employees Association of North Carolina
SECOORA	Southeast Coastal and Ocean Observing Regional Association
SEDAR	Southeast Data Assessment and Review
SENRLG	Southeast Natural Resource Leaders Group
SFBPC	Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council
SHA	Strategic Habitat Area
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SOW	Statement of Work
SSRWQ	Shellfish Sanitation & Recreational Water Quality
STAC	Former Sea Turtle Advisory Committee
TAC	Total Allowable Catch
TAL	Total Allowable Landings
TED	Turtle Excluder Device
TMC	DEQ Technology Management Committee
TRP	Take Reduction Plan
TRT	Take Reduction Team
UNCWCMS	University of North Carolina-Wilmington Center for Marine Science
VIMS	Virginia Institute of Marine Science
VMS	Vessel Monitoring System
WARO	Washington Regional Office
WIRO	Wilmington Regional Office
WRC	NC Wildlife Resources Commission

Information taken from the NCDEQ and NCDMF websites.