

# Chairman's Report







## NORTH CAROLINA MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

### COMMISSIONERS

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**JOE SHUTE**  
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**MIKE WICKER**  
Raleigh  
**ALISON WILLIS**  
Harkers Island

August 3, 2015

Mr. Alexander B. Rich  
1614 Forrest Drive  
Elizabeth City, N.C. 27909

Dear Alexander:

Congratulations, I am pleased to welcome you as an adviser to the Marine Fisheries Commission's Coastal Recreational Fishing License Committee. This committee makes funding decisions for a grant program established to help manage, protect, restore, develop, cultivate and enhance the state's marine resources. The program is funded from proceeds from the sale of Coastal Recreational Fishing Licenses that are deposited in to the N.C Marine Resources Fund.

The Coastal Recreational Fishing License Committee generally meets in the fall to select which grants to fund and again in the spring to discuss the upcoming request for proposals and to go over funding for multi-year grants. Specific dates have not yet been set for these meetings, but you will be notified when they will be occurring. These meetings typically take place at the division's headquarters in Morehead City. You will be sent the same materials that committee members receive, generally two weeks prior to each meeting, and asked to provide your input on all grant proposals and requests for proposals during the meetings. Your primary staff contact for this committee is Coastal Recreational Fishing License Project Coordinator Wayne Johannessen, who can be reached at 252-808-8004 or 800-682-2632, or [Wayne.Johannessen@ncdenr.gov](mailto:Wayne.Johannessen@ncdenr.gov).

On June 1, the N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries released the request for proposals for the 2016-2017 funding cycle. Only universities and local and state governmental entities in North Carolina are eligible to apply. Others must partner with one of these eligible entities.

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***Habitat*** – Projects that improve the effectiveness of existing environmental programs or that identify, designate or protect coastal recreational fish habitat; or

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CRFL Appointment Letter  
July 22, 2015

**People** – Projects that provide increased access to recreational fisheries resources and enhancement structures or provide better public education and enrichment products.

Proposals are evaluated based on the Coastal Recreational Fishing License Strategic Plan for the Conservation and Improvement of North Carolina's Marine Resources. The plan considers priority research needs identified in fishery management plans approved by the N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission, issues identified in the N.C. Coastal Habitat Protection Plan and research needs identified with other agencies. A copy of the strategic plan is attached for your convenience, but is can also found online at [http://portal.ncdenr.org/c/document\\_library/get\\_file?uuid=8989a7aa-f1d2-4fce-aacd-1142daecf3ab&groupId=38337](http://portal.ncdenr.org/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=8989a7aa-f1d2-4fce-aacd-1142daecf3ab&groupId=38337).

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I want to personally thank you for your interest in advising the commission on the management of our state's coastal fisheries and I look forward to seeing you at a meeting in the near future.

Sincerely,



Sammy Corbett, Chairman  
N. C. Marine Fisheries Commission

cc: Marine Fisheries Commission  
Wayne Johannessen, CRFL Coordinator





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August 3, 2015

Mr. Galen Maxwell  
426 N.C. 581 Highway South  
Goldsboro, N.C. 27530

Dear Galen:

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August 3, 2015

Ms. Jan Willis  
4915 Holly Lane  
Morehead City, N.C. 28557

Dear Jan:

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August 3, 2015

Mr. Robert Schoonmaker  
P.O. Box 1328  
Carolina Beach, N.C. 28428

Dear Robert:

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August 3, 2015

Mr. Richard Sear  
191 Howards Lane  
Hampstead, N.C. 28443

Dear Richard:

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August 3, 2015

Mr. Christopher K. Behm  
7020 Finian Drive  
Wilmington, N.C. 28409

Dear Christopher:

Thank you for your application to serve as an adviser to the N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission's Coastal Recreational Advisory Committee. It was difficult to select advisers because we received so many excellent applications. Unfortunately, I was not able to appoint you to as an adviser to this committee, but I encourage you to apply for other advisory committee vacancies in the future and to participate in our fisheries management process by attending committee and commission meetings and offering your input.

Please visit the Division of Marine Fisheries website at [www.ncfisheries.net](http://www.ncfisheries.net) for meeting schedules, proclamations, fisheries hot topics, and various fishing information. You may also contact Nancy Fish at 800-682-2632 or 252-808-8021 if you have questions about any of the commission's processes or issues.

Again, thank you for your interest in the conservation of our state's resources.

Sincerely,

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Sammy Corbett, Chairman  
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August 3, 2015

Mr. Chad Davis  
617 Vale Drive  
Wilmington, N.C. 28411

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August 3, 2015

Mr. David Glenn  
212 Morada Bay Drive  
Newport, N.C. 28570

Dear David:

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August 3, 2015

Mr. Jim Hardin  
107 Excaliber Drive  
Greenville, N.C. 27858

Dear Jim:

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**SAMMY CORBETT**  
Chairman

**ANNA BECKWITH**  
Morehead City  
**MIKEY DANIELS**  
Wanchese  
**KELLY DARDEN**  
Greenville  
**MARK GORGES**  
Wrightsville Beach

**CHUCK LAUGHRIDGE**  
Harkers Island  
**JOE SHUTE**  
Morehead City  
**MIKE WICKER**  
Raleigh  
**ALISON WILLIS**  
Harkers Island

August 3, 2015

Mr. Allen Jernigan  
P.O. Box 1181  
Sneads Ferry, N.C. 28460

Dear Allen:

Thank you for your application to serve as an adviser to the N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission's Coastal Recreational Advisory Committee. It was difficult to select advisers because we received so many excellent applications. Unfortunately, I was not able to appoint you to as an adviser to this committee, but I encourage you to apply for other advisory committee vacancies in the future and to participate in our fisheries management process by attending committee and commission meetings and offering your input.

Please visit the Division of Marine Fisheries website at [www.ncfisheries.net](http://www.ncfisheries.net) for meeting schedules, proclamations, fisheries hot topics, and various fishing information. You may also contact Nancy Fish at 800-682-2632 or 252-808-8021 if you have questions about any of the commission's processes or issues.

Again, thank you for your interest in the conservation of our state's resources.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sammy Corbett".

Sammy Corbett, Chairman  
N. C. Marine Fisheries Commission



**NORTH CAROLINA MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION  
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

**COMMISSIONERS**

**PAT MCCRORY**  
Governor

**DONALD VAN DER VAART**  
Secretary

**SAMMY CORBETT**  
Chairman

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Morehead City  
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**CHUCK LAUGHRIDGE**  
Harkers Island  
**JOE SHUTE**  
Morehead City  
**MIKE WICKER**  
Raleigh  
**ALISON WILLIS**  
Harkers Island

August 3, 2015

Mr. Denny Lanier  
316 South Graham Street  
Wallace, N.C. 28466

Dear Denny:

Thank you for your application to serve as an adviser to the N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission's Coastal Recreational Advisory Committee. It was difficult to select advisers because we received so many excellent applications. Unfortunately, I was not able to appoint you to as an adviser to this committee, but I encourage you to apply for other advisory committee vacancies in the future and to participate in our fisheries management process by attending committee and commission meetings and offering your input.

Please visit the Division of Marine Fisheries website at [www.ncfisheries.net](http://www.ncfisheries.net) for meeting schedules, proclamations, fisheries hot topics, and various fishing information. You may also contact Nancy Fish at 800-682-2632 or 252-808-8021 if you have questions about any of the commission's processes or issues.

Again, thank you for your interest in the conservation of our state's resources.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sammy Corbett". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sammy Corbett, Chairman  
N. C. Marine Fisheries Commission



**NORTH CAROLINA MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION  
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

**COMMISSIONERS**

**PAT MCCRORY**  
Governor

**DONALD VAN DER VAART**  
Secretary

**SAMMY CORBETT**  
Chairman

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**CHUCK LAUGHRIDGE**  
Harkers Island  
**JOE SHUTE**  
Morehead City  
**MIKE WICKER**  
Raleigh  
**ALISON WILLIS**  
Harkers Island

August 3, 2015

Mr. Warren Martin, Jr.  
P.O. Box 13  
Rodanthe, N.C. 27968

Dear Warren:

Thank you for your application to serve as an adviser to the N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission's Coastal Recreational Advisory Committee. It was difficult to select advisers because we received so many excellent applications. Unfortunately, I was not able to appoint you to as an adviser to this committee, but I encourage you to apply for other advisory committee vacancies in the future and to participate in our fisheries management process by attending committee and commission meetings and offering your input.

Please visit the Division of Marine Fisheries website at [www.ncfisheries.net](http://www.ncfisheries.net) for meeting schedules, proclamations, fisheries hot topics, and various fishing information. You may also contact Nancy Fish at 800-682-2632 or 252-808-8021 if you have questions about any of the commission's processes or issues.

Again, thank you for your interest in the conservation of our state's resources.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sammy Corbett".

Sammy Corbett, Chairman  
N. C. Marine Fisheries Commission





**NORTH CAROLINA MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION  
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

**COMMISSIONERS**

**PAT MCCRORY**  
Governor

**DONALD VAN DER VAART**  
Secretary

**SAMMY CORBETT**  
Chairman

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Morehead City  
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Harkers Island  
**JOE SHUTE**  
Morehead City  
**MIKE WICKER**  
Raleigh  
**ALISON WILLIS**  
Harkers Island

August 3, 2015

Mr. Ron McPherson  
221 Moonlight Drive  
Atlantic Beach, N.C. 28512

Dear Ron:

Thank you for your application to serve as an adviser to the N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission's Coastal Recreational Advisory Committee. It was difficult to select advisers because we received so many excellent applications. Unfortunately, I was not able to appoint you to as an adviser to this committee, but I encourage you to apply for other advisory committee vacancies in the future and to participate in our fisheries management process by attending committee and commission meetings and offering your input.

Please visit the Division of Marine Fisheries website at [www.ncfisheries.net](http://www.ncfisheries.net) for meeting schedules, proclamations, fisheries hot topics, and various fishing information. You may also contact Nancy Fish at 800-682-2632 or 252-808-8021 if you have questions about any of the commission's processes or issues.

Again, thank you for your interest in the conservation of our state's resources.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sammy Corbett". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sammy Corbett, Chairman  
N. C. Marine Fisheries Commission



**NORTH CAROLINA MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION  
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

**COMMISSIONERS**

**PAT MCCRORY**  
Governor

**DONALD VAN DER VAART**  
Secretary

**SAMMY CORBETT**  
Chairman

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**JOE SHUTE**  
Morehead City  
**MIKE WICKER**  
Raleigh  
**ALISON WILLIS**  
Harkers Island

August 3, 2015

Mr. Chris Medlin  
2421 Highway 210 East  
Hampstead, N.C. 28443

Dear Chris:

Thank you for your application to serve as an adviser to the N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission's Coastal Recreational Advisory Committee. It was difficult to select advisers because we received so many excellent applications. Unfortunately, I was not able to appoint you to as an adviser to this committee, but I encourage you to apply for other advisory committee vacancies in the future and to participate in our fisheries management process by attending committee and commission meetings and offering your input.

Please visit the Division of Marine Fisheries website at [www.ncfisheries.net](http://www.ncfisheries.net) for meeting schedules, proclamations, fisheries hot topics, and various fishing information. You may also contact Nancy Fish at 800-682-2632 or 252-808-8021 if you have questions about any of the commission's processes or issues.

Again, thank you for your interest in the conservation of our state's resources.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sammy Corbett". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sammy Corbett, Chairman  
N. C. Marine Fisheries Commission



**NORTH CAROLINA MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION  
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

**COMMISSIONERS**

**PAT MCCRORY**  
Governor

**DONALD VAN DER VAART**  
Secretary

**SAMMY CORBETT**  
Chairman

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**JOE SHUTE**  
Morehead City  
**MIKE WICKER**  
Raleigh  
**ALISON WILLIS**  
Harkers Island

August 3, 2015

Mr. Kurt Tressler  
226 Saint Luke Ct.  
Wilmington, N.C. 28409

Dear Kurt:

Thank you for your application to serve as an adviser to the N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission's Coastal Recreational Advisory Committee. It was difficult to select advisers because we received so many excellent applications. Unfortunately, I was not able to appoint you to as an adviser to this committee, but I encourage you to apply for other advisory committee vacancies in the future and to participate in our fisheries management process by attending committee and commission meetings and offering your input.

Please visit the Division of Marine Fisheries website at [www.ncfisheries.net](http://www.ncfisheries.net) for meeting schedules, proclamations, fisheries hot topics, and various fishing information. You may also contact Nancy Fish at 800-682-2632 or 252-808-8021 if you have questions about any of the commission's processes or issues.

Again, thank you for your interest in the conservation of our state's resources.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sammy Corbett". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sammy Corbett, Chairman  
N. C. Marine Fisheries Commission





North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources

Pat McCrory  
Governor

Donald R. van der Vaart  
Secretary

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission

**FROM:** Nancy Fish  
Commission Liaison

**DATE:** Aug. 20, 2015

**SUBJECT:** Southern Flounder Resolutions and Correspondence Received Outside of the Formal Comment Period

Following are two groups of correspondence the commission has received related to southern flounder:

- First are resolutions received this past spring and early summer from various counties, towns and villages regarding the use of the supplement to implement harvest reductions with southern flounder.
- The second set of information is correspondence the commission has received outside of the formal June 10-July 10 public comment period for the southern flounder supplement proposals.



Board of Commissioners  
Dan Ingle, Chairman  
Eddie Boswell, Vice-Chairman  
Linda Massey  
David I. Smith  
Robert "Bob" Byrd

# Alamance County

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
124 West Elm Street  
Graham, NC 27253-2865

County Manager  
Craig F. Honeycutt

County Attorney  
Clyde Albright

Clerk to the Board  
Tory M. Frink, NCCCC



## RESOLUTION ASKING THE NC MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION (MFC) TO SUPPORT THE NC DIVISION OF MARINE FISHERIES (DMF) USE OF THE SUPPLEMENT PROCESS TO IMPLEMENT REDUCTIONS ON SOUTHERN FLOUNDER

Whereas, all marine creatures are public trust resources owned equally by all citizens of NC regardless of residency; and

Whereas, the southern flounder fishery is a traditional recreational target of thousands of Alamance County residents; and

WHEREAS, the southern flounder population stocks in NC are classified as "depleted"; and

WHEREAS, a recent NCDMF stock assessment as well as the peer reviewers agreed that the stocks are showing no signs of improvement and that harvest of juvenile fish within the population is alarming; and

WHEREAS, the citizens of Alamance County have no representation except through the MFC to manage these public trust resources conservatively and for all citizens; and

WHEREAS, many Alamance County businesses including motels, gas stations, tackle shops, restaurants, and boat dealers provide goods and services to many local citizens as well as traveling fishermen on I-85/40 in the pursuit of southern flounder; and

WHEREAS, there is need for absolute and focused management of these fish to attain, and then maintain, a viable stock of not only southern flounder, but all traditional estuarine fish stocks for our citizenry to enjoy in perpetuity as required by the NC Fishery Reform Act of 1997;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Alamance County Board of Commissioners asks the NC Marine Fisheries Commission to support the NC Division of Marine Fisheries use of the supplement process to implement reduction of southern flounder harvest and that such reductions be made so that the fishery is revived in order to serve all of NC's citizen fishermen and not just ones who fish for profit.

ADOPTED this the 20<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2015.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Dan Ingle, Chairman  
Alamance County Board of Commissioners

ATTEST:   
\_\_\_\_\_  
Tory M. Frink, Clerk to the Board





**BERTIE COUNTY**  
106 DUNDEE STREET  
POST OFFICE BOX 530  
WINDSOR, NORTH CAROLINA 27983  
(252) 794-5300  
FAX: (252) 794-5327  
WWW.CO.BERTIE.NC.US

**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
RONALD "RON" WESSON, Chairman  
TAMMY A. LEE, Vice-Chairman  
JOHN TRENT  
ERNESTINE (BYRD) BAZEMORE  
STEWART WHITE

**A RESOLUTION ASKING THE NC MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION (NCMFC) TO NOT SUPPORT THE NC DIVISION OF MARINE FISHERIES (DCDMF) USE OF THE SUPPLEMENT PROCESS TO IMPLEMENT REDUCTIONS OF SOUTHER FLOUNDER**

**WHEREAS**, the southern flounder fishery is regionally diverse throughout Bertie County and statewide with regards to gear, timing of harvest, and size of fish harvested; and,

**WHEREAS**, the southern flounder fishery is \$5.6 million fishery for NC commercial fishermen and the economic impact to the region would be devastating if harvest cuts of 25% to 60% are implemented by NCMFC; and,

**WHEREAS**, recent <sup># C</sup>DCDMF stock assessment report did not pass peer review and the harvest reduction parameters are arbitrary and subjective and not based on stakeholder input; and,

**WHEREAS**, the supplement process disenfranchises stakeholders because of lack of public input; and,

**WHEREAS**, Bertie County's commercial fishermen have already made their investments for the fall 2015 season that will not be recovered, which subjects them to a double economic hit that will be catastrophic for these small businesses; and,

**WHEREAS**, there is need for thoughtful and comprehensive review of any proposed measure to assess the long-term viability of the fishery, and that review must incorporate stakeholder input.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Bertie County Board of Commissioners asks the NC Marine Fisheries Commission to not support the NC Division of Marine Fisheries use of the supplement process to implement reductions of southern flounder and that any proposal to limit the fishery be subjected to comprehensive review that includes stakeholder input.

This adopted the **18th** day of **May**, 2015.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ronald D. Wesson".

Ronald D. Wesson, Chairman  
Bertie County Board of Commissioners

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sarah S. Tinkham".

Sarah S. Tinkham, Clerk to the Board



*County of Brunswick*

*Office of the County Commissioners*



**RESOLUTION ASKING THE NC MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION (MFC) TO SUPPORT THE NC DIVISION OF MARINE FISHERIES (DMF) USE OF THE SUPPLEMENT PROCESS TO IMPLEMENT ADJUSTMENTS ON SOUTHERN FLOUNDER**

**WHEREAS**, all marine creatures are public trust resources owned equally by all citizens of NC regardless of residency; and

**WHEREAS**, the southern flounder fishery is a source of income for the livelihood of commercial fishermen and is a traditional target by recreational fishermen in Brunswick County; and

**WHEREAS**, the southern flounder population stocks in NC are classified as “declining” and there is need to implement a regional management plan that adjusts accordingly; and

**WHEREAS**, a recent NCDMF stock assessment as well as the peer reviewers agreed that the stocks are showing no signs of improvement and that harvest of juvenile fish within the population is questionable; and

**WHEREAS**, the citizens of Brunswick County have representation through the MFC to manage these public trust resources conservatively and for all citizens; and

**WHEREAS**, many Brunswick County businesses including commercial fishermen, seafood retailers, seafood wholesalers, guides, tackle shops, restaurants, lodging and boat dealers provide goods and services to many local citizens as well as tourists in the pursuit of southern flounder; and

**WHEREAS**, there is need for absolute and focused management of these fish to attain, and then maintain, a viable stock of not only southern flounder, but all traditional estuarine fish stocks for our citizenry to enjoy in the perpetuity as required by the NC Fishery Reform Act of 1997;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Brunswick County Board of Commissioners asks the NC Marine Fisheries Commission to support the NC Division of Marine Fisheries use of the supplement process to fairly implement necessary adjustments of southern flounder harvest and those adjustments are made so that the fishery is maintained for a viable future in order to serve all of NC’s citizen fishermen.

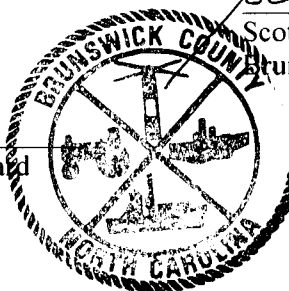
This the 18th day of May, 2015.

*Scott Phillips*

Scott Phillips, Chairman  
Brunswick County Commissioners

ATTEST:

*Margie Stephenson*  
Margie Stephenson, Clerk to the Board



BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

P. MICHAEL McLAIN  
Chairman

SANDRA J. DUCKWALL  
Vice Chairman

GARRY W. MEIGGS  
CLAYTON D. RIGGS  
TOM WHITE



**CAMDENCOUNTY**  
new energy. new vision.

MICHAEL RENSHAW  
County Manager

ANGELA WOOTEN  
Clerk to the Board

JOHN S. MORRISON  
County Attorney

**Resolution No. 2015-05-02**

**A RESOLUTION ASKING THE NC MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION (NCMFC) TO NOT SUPPORT THE NC DIVISION OF MARINE FISHERIES (NCDMF) USE OF THE SUPPLEMENT PROCESS TO IMPLEMENT REDUCTIONS OF SOUTHERN FLOUNDER**

**WHEREAS**, the southern flounder fishery is regionally diverse throughout Eastern North Carolina communities with regards to gear, timing of harvest and size of fish harvested;  
And

**WHEREAS**, the southern flounder fishery is a \$5.6 million fishery for NC commercial fisherman and the economic impact to the region would be devastating if harvest cuts of 25% to 60% are implemented by NCMFC; and

**WHEREAS**, recent NCDMF stock assessment report did not pass peer review and the harvest reduction parameters are arbitrary and subjective and not based on stakeholder input; and

**WHEREAS**, the supplement process disenfranchises stakeholder because of lack of public input;  
and

**WHEREAS**, Camden County's commercial fishermen have made their fishing gear investments for the 2015 fishing season that will not be able to be recovered, which subjects them to a double economic hit that will be catastrophic for these small businesses; and

**WHEREAS**, there is need for thoughtful and comprehensive review of any proposed measure to assess the long-term viability of the fishery, and that review must incorporate local stakeholder input.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Camden County Board of Commissioners asks the NC Marine Fisheries Commission to not support the NC Division of Marine Fisheries use of the supplement process to implement reduction of Southern Flounder and that any proposal to limit the fishery be subjected to comprehensive review that includes stakeholder input.

**ADOPTED**, this the 19<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2015, in Camden County, North Carolina.

ATTEST: Angela Wooten

Clerk to the Board



P. Michael McLain

Chairman of County Commissioners

**Board of Commissioners**

Robin V. Comer, Chair  
Jonathan Robinson, Vice-Chair  
Elaine O. Crittenton  
Jimmy Farrington  
Terry Frank  
Mark Mansfield  
Bill Smith



**County Manager**  
W. Russell Overman  
russello@carteretcountync.gov

Office: (252) 728-8450  
Fax: (252) 728-2092

**A RESOLUTION ASKING THE  
NC DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES (NCDENR) AND  
THE NC MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION (NCMFC) TO OPPOSE THE NC DIVISION  
OF MARINE FISHERIES (NCDMF) USE OF THE SUPPLEMENT PROCESS TO  
IMPLEMENT REDUCTIONS OF SOUTHERN FLOUNDER**

**WHEREAS**, the southern flounder fishery is important to North Carolina counties throughout the coastal area; and

**WHEREAS**, the southern flounder population has been able to sustain itself at levels allowing substantial harvest for over 30 years, landing millions of pounds annually; and

**WHEREAS**, the latest southern flounder stock assessment did not pass peer review and has been deemed unable to assess the status of the southern flounder population in North Carolina, and thus the status of the population is unknown; and

**WHEREAS**, the supplement process allows for limited stakeholder and public input; and

**WHEREAS**, when there is need for an amendment, a thoughtful and comprehensive review of any proposed measure to assess the long-term viability of the fishery, it should allow ample opportunity for stakeholder and public input; and

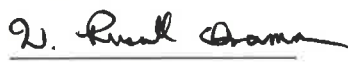
**WHEREAS**, North Carolina began requiring substantial conservation measures on southern flounder to provide for a sustainable population and viable fisheries in 1979 and has continued to responsibly manage the fishery until the present; and

**WHEREAS**, effort in the gill net fishery and pound net fishery, the largest fisheries harvesting southern flounder in North Carolina, has been drastically reduced in recent years.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Carteret County Board of Commissioners asks the Secretary of the North Carolina Department of the Environment and Natural Resources and the North Carolina Marine Fisheries Commission to oppose the development of a supplement to the Southern Flounder Fishery Management Plan.

**ADOPTED**, this day the 20<sup>th</sup> day of April 2015

Attest:

  
Russell Overman,  
Interim Clerk to the Board

  
Robin V. Comer, Chairman  
Carteret County Board of Commissioners





## **COUNTY OF CURRITUCK**

### **A RESOLUTION ASKING THE NC MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION (NCMFC) TO NOT SUPPORT THE NC DIVISION OF MARINE FISHERIES (NCDMF) USE OF THE SUPPLEMENT PROCESS TO IMPLEMENT REDUCTIONS OF SOUTHERN FLOUNDER**

**WHEREAS**, the southern flounder fishery is regionally diverse throughout Currituck County and statewide with regard to gear, timing of harvest and size of fish harvested; and

**WHEREAS**, the southern flounder fishery is a \$5.6 million fishery for NC commercial fishermen and the economic impact of the region would be devastating if harvest cuts of 25% to 60% are implemented by NCMFC; and

**WHEREAS**, recent NCDMF stock assessment report did not pass peer review and the harvest reduction parameters are arbitrary and subjective and not based on stakeholder input; and

**WHEREAS**, the supplement process disenfranchises stakeholders because of lack of public input; and

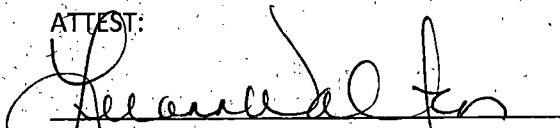
**WHEREAS**, Currituck County's commercial fishermen have already made their investments for the fall 2015 season that will not be able to be recovered, which subjects them to a double economic hit that will be catastrophic for these small businesses; and


**WHEREAS**, there is need for thoughtful, arid, comprehensive review of any proposed measure to assess the long-term viability of the fishery, and that review must incorporate stakeholder input.

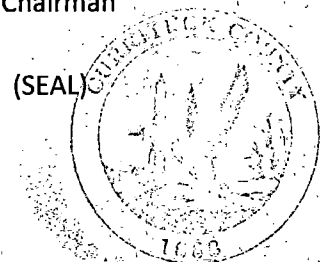
**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Currituck County Board of Commissioners asks the NC Marine Fisheries Commission to not support the NC Division of Marine Fisheries use of the supplement process to implement reductions of southern flounder and that any proposal to limit the fishery be subjected to comprehensive review that includes stakeholder input.

This the 18<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2015.

ATTEST:

  
Leeann Walton, Clerk to the Board

  
S. Paul O'Neal, Chairman







**A RESOLUTION  
ASKING THE NC MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION (NCMFC)  
TO NOT SUPPORT THE NC DIVISION OF MARINE FISHERIES (DCDMF) USE OF THE  
SUPPLEMENT PROCESS TO IMPLEMENT REDUCTIONS OF SOUTHERN FLOUNDER**

WHEREAS, the southern flounder fishery is regionally diverse throughout Dare County and statewide with regards to gear, timing of harvest and size of fish harvested; and

WHEREAS, the southern flounder fishery is a \$5.6 million fishery for NC commercial fisherman and the economic impact to the region would be devastating if harvest cuts of 25% to 60% are implemented by NCMFC; and

WHEREAS, Recent NCDMF stock assessment report did not pass peer review and the harvest reduction parameters are arbitrary and subjective and not based on stakeholder input; and

WHEREAS, the supplement process disenfranchises stakeholders because of lack of public input; and

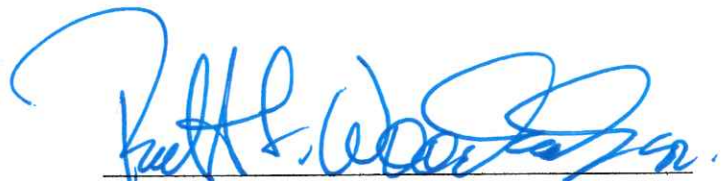
WHEREAS, Dare County's commercial fishermen have already made their investments for the fall 2015 season that will not be able to be recovered, which subjects them to a double economic hit that will be catastrophic for these small businesses; and

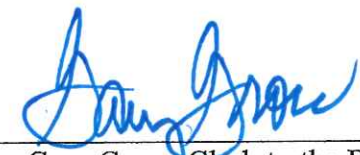
WHEREAS, there is need for thoughtful and comprehensive review of any proposed measure to assess the long-term viability of the fishery, and that review must incorporate stakeholder input.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Dare County Board of Commissioners asks the NC Marine Fisheries Commission to not support the NC Division of Marine Fisheries use of the supplement process to implement reductions of southern flounder and that any proposal to limit the fishery be subjected to comprehensive review that includes stakeholder input.

This the 6<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2015



  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Robert Woodard, Chairman

Attest:   
\_\_\_\_\_  
Gary Gross, Clerk to the Board

# COUNTY OF HYDE

## Board of Commissioners

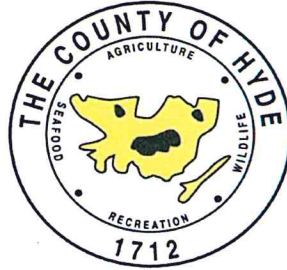
Barry Swindell, Chair  
Earl Pugh, Jr., Vice-chair  
Ben Simmons  
John Fletcher  
Dick Tunnell

30 Oyster Creek Road  
PO Box 188  
SWAN QUARTER, NORTH CAROLINA 27885  
252-926-4400  
252-926-3701 Fax

Bill Rich  
County Manager

Fred Holscher  
County Attorney

Lois Stotesberry, CMC, NCCCC  
Clerk to the Board



## **A RESOLUTION ASKING THE NC MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION (NCMFC) TO NOT SUPPORT THE NC DIVISION OF MARINE FISHERIES (DCDMF) USE OF THE SUPPLEMENT PROCESS TO IMPLEMENT REDUCTIONS OF SOUTHERN FLOUNDER**

**WHEREAS**, the southern flounder fishery is regionally diverse throughout Hyde County and statewide with regards to gear, timing of harvest and size of fish harvested; and,

**WHEREAS**, the southern flounder fishery is a \$5.6 million fishery for NC commercial fishermen and the economic impact to the region would be devastating if harvest cuts of 25% to 60% are implemented by NCMFC; and,

**WHEREAS**, recent MCDMF stock assessment report did not pass peer review and the harvest reduction parameters are arbitrary and subjective and not based on stakeholder input; and,


**WHEREAS**, the supplement process disenfranchises stakeholders because of lack of public input; and,

**WHEREAS**, Hyde County's commercial fishermen have already made their investments for the fall 2015 season that will not be recovered, which subjects them to a double economic hit that will be catastrophic for these small business; and,

**WHEREAS**, there is need for thoughtful and comprehensive review of any proposed measure to assess the long-term viability of the fishery, and that review must incorporate stakeholder input.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Hyde County Board of Commissioners asks the NC Marine Fisheries Commission to not support the NC Division of Marine Fisheries use of the supplement process to implement reductions of southern flounder and that any proposal to limit the fishery by subjected to comprehensive review that includes stakeholder input.

This the 6<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2015.

  
Barry Swindell, Chairman

ATTEST:

  
Lois Stotesberry, Clerk to the Board





Office of  
County Commissioners  
(919) 989-5100  
FAX (919) 989-5179

Paula G. Woodard, Clerk

*Johnston County*

POST OFFICE BOX 1049  
SMITHFIELD, N.C. 27577

Tony Braswell, Chairman  
DeVan Barbour, Vice Chairman  
Cookie Pope  
Allen L. Mims, Jr.  
Jeffrey P. Carver  
Ted G. Godwin  
Chad M. Stewart

**A RESOLUTION ASKING THE NC MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION (MFC)  
TO SUPPORT THE NC DIVISION OF MARINE FISHERIES (DMF) USE  
OF THE SUPPLEMENT PROCESS TO IMPLEMENT  
REDUCTIONS ON SOUTHERN FLOUNDER**

WHEREAS, all marine creatures are public trust resources owned equally by all citizens of North Carolina regardless of residency; and

WHEREAS, the southern flounder fishery is a traditional recreational target of many Johnston County residents; and

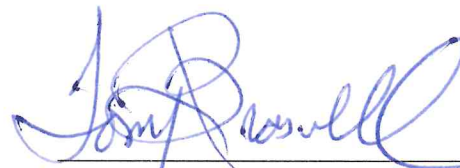
WHEREAS, the southern flounder population stocks in North Carolina are classified as “depleted”; and

WHEREAS, a recent NCDMF stock assessment as well as the peer reviewers agreed that the stocks are showing no signs of improvement and that harvest of juvenile fish within the population is alarming; and

WHEREAS, there is a need for absolute and focused management of these fish to attain and then maintain a viable stock of not only southern flounder but all traditional estuarine stocks for our citizenry in perpetuity as required by the North Carolina Fishery Reform Act of 1997.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Johnston County Board of Commissioners does hereby ask the North Carolina Marine Fisheries Commission to support the North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries use of the supplement process to implement reduction of the southern flounder harvest and that such reductions be made so that the fishery is revived to serve all of North Carolina citizens and not just ones who fish for profit.

Adopted this the 4<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2015.



Tony Braswell, Chairman

Attest:



Paula G. Woodard  
Clerk to the Board



## County of Lenoir

### Board of Commissioners

Craig Hill, Chairman  
Jackie Brown, Vice-Chairman  
Roland Best  
J. Mac Daughety  
Reuben Davis  
Eric Rouse  
Linda Rouse Sutton



Lenoir County Courthouse  
Post Office Box 3289  
130 South Queen Street  
Kinston, NC 28502

Telephone: (252) 559-6450  
Fax: (252) 559-6454

Michael W. Jarman, County Manager  
Tommy Hollowell, Assist. County Manager  
Vickie F. King, Clerk to the Board

### ***RESOLUTION ASKING THE NC MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION (MFC) TO SUPPORT THE NC DIVISION OF MARINE FISHERIES (DMF) USE OF THE SUPPLEMENT PROCESS TO IMPLEMENT REDUCTIONS ON SOUTHERN FLOUNDER***

**WHEREAS**, all marine creatures are public trust resources owned equally by all citizens of NC regardless of residency; and

**WHEREAS**, the southern flounder fishery is a traditional recreational target of thousands of Lenoir County residents; and

**WHEREAS**, the southern flounder population stocks in NC are classified as “depleted”; and

**WHEREAS**, a recent NCDMF stock assessment as well as the peer reviewers agreed that the stocks are showing no signs of improvement and that harvest of juvenile fish within the population is alarming; and

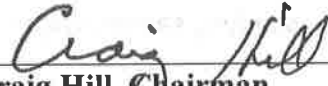
**WHEREAS**, the citizens of Lenoir County have no representation except through the MFC to manage these public trust resources conservatively and for all citizens; and

**WHEREAS**, many Lenoir County businesses including tackles shops, restaurants, and boat dealers provide goods and services to many local citizens as well as traveling fishermen on US 70 in the pursuit of southern flounder; and

**WHEREAS**, there is need for absolute and focused management of these fish to attain, and then maintain, a viable stock of not only southern flounder, but all traditional estuarine fish stocks for our citizenry to enjoy in perpetuity as required by the NC Fishery Reform Act of 1997.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Lenoir County Board of Commissioners asks the NC Marine Fisheries Commission to support the NC Division of Marine Fisheries use of the supplement process to implement reduction of southern flounder harvest and that such reductions be made so that the fishery is revived in order to serve all of NC’s citizen fishermen and not just ones who fish for profit.

April 20, 2015

  
Craig Hill, Chairman





**A RESOLUTION ASKING THE NC MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION (MFC)  
TO SUPPORT THE USE BY THE NC DIVISION OF MARINE FISHERIES (DMF)  
OF THE SUPPLEMENT PROCESS TO IMPLEMENT REDUCTIONS  
ON THE FISHING OF SOUTHERN FLOUNDER**

**WHEREAS**, all marine creatures are public trust resources owned equally by all citizens of North Carolina regardless of residency; and,

**WHEREAS**, the southern flounder fishery is a traditional recreational target of many Nash County residents; and,

**WHEREAS**, the southern flounder population stocks in North Carolina are classified as "depleted"; and,

**WHEREAS**, a recent stock assessment conducted by the NC Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF), as well as the peer reviewers, agreed that the stocks are showing no signs of improvement and that harvest of juvenile fish within the population is alarming; and,

**WHEREAS**, the NC Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF) reports that in 2013 in Nash County 12 individuals held a commercial fishing license, with one of those selling, and 8,700 individuals held a recreational saltwater fishing license; and,

**WHEREAS**, many Nash County businesses, including fuel stations, restaurants, boat dealers, tackle shops, etc., provide goods and services to local citizens as well as travelling fishermen in the pursuit of southern flounder; and,

**WHEREAS**, there is a need for absolute and focused management of these fish to attain and then maintain a viable stock of not only southern flounder by all traditional estuarine stocks for our citizenry in perpetuity as required by the North Carolina Fishery Reform Act of 1997;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Nash County Board of Commissioners adopts this resolution to hereby ask the North Carolina Marine Fisheries Commission (MFC) to support the use of the supplement process by the North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF) to implement reduction of the southern flounder harvest and that such reductions be made so that the fishery is revived for not only those who fish for profit, but also for those who fish for recreation, as well as the businesses supported by fishing.


**ADOPTED THIS 6<sup>th</sup> DAY OF JULY 2015.**

NASH COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

By: 

Fred Belfield, Jr., Chairman

ATTEST:

  
Janice Evans, Clerk to the Board

(OFFICIAL SEAL)

**Board of Commissioners**

**Pat Prescott, Chairman, Township #1**

**Christine Mele, Vice Chairman, Township #2**

**Paul Delamar, At – Large**

**Ann A. Holton, At-Large**

**Edward Riggs Jr., Township #3**

**Carl Ollison, Township #4**

**Kenny Heath, Township #5**



**COUNTY OF PAMLICO**

**P.O. BOX 776**

**BAYBORO, N.C. 28515**

**(252) 745-3133 / 745-5195**

**FAX (252) 745-5514**

**Email: [tim.buck@pamlicocounty.org](mailto:tim.buck@pamlicocounty.org)**

**County Manager  
Timothy A. Buck**

**Clerk to the Board  
Kathy P. Cayton**

**County Attorney  
Jimmie B. Hicks, Jr.**

**A RESOLUTION ASKING THE NC DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES (NCDENR) AND THE NC MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION (NCMFC) TO OPPOSE THE NC DIVISION OF MARINE FISHERIES (NCDMF) USE OF THE SUPPLEMENT PROCESS TO IMPLEMENT REDUCTIONS OF SOUTHERN FLOUNDER**

WHEREAS, the southern flounder fishery is important to North Carolina counties throughout the coastal area; and

WHEREAS, the southern flounder population has been able to sustain itself at levels allowing substantial harvest for over 30years, landing millions of pounds annually; and

WHEREAS, the latest southern flounder stock assessment did not pass peer review and has been deemed unable to assess the status of the southern flounder population in North Carolina, and thus the status of the population is unknown; and

WHEREAS, the supplement process allows for limited stakeholder and public input; and

WHEREAS, when there is need for an amendment, a thoughtful and comprehensive review of any proposed measure to assess the long-term viability of the fishery, it should allow ample opportunity for stakeholder and public input; and

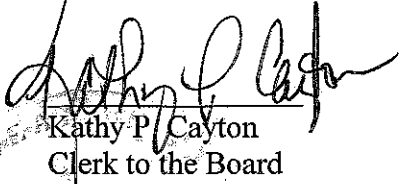
WHEREAS, North Carolina began requiring substantial conservation measures on southern flounder to provide for a sustainable population and viable fisheries in 1979 and has continued to responsibly manage the fishery until the present; and

WHEREAS, effort in the gill net fishery and pound net fishery, the largest fisheries harvesting southern flounder in North Carolina, has been drastically reduced in recent years.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Pamlico County Board of Commissioners asks the Secretary of the North Carolina Department of the Environment and Natural Resources and the North Carolina Marine Fisheries Commission to oppose the development of a supplement to the Southern Flounder Fishery Management Plan.

ADOPTED, this day the 6th day of July 2015

Attest

  
Kathy P. Cayton  
Clerk to the Board

  
Pat Prescott, Chairman  
Pamlico County Board of Commissioners

**A RESOLUTION  
ASKING THE NC MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION (NCMFC)  
TO NOT SUPPORT THE NC DIVISION OF MARINE FISHERIES (DCDMF) USE OF  
THE SUPPLEMENT PROCESS TO IMPLEMENT REDUCTIONS OF SOUTHERN  
FLOUNDER**

**WHEREAS**, the southern flounder fishery is regionally diverse throughout Eastern North Carolina communities with regards to gear, timing of harvest and size of fish harvested; and

**WHEREAS**, the southern flounder fishery is a \$5.6 million fishery for NC commercial fisherman and the economic impact to the region would be devastating if harvest cuts of 25% to 60% are implemented by NCMFC; and

**WHEREAS**, recent NCDMF stock assessment report did not pass peer review and the harvest reduction parameters are arbitrary and subjective and not based on stakeholder input; and

**WHEREAS**, the supplement process disenfranchises stakeholder because of lack of public input; and

**WHEREAS**, Pasquotank County's commercial fishermen have made their fishing gear investments for the 2015 fishing season that will not be able to be recovered, which subjects them to a double economic hit that will be catastrophic for these small businesses; and

**WHEREAS**, there is need for thoughtful and comprehensive review of any proposed measure to assess the long-term viability of the fishery, and that review must incorporate local stakeholder input.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Pasquotank County Board of Commissioners asks the NC marine Fisheries Commission to not support the NC Division of Marine Fisheries use of the supplement process to implement reduction of southern flounder and that any proposal to limit the fishery be subjected to comprehensive review that includes stakeholder input.

This 20<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2015



*James B. Scott*  
Asst. Clerk to the Board

*Joseph S. Winslow, Jr.*  
Joseph S. Winslow, Jr., Chairman  
Pasquotank County Board of Commissioners

**Resolution Asking the NC Marine Fisheries Commission (MFC) to Support the NC Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF) Use of the Supplement Process to Implement Reductions on Southern Flounder**

**WHEREAS**, all marine creatures are public trust resources owned equally by all citizens of North Carolina regardless of residency; and,

**WHEREAS**, the southern flounder fishery is a traditional recreational target of thousands of Pitt County residents; and,

**WHEREAS**, the southern flounder population stocks in NC are classified as “depleted”; and

**WHEREAS**, a recent North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries stock assessment as well as the peer reviewers agreed that the stocks are showing no signs of improvement and that harvest of juvenile fish within the population is alarming; and,

**WHEREAS**, the citizens of Pitt County have no representation except through the MFC to manage these public trust resources conservatively and for all citizens; and,

**WHEREAS**, many Pitt County businesses including tackles shops, restaurants, and boat dealers provide goods and services to many local citizens as well as traveling fishermen on the Highway 64 & Highway 264 corridor in the pursuit of southern flounder; and,

**WHEREAS**, there is need for absolute and focused management of these fish to attain, and then maintain, a viable stock of not only southern flounder, but all traditional estuarine fish stocks for our citizenry to enjoy in perpetuity as required by the NC Fishery Reform Act of 1997.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Pitt County Board of Commissioners asks the NC Marine Fisheries Commission to support the NC Division of Marine Fisheries use of the supplement process to implement reduction of southern flounder harvest and that such reductions be made so that the fishery is revived in order to serve all of NC’s citizen fishermen and not just ones who fish for profit.

Adopted this 4<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2015.



Glen Webb, Chairman

*Kimberly W. Hines*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Kimberly W. Hines, Clerk to the Board





**TOWN OF BEULAVILLE**  
PO BOX 130 • 111 W. QUINN STREET  
BEULAVILLE, NC 28518-0130

Phone: 910-298-4647

Fax: 910-298-3481

May 13, 2015

North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries  
North Carolina Marine Fisheries Commission  
3441 Arendell Street  
Morehead City, NC 28557

SUBJECT: Letter of Support for Town of Wallace Resolution

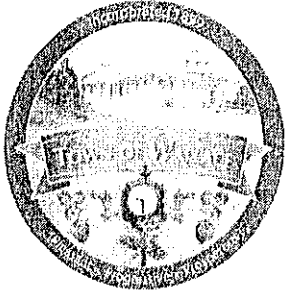
Ladies and Gentlemen:

Please allow this letter of support to serve as my wholehearted endorsement of the Town of Wallace's RESOLUTION ASKING THE NC MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION (MFC) TO SUPPORT THE NC DIVISION OF MARINE FISHERIES (DMF) USE OF THE SUPPLEMENT PROCESS TO IMPLEMENT REDUCTIONS ON SOUTHERN FLOUNDER. I agree with Wallace's request that action should be taken to reverse depleted southern flounder population stocks in North Carolina, as stated in their Resolution.

Regards,

Kenneth L. Smith  
Mayor

Enclosure



# Town of Wallace

316 EAST MURRAY STREET • WALLACE, NORTH CAROLINA 28466 • PHONE: 910-285-4136

MAYOR  
Charles C. Patton, Jr.

TOWN MANAGER  
Matthew S. Livingston

TOWN COUNCIL  
David E. Jordan, Mayor Pro-Tem  
Frank Dandley

William Jeffrey Carter  
Greg S. Caye  
David Warren Hepler

TOWN CLERK  
Lacie Nicholson

TAX COLLECTOR  
Kathy B. Hubbard

FINANCE OFFICER  
Tracy Chesnut

TOWN ATTORNEY  
Richard L. Barrows

## RESOLUTION ASKING THE NC MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION (MFC) TO SUPPORT THE NC DIVISION OF MARINE FISHERIES (DMF) USE OF THE SUPPLEMENT PROCESS TO IMPLEMENT REDUCTIONS ON SOUTHERN FLOUNDER

**WHEREAS**, all marine creatures are public trust resources owned equally by all citizens of NC regardless of residency; and

**WHEREAS**, the southern flounder fishery is a traditional recreational target of Town of Wallace residents; and

**WHEREAS**, the southern flounder population stocks in NC are classified as "depleted"; and

**WHEREAS**, a recent NCDMF stock assessment as well as the peer reviewers agreed that the stocks are showing no signs of improvement and that harvest of juvenile fish within the population is alarming; and

**WHEREAS**, the citizens of the Town of Wallace have no representation except through the MFC to manage these public trust resources conservatively and for all citizens; and

**WHEREAS**, many Town of Wallace businesses provide goods and services to many local citizens as well as traveling fishermen on interstate 40 in the pursuit of southern flounder; and

**WHEREAS**, there is need for absolute and focused management of these fish to attain, and then maintain, a viable stock of not only southern flounder, but all traditional estuarine fish stocks for our citizenry to enjoy in perpetuity as required by the NC Fishery Reform Act of 1997.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Town of Wallace Town Council asks the NC Marine Fisheries Commission to support the NC Division of Marine Fisheries use of the supplement process to implement reduction of southern flounder harvest and that such

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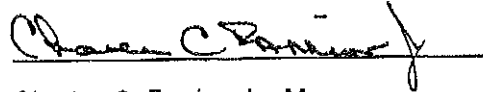
FAX: 910-285-5135 • EMAIL: [mail@townofwallace.com](mailto:mail@townofwallace.com) • WEB: <http://www.townofwallace.com>

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reductions be made so that the fishery is revived in order to serve all of NC's citizen fishermen and not just ones who fish for profit.

---

April 23, 2015

  
Charles C. Farrior, Jr., Mayor

  
Attest





Dan Wilcox  
Mayor

Sarah Friede  
Council Member

Steve Shuttleworth  
Council Member



LeAnn Pierce  
Mayor Pro Tem

Gary Doetsch  
Council Member

Michael Cramer  
Town Manager

TOWN OF CAROLINA BEACH  
1121 N. Lake Park Boulevard  
Carolina Beach, North Carolina 28428

**RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE NORTH CAROLINA MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION TO SUPPORT THE NORTH CAROLINA DIVISION OF MARINE FISHERIES (NCDMF) USE OF THE SUPPLEMENT PROCESS TO IMPLEMENT REDUCTIONS ON SOUTHERN FLOUNDER HARVESTS**

**WHEREAS**, all marine creatures are public trust resources owned equally by all citizens of North Carolina regardless of residency; and

**WHEREAS**, the southern flounder fishery is a traditional recreational target of the citizens of the Town of Carolina Beach; and

**WHEREAS**, the southern flounder population stocks in North Carolina are classified as "depleted"; and

**WHEREAS**, a recent North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries assessment, as well as peer reviewers, agreed that the stocks are showing no signs of improvement, and the harvest of juvenile fish within the population is alarming; and

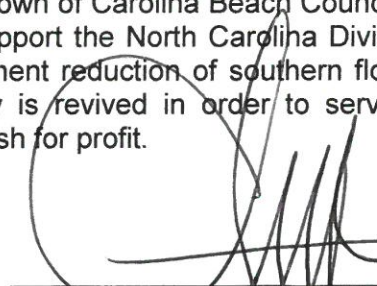
**WHEREAS**, the citizens of the Town of Carolina Beach have no representation except through the North Carolina Marine Fisheries Commission to manage these public trust resources conservatively and for all citizens; and


**WHEREAS**, many Town of Carolina Beach businesses provide goods and services to local citizens as well as visiting fishermen in the pursuit of southern flounder; and

**WHEREAS**, there is need for absolute and focused management of these fish to attain and then maintain a viable stock of not only southern flounder, but all traditional estuarine fish stocks for our citizenry to enjoy in perpetuity as required by the North Carolina Fishery Reform Act of 1997.


**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOVLED**, that the Town of Carolina Beach Council requests the North Carolina Marine Fisheries Commission to support the North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries use of the supplement process to implement reduction of southern flounder harvest and that such reductions be made so the fishery is revived in order to serve all of North Carolina's citizen fishermen and not just ones who fish for profit.

Adopted this 9<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2015.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Dan Wilcox, Mayor



Attest:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Kimberlee Ward, Town Clerk

ROSE HILL  
Incorporated 1875

# TOWN OF ROSE HILL

NORTH CAROLINA

*Home of the World's Largest Frying Pan*

## RESOLUTION ASKING THE NC MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION (MFC) TO SUPPORT THE NC DIVISION OF MARINE FISHERIES (DMF) USE OF THE SUPPLEMENT PROCESS TO IMPLEMENT REDUCTIONS ON SOUTHERN FLOUNDER

WHEREAS, all marine creatures are public trust resources owned equally by all citizens of NC regardless of residency; and

WHEREAS, the southern flounder fishery is a traditional recreational target of Town of Rose Hill residents; and

WHEREAS, the southern flounder population stocks in NC are classified as "depleted"; and

WHEREAS, a recent NCDMF stock assessment as well as the peer reviewers agreed that the stocks are showing no signs of improvement and that harvest of juvenile fish within the population is alarming; and

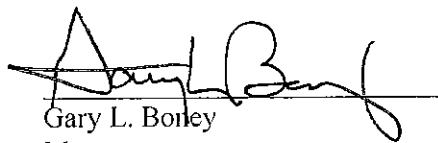
WHEREAS, the citizens of the Town of Rose Hill have no representation except through the MFC to manage these public trust resources conservatively and for all citizens; and

WHEREAS, many Town of Rose Hill businesses provide goods and services to many local citizens as well as traveling fishermen on interstate 40 in the pursuit of southern flounder; and

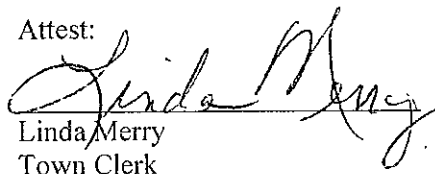
WHEREAS, there is need for absolute and focused management of these fish to attain, and then maintain, a viable stock of not only southern flounder, but all traditional estuarine fish stocks for our citizenry to enjoy in perpetuity as required by the NC Fishery Reform Act of 1997.

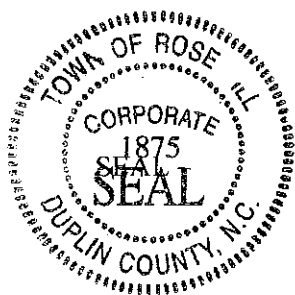
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town of Rose Hill Board of Commissioners asks the NC Marine Fisheries Commission to support the NC Division of Marine Fisheries use of the supplement process to implement reduction of southern flounder harvest and that such reductions be made so that the fishery is revived in order to serve all of NC's citizen fishermen and not just ones who fish for profit.

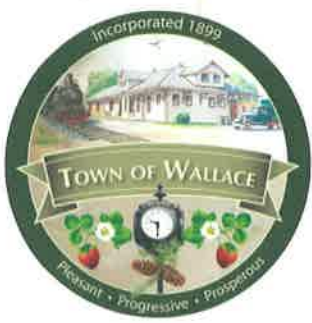
This the 12<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2015.

  
Gary L. Boney  
Mayor

Attest:

  
Linda Merry  
Town Clerk





# Town of Wallace

316 EAST MURRAY STREET • WALLACE, NORTH CAROLINA 28466 • PHONE: 910-285-4136

**MAYOR**  
Charles C. Fariior, Jr.

**TOWN MANAGER**  
Matthew S. Livingston

**TOWN COUNCIL**  
David E. Jordan, Mayor Pro-Tem  
Frank Brinkley  
William Jeffrey Carter  
Greg S. Cave  
David Warren Hepler

**TOWN CLERK**  
Jackie Nicholson

**TAX COLLECTOR**  
Kathy B. Hubbard

**FINANCE OFFICER**  
Tracy Chestnutt

**TOWN ATTORNEY**  
Richard L. Burrows

## **RESOLUTION ASKING THE NC MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION (MFC) TO SUPPORT THE NC DIVISION OF MARINE FISHERIES (DMF) USE OF THE SUPPLEMENT PROCESS TO IMPLEMENT REDUCTIONS ON SOUTHERN FLOUNDER**

**WHEREAS**, all marine creatures are public trust resources owned equally by all citizens of NC regardless of residency; and

**WHEREAS**, the southern flounder fishery is a traditional recreational target of Town of Wallace residents; and

**WHEREAS**, the southern flounder population stocks in NC are classified as "depleted"; and

**WHEREAS**, a recent NCDMF stock assessment as well as the peer reviewers agreed that the stocks are showing no signs of improvement and that harvest of juvenile fish within the population is alarming; and

**WHEREAS**, the citizens of the Town of Wallace have no representation except through the MFC to manage these public trust resources conservatively and for all citizens; and

**WHEREAS**, many Town of Wallace businesses provide goods and services to many local citizens as well as traveling fishermen on interstate 40 in the pursuit of southern flounder; and

**WHEREAS**, there is need for absolute and focused management of these fish to attain, and then maintain, a viable stock of not only southern flounder, but all traditional estuarine fish stocks for our citizenry to enjoy in perpetuity as required by the NC Fishery Reform Act of 1997.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Town of Wallace Town Council asks the NC Marine Fisheries Commission to support the NC Division of Marine Fisheries use of the supplement process to implement reduction of southern flounder harvest and that such

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FAX: 910-285-5135 • EMAIL: [mail@townofwallace.com](mailto:mail@townofwallace.com) • WEB: <http://www.townofwallace.com>


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reductions be made so that the fishery is revived in order to serve all of NC's citizen fishermen and not just ones who fish for profit.

---

April 23, 2015

  
Charles C. Farrior, Jr., Mayor

  
Attest



**RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
OF THE TOWN OF WARSAW**

**Resolution No. 2015-**

RESOLUTION ASKING THE NC MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION (MFC) TO SUPPORT THE NC DIVISION OF  
MARINE FISHERIES (DMF) USE OF THE SUPPLEMENT PROCESS TO IMPLEMENT REDUCTIONS ON  
SOUTHERN FLOUNDER

**WHEREAS**, all marine creatures are public trust resources owned equally by all citizens of NC regardless of residency; and

**WHEREAS**, the southern flounder fishery is a traditional recreational target of Town of Warsaw residents; and

**WHEREAS**, the southern flounder population stocks in NC are classified as "depleted"; and

**WHEREAS**, a recent NCDMF stock assessment as well as the peer reviewers agreed that the stocks are showing no signs of improvement and that harvest of juvenile fish within the population is alarming; and

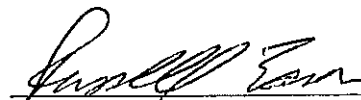
**WHEREAS**, the citizens of the Town of Warsaw have no representation except through the MFC to manage these public trust resources conservatively and for all citizens; and

**WHEREAS**, many Town of Warsaw businesses provide goods and services to many local citizens as well as traveling fishermen on Interstate 40 in the pursuit of southern flounder; and

**WHEREAS**, there is need for absolute and focused management of these fish to attain, and then maintain, a viable stock of not only southern flounder, but all traditional estuarine fish stocks for our citizenry to enjoy in perpetuity as required by the NC Fishery Reform Act of 1997.

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Warsaw Board of Commissioners asks the NC Marine Fisheries Commission to support the NC Division of Marine Fisheries use of the supplement process to Implement reduction of southern flounder harvest and that such reductions be made so that the fishery is revived in order to serve all of NC's citizen fishermen and not just ones who fish for profit.

Adopted by the Board of Commissioners of the Town of Warsaw this 11<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2015.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Russell Eason, Mayor

ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Lea Futrell, Town Clerk





# Tyrrell County Board of Commissioners

Post Office Box 449  
Columbia, North Carolina 27925  
Telephone (252) 796-1371



Leroy Spivey, Chairman  
Carl Willis, Vice Chairman  
Nathan T. Everett  
Nina Griswell  
Larry G. Hill

David L. Clegg, County Manager  
Penny Rhodes Owens, Clerk to the Board  
David Gadd, County Attorney

## **A RESOLUTION ASKING THE NC MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION (NCMFC) TO NOT SUPPORT THE NC DIVISION OF MARINE FISHERIES (NCDMF) USE OF THE SUPPLEMENT PROCESS TO IMPLEMENT REDUCTIONS OF SOUTHERN FLOUNDER**

**WHEREAS**, the southern flounder fishery is regionally diverse throughout Tyrrell County and statewide with regards to gear, timing of harvest and size of fish harvested; and,

**WHEREAS**, the southern flounder fishery is a \$5.6 million fishery for NC commercial fishermen and the economic impact to the region would be devastating if harvest cuts of 25% to 60% are implemented by NCMFC; and

**WHEREAS**, recent NCDMF stock assessment report did not pass peer review and the harvest reduction parameters are arbitrary and subjective and not based on stakeholder input; and,

**WHEREAS**, the supplement process disenfranchises stakeholders because of lack of public input; and,

**WHEREAS**, Tyrrell County's commercial fishermen have already made their investments for the fall 2015 season that will not be recovered, which subjects them to a double economic hit that will be catastrophic for these small businesses; and,

**WHEREAS**, there is need for thoughtful and comprehensive review of any proposed measure to assess the long-term viability of the fishery, and that review must incorporate stakeholder input.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Tyrrell County Board of Commissioners asks the NC Marine Fisheries Commission to not support the NC Division of Marine Fisheries use of the supplement process to implement reductions of southern flounder and that any proposal to limit the fishery be subjected to comprehensive review that includes stakeholder input.

This the 19<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2015

Leroy Spivey, Chairman  
Tyrrell County Board of Commissioners

Attest:

Penny Rhodes Owens, CMC, NCCCC  
Clerk to the Board

**A RESOLUTION FOR BOARD ADOPTION  
THE VILLAGE OF WALNUT CREEK**

**A RESOLUTION ASKING THE NC MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION (MFC) TO  
SUPPORT THE NC DIVISION OF MARINE FISHERIES (DMF) USE OF THE  
SUPPLEMENT PROCESS TO IMPLEMENT REDUCTIONS ON SOUTHERN  
FLOUNDER**

**Whereas**, all marine creatures are public trust resources owned equally by all citizens of NC regardless of residency; and

**Whereas**, the southern flounder fishery is a traditional recreational target of thousands of Wayne County residents; and

**Whereas**, the southern flounder population stocks in NC are classified as “depleted”; and

**Whereas** a recent NCDMF stock assessment as well as the peer reviewers agreed that the stocks are showing no signs of improvement and that harvest of juvenile fish within the population is alarming; and

**Whereas**, the citizens of Wayne County have no representation except through the MFC to manage these public trust resources conservatively and for all citizens; and

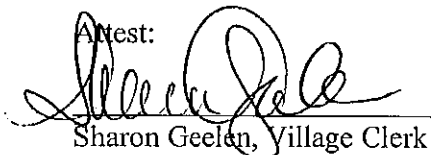
**Whereas**, many Wayne County restaurants and other businesses including tackles shops and boat dealerships provide goods and services to many local citizens as well as traveling fishermen on US 70 in the pursuit of southern flounder; and

**Whereas**, there is a need for absolute and focused management of these fish to attain, and then maintain, a viable stock of not only southern flounder but all traditional estuarine stocks for our citizenry in perpetuity as required by the NC Fishery Reform Act of 1997;

**Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved**, that the Village Council of the Village of Walnut Creek asks the NC Marine Fisheries Commission to support the NC Division of Marine Fisheries use of the supplement process to implement reduction of southern flounder harvest and that such reductions be made so that the fishery is revived to serve all of NC citizens and not just ones who fish for profit.

Adopted this 29<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2015.

Attest:



Sharon Geelen, Village Clerk  
Village of Walnut Creek



Danny Jackson, Mayor  
Village Of Walnut Creek

**NORTH CAROLINA  
WAYNE COUNTY**

**A RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE NORTH CAROLINA MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION TO  
SUPPORT THE NORTH CAROLINA DIVISION OF MARINE FISHERIES USE OF THE  
SUPPLEMENT PROCESS TO IMPLEMENT REDUCTIONS ON SOUTHERN FLOUNDER**

**WHEREAS**, all marine creatures are public trust resources owned equally by all citizens of North Carolina regardless of residency; and

**WHEREAS**, the southern flounder fishery is a traditional recreational target of thousands of Wayne County residents; and

**WHEREAS**, the southern flounder population stocks in North Carolina are classified as “depleted;” and

**WHEREAS**, a recent North Carolina Department of Marine Fisheries stock assessment, as well as the peer reviewers, agreed the stocks are showing no signs of improvement and the harvest of juvenile fish within the population is alarming; and

**WHEREAS**, the citizens of Wayne County have no representation except through the North Carolina Marine Fisheries Commission to manage these public trust resources conservatively and for all citizens; and

**WHEREAS**, many Wayne County restaurants and other businesses including tackle shops, restaurants and boat dealers provide goods and services to many local citizens as well as traveling fishermen on US Highway 70 in the pursuit of southern flounder; and

**WHEREAS**, there is need for absolute and focused management of these fish to attain and then maintain a viable stock of not only southern flounder, but all traditional estuarine fish stocks for our citizenry to enjoy in perpetuity as required by the North Carolina Fishery Reform Act of 1997.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Wayne County Board of Commissioners requests the North Carolina Marine Fisheries Commission support the North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries use of the supplement process to implement reduction of southern flounder harvest and that such reductions be made so the fishery is revived in order to serve all of North Carolina’s citizen fishermen and not just ones who fish for profit.

Adopted this the 21<sup>st</sup> day of April, 2015.



Attest:

Marcia R. Wilson  
Marcia R. Wilson, Clerk to the Board

George Wayne Aycock, Jr.  
George Wayne Aycock, Jr., Chairman  
Wayne County Board of Commissioners



## Fish, Nancy

---

**From:** Hensley, Michelle L  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 07, 2015 7:34 AM  
**To:** Fish, Nancy  
**Subject:** FW: Flounder Regulation Changes

FYI, I passed this on to Louis but just wanted to you see as well

Michelle Hensley, Executive Assistant  
Director's Office  
NC Division of Marine Fisheries  
3441 Arendell Street/Post Office Box 769  
Morehead City, NC 28557-0769  
Phone: (252) 808-8013  
Fax: (252) 726-0254  
[michelle.hensley@ncdenr.gov](mailto:michelle.hensley@ncdenr.gov)

Email correspondence to and from this address is subjected to the North Carolina Public Records Law and may be disclosed to third parties unless the content is exempt by statute or other regulation.

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**From:** nancy neeley [mailto:[nancy22221@live.com](mailto:nancy22221@live.com)]  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 07, 2015 7:06 AM  
**To:** Hensley, Michelle L  
**Subject:** Flounder Regulation Changes

Dear Michelle, would you kindly pass this onto Director Daniel please. Thank you.

Dear Director Daniel,

Rumors have been circulating about an upcoming change to our flounder fishery; we thank you!

I have been polling many folks, both commercial and recreational and I confirmed that the majority of us fully support a complete shutdown of the flounder fishery for a few years to allow our fish stocks to grow and replenish. As you already know, our flounder fishery takes a big hit every year as everyone likes flounder fishing and enjoys flounder at the dinner table; however over the past few years, finding sizable ones has been difficult at best. Thus, confirming our depleted status.

Moreover, while most of us understand the impact this would have, everyone agrees that this would be best not only for our fishery, but also for the many businesses that cater to fishing in the long run. With a few years to grow and replenish, we can have a fantastic flounder fishery. Everyone wins.

I/we know you must make many difficult decisions in your position with arguments and data coming from all directions, but I am hopeful that you will agree that closing the fishery for awhile will be a long-term benefit. It takes a strong leader to make difficult decisions like this, but this argument, if you choose to do this will certainly prove itself in the long run.

Thank you in advance for taking our input into consideration.

Best regards,  
Tom Neeley

## Fish, Nancy

---

**From:** Hensley, Michelle L  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 12, 2015 7:28 AM  
**To:** Fish, Nancy  
**Subject:** FW: Flounder management comments - Marine Fisheries Commission

I assume that you want these for the comments for the meeting next week?

Michelle Hensley, Executive Assistant  
Director's Office  
NC Division of Marine Fisheries  
3441 Arendell Street/Post Office Box 769 Morehead City, NC 28557-0769  
Phone: (252) 808-8013  
Fax: (252) 726-0254  
michelle.hensley@ncdenr.gov

Email correspondence to and from this address is subjected to the North Carolina Public Records Law and may be disclosed to third parties unless the content is exempt by statute or other regulation.

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Rodger Lentz [mailto:rlentz@wilsonnc.org]  
**Sent:** Monday, May 11, 2015 8:09 PM  
**To:** Hensley, Michelle L  
**Cc:** Rep. Susan Martin; Senator Buck Newton; Rep. Jean Farmer-Butterfield; Senator Angela Bryant  
**Subject:** Flounder management comments - Marine Fisheries Commission

Hello, my name is Rodger Lentz, I am a recreational fisherman from Wilson, NC.

I would like to offer these comments to the Marine Fisheries Commission on proposed changes to southern flounder management and bag limits.

Recreational fishermen are a small percentage of the overall catch of southern flounder. Commercial fishermen account for approximately 80% of the total catch. While I understand flounder is popular table fare, our current management techniques are failing.

While I applaud the review of this important fishery, the proposals I am aware of are focused squarely on the backs of recreational fishermen. This has been the case for years. If flounder is diminished, the Marine Fisheries Commission reduces bag limits for recreational fishermen and increases minimum size requirements. However little is done to curtail commercial take. This approach has not worked. Reducing recreational bag limits won't work this time either.

In recent years, recreational fishermen have had reductions in bag limits for the popular inshore fish, speckled trout, flounder and red drum. Essentially, we are becoming a catch and release only state for recreational fishermen given the bag limits for these fish. It's hard to justify spending \$150-300 per day trip when you get to keep 5 or less fish. It's hard to justify spending the night, going out for meals, purchasing equipment, bait, etc. for trips like this. I bought an SUV, Boat, boat equipment (trolling motor, electronics, batteries, etc.), and fishing equipment with the express purpose of fishing in coastal waters. These purchases have had a positive economic impact on this state and our state tax coffers.

While recreational fishermen have a tremendous economic impact, the largest cause of destruction to our fisheries, Gil nets, is allowed to continue unchecked. Unfortunately, the Marine Fisheries Commission won't even consider reducing

commercial Gil netting. While most other states have banned inshore Gil nets, we continue on and stand on the sidelines as our fisheries continue to be depleted.

I urge the Commission to consider a ban on commercial Gil netting or at least severe restrictions in line with their destructive nature. Gil nets account for well over 50% of the total commercial take of southern flounder. Shouldn't their take be reduced? This would have a positive impact on southern flounder. Let's follow the example of states like Virginia, South Carolina, Louisiana, Texas, Florida and others who have banned or severely restricted the inshore Gil net. Those states have built coastal economies around recreational fishing and their economic impact. North Carolina can do the same and truly help communities like Washington, Swan Quarter and others thrive as fishing destinations.

Thank you for allowing me to be heard.

Rodger Lentz  
rhlentz@mac.com

Sent from my iPad

Pursuant to North Carolina General Statutes, Chapter 132, et seq., this electronic mail message and any attachment hereto, as well as any electronic mail message(s) that may be sent in response to it may be considered public record and as such are subject to requests for review.

May 14, 2015

I am a resident of Craven County, I vote here and own property in the county. I am also a recreational fisherman and am concerned with the state of our fisheries.

Too many of our most sought after fish, namely the red drum, specs and flounder populations reflect a lack of vision and leadership from our state's fisheries managers. It is time to change the way we manage these fish.

Presently, you are in the process of reviewing the supplement process for the southern flounder. The DMF has proposed reducing the recreational harvest on these fish to one fish per day. I find this proposal lacking especially when you consider the recreational harvest of these fish comprises around 21.4 percent of the total harvest. The commercial harvest comprises 78.6 percent. It is time to balance the equation.

Accordingly, I support:

- \* No further reductions in the recreational harvest
- \* A moratorium on the large mesh gill net fishery
- \* Have a spawning season closure for pound nets to facilitate a more equitable allocation
- \* Adjust the commercial size limit to 15 inches
- \* Institute an immediate moratorium on new pound net applications
- \* If large mesh gill nets are retained, institute a moratorium on all new gill net applications
- \* Manage the southern flounder under a TAC. DMF leadership has raised concerns about managing these fish under a TAC. They already manage the red drum and striped bass under a TAC (CAP) and the same can apply to flounder.
- \* Balance the recreational/commercial split under a TAC to 50/50.

Sincerely,



Art Thinguldstad  
906 Hawksbill Ct  
New Bern NC 28560  
252-675-3766

-----Original Message-----

From: Paul Nancy Miller [<mailto:nette33@earthlink.net>]

Sent: Thursday, May 14, 2015 12:40 PM

To: Fish, Nancy

Cc: [gbobdillard@gmail.com](mailto:gbobdillard@gmail.com)

Subject: Harvesting of fish in NC waters

May 14, 2015

I am a resident of Pamlico County, I vote here and own property in the county. I am also a recreational fisherman and am concerned with the state of our fisheries.

Too many of our most sought after fish, namely the red drum, specs and flounder populations reflect a lack of vision and leadership from our state's fisheries managers It is time to change the way we manage these fish.

Presently, you are in the process of reviewing the supplement process for the southern flounder. The DMF has proposed reducing the recreational harvest on these fish to one fish per day. I find this proposal lacking especially when you consider the recreational harvest of these fish comprises around 21.4 percent of the total harvest. The commercial harvest comprises 78.6 percent. It is time to balance the equation.

Accordingly, I support no further reductions in the recreational harvest. I also support a moratorium on the large mesh gill net fishery. In conjunction with the moratorium have a spawning season closure for pound nets to facilitate a more equitable allocation.

Adjust the commercial size limit to 15 inches. Institute an immediate moratorium on new pound net applications. If large mesh gill nets are retained, institute a moratorium on all new gill net applications. Manage the southern flounder under a TAC. DMF leadership has raised concerns about managing these fish under a TAC. They already manage the red drum and striped bass under a TAC (CAP) and the same can apply to flounder.

Balance the recreational/commercial split under a TAC to 50/50.

Sincerely,

Paul Miller  
252-249-1443



NC Division of Marine Fisheries  
3441 Arendell Street  
Morehead City, NC 28557

May 14, 2015

Dr Daniel,

This letter is to help you understand that there is no depletion in North Carolina's southern flounder stocks. I want to insure that there are no changes to the southern flounder fishery that is so important to our NC economy and to our state's coastal communities. The value of the southern flounder fishery is one of the highest of any seafood that is available to the consumer in our state.

I am providing facts and figures below that will help you understand that there is no need for further restrictions or a closure. The commercial southern flounder fishery is not "trending downward" -

- From 2004 through 2013, the 10-year average landings of southern flounder were just over 2 million pounds.
- From 2004 to 2009, fishermen were allowed to catch and set flounder nets 365 days per year.
- Beginning in 2009-2010, a new regulation restricted large mesh nets to 40 hours per week. Over half the state is restricted to 4 days per week with night time soaks only.
- In 2011, there were only 1.2 million pounds caught by commercial fishermen.
- In 2013 there were close to 2.2 million pounds caught by commercial fishermen.
- In 2013, southern flounder landings in Dare County were 1.3 million pounds.
- In 2013, from June 1 to November 30, there were only 70 days in which large mesh nets were able to be used from Oregon Inlet down to South Carolina. Fishermen could only set nets 4 days per week. Plus, there was a 2-month closure during this time frame to all large mesh nets.
- The point being, the largest body of water in the state had only 70 days that allowed fishermen to use nets for southern flounder in 2013, and still the commercial landings exceeded the 10-year average by 200,000 pounds, even though half of the 10-year average allowed flounder fishing with nets 365 days per year.

- In 2014, southern flounder landings went down to 1.66 million pounds because the state shut down fishing with large mesh nets during peak flounder fishing times, in peak areas.
- In 2014, from Currituck and Albemarle Sounds south to the SC line, there were only 82 days open to set large mesh gill nets for flounder.

In summary, more southern flounder are being caught with much less fishing time.

The southern flounder fishery management plan cannot compare landings from years ago when fishermen could fish 365 days a year, and now only about half of the state's coastal areas allow flounder nets to be used 70 days per year. Even the NC State Biologist disagrees with the MFC about a depletion of southern flounder.

All of the above information came from the NCDMF statistics office and from NCDMF Proclamations that show a marked decrease in fishing time. By proof from NCDMF Proclamations, southern flounder are underfished now more than ever, NOT overfished. Southern flounder are considered a depleted stock by the NCDMF, but there is not one bit of scientific data to back up this myth.

Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.

Yours truly,

*Andrew Berry*

Andrew Berry

NCWU Board Member

252-722-4293

[Bowhunterab14@gmail.com](mailto:Bowhunterab14@gmail.com)

Board of Directors

Perry Wood Beasley

Billy Maxwell

Capt Sonny Davis

Greg Mayer

Ernie Doshier

Jamie Reibel

Ernie Foster

Britt Shackelford

Tom Harper

Bradley Styron

Glen Hopkins

Duke Spencer

Rom Whitaker

AB: mm

Cc: MFC

Nancy Fish, Liaison

NCDENR Secretary van der Vaart

NCGA Senators and Representatives



NC Division of Marine Fisheries  
3441 Arendell Street  
Morehead City, NC 28557

May 14, 2015

Dr Daniel,

The North Carolina Watermen United (NCWU) would like to comment on the southern flounder fishery.

In 2013, NCWU requested that the minimum size for flounder be reduced to 14 inches for the recreational and charter/headboat sectors. Many of our non-commercial fishermen are being disenfranchised because of the large number of flounder just under the minimum retention size. Reducing the size by merely an inch would take the pressure off, as anglers would more quickly catch their limit - or enough to eat – and stop targeting flounder.

In February 2015, we asked that no action be taken in the flounder fishery, because two of three assessors in the Peer Review for the stock assessment rejected it. Then the Division issued a Flounder FMP Supplement process including a 25 – 60% reduction for the fishery.

NC scientists and biologists believe that the 2007-2008 model does not take into account the migration of the southern flounder and should not have been used for the 2014 assessment. Neither the state nor the stakeholders know the flounder population status. Many of the scientists and biologists also believe that the 25 – 60% reduction was selected arbitrarily with an explanation that the catch/efforts are “trending downward.” There is also concern by scientists, biologists and NCWU that the supplement process is too quick, does not require an FMP Advisory Committee for the MFC, does not require MRC Regional Advisory Committee review and does not require a report to an appropriate Committee of the NC General Assembly. We would like an independent review of the supplemental (temporary) management measures and a “new” stock assessment.

We have joined with many fishermen and other groups, including the North Carolina Fisheries Association (NCFA), the Ocracoke Working Waterman’s Association (OWWA) and the Carteret County Fishing Association (CCFA) on this issue. Our members have been working with many Boards of



Commissioners including Carteret, Currituck, Dare, Hyde, Pasquotank, Perquimans and Tyrrell Counties that have issued Proclamations against the supplement process and the 25 – 60% reduction because of the economic impact to each County.

One of our NCWU Board members, Andrew Berry, has compiled data showing that the landings of southern flounder by the commercial fleet have remained consistent from 2004 – 2013, in spite of the limitations imposed, mostly because of the ITP for Sea Turtles, to reduce the fishery from 365 days per year to about 70 days per year. Because of severe restrictions and closures, the 2014 landings were less.

We believe that no action should be taken until a new stock assessment is available.

We have all of the cited materials on file and are willing to discuss this issue further at any time.

Yours truly,

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

*Britt Shackelford*

Britt Shackelford  
President, NCWU  
[brittonshack@gmail.com](mailto:brittonshack@gmail.com)  
252-473-8078

Perry Wood Beasley	Billy Maxwell
Andrew Berry	Greg Mayer
Capt Sonny Davis	Jamie Meyer
Ernie Doshier	Duke Spencer
Ernie Foster	Bradley Styron
Tom Harper	Rom Whitaker
Glen Hopkins	

BTS: mm

Cc: MFC  
Nancy Fish, Liaison  
NCDENR Secretary Van der Vaart  
NCGA Senators and Representatives



May 14, 2015

Sammy Corbett, Chair  
North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries  
3441 Arendell Street  
Morehead City, NC 28557

**RE: Southern Flounder Draft Supplemental Comments**

Dear Chairman Corbett:

Please accept the following comments on behalf of the North Carolina Chapter of the Recreational Fishing Alliance (RFA-NC) in regards to pending action for the Southern Flounder fishery. The comments were developed with input gathered from members of RFA-NC who include private anglers, for-hire owners/operators, scientists and others closely involved with the fishery. In addition, the comments were prepared after careful and thorough review of the support materials provided by North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries (NCDMF) in regards to southern flounder. Our comments reflect the chapter's desire to see the southern flounder fishery managed in a responsible manner that also provides reasonable and equitable opportunities for the recreational fishing community to access this important fishery.

Please reference the document entitled "Draft Supplement A to Amendment 1 of the N.C. Southern Flounder Fishery Management Plan, Implement Short-Term Measures to Address Stock Concerns" dated May 4, 2015. The purpose of the referenced document is to present short term management options to remedy our depleted southern flounder stock. The N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission (MFC) will decide at its May meeting to reject the draft supplement, approve the draft supplement as presented for public comment, or modify the draft supplement and approved the modified version for public comment (p.2).

Based on the referenced supplement (p. 4) the NCDMF determined the southern flounder stock assessment could not be used to define the stock status due to mixing of the stock on a regional scale. Due to concerns of southern flounder stock status, the MFC at its February 2015 meeting decided to pursue a supplement to reduce catch of southern flounder by no less than 25% and no greater than 60%.

RFA-NC agrees with the division's decision regarding the draft 2015 southern flounder stock assessment. However, it is recommended that the division pursue development of a valid stock assessment to determine if the stock is overfished or overfishing is occurring. The referenced supplement states that the NCDMF cannot quantify levels of sustainable harvest without a valid stock assessment; however, certain patterns in the southern flounder fishery and population are concerning and may warrant further management action (p.4). The RFA-NC concurs and requests that immediate action be taken. The supplement further states that the 2014 Southern Flounder Stock Assessment was not accepted for management use by the NCDMF due to legitimate and substantial concerns raised by three external peer reviewers, selected by the NCDMF. The RFA-NC requests that the 2014 draft stock assessment undergo additional peer review by reviewers selected by the NCDMF in collaboration with the RFA-NC and other stakeholders.

In addition, the RFA-NC requests that the MFC take **immediate** action to prevent further depletion of the southern flounder stock. Thus, the RFA-NC recommends that the MFC approve to modify the draft supplement and approve the modified version for public comment. The importance of allowing a public process to move forward cannot be over emphasized. Further, consideration of all public comment by the MFC for its August 19-21 meeting is extremely important in this case. Public comments would greatly assist the MFC in its selection of the preferred management option and final approval of the supplement. The RFA-NC overwhelmingly supports a public transparent process whereby the public is provided an opportunity to comment on a modified draft supplement. Our recommendations on this document are provided below. Please note that many recreational fisherman and RFA members work during the day or live far from New Bern and will not be able to attend the MFC May meeting. Thus, providing those fishermen an opportunity to comment on southern flounder, including our recommended options, is even more important.

The RFA-NC also concurs with resolutions to support the NC DMF use of the supplement process to implement reduction of southern flounder harvest recently adopted by Alamance County, Lenoir County, Town of Wallace, and Wayne County (see Directors report).

Since approximately 1989, the recreational sector has been subject to increased restrictions on southern flounder that have included increased minimum size limits and decreased bag limits. The recreational sector has endured six size limit increases from 13" in 1989 to the current 15" and two bag limit decreases from unlimited to the current bag limit of 6 fish per person/day (p.47). The commercial sector has and is allowed to catch an unlimited amount (i.e. no quota or Total Allowable Catch (TAC)) of flounder 11 months a year with a minimum size limit of 14" (p.48-51). Based on Table 1 (p.9) and Table 2 (p.11), the total recreational and commercial catch for 2011-2013 was 2,148,822 lbs as shown in Table 1 below. Of this total, the recreational industry caught 21.4% (459,177 lbs of the total 2,148,822 lbs) and the commercial industry caught 78.6% (1,689,645 lbs of the total 2,148,822lbs). The inequity in flounder harvest between recreational and commercial fishing is astounding. Further reductions to the recreational flounder catch would not be equitable, reasonable, or fair. The RFA-NC firmly believes that flounder reduction must be taken from the 79% side of the equation.

Table 1. Total landings (lbs) 2011-2013\*

Sector	Landings (lbs)	Reference	Percent of Total
Commercial	1,689,645	Table 2, p.11	78.6
Recreational	459,177	Table 1, p.9	21.4
Total	2,148,822		100

\*based on Table 1(p.9) and Table 2 (p.11) of draft supplement.

The referenced supplement provides five management options for MFC consideration which would be made available for public comment (p.1). These include:

1. Implement a season closure;
2. Increase the minimum size limit;
3. Decrease the recreational bag limit;
4. Implement a season closure and also increase the minimum size limit;
5. Implement a season closure, increase the minimum size limit, and decrease the recreational bag limit.

Our comments on each of these options, as presented in the referenced document, are as follows:

1. Season Closure (p.17). This option considers season closures of both commercial and recreational fisheries. NCDMF tagging data clearly indicate that southern flounder begin spawning migration to ocean waters in fall months. This time period is critical for spawning flounder. Should this option be selected, the RFA-NC recommends a commercial seasonal closure from October 1-December 31 resulting in an estimated reduction of 50% (see Table 4, p.19) which would **reduce the minimum catch reduction as requested by the MFC**. If option 1 is approved, RFA-NC suggests the development of effort controls to prevent a reattribution of commercial effort to which could potential negate or reduce the estimated 50% reduction. The RFA-NC strongly opposes any recreational closure from May through November in any year since it would adversely affect the ability of the for-hire industry to work within the tourism season and allow recreational fisherman to enjoy the fall fishing season.
2. Minimum Size Increase (p.23). Increasing the minimum size limit is a management tool that has always been used by the NCDMF to help end overfishing. Data provided in the referenced document and other NCDMF documents clearly indicate this management measure applied to the recreational industry is not successful (Table A1.1, p.47). However, the referenced document (p. 26 and Table 11) states that “increasing the minimum size limit to 16” would reduce commercial catch by an estimated 32% which would **reduce the minimum catch reduction as requested by the MFC** (p.28). The RFA-NC therefore recommends that the commercial minimum size limit be increased to 16”. The recreational minimum size limit must remain at 15”.
3. Decrease the recreational bag limit (p.31). According to the referenced document the hook and line recreational fishery contributed the most to reductions from recreational bag limit decreases because of the greater harvest from this gear. Based on estimated catch reductions shown in Table 17 (p.32), the reduction from decreasing to a one-fish recreational bag limit is less than 23% and **does not meet the minimum catch reduction requested by the MFC**. Therefore, the RFA-NC does not support this option. Moreover, we feel that increasing the recreational bag limit to 8 fish per person/day would not adversely impact the southern flounder stock.
4. Season closure and increase the minimum size limit (p.32). This option proposes to combine a season closure with a minimum size limit increase. For reasons described above, the RFA-NC supports a commercial fishing season closure from November 16-December 31 and increasing the commercial minimum size limit to 16” resulting in a commercial reduction by 36% to meet **the minimum catch reduction as requested by the MFC** (Table 18, p.33). Consistent with RFA-NC’s comment in regards to Option 1, effort controls should be developed to prevent redistribution of commercial effort in response to a seasonal closure. As stated above, we cannot support any recreational closure or recreational minimum size limit reduction. *This is the preferred option of the RFA-NC.*
5. Season closure, increase the minimum size limit, and decrease the recreational bag limit (p.37). As stated above, the recreational industry has taken the biggest reduction in southern flounder since 1989. The RFA-NC cannot support any further reductions in bag limits in order to allow the commercial industry to harvest more southern flounder. We request that this option be eliminated from further consideration.

The RFA-NC recommends the MFC approve the draft supplement with modifications that would help prevent further depletion of the stock in a fair and equitable manner. It is highly recommended that the MFC approve a modified supplement that allows public comment on the

options below. As stated above, public comment on all options would greatly help the MFC with its selection of a preferred southern flounder management option.

1. Total closure of commercial gill nets (used for southern flounder). According to the referenced document, page 10, gill nets are used in most estuarine waters where regulations allow. Based on Table 2 (p.11) and Table 1 (p.9), Gill nets accounted for roughly 55.2% (932,792 lbs/1,689,645 lbs) of the commercial harvest and 43.4% (932,792/2,148,822) of the total recreational and commercial fishery harvest. **This single option would fully meet the catch reduction as requested by the MFC.** The RFA-NC recommends this option be given serious consideration in the modified supplement.
2. Prohibition of the issuance of future pound net permits. This motion failed to be approved at the February 2015 MFC meeting. Since that time, there have been numerous pound net permit applications submitted, as expected. Therefore, the RFA-NC recommends that issuance of new pound permits be immediately prohibited until southern flounder management decisions based on a new flounder stock assessment can be made.
3. A quota based fishery management option must be implemented for southern flounder similar to that used for summer flounder. Several issues regarding equal opportunity to land summer flounder and dealer reporting frequencies need to be resolved. The RFA-NC recommends the NCDMF pursue commercial and recreational quotas for southern flounder using a public process that includes an advisory panel. In the absence of the valid stock assessment and amended FMP, it is recommended the NCDMF **immediately** implement a total cap for commercial fishing of southern flounder. It is recommended that a commercial flounder harvest cap of 40% of the 2011-2013 commercial landings (see Table 2, p.11) be used until a science based commercial and recreational quota can be determined. The recommended cap on commercial landings that the NCDMF should consider are as follows:

Table 2. Proposed caps on commercial landings for southern flounder (40% reduction).\*

Gear	2011-2013 landings (lbs)*	Proposed Landings Cap (lbs)
Gill Net	932,792	559,675
Pound Net	614,899	368,939
Gig	127,413	76,454

\*based on Table 2, p.11 of draft supplement.

4. A valid southern flounder assessment is essential to ensuring sustainable southern flounder stocks. The RFA-NC requests that the 2014 stock assessment undergo additional peer review by reviewers selected by the NCDMF in collaboration with the RFA-NC and other stakeholders.
5. Recreational Commercial Gear Licenses (RCGL) holders are allowed to use limited amounts of commercial gears such as gill nets, trawls, pots and seines. The RFA-NC recommends a moratorium on all gear permitted by RCGL's.
6. Develop and implement species specific reporting for all commercial fisherman and dealers in the southern flounder and summer flounder fisheries. RFA-NC suggest that this program should be implemented over 2 fishing seasons with NCDMF providing mandatory workshops on proper species identification. A forthcoming southern flounder stock assessment will require highquality fisheries dependent information to properly assess the stock. NCMFC should move away from using the location of commercial fishing activity as the determining factor for flounder species identification and instead rely on using accepted identifying features to distinguish between the two species.

Thank you for reading our comments. To iterate, the RFA-NC recommends that the MFC approve to modify the draft supplement and approve the modified version for public comment. The RFA-NC overwhelmingly supports a public process whereby the public is provided an opportunity to comment on a modified draft supplement for southern flounder.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Rob Schoonmaker".

Capt. Robert Schoonmaker  
RFA-NC Chairman

cc: Ms. Anna Beckwith, MFC  
Mr. Mikey Daniels, MFC  
Mr. Kelly Darden, MFC  
Mr. Mark Gorges, MFC  
Mr. Chuck Laughridge, MFC  
Mr. Joe Shute, MFC  
Mr. Mike Wicker, MFC  
Ms. Alison Willis, MFC  
Mr. Donald van der Vaart, NC DENR

**From:** abobdillard [<mailto:gbobdillard@gmail.com>]

**Sent:** Thursday, May 14, 2015 9:16 AM

**To:** Fish, Nancy

**Subject:** Flounder stock management

May 14, 2015

I am a resident of Pamlico County, I vote here and own property in the county. I am also a recreational fisherman and am concerned with the state of our fisheries. Too many of our most sought after fish, namely the red drum, speckled trout and flounder populations reflect a lack of vision and leadership from our state's fisheries managers. It is time to change the way we manage these fish.

Presently, you are in the process of reviewing the supplement process for the southern flounder. The DMF has proposed reducing the recreational harvest on these fish to one fish per day. I find this proposal lacking especially when you consider the recreational harvest of these fish comprises around 21.4 percent of the total harvest. The commercial harvest comprises 78.6 percent. It is time to balance the equation.

Accordingly, I support no further reductions in the recreational harvest. I also support a moratorium on the large mesh gill net fishery. In conjunction with the moratorium have a spawning season closure for pound nets to facilitate a more equitable allocation.

Adjust the commercial size limit to 15 inches. Institute an immediate moratorium on new pound net applications. If large mesh gill nets are retained, institute a moratorium on all new gill net applications. Manage the southern flounder under a TAC. DMF leadership has raised concerns about managing these fish under a TAC. They already manage the red drum and striped bass under a TAC (CAP) and the same can apply to flounder.

Balance the recreational/commercial split under a TAC to 50/50.

Sincerely,  
Bob Dillard  
1202 Neuse Drive  
Oriental, NC 28571  
[gbobdillard@gmail.com](mailto:gbobdillard@gmail.com)

**From:** Robert Berger [<mailto:bergermansemail@yahoo.com>]  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 14, 2015 9:26 AM  
**To:** Fish, Nancy  
**Subject:** Current Legislation

May 14, 2015

I am a resident of Pamlico County, I vote here and own property in the county. I am also a recreational fisherman and am concerned with the state of our fisheries.

Too many of our most sought after fish, namely the red drum, specs and flounder populations reflect a lack of vision and leadership from our state's fisheries managers. It is time to change the way we manage these fish.

Presently, you are in the process of reviewing the supplement process for the southern flounder. The DMF has proposed reducing the recreational harvest on these fish to one fish per day. I find this proposal lacking especially when you consider the recreational harvest of these fish comprises around 21.4 percent of the total harvest. The commercial harvest comprises 78.6 percent. It is time to balance the equation. You need to reduce the area that these nets are allowed. Consider moving back boundaries below Oriental.

Accordingly, I support no further reductions in the recreational harvest. I also support a moratorium on the large mesh gill net fishery. In conjunction with the moratorium have a spawning season closure for pound nets to facilitate a more equitable allocation.

Adjust the commercial size limit to 15 inches. Institute an immediate moratorium on new pound net applications. If large mesh gill nets are retained, institute a moratorium on all new gill net applications.

Manage the southern flounder under a TAC. DMF leadership has raised concerns about managing these fish under a TAC. They already manage the red drum and striped bass under a TAC (CAP) and the same can apply to flounder.

Balance the recreational/commercial split under a TAC to 50/50.

Sincerely,

Robert Berger  
6110 Horton road  
Oriental



-----Original Message-----

From: Paul Nancy Miller [<mailto:nette33@earthlink.net>]

Sent: Thursday, May 14, 2015 12:40 PM

To: Fish, Nancy

Cc: [gbobdillard@gmail.com](mailto:gbobdillard@gmail.com)

Subject: Harvesting of fish in NC waters

May 14, 2015

I am a resident of Pamlico County, I vote here and own property in the county. I am also a recreational fisherman and am concerned with the state of our fisheries.

Too many of our most sought after fish, namely the red drum, specs and flounder populations reflect a lack of vision and leadership from our state's fisheries managers It is time to change the way we manage these fish.

Presently, you are in the process of reviewing the supplement process for the southern flounder. The DMF has proposed reducing the recreational harvest on these fish to one fish per day. I find this proposal lacking especially when you consider the recreational harvest of these fish comprises around 21.4 percent of the total harvest. The commercial harvest comprises 78.6 percent. It is time to balance the equation.

Accordingly, I support no further reductions in the recreational harvest. I also support a moratorium on the large mesh gill net fishery. In conjunction with the moratorium have a spawning season closure for pound nets to facilitate a more equitable allocation.

Adjust the commercial size limit to 15 inches. Institute an immediate moratorium on new pound net applications. If large mesh gill nets are retained, institute a moratorium on all new gill net applications. Manage the southern flounder under a TAC. DMF leadership has raised concerns about managing these fish under a TAC. They already manage the red drum and striped bass under a TAC (CAP) and the same can apply to flounder.

Balance the recreational/commercial split under a TAC to 50/50.

Sincerely,

Paul Miller

252-249-1443

**From:** Randy [<mailto:mrbookend@yahoo.com>]  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 14, 2015 9:40 AM  
**To:** Fish, Nancy  
**Subject:** Southern Flounder

Hello Nancy,

My name is Randy Smith. For years I dreamed of owning a property on the water so I could go fishing and shrimping and crabbing. In the mid 1980's, I bought a boat but used it 3 times in 2 years so sold it due to my heavy work load and not being home.

Now I am retired and bought a beautiful place on Pierce Creek with access to the Neuse River in a wonderful little town of Oriental. Also bought a small 14 foot boat. But now I hear that fish populations are dwindling especially flounder not due to recreational fishing but rather to over harvesting by commercial fishing and allowing harvesting during spawning season.

Please support the following suggestions by a local Pamlico County club so that I do not feel that I may have made a mistake in choosing this area as my retirement spot. Plus I am sure that the better the recreational fishing, the more revenue is generated by people coming to this area to fish and spend their money in so many ways at many commercial businesses.

Please support the following:

I am a resident of Pamlico County in Oriental, I will vote here and own property in the county. I am also a recreational fisherman and am concerned with the state of our fisheries.

Too many of our most sought after fish, namely the red drum, specs and flounder populations reflect a lack of vision and leadership from our state's fisheries managers It is time to change the way we manage these fish.

Presently, you are in the process of reviewing the supplement process for the southern flounder. The DMF has proposed reducing the recreational harvest on these fish to one fish per day. I find this proposal lacking especially when you consider the recreational harvest of these fish comprises around 21.4 percent of the total harvest. The commercial harvest comprises 78.6 percent. It is time to balance the equation.

Accordingly, I support no further reductions in the recreational harvest. I also support a moratorium on the large mesh gill net fishery. In conjunction with the moratorium have a spawning season closure for pound nets to facilitate a more equitable allocation.

Adjust the commercial size limit to 15 inches. Institute an immediate moratorium on new pound net applications. If large mesh gill nets are retained, institute a moratorium on all new gill net applications. Manage the southern flounder under a TAC. DMF leadership has raised concerns about managing these fish under a TAC. They already manage the red drum and striped bass under a TAC (CAP) and the same can apply to flounder.

Balance the recreational/commercial split under a TAC to 50/50.

Sincerely,

Randy

-----Original Message-----

From: Cliff & Nancy Hill [<mailto:chill6@embarqmail.com>]

Sent: Thursday, May 14, 2015 10:00 AM

To: Fish, Nancy

Subject: recreational fishermen input to the DMV

May 14, 2015

I am a resident of Pamlico County, I vote here and own property in the county. I am also a recreational fisherman and am very concerned with the state of our fisheries.

Too many of our most sought after fish, namely the red drum, specs and flounder populations reflect a lack of vision and leadership from our state's fisheries managers It is time to change the way we manage these fish.

Presently, you are in the process of reviewing the supplement process for the southern flounder. The DMF has proposed reducing the recreational harvest on these fish to one fish per day. I find this proposal lacking especially when you consider the recreational harvest of these fish comprises around 21.4 percent of the total harvest. The commercial harvest comprises 78.6 percent. It is time to balance the equation.

Accordingly, I support no further reductions in the recreational harvest. I also support a moratorium on the large mesh gill net fishery.

In conjunction with the moratorium have a spawning season closure for pound nets to facilitate a more equitable allocation.

Adjust the commercial size limit to 15 inches. Institute an immediate moratorium on new pound net applications. If large mesh gill nets are retained, institute a moratorium on all new gill net applications. Manage the southern flounder under a TAC. DMF leadership has raised concerns about managing these fish under a TAC. They already manage the red drum and striped bass under a TAC (CAP) and the same can apply to flounder.

Balance the recreational/commercial split under a TAC to 50/50.

Sincerely,

Cliff Hill

PO Box 866

Oriental NC

May 15, 2015

I am a resident of Pamlico County; I live here, I own property here, I pay taxes here. I am also a recreational fisherman who believes the current state of our southern flounder fishery reflects a lack of vision and leadership from our state's fisheries managers....that encompasses the last 30 years!

The DMF/MFC for the last 23 years, think about that, 23 years, nearly a quarter of a century have developed rules and regulations, have drawn on the wisdom of advisory committees, have gone through who knows how many members of the MFC and staff members of the DMF and what has been the result for southern flounder....over fished. In short failure.

Now, you the MFC are involved in the supplemental process that creates an opportunity to develop a new strategy for resource management and conservation that produces an equitable distribution of the harvest, or you can choose status quo that locks us in to the present situation of an over capitalized large mesh gill net fishery at the expense of all other user groups, including commercial as well as recreational fishermen.

At the same time, this over capitalized large mesh gill net fishery sucks up dwindling funds from the DMF for observers and staff time and energy required to keep the mesh in the water. A mindset that plagues the DMF....gear management rather than resource management. This approach also results in the by catch of red drum, turtles and now sturgeon and controversy.

The DMF has one proposal that would reduce recreational harvest to one fish per day! At a time when already the commercial sector takes nearly 79 percent of the flounder, recreational around 21 percent. And they want to penalize those of us taking less than a quarter of the fish. Enlightened leadership, indeed.

Recreational fishermen statewide are hard pressed to catch a legal southern flounder for a meal. Yet, hundreds of thousands of pounds of these prize fish are shipped to markets elsewhere for the profits of a few. The tax paying citizens of North Carolina, the recreational fishermen, are left holding the bag and it more often than not it doesn't include a legal sized flounder.

No more reductions on recreational fishermen.

Here are my non scientific proposals for southern flounder (I don't believe the DMF staff recommendations are based upon science either, by the way)

1. Institute an immediate moratorium on large mesh gill nets. Develop

season closures from north to south that fairly distributes the catch of flounder to the pound nets. But, more importantly, allows the spawning females to escape.

2. Commercial size limit of 15 inches, same as recreational.

3. Immediate moratorium on all new pound net applications. If, you cannot or refuse to adopt a moratorium on large mesh gill nets, institute a moratorium on all new applications for large mesh license.

4. Manage flounder under a TAC. The DMF staff claim they cannot manage this fishery under a TAC. They manage the red drum and striped bass under a TAC (CAP), they can manage this fishery under a TAC. Just another excuse to keep the gear in the water. Indicates the mind set of the DMF, gear management rather than resource management.

5. Currently, recreational harvest is 21.4 percent and commercial harvest is 78.6 percent. Ensure the TAC allocates a 50/50 split.

6. If you refuse to adopt a moratorium on large mesh gill nets, and a 15 inch size limit, set a season closure of October 15<sup>th</sup>.

Thank you and good luck in your efforts to finally succeed where so many of your predecessors have failed.

Tim Hergenrader  
106 Black Horse Run S.  
New Bern, NC 28560  
252-571-2615

Original Message-----

From: Mike [<mailto:mcshannon@suddenlink.net>]

Sent: Friday, May 15, 2015 11:35 AM

To: Fish, Nancy

Subject: Recreational limits on Southern Flounder

I am a resident of Craven County, I vote here and own property in the county. I am also a recreational fisherman and am concerned with the state of our fisheries.

Presently, you are in the process of reviewing the supplement process for the southern flounder. The DMF has proposed reducing the recreational harvest on these fish to one fish per day. I find this proposal lacking especially when you consider the recreational harvest of these fish comprises around 21.4 percent of the total harvest. The commercial harvest comprises 78.6 percent. It is time to balance the equation.

Accordingly, I support no further reductions in the recreational harvest. I also support a moratorium on the large mesh gill net fishery. In conjunction with the moratorium have a spawning season closure for pound nets to facilitate a more equitable allocation.

Adjust the commercial size limit to 15 inches. Institute an immediate moratorium on new pound net applications. If large mesh gill nets are retained, institute a moratorium on all new gill net applications.

Manage the southern flounder under a TAC. DMF leadership has raised concerns about managing these fish under a TAC. They already manage the red drum and striped bass under a TAC (CAP) and the same can apply to flounder.

Balance the recreational/commercial split under a TAC to 50/50.

Too many of our most sought after fish, namely the red drum, specs and flounder populations reflect a lack of vision and leadership from our state's fisheries managers It is time to change the way we manage these fish.

Sincerely,

--

Mike Shannon  
1033 Barkentine Dr  
New Bern, NC 28560  
252-636-2529



**From:** [anna@downeastguideservice.com](mailto:anna@downeastguideservice.com) [<mailto:anna@downeastguideservice.com>]  
**Sent:** Saturday, May 16, 2015 10:31 AM  
**To:** Fish, Nancy  
**Subject:** FW: NCDMF Proposed Changes

Please share with others

**From:** [info@downeastguideservice.com](mailto:info@downeastguideservice.com)  
**Sent:** Friday, May 15, 2015 9:12 PM  
**To:** [anna@downeastguideservice.com](mailto:anna@downeastguideservice.com)  
**Subject:** FW: NCDMF Proposed Changes

**From:** Triad Saltwater Anglers [<mailto:triadncwaterman@gmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Friday, May 15, 2015 4:40 PM  
**To:** [annabarriosbeckwith@yahoo.com](mailto:annabarriosbeckwith@yahoo.com); [info@downeastguideservice.com](mailto:info@downeastguideservice.com)  
**Cc:** Steve Craven; John Cranford; Dieter Cardwell; Bob Miller  
**Subject:** NCDMF Proposed Changes

Mrs. Beckwith,

Please share this message with anyone you feel is pertinent regarding this matter.

I am writing this message on behalf of Triad Saltwater Anglers. We are an organization of primarily recreational fishermen located in the Winston-Salem area. We are extremely concerned at how saltwater fishery management in North Carolina is being handled. We fully understand this resource is designated to be shared between all people of our State. With that in mind we are strongly of the opinion the NCDMF has for 25+ years has demonstrated a heavy handed, highly political bias in the favor of the commercial industry. This is demonstrated by the extreme reductions in catch limits placed on recreational fishermen while making minimal cuts to commercial limits and allowing the continued the use of highly destructive poorly managed gear.

**To say we are highly concerned with the potential reduction in catch limits for summer flounder would be an understatement. Recreational fishermen played little if any role in causing the depletion of this stock and the thought the NCDMF is even considering placing the bulk of the burden on them is unconscionable.** The commercial industry catches 80% of this species. It is statistically highly unlikely that reducing the recreational limit will have any significant effect on restoring the stock.

Let us all not forget this is a shared resource for the people of this State. That sharing goes far beyond the counting of who can keep the most fish and who can shout the loudest in meetings regarding these issues. Sharing also includes the total economic impact for the people in this State. It is common knowledge that the total economic impact of the recreational industry far

exceeds that of the commercial industry. Let us do all we can to promote fishing and tourism of all types to make a positive impact on all involved.

The Coastal Conservation Association of North Carolina has put together a good set of recommendations that will help get this species back on course. They are included below for your review and consideration.

May 13, 2015

*Southern Flounder FMP Supplement Options* The Coastal Conservation Association of North Carolina believes the current state of our southern flounder fishery reflects a lack of vision and leadership from our state's fisheries managers over the last thirty years. Now North Carolina's most valuable commercial and recreational finfish, southern flounder, is a shadow of its former abundance. Decades of non-action have ultimately resulted in a majority allocation of harvest and de facto prioritization to the destructive large mesh gill net fishery. To use today's fishery as a template for future management does nothing but preserve the trends and factors that led us to the situation where we are now: a collapsed fishery that demands the majority of the Division's time and resources while falling far short of its real potential. CCANC believes this supplement process creates an opportunity to create a new strategy where the resource is conserved and its economic potential realized. If the MFC chooses to remain with status quo they are locking in the source of all of our problems, an over-capitalized large mesh gill net fishery, at the expense of all other user groups: pound nets, gigs, recreational fishermen, the For-Hire industry and the public. Instead of focusing on "being equitable among users" we must concentrate on the source of the fisheries main problems and ask, what is best for the fishery and our coastal economy? That must start with placing the majority of the reductions on the large mesh gill net fishery. CCANC asks that no further reductions be placed upon the recreational fishery. All past cuts have been placed upon the backs of recreational anglers and have virtually eliminated the viability of NC's most popular recreational fishery. As documented in the supplement paper, reductions in recreational catch will result in minimal reductions in harvest, yet come at massive economic and social costs to recreational fishermen and the recreational fishing industry. While the stock assessment cannot determine what cuts should be, it is very clear that the stock is in dire shape and reductions must be made. As cuts will likely either be "fished around" by commercial gears or be less than modeled due to undocumented catches – CCANC believes that harvest of southern flounder must be cut by at least 40%. CCANC requests that NCMFC approve the following management options to be sent out for public comment:

*Preferred Options*

1. No reductions to the recreational bag limit and no changes to the recreational size limit.
2. Moratorium on the large mesh gill net fishery.
- 2.1. In conjunction with a large mesh moratorium, have a spawning season closure that differs for north of Hatteras (Oct 1) and south of Hatteras (Nov 1) so pound net allocation will be more equitable.
3. Adjust the commercial size limit to 15"
- 3.1. Require 6" escape panels on pound nets.
- 3.2. If large mesh gill nets are to be retained, CCANC requests that we require a minimum mesh size of 6" transitioning to 6.25" by 2016 to reduce what is already an inappropriate number of discard.
4. Immediate moratorium on all new pound net applications.

*5. If large-mesh gill nets are to be retained, CCANC requests an immediate moratorium on all new gill net permits to prevent continued over-capitalization of that gear.*

*6. Management of southern flounder under a TAC 6.1. While NCDMF leadership has raised concerns regarding the viability of managing with a TAC in the short term, CCANC believes if the NCDMF can manage our commercial red drum and striped bass fisheries with a TAC (CAP) then the same management option can be considered for Southern flounder.*

*6.2. Currently recreational harvest is 21.4% and commercial harvest is 78.6%. We request that a TAC allocate a 50/50 split between the recreational and commercial sectors.*

*7. Seasonal Closures*

*7.1. If the MFC is unwilling to place a moratorium on large mesh gill nets or manage under a TAC, we request that, in conjunction with raising the commercial size limit to 15," that the state-wide commercial season be closed by October 15th.*

Thank you for your consideration in this matter. Working together we can rebuild this and other depleted fish stocks...working one sided we can watch as our precious resource is further depleted.

Sincerely,  
Bob Miller  
Triad Saltwater Anglers

Comments to share

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** steven j craven <[oakisl@aol.com](mailto:oakisl@aol.com)>

**Date:** May 16, 2015 at 7:58:30 AM EDT

**To:** "[annabarriosbeckwith@yahoo.com](mailto:annabarriosbeckwith@yahoo.com)" <[annabarriosbeckwith@yahoo.com](mailto:annabarriosbeckwith@yahoo.com)>

**Subject:** Triad Saltwater Anglers

You recently received a email from one of our members Mr. Bob Miller. I just wanted to to let you know that I totally agree with him. We really need common sense along with the science to regulate our fisheries. Recreational fishermen are a asset to our state and we need to protect their rights to enjoy their experiences fishing in our state. All the research I have done tells me that we are the only coastal state that even allows gill nets. I have long wondered why.

Steve Craven

President Triad Saltwater Anglers

May 17, 2015

Dear Marine Fisheries Commissioners,

As a recreational fishermen, I have followed the downward slide of North Carolina's southern flounder for the last several years. These fish need a break and you can give it to them.

I would like to see you do what is necessary to have the following three items occur:

1. at least a 50% reduction in the harvest of southern flounder by commercial fishermen.
2. a yearly Total Allowable Catch (TAC) for southern flounder. Without a TAC, you can not have a harvest reduction that will work. An unlimited harvest has gotten us into this situation and we will not correct our problems until a TAC is in place.
3. suspend the harvest of southern flounder by gillnets. Doing this will achieve most of the 50% reduction requested above and solve many, many problems for our inshore marine fisheries.

Please support these three simple changes and help our southern flounder begin the recovery that we all so desperately want.

Thank you,

Everett Pesci  
Greenville, NC 27858  
ebpesci@gmail.com

**From:** Harriett Blood [<mailto:hblood@embarqmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Sunday, May 17, 2015 9:09 PM  
**To:** Fish, Nancy  
**Subject:** NC Anglers

May 14, 2015

I am a resident of Pamlico County, I vote here and own property in the county. I am also a recreational fisherman and am concerned with the state of our fisheries.

Too many of our most sought after fish, namely the red drum, specs and flounder populations reflect a lack of vision and leadership from our state's fisheries managers It is time to change the way we manage these fish.

Presently, you are in the process of reviewing the supplement process for the southern flounder. The DMF has proposed reducing the recreational harvest on these fish to one fish per day. I find this proposal lacking especially when you consider the recreational harvest of these fish comprises around 21.4 percent of the total harvest. The commercial harvest comprises 78.6 percent. It is time to balance the equation.

Accordingly, I support no further reductions in the recreational harvest. I also support a moratorium on the large mesh gill net fishery. In conjunction with the moratorium have a spawning season closure for pound nets to facilitate a more equitable allocation.

Adjust the commercial size limit to 15 inches. Institute an immediate moratorium on new pound net applications. If large mesh gill nets are retained, institute a moratorium on all new gill net applications.

Manage the southern flounder under a TAC. DMF leadership has raised concerns about managing these fish under a TAC. They already manage the red drum and striped bass under a TAC (CAP) and the same can apply to flounder. Balance the recreational/commercial split under a TAC to 50/50.

Sincerely,

Matthew Bolyard  
Oriental, NC

**From:** Michelle Speckine [<mailto:michellespeckine@gmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Monday, May 18, 2015 10:23 PM  
**To:** Fish, Nancy  
**Subject:** Marine Fisheries

To whom it may concern,

My name is Michelle Speckine, I am a resident of Frisco, North Carolina on the Outer Banks and I am writing to express my complete and total opposition to the proposed 25% to 60% reduction of Southern Flounder harvests that is currently being discussed on your legislature. My reasons for opposing said bill are that it will have a devastating economic impact on the island and region in which I live, there is little or no concrete evidence to support your claim of a shortage of flounders in North Carolina waters, and you will be depriving the state of a vital resource that is part of the heritage of our great state,

First and foremost if you follow through with your proposal of a 25% to 60% reduction of flounder harvests you will be inflicting a devastating blow to fishing communities and tourist destinations throughout the state. Thousands of individuals in North Carolina rely on the flounder as a means to make a living whether it is through commercial harvests, recreational charters, or serving the delicacy in their restaurants or retail storefronts. This is particularly so in the fall months. Many rely on the flounder as a primary target species to harvest during the fall no matter if they are commercial or recreational charter fishermen. By enacting the proposal you will be removing this vital economic resource from the fall months and as a result removing countless business revenue and tax dollars from the community. Less money will be spent at local businesses as a result, in turn taking money out of the pockets of those local business owners who count on the fishermen and restaurant owners to spend money in their establishment after the tourists have gone home for the winter. In addition, you will be causing a hefty burden for restaurant owners and retail owners and workers, who rely on the flounder to draw hungry guests to their tables and storefronts, who will be forced to raise prices considerably, or worse take flounder from their menu as supplies are sure to be less resulting in prices potentially too high to justify continuing to feature flounder on their menu. Tourists come to North Carolina to eat and catch flounder and may choose to vacation closer to home if they cannot come harvest and dine on flounders in the same fashion they have enjoyed for many years passed. Also, individuals who work in the infrastructure that supports our commercial and recreational fisheries will also be impacted as there could be more than half of their work removed as a result of your proposed reduction. So many will be impacted economically in our state that the true impact cannot even be put into words here.

In addition to opposing the reduction because of the economic impact that will surely come as a result, I also oppose to reduction because I believe there is little or no evidence to support your claims that there is a shortage of Southern Flounders. Every region is different, and every year is completely different. Some years are better than others, and every year teaches you something new. I fished commercially full time for more than five years and I can tell you that no two years are the same and catches vary from year to year,



and are often heavily impacted by weather events, temperatures, and timing for seasonal changes. There is no way true scientific data backing your claims of a shortage of flounders can be credible without looking at ten to twenty years of data minimal and I know there is no way a study backing your claims has been in place for that extended period. My request and proposal would be at the very least the DMF leave regulations as they currently stand and begin a study to back your claims and look at multiple years, five to ten years minimal, and not just one or two because there is no way you can accurately access stocks with ANY less than five to ten years. I believe if you are honest with your data and look at the situation in its entirety you will see that the stocks of flounder are as stable as ever.

Finally, I believe the proposed reduction of flounder harvests is wrong and should be abandoned is that, by enacting said such a reduction would surely significantly remove the importance of one of our states great symbols of heritage, the Flounder. North Carolina has many coastal communities that rely on the flounder as a fish to harvest, serve, sell, and represent their economy and community. My home of Frisco and to a greater extent Hatteras Island, fits this description perfectly. Flounder is synonymous with Hatteras, as tourists flock here to eat and catch flounders and enjoy the traditional heritage of a local fishing community. We are a fishing and tourist community who has always relied on the flounder in the spring summer and fall. Past gill net restrictions have lessened this in the spring and summer and the new proposed reduction will all but eradicate the flounder from the economy and heritage my community and those like mine. We need the flounder in the fall to help us keep food on our tables and roofs over our heads. I beg you not to penalize hard working honest individuals who rely on this great fish for our livelihoods.

I thank you for your time in reading my letter. Please understand that there is no way I can fully express in this letter how bad of an idea the proposal is or how severe the impact will be for my community and those like mine if the proposed reduction is carried out. Nor can I fully explain the extent of those impacted by the proposed legislation without composing pages upon pages upon pages, and I believe in doing so my plea would be lost. So please reconsider and abandon the proposed reduction of Flounder, and take more time to accurately access stocks, economic impact, and regional differences in harvest methods, numbers of fishermen, and economic reliance on the flounder. Thousands stand to lose or be displaced if you carry out your proposed reduction. In a position of power and authority comes great responsibility and I beg you to consider the weight of your decision and act wisely and consider all of those who will be harmed as result of the wrong decision.

Sincerely,

Michelle Speckine

PO Box 581

Frisco, NC 27936

From: Bryan [mailto:stanton8922@gmail.com]

Sent: Monday, May 18, 2015 1:08 PM

To: Smith, Tricia

Subject: Concerned fisherman

My name is Bryan Stanton and I am a concerned recreational fisherman and I strongly disagree with the proposed regulations for southern flounder. I think the intentions are good but are being taken from the wrong angle. I fish all salt waters from Brunswick too pender county. And I can tell you from first hand experience that there are plenty of flounder in the icw and all of its creeks and bays but the problem here is length of fish due too being over fished by giggers. Recreational and commercial it is way over fished. The study's that you have proposed on the data of giggered fish commercially and recreationally are way underestimated. And as for the hook and line harvest folks around here aren't doing much damage because of that. When talking too a friend or stranger on how there fishing trips have been I hear the same thing everytime which is usually 1-3 keepers per vessel. And most say plenty of under regulation. What I am trying too say is the regulations should not be altered too much for the recreational fisher man we are the ones who work our tails off all week long just too be able too go out fishing for one day most of the time and that is all that can be afforded for most of the people who go out and target these fish. It really is not fair too us. If you want too close a season do it too the giggering crowd. It would most certainly have great effect on this species. And I mean commercially as well. I would support an 3 fish bag limit at 16-17 inches for hook and line..and an 18 to 20" for giggers. But would much rather see giggering closed too recreational fisherman and a big time reduction for commercial such as reducing the bag limit and certain days of the week. If you truly care about the fisheries and are not being tied up in the politics that go's with it.. The commercial industry should in no way dictate how the fisheries are managed. And should not have a bigger voice than the recreational fishing industries. Your proposals will cripple man many businesses. From the tackle stores too local restaurants gas stations , hotels any many more local small businesses will suffer because people from near and far will travel elsewhere..we need too think about the economy as well as the fisheries. And as for the nets I personally don't know what too say except that there are many folks with commercial licenses using these nets who don't depend on them for their livelihood and something needs too be done about that in some way or another. I am an 28 year old recreational fisherman who wants things to be done right and I am saying I do not agree with all of your data and proposed amendments.. I want the future too be bright for everyone and I think that the commercial fishing industry is mostly too blame for the so called depleted southern flounder. They must be regulated much much more than the hook and line guys if this species is too flourish!!!!

## May 2015 NC Marine Fisheries Commission Meeting Public Comments

Lord willing we will be fishing during this meeting, so I am submitting my written comments before the deadline. Please keep an open heart and mind as you consider these solutions for enhancing our fisheries, freedom, and food supply.

Uncertainty about Southern Flounder populations seems to be the latest management crisis that threatens our freedom to fish and eat them. It looks as if forcing fishermen to only target the female breeding stock is one of the preferred management options. Does it really make sense to discard almost every male flounder when one male can fertilize the eggs of multiple females?

Rather than continuing down the failed path of restricting access and creating more regulatory discards, why don't we focus on enhancing our flounder fishery? We should follow existing models of successful stocking programs and establish Hatchery Supported Quotas. Stocking efforts could be funded with our license fees along with existing taxes that are already earmarked for promoting recreational fishing and domestic seafood production. Stocked fish should be marked for easy identification and should not have a size limit to preserve genetic diversity. This would promote tourism by increasing angling and culinary opportunities.

Licensed fishermen should be allowed to decide how our license fees will be used and quotas will be managed within certain guidelines. Separate recreational and commercial online forums should be set up to facilitate discussions and hold votes. Our votes should be binding when a 2/3 majority of those interested enough in an issue to participate agree on something.

I'll close by asking the commission to allow NC's River Herring fishery to resume next spring. Allowing some harvest would provide valuable data and food while preserving an ancient spring tradition as we work to rebuild this iconic fishery. Hatcheries could quickly boost herring stocks to historically high levels.

Sincerely,

Chris McCaffity

**From:** Don & Betty CALLAHAN [<mailto:donjcal@embarqmail.com>]

**Sent:** Monday, May 18, 2015 9:38 AM

**To:** Fish, Nancy

**Subject:**

nancy

I am a resident of Pamlico County, I vote here and own property in the county. I am also a recreational fisherman and am concerned with the state of our fisheries.

Too many of our most sought after fish, namely the red drum, specs and flounder populations reflect a lack of vision and leadership from our state's fisheries managers. It is time to change the way we manage these fish.

Presently, you are in the process of reviewing the supplement process for the southern flounder. The DMF has proposed reducing the recreational harvest on these fish to one fish per day. I find this proposal lacking especially when you consider the recreational harvest of these fish comprises around 21.4 percent of the total harvest. The commercial harvest comprises 78.6 percent. It is time to balance the equation.

Accordingly, I support no further reductions in the recreational harvest. I also support a moratorium on the large mesh gill net fishery. In conjunction with the moratorium have a spawning season closure for pound nets to facilitate a more equitable allocation.

Adjust the commercial size limit to 15 inches. Institute an immediate moratorium on new pound net applications. If large mesh gill nets are retained, institute a moratorium on all new gill net applications.

Manage the southern flounder under a TAC. DMF leadership has raised concerns about managing these fish under a TAC. They already manage the red drum and striped bass under a TAC (CAP) and the same can apply to flounder.

Balance the recreational/commercial split under a TAC to 50/50.

Sincerely,

Donald Callahan

[donjcal@embarqmail.com](mailto:donjcal@embarqmail.com)

Mary Carolan  
P.O. Box 272  
Frisco, NC 27936  
May 18, 2015

To whom it may concern,

My name is Mary Carolan, I am a native of Frisco, North Carolina on the Outer Banks and I am writing to express my complete and total opposition to the proposed 25% to 60% reduction of Southern Flounder harvests that is currently being discussed on your legislature. My reasons for opposing said bill are that it will have a devastating economic impact on the island and region in which I live, there is little or no concrete evidence to support your claim of a shortage of flounders in North Carolina waters, and you will be depriving the state of a vital resource that is part of the heritage of our great state,

First and foremost if you follow through with your proposal of a 25% to 60% reduction of flounder harvests you will be inflicting a devastating blow to fishing communities and tourist destinations throughout the state. Thousands of individuals in North Carolina rely on the flounder as a means to make a living whether it is through commercial harvests, recreational charters, or serving the delicacy in their restaurants or retail storefronts. This is particularly so in the fall months. Many rely on the flounder as a primary target species to harvest during the fall no matter if they are commercial or recreational charter fishermen. By enacting the proposal you will be removing this vital economic resource from the fall months and as a result removing countless business revenue and tax dollars from the community. Less money will be spent at local businesses as a result, in turn taking money out of the pockets of those local business owners who count on the fishermen and restaurant owners to spend money in their establishment after the tourists have gone home for the winter. In addition, you will be causing a hefty burden for restaurant owners and retail owners and workers, who rely on the flounder to draw hungry guests to their tables and storefronts, who will be forced to raise prices considerably, or worse take flounder from their menu as supplies are sure to be less resulting in prices potentially too high to justify continuing to feature flounder on their menu. Tourists come to North Carolina to eat and catch flounder and may choose to vacation closer to home if they cannot come harvest and dine on flounders in the same fashion they have enjoyed for many years passed. Also, individuals who work in the infrastructure that supports our commercial and recreational fisheries will also be impacted as there could be more than half of their work removed as a result of your proposed reduction. So many will be impacted economically in our state that the true impact cannot even be put into words here.

In addition to opposing the reduction because of the economic impact that will surely come as a result, I also oppose to reduction because I believe there is little or no evidence to support your claims that there is a shortage of Southern Flounders. Every

region is different, and every year is completely different. Some years are better than others, and every year teaches you something new. I fished commercially full time for more than five years and I can tell you that no two years are the same and catches vary from year to year, and are often heavily impacted by weather events, temperatures, and timing for seasonal changes. There is no way true scientific data backing your claims of a shortage of flounders can be credible without looking at ten to twenty years of data minimal and I know there is no way a study backing your claims has been in place for that extended period. My request and proposal would be at the very least the DMF leave regulations as they currently stand and begin a study to back your claims and look at multiple years, five to ten years minimal, and not just one or two because there is no way you can accurately assess stocks with ANY less than five to ten years. I believe if you are honest with your data and look at the situation in its entirety you will see that the stocks of flounder are as stable as ever.

Finally, I believe the proposed reduction of flounder harvests is wrong and should be abandoned is that, by enacting said such a reduction would surely significantly remove the importance of one of our states great symbols of heritage, the Flounder. North Carolina has many coastal communities that rely on the flounder as a fish to harvest, serve, sell, and represent their economy and community. My home of Frisco and to a greater extent Hatteras Island, fits this description perfectly. Flounder is synonymous with Hatteras, as tourists flock here to eat and catch flounders and enjoy the traditional heritage of a local fishing community. We are a fishing and tourist community who has always relied on the flounder in the spring summer and fall. Past gill net restrictions have lessened this in the spring and summer and the new proposed reduction will all but eradicate the flounder from the economy and heritage my community and those like mine. We need the flounder in the fall to help us keep food on our tables and roofs over our heads. I beg you not to penalize hard working honest individuals who rely on this great fish for our livelihoods.

I thank you for your time in reading my letter. Please understand that there is no way I can fully express in this letter how bad of an idea the proposal is or how severe the impact will be for my community and those like mine if the proposed reduction is carried out. Nor can I fully explain the extent of those impacted by the proposed legislation without composing pages upon pages upon pages, and I believe in doing so my plea would be lost. So please reconsider and abandon the proposed reduction of Flounder, and take more time to accurately assess stocks, economic impact, and regional differences in harvest methods, numbers of fishermen, and economic reliance on the flounder. Thousands stand to lose or be displaced if you carry out your proposed reduction. In a position of power and authority comes great responsibility and I beg you to consider the weight of your decision and act wisely and consider all of those who will be harmed as result of the wrong decision.

Sincerely,

To whom it may concern,

My name is Stephen Heinz, I'm from Buxton, North Carolina on the Outer Banks and I am writing to express my complete and total opposition to the proposed 25% to 60% reduction of Southern Flounder harvests that is currently being discussed on your legislature. My reasons for opposing said bill are that it will have a devastating economic impact on the island and region in which I live, there is little or no concrete evidence to support your claim of a shortage of flounders in North Carolina waters, and you will be depriving the state of a vital resource that is part of the heritage of our great state,

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your data and look at the situation in its entirety you will see that the stocks of flounder are as stable as ever.

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Sincerely, Stephen Heinz

-----Original Message-----

From: Gaither Midgette [<mailto:gaithermidgette@yahoo.com>]

Sent: Monday, May 18, 2015 6:49 PM

To: Fish, Nancy

Subject: Flounder reduction

I'm Gaither Midgette a pound netter in alb sound I oppose to any flounder reduction plan I don't even know why this has come up we'll I do know why it just another nail in the coffin! Flounders are not in distress any flounder fisherman can tell u that I can show u all the juvenile fish you want to see if I could close my panels. When they went to a 14in min I took It upon my self after the first year to take out the 5 1/2 in panel and put in 5 3/4 in panels this let more of the small fish out so I didn't have to handle them. I've heard talk of going to a bigger fish/ shorting the season any of these will put me out of business I realize that is the goal. It has nothing to do with fish stocks! I'm 4th gen commercial fisherman my grandfather and great grandfather fished pound nets in the same general area I'm in I'm the last of my family fishing when I go that's it I have 2 girls I'd like to put through school.Its sad what's being done to the fisherman in N.C! Nancy please send this to whoever needs to see it I might not make the meeting I need to work every day I can to support my girls. Thank you Gaither

Good Morning

I'm Rick Sasser. You have nine pages of my public comment in your package that includes Division data and clearly shows that there is a big problem with southern flounder. <sup>which</sup>

I have faith in the Commission that not only do you have complete authority to do so, but that you will address the problem with adequate measures.

Last night in a reply to Ken Seigler's comments, Dr. Daniel said "be careful what you ask for, Indexes of abundance and length frequencies coming out of NC, SC, GA and FLA do not bode well..." That's not the first time I've heard Dr. Daniel make a similar statement.

On April 20, I had a personal conversation with the Director in which I specifically asked Dr. Daniel if a 40% catch reduction was needed. He replied that all indications are that at least a 40% catch reduction is needed. Dr. Daniel said that the 2005 FMP required a 38% reduction and that was never met. Dr. Daniel further stated that since 2005 NC, SC, GA and FLA landings are down and the age structure is shrinking. Today we are fishing with ~~75%~~ <sup>80% to 90%</sup> of landings consisting of juvenile fish.

It's clear that the fishery is in trouble and has been for decades. Measures have failed. It's time to do something for this fishery and I urge you to let past Commissions retain the titles of complacency and defeat.

What needs to be done?

Number 1-

Put the resource first above all else. Until it is fully recovered, be conservative in what you allow to be taken from this fishery.

Number 2-

The recreational sector has given all of the blood to date and we are anemic. Cuts to this fishery have to come from the sector that is catching 80% of the fish.

Number3-

The pound net and gig fisheries are clean. Pounds and gigs don't have ESA, bycatch or discard issues associated with the gill net fishery. NC should not be supporting unsustainable gear that makes the fishery unmanageable. Today's pound net and gig fisheries can harvest every single pound that the southern flounder stock can afford to give.

Number4-

No measure will be successful without a TAC or quota. Commercial gear is very efficient, that is why reductions dependent on turtle restrictions failed. Dr. Daniel was clear in his comments last night as to his opinion on why landings in the pound net fishery could have increased, ITP restrictions left fish in the water over the summer to be harvested during fall escapement. A flounder's fall travel path is predictable and over-capitalized gear will make short-order of overfishing without a TAC.

By nature of the statutory provisions, the Secretary's authorization of this supplement is an extraordinary management tool which is invoked only when there is a need for new management measures. The provision says nothing about heritage, income, scripture giving man rein over fish or personal wants and perceived needs. It is about the resource.

Again, I have faith in today's seated Commission that you will err on the side of the resource. A 45% to 55% catch reduction is needed.

Thank you, I greatly appreciate your service to  
proper management of our coastal resources.



By electronic transmission to [samjcorbett3@gmail.com](mailto:samjcorbett3@gmail.com)

May 19, 2015

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Tjm Nifong, Ph.D., J.D.  
General Counsel

Mr. Sammy Corbett, Chair  
North Carolina Marine Fisheries Commission  
3441 Arendell Street  
Morehead City, NC 28557

Dear Commissioner Corbett,

As General Counsel for the Coastal Conservation Association North Carolina (CCANC), I was asked by its leadership to write this letter on the law underlying coastal fisheries management by way of the Fisheries Management Plan, or FMP, process., with the understanding that it would become a part of the public record at your May 20-22, 2015 Commission meeting.

As you know, the primary law governing fisheries management since the 1997 passage of the Fisheries Reform Act is found at G.S. § 113-182.1, entitled "Fishery Management Plans." Under that statute, the Division of Marine Fisheries, or Division, must prepare an FMP for "all commercially or recreationally significant species." The goal of each FMP is "to ensure the long-term viability of the State's commercially and recreationally significant species or fisheries." When a new plan is presented to it, the Commission must implement it through appropriate use of its rulemaking authority. Each FMP must be reviewed and appropriately revised to meet the basic goal for every FMP as well as other statutory FMP requirements at least every 5 years.

You may or may not know that the word "Amendment" appears nowhere in the state fisheries management statutes, but since the inception of the state FMP process the Division has, by fisheries management convention, termed each 5-year update of an existing FMP an "Amendment." By contrast to an original FMP or an Amendment of that FMP, an FMP "Supplement" is a much less common occurrence by design. Under the statutory provision governing Supplements [G.S. § 113-182.1(e1)], only the Secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, or Secretary, may authorize a Supplement to an existing FMP, and may do so only if he determines that new management measures supplemental to an existing FMP are "in the interest of the long-term viability of a fishery." By approving an FMP Supplement, the Secretary authorizes the Commission to develop supplemental, temporary management measures for the fishery under consideration. Supplements are exempt from the usual FMP requirements of being

*Dedicated to the Conservation of North Carolina's Marine Resources*

4809 Hargrove Road, Suite 123 Raleigh, NC 27616

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[www.ccanc.org](http://www.ccanc.org)

subject to input by both the Commission FMP Advisory and Regional Advisory Committees, and from the prohibition against the Commission altering the FMP development schedule. The rules implemented under a Supplement remain in effect until “the next review period for” the supplemented FMP, at which time the Commission may either incorporate those management measures into the FMP Amendment or allow them to expire.

In the case of Southern flounder, the Division informed the Commission by letter just prior to the Commission’s February 2015 meeting that the Division had determined it could not accept the 2014 Southern flounder stock assessment, and as a result that the Division would not be recommending any new management measures for Southern flounder over and above those contained in the 2013 Southern flounder FMP Amendment 1. In response to the Division’s declaration, the Commission passed a motion requesting that the Division present to it at this meeting new management measures that would reduce catch of Southern flounder between 25 and 60 percent. CCANC again thanks the Commission for having the courage and foresight to exercise its statutory duty to conserve and protect North Carolina’s Southern flounder fishery by passing that motion. Under state law the Commission’s motion was tantamount to a request that the Secretary approve a Supplement to the Southern flounder FMP Amendment 1. The Secretary subsequently approved the Commission’s request, and CCANC also wishes to thank Secretary van der Vaart for his wisdom in approving the Supplement.

In approving the Commission’s request for a Supplement, the Secretary necessarily made a determination, under state law, that additional management measures are needed in order for the North Carolina Southern flounder fishery to remain viable. The Division has prepared a draft Supplement for this meeting that presents several Southern flounder management options to the Commission which the Division believes will reduce the catch of Southern flounder by 25 to 60 percent. CCANC does not believe that any of the options presented by the Division would, even if successful, ensure the continued viability of the North Carolina Southern flounder fishery, and therefore believes that state law demands more.

The questions presently before the Commission are these. First, what additional regulatory measures for Southern flounder are necessary to ensure the continued viability of that fishery in North Carolina? And secondly, what regulatory options are available to the Commission in meeting that mandate? It would be clearest to answer the second question first.

As to the latter question, it is my learned opinion as former counsel for both the Division and the Commission that the Commission may use the full breadth of its statutory authority in the Southern Flounder FMP Supplement to regulate the fishery as necessary to end or prevent overfishing and ensure the fishery’s continued viability. Nothing is off limits. That means that the Commission is not restricted to either the management measures suggested to it by the Division in the Supplement it has prepared, nor by the Commission’s original request to the Division for prospective management measures that reduce catch between 25 and 60 percent. That is to say that the Commission could choose to end harvest on Southern flounder altogether through the current Supplement process should the Commission find such action necessary to ensure the continued viability of the Southern flounder fishery. Obviously then, potential Commission action under the Supplement includes proscribing the use of any or all gears or fisheries practices that present a significant threat of continued overfishing and/or stock depletion for Southern flounder.

CCANC has been informed that some within the Division maintain that the Commission's regulatory powers are limited under a Supplement to an FMP. CCANC has asked for a reference to the statutory authority for such an interpretation, but none has been forthcoming. I wish to specifically address that point here. First, it is up to the Commission—and not the Division—to interpret the statutory provisions the Commission applies in regulating coastal fisheries insofar as the statutes may be ambiguous or interpretable. Secondly, I am aware of nothing in either the Fishery Management Plan statute—G.S. § 113-182.1—or the Commission's organic statute—G.S. §§ 143B-289.50 *et seq.*—that could reasonably be interpreted to limit the Commission's regulatory powers under a Supplement. And such a limitation inherently makes no sense at all. As I previously stated, an FMP Supplement is an extraordinary fisheries management tool that is invoked to augment an existing FMP only where supplemental measures are needed “to ensure the continued viability of the fishery” under consideration. It is entirely inconsistent with the statutory supplement process, and patently unreasonable, to maintain that the Commission is somehow precluded as a matter of law from doing whatever is necessary to ensure that viability.

So what additional regulatory measures for Southern flounder are necessary to ensure the continued viability of that fishery in North Carolina? To answer that question, I direct the Commission to what each of you already know: The Commission's primary statutory duty in fisheries management is to conserve and protect the state's public trust marine and estuarine resources. That is why the express statutory goal of each state FMP is “to ensure the long-term viability of the State's commercially and recreationally significant species or fisheries.” [G.S. § 113-182.1(b).] If the Commission takes this primary duty to heart, allocation of the resource becomes almost inconsequential, because there are plenty of fish for everyone. However, where the Commission fails to meet that mandate, allocation of fisheries resources becomes extremely problematical, because there are simply too few fish to go around. In such a case—as here—the likelihood of both overfishing and continual stock depletion is almost guaranteed.

That is precisely the situation in which North Carolina increasingly finds itself in managing its coastal fisheries resources. And I would add that the Commission's duty in conserving public trust resources is not just to fishermen, be they recreational or commercial, because each of North Carolina's almost 10 million citizens also has a stake in publicly owned resources. That means that it would be entirely reasonable for the Commission to set aside a significant portion of every species stock in a non-harvestable conservation pool reserved to all non-fishing citizens.

CCANC stated the following in its February 10, 2015 letter to the Commission regarding Southern flounder:

What was once a robust fishery and strong economic driver has been in decline for decades now. As reflected in the North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries relevant stock status reports and stock assessments, Southern flounder were classified as “overfished” from 2002-2005, and depleted from 2006-2013. In 2005...a Fisheries Management Plan was adopted by the...Commission to end overfishing of Southern flounder and achieve a sustainable harvest. **Ten years later, there are no data indicating the purposes of the FMP—to end overfishing and get back to a sustainable harvest—have been met.** To the contrary, the recent 2014 stock assessment

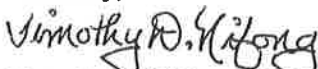
indicates that overfishing continued unabated, and to make matters worse, much of the overfishing is "recruitment overfishing"—due in large part to the fact that the current North Carolina Southern flounder stock now consists primarily of younger fish.

Those facts are why the Commission finds itself in the position of managing Southern flounder through the extraordinary occurrence of an FMP Supplement. Consequently, in making your decision as to what measures are required to implement the Supplement and thereby ensure the continued viability of Southern flounder *I urge the Commission to ignore the voices of self-interest and "business as usual" that too often rule fisheries management and instead err, if at all, on the side of resource conservation.*

Let me close by saying that I have sat where you sit. Consequently, I fully understand the practical difficulties the Commission faces in meeting its statutory mandate to conserve and protect the state's coastal fisheries resources, and in choosing the more difficult management path when the loudest voices are telling you how wrong and unfair you would be in doing so. But protest volume is too often not correlated with just decision-making, and I ask each of you to put on your blinders by forgetting politics, and do what is best for the resource and its entire complement of citizen owners. My biggest regret of my time as a Commissioner was that as a body we failed to do what I am suggesting, and instead allowed the full and imminent collapse of the state river herring fishery. Please do not allow Southern flounder to follow suit.

I thank you for you for the opportunity to address the Commission by way of this letter, and for your careful consideration of my comments.

Sincerely,



Timothy D. Nifong, Ph.D., J.D.  
General Counsel, CCANC

cc: Ms. Anna Barrios Beckwith, [annabarriosbeckwith@yahoo.com](mailto:annabarriosbeckwith@yahoo.com), MFC  
Mr. Mikey Daniels, [nccroakerjoe@yahoo.com](mailto:nccroakerjoe@yahoo.com), MFC  
Mr. Kelly Darden, Jr., [kdarden@embarqmail.com](mailto:kdarden@embarqmail.com), MFC  
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Mr. Mike Wicker, [amikewicker@gmail.com](mailto:amikewicker@gmail.com), MFC  
Ms. Alison Willis, [awillis.mfc@gmail.com](mailto:awillis.mfc@gmail.com), MFC  
Dr. Louis Daniel, [louis.daniel@ncdenr.gov](mailto:louis.daniel@ncdenr.gov), DMF  
Mary Joan Pugh, [maryjoan.pugh@nczoo.org](mailto:maryjoan.pugh@nczoo.org), Assistant Secretary, NC DENR  
Donald R. van der Vaart, [donald.vandervaart@ncdenr.gov](mailto:donald.vandervaart@ncdenr.gov), Secretary, NC DENR  
The Honorable Pat McCrory, [governor.office@governor.ncmail.net](mailto:governor.office@governor.ncmail.net), Governor, NC





By electronic transmission to [samjcorbett3@gmail.com](mailto:samjcorbett3@gmail.com)

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Office Administrator

Dr. Tim Njifong, Ph.D., J.D.  
General Counsel

Mr. Sammy Corbett, Chair  
North Carolina Marine Fisheries Commission  
3441 Arendell Street  
Morehead City, NC 28557

Dear Commissioner Corbett,

The Coastal Conservation Association North Carolina (CCA NC) has joined its voice with that of hundreds of thousands of recreational fishermen in North Carolina to express our continued concern for the fate of Southern flounder in North Carolina. What was once a robust fishery and strong economic driver has been in decline for decades now, and immediate action is needed. In a letter submitted by CCA NC to the NC Marine Fisheries Commission (Commission) on February 10, 2015, we reminded the Commission of their duty and responsibility to represent both private sector interests and the overall public interest in the management of its coastal fisheries resources, and when necessary to do so independently and beyond any recommendations it receives from the NC Division of Marine Fisheries (Division).

We applaud the Commission for the nearly unanimous action it took in February, asking the Division to identify management options for reducing the annual catch of Southern flounder by 25% to 60% and increase escapement, essentially requesting the Secretary of DENR approve a Supplement to the Southern Flounder FMP Amendment 1. To his credit, the Secretary subsequently authorized short-term management measures to address stock concerns via such a Supplement.

Per the Commission's request in February, the Division then presented the Commission with five management options in a "draft Supplement." (May 4, 2015). Having reviewed those management options, CCA NC respectfully submits the following comments.

CCA NC does not believe any of the options presented by the Division would, even if successful, restore Southern flounder stocks and ensure their continued viability. We therefore first want to remind the Commission that, in formulating a Supplement, it is not limited by the management options presented by the Division, and has the authority and indeed a duty to independently take under consideration options other than those proposed by the Division in doing so. CCA NC accordingly urges the Commission to appropriately modify the draft Supplement and approve a modified version for public comment at its May meeting. To that end, we asked Dr. Tim Nifong to write the enclosed letter addressing the legal context of the FMP Supplement process under the 1997 Fisheries Reform Act, and the Commission's

*Dedicated to the Conservation of North Carolina's Marine Resources*

4809 Hargrove Road, Suite 123 Raleigh, NC 27616

(919) 781-3474 (FISH) Fax (919) 781-3475 [contact@ccanc.org](mailto:contact@ccanc.org)

[www.ccanc.org](http://www.ccanc.org)

Commission to do what is look is best for the fishery and our coastal economy. That must start with placing the majority of the additional, needed reductions in harvest on the large mesh gill net fishery.

Finally, we encourage you and your fellow Commissioners to insist on civility and equality in the public comment process for all interested NC citizens. By its very nature, the process of public involvement in NC fisheries management is not conducive to producing candid and fair comments. With meetings held only at the coast, it serves to disenfranchise the greater public. The most contentious issues, such as the one we are facing here, inflame many passions and facilitate a mob mentality to ensure those who have the most numbers and the loudest voices get their way. These public meetings create a venue of intimidation that not only discourages citizen involvement in open government, but also prevent public servants from performing their duties. We urge the Commission to consider means of public involvement in fisheries management that is not designed to disenfranchise the pro-resource citizens and recreational anglers who support rule changes to revive our fisheries, goals that serve all of NC's citizens and not just the ones who fish for profit. We recommend, due to the highly contentious nature of southern flounder, that the Commission pursue only accepting written comments in lieu of any public forum.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,



Bud Abbott, President CCANC

cc: Ms. Anna Barrios Beckwith, [annabarriosbeckwith@yahoo.com](mailto:annabarriosbeckwith@yahoo.com), MFC  
Mr. Mikey Daniels, [nccroakerjoe@yahoo.com](mailto:nccroakerjoe@yahoo.com), MFC  
Mr. Kelly Darden, Jr., [kdarden@embarqmail.com](mailto:kdarden@embarqmail.com), MFC  
Mr. Mark Gorges, [captgorgesmfc@gmail.com](mailto:captgorgesmfc@gmail.com), MFC  
Mr. Chuck Laughridge, [sobx11@gmail.com](mailto:sobx11@gmail.com), MFC  
Mr. Joe Shute, [6111captjoemfc@yahoo.com](mailto:6111captjoemfc@yahoo.com), MFC  
Mr. Mike Wicker, [amikewicker@gmail.com](mailto:amikewicker@gmail.com), MFC  
Ms. Alison Willis, [awillis.mfc@gmail.com](mailto:awillis.mfc@gmail.com), MFC  
Dr. Louis Daniel, [louis.daniel@ncdenr.gov](mailto:louis.daniel@ncdenr.gov), DMF  
Mary Joan Pugh, [maryjoan.pugh@nczoo.org](mailto:maryjoan.pugh@nczoo.org), Assistant Secretary, NC DENR  
Donald R. van der Vaart, [donald.vandervaart@ncdenr.gov](mailto:donald.vandervaart@ncdenr.gov), Secretary, NC DENR  
The Honorable Pat McCrory, [governor.office@governor.ncmail.net](mailto:governor.office@governor.ncmail.net), Governor, NC

**COMMENTS ON SOUTHERN FLOUNDER MANAGEMENT**  
**made to the**  
**North Carolina Marine Fisheries Commission**  
**May 21, 2015**  
**by Jerry Schill, President**  
**North Carolina Fisheries Association, Inc.**

Chairman Corbett and Commission members:

My name is Jerry Schill and I am speaking on behalf of the North Carolina Fisheries Association on the subject of Southern Flounder management.

While I have been involved with fishery management plans at the state and federal levels for quite some time, the supplement process is new to me since I was not involved in fisheries work for a period of time. Actually, it's new to most of you too, relatively speaking. So in doing a little background work on that process I found that it was proposed to the General Assembly so that the MFC could address issues of a critical or emergency nature that needed immediate attention, as a fishery management plan takes up to 2 years from start to finish.

There are costs involved in choosing a supplement over amending a fishery management plan. One is a much minimized public input. Another is oversight or review by the Rules Review Commission. History has shown that both are important to legislators. The amendment process requires the Commission to do its due diligence in allowing the public to review and comment, while the supplemental process is minimal in that regard. In addition, an amendment requires the RRC to assure that the Commission fulfilled its statutory obligations in public notice and comment. The RRC does not look at all of the merits of the proposed changes, only the process.

It's understandable to have some sort of procedure outside of the amendment process to address fishery management issues through something like a supplement to address critical or emergency situations. But based upon the importance the legislators put on going through the proper hoops with ALL regulatory agencies, it is very important to make sure you choose wisely.

Considering what is known about the Southern Flounder stocks, we know there are some areas of concern. Enough concern to warrant an amendment on a fast track. An amendment will not threaten the long term viability of Southern Flounder if the Commission implements an amendment, and that is the legal key for requiring a supplement.

The law does not give priority of one particular fishery over another when it comes to fulfilling the mandates of the process. But given the economic importance of Southern Flounder to this state and in particular to commercial fishing families, the political and legal realities of doing the right thing are magnified immensely.

Based upon the science, there is no crisis with Southern Flounder. And the science certainly does not indicate an emergency situation. However, there is a POTENTIAL for a crisis in this situation.....and that is the credibility of the Commission and this process.

**NO SCIENCE, NO SUPPLEMENT!**

We urge you to begin an amendment to the Southern Flounder Fishery Management Plan, and put it on the fast track to be completed as soon as possible.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

102 Gull Circle  
Oriental N.C.  
May, 19 2015

Greetings to all in the NCDMF / NCMFC,

Please consider these comments when discussing the future rules and regulations for managing the N.C. southern flounder.

Reviewing the NCDMF web site stock assessments it was revealed that in 2002 southern flounder were overfished with "indications of a 32% decline in population biomass over the past decade" Since the status of this fish has not left the depleted category. As one would expect the recreational and commercial landings have declined. Surveys show about 75% of commercial take consists of pre-spawn juveniles due to the 14" minimum size allowance.

Trying to correct the depleted status of this flounder the NCDMF has only reduced the recreational take without success in beneficially increasing the bio mass.

My requests for consideration are as follows:

1. A TAC cap should be in place, similar to what's been enacted for striped bass and red drum, with at least a 40% to 50% reduction in total yearly take, divided between commercial and recreational sectors with a higher reduction in the commercial allowance since the recreational catch limits have been reduced in the past.

2. The minimum commercial size limit should be 15", thus allowing more fish below the recommended 15" to spawn. If a reduction in large gill nets needs to be enacted and an increase in pound nets allowed it would benefit the southern flounder. This would enable undersized flounder to be released to spawn and reduce by- catch mortality.

My requests are geared to correct the depleted southern flounder status, share the responsibility between the recreational and commercial groups, and open new windows to be considered for the other effected fish in our local waters that have been declining steadily within the past decade, i.e.—croaker, menhaden, spotted trout, spot, weakfish, and river herring.

The combined North Carolinas fisheries is a multi-billion dollar yearly asset to the economy. This dictates the need for serious steps to be taken to safeguard and improve the biomass of our fragile marine life.

Respectfully,

Ron Zielinski

Thomas N. Roller  
Beaufort, NC

**Commenting on behalf of the North Carolina Guide Association.**

TODAY is different. Today is the day you CAN step up as leaders and choose a brighter future for our southern flounder fishery.

My name is Thomas N. Roller. I am a full time working waterman and I am the president of the North Carolina Guides Association. We are an organization of professional guides and small business owners. Above all we are advocates for a healthy southern flounder fishery.

A healthy southern flounder fishery is a vision of the past. If you hold a SCFL, if you run gillnets, and if you enjoy a 14" size limit you may choose to think differently. I could offer a personal view too. I could tell you about younger friends, who think flounder just don't get bigger than 15 inches and that a good day is catching 2 keepers. We have a new generation of fishermen who are willing to settle for remnants because they don't know any better. At 34 I am now old enough to remember "the way things were."

Let's talk facts. The science may not be adequate to determine exact cuts. But the science does tell us there is a problem. That over-fishing has been occurring for 23 years. There are fewer big fish. Most fish never have the opportunity to spawn.

The fate of our southern flounder fishery is not a recreational vs. commercial issue. The question is whether we are willing to take a hard look at this fishery and address its problems before we reach a point of no return.

The southern flounder fishery is managed for preferential access for the large mesh gillnet fishery. This is under the false premise of "managing for all user groups." We devote the majority of our limited resources to keeping large mesh gillnets in the water, to the detriment of all other user groups.

- Commercial pound netters
- Commercial giggers
- Recreational anglers
- For hire guides.
- The public.
- Consumers.
- Everyone who stands to benefit from a rebuilt southern flounder fishery.

Addressing these problems through "equal cuts" is a recipe for failure. This will simply preserve the same problems that have led us down a 30-year road of decline.

Consider these facts. Over the last five years, reducing effort in the large mesh gillnet fishery has had little or no impact in reducing harvest. Now all of you who hold

SCFLs will see your license fees increase to cover the costs of an observer program that we don't need. We spend more to manage the large mesh fishery than it generates in income. We all lose.

As they are so ruthlessly efficient and indiscriminate, large mesh gillnets prosper on the remnants of a fishery in decline.

Our recommendation is as follows:

- Approve a supplement with modifications for public comment
- Consider a closure of large mesh gillnet fishery
- Place a TAC on harvest
- Not apply further reductions to the rec fishery. We have so little to give.

Fishermen are optimists by nature. To our own detriment. Today, instead of asking how LITTLE we can do, we need to ask: how MUCH are we willing to do. Our future is on the line.

Thank you for your time.

I understand that yesterday evening my name was submitted and called for public comment. I was not in attendance. The false submission of a name for comment whether to intimidate, embarrass, or eliminate the opportunity for comment, should not be tolerated. Unfortunately this harassment is common when there are controversial issues at stake. For this reason we encourage you to accept only written comments if you chose to send forward a supplement.

But if there is another Tom Roller in the audience I look forward to buying you a beer.

May 21, 2015

COMMENTS TO N.C.M.F.C. RE: SOUTHERN FLOUNDER  
by Terry Pratt, PRES. ALBEMARLE FISHERMENS ASSOC.

THE ALBEMARLE FISHERMENS ASSOC. DOES NOT  
SUPPORT THE USE OF A SUPPLEMENT PROCESS FOR MANAGEMENT  
OF SOUTHERN FLOUNDER. THERE ARE NO DATA THAT  
INDICATES A PROBLEM.

THE APPROPRIATE WAY TO REVISE MANAGEMENT OF  
SOUTHERN FLOUNDER WOULD BE THROUGH AN AMENDMENT  
PROCESS. SUPPLEMENTS ARE EMERGENCY MEASURES.  
AN AMENDMENT PROCESS IS A MORE COMPLETE  
WAY TO ~~STATE~~ <sup>SOLVE</sup> MANAGEMENT PROBLEMS WITH BETTER  
STAKEHOLDER INPUT AND PUBLIC REVIEW.

I WOULD STRONGLY URGE THE COMMISSION  
TO RECOMMEND FOLLOWING THE AMENDMENT PROCESS.

Terry Pratt pres

ALBEMARLE FISHERMENS ASSOC.

REMEMBER - THE ONLY WAY FOR N.C. CITIZENS TO PURCHASE N.C.  
SEAFOOD IS IF N.C. FISHERMEN CATCH IT!

## **Fish, Nancy**

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**From:** Herrmann, Nathan <nlherrmann0329@email.campbell.edu>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 20, 2015 8:45 AM  
**To:** Daniel, Louis  
**Subject:** DMF Meeting in New Bern

Good Morning,

I am unable to attend the meeting tonight in New Bern, but wanted to take the time to write you a note with my thoughts. I am located in the greater Raleigh area and frequently travel to the coast to fish the Carolina coast. I am asking you to please get gill nets out of the water. The time is now. Every other state in the Southeast took this step years ago to protect the fishery in their state.

It simply does not make sense any more from a economic or conservation stand point. One flounder per day rec. limit is crazy. We will lose recreational anglers to South Carolina and Virginia all day because of the strong rec. restrictions in North Carolina.

Please make the right decision for North Carolina and protect our fishery.

Nathan Herrmann



## Fish, Nancy

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**From:** Jeff Sampson <jrsampson@fedex.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 20, 2015 9:06 AM  
**To:** Vandervaart, Donald; 'captgorgesmfc@gmail.com'; 'annabarriosbeckwith@yahoo.com'; 'sobxl1@gmail.com'; 'captjoemfc@yahoo.com'; 'kdarden@embarqmail.com'; 'amikewicker@gmail.com'; Daniel, Louis; Fish, Nancy; 'awillis.mfc@gmail.com'; 'preynolds@ncdoj.gov'; 'samjcorbett3@gmail.com'; 'ccroakerjoe@yahoo.com'  
**Subject:** Public comment

I have written this email to ask this commission to start managing for the public resource and not the interests of a small group of profit driven users. I have grown up fishing and enjoying the coastal resources of NC for 40 plus years. I have watched the species decline and resource being abused. I have family who works as waterman and profit from the public resource. They acknowledge the damage being done by destructive gear and improper reporting. But they also are fearful that as the public gains knowledge of abuses finally coming out will hurt them as well because that's what the unions are telling them, give nothing because they will shut down all comm fishing. I have learned to live with the disappointments from this and past administrations, failing to protect for the many(public of NC) over the few. I will back a reduction in recreation catch on the flounder if it will help this speciefies recover, but as we all know this will not fix the problem. The large mesh gill nets and bottom trawlers are the root causes of the issue. they have failed to reduce the harvest while rec harvest is reduced over and over and will never fix the problem. More information is reaching the people of all NC not just the coastal counties as in the past, and I'm optimistic the curtain will be pulled back and we will see the real wizard of failed fisheries management. Remove destructive gears from our waters and recovery our fish populations...

Thank you for time.

## Fish, Nancy

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**From:** john evenson <john.evenson@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 20, 2015 8:46 AM  
**To:** Fish, Nancy  
**Subject:** MFC Thoughts

Dear Ms. Fish,

My name is John Evenson and I am a recreational fisherman who was born and raised in North Carolina. My Father taught me how to saltwater fish at an early age and instilled a love and a passion for fishing and our great state at an early age.

I am writing to request that you PLEASE take the necessary steps to get the GILL NETS out of our inshore waters! While I respect, love, and am proud of our fishing heritage in North Carolina, we are doing ourselves and my children a huge disservice by allowing these nets in our water. The fishery in North Carolina is leaps and bounds behind other southeastern states. Our fish stocks are depleted and there is no excuse to continue to allow gill netting while taking from recreational fisherman (who spend more to catch less fish!).

Please take the necessary steps to get rid of GILL NETS in our waters. Thank you for your service and for protecting our resources.

Sincerely,

John Evenson

Fuquay-Varina, NC  
919-337-3331

## Fish, Nancy

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**From:** Hensley, Michelle L  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 20, 2015 7:46 AM  
**To:** Fish, Nancy  
**Subject:** FW: Gill nets

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Michelle Hensley, Executive Assistant  
Director's Office  
NC Division of Marine Fisheries  
3441 Arendell Street/Post Office Box 769 Morehead City, NC 28557-0769  
Phone: (252) 808-8013  
Fax: (252) 726-0254  
[michelle.hensley@ncdenr.gov](mailto:michelle.hensley@ncdenr.gov)

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-----Original Message-----

**From:** Robert [<mailto:rlcherry@suddenlink.net>]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 19, 2015 6:40 PM  
**To:** Hensley, Michelle L  
**Subject:** Gill nets

Please use common sense and remove gills nets from our hater hoed. Politics should have no say so in doing what is right. I have fished all my life and obeyed the law, but nothing is turning around in our stock management program. One grey trout per person, and nothing had changed since this regulation has been put in place. Stop putting restrictions on the recreational fisherman and take some pride in banning the gill nets, then see what happens. Politics should not play a roll in fisheries management program.

Sent from my iPhone

## Fish, Nancy

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**From:** john@rakoci.com  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 20, 2015 12:21 PM  
**To:** samjcorbett3@gmail.com  
**Cc:** Pugh, Maryjoan; Vandervaart, Donald; captgorgesmfc@gmail.com; annabarriosbeckwith@yahoo.com; sobxl1@gmail.com; captjoemfc@yahoo.com; kdarden@embarqmail.com; amikewicker@gmail.com; Daniel, Louis; Fish, Nancy; awillis.mfc@gmail.com; preynolds@ncdoj.gov; ccroakerjoe@yahoo.com  
**Subject:** Comment on southern flounder

Good morning,

The Commission has received a lot of information and statistics from NCDMF. The latest suggestions from NCDMF are geared for continued failure. The resource has suffered through more than two decades of failure and it is now time to consider the resource and the majority of citizens of North Carolina. The answer is the elimination of the large mesh gill nets throughout state waters. Your position carries the responsibility to the resource and not a vocal minority.

Suggestions have also been sent by CCANC, NCWF, and RFA NC. The suggestions by those organizations are suggestions for success.

Should the Commission decide to retain gillnets they must be severely restricted with a TAC and long season closures.

Previous attempts to bring southern flounder back have failed as it cannot be done by curtailing recreational fishermen mostly or completely. Recreational fishermen have been cut severely over the years and deserve to see no farther creel restrictions. Size limits of both commercial fishermen and recreational fishermen need to be the same. The following numbers are simply a reminder: **Commercial**

**Average Catch for the period: 2011 - 2014**

Gill Nets = 477,984  
Pound Nets = 306,565  
Gig = 71,753  
Other = 10,249  
Total = 866,551

**Recreational Average Catch for the period: 2011 - 2014**

Hook and Line = 210,491  
Gig = 53,661  
Total = 264,152

North Carolina can again have a great southern flounder fishery to match or exceed that of our neighbors. Our neighbors made the difficult decisions long ago with success.

I will not repeat what others with a concern for the resource have stated. It is time for North Carolina history to be made with tough decisions made for the resource.

Respectfully,

John Rakoci  
Ocean Isle Beach NC 28469

## Fish, Nancy

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**From:** Al Raynor <alraynor@bellsouth.net>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 20, 2015 10:24 AM  
**To:** captgorgesmfc@gmail.com; annabarriosbeckwith@yahoo.com; sobxl1@gmail.com; captjoemfc@yahoo.com; kdarden@embarqmail.com; amikewicker@gmail.com; awillis.mfc@gmail.com; samjcorbett3@gmail.com; nccroakerjoe@yahoo.com; ccroakerjoe@yahoo.com  
**Cc:** Fish, Nancy; Daniel, Louis; Vandervaart, Donald; Pugh, Maryjoan; preynolds@ncdoj.gov  
**Subject:** RE: Management Measures to Address Southern Flounder Stock Concerns

Sammy Corbett, Chairman  
North Carolina Marine  
Fisheries Commission  
NC Division of Marine  
Fisheries  
3441 Arendell Street  
Morehead City, NC 28557

RE: Management Measures to Address Southern Flounder Stock Concerns

Dear Chairman Corbett,  
Please accept the following comments as my personal concerns and recommendations in regards to the upcoming discussions and actions for the southern flounder fishery.

I would like to by thanking each of you for taking the time out of your busy lives to dedicate towards managing our state's marine fisheries. As an avid recreational fishermen who spent countless hours over the years immersed in the advocacy and non-profit efforts to bring science based, common sense solutions to light as a methodology for dealing with a dwindling public trust resource, I completely understand the sacrifice each of you are making. It is not an easy task, nor is there a 100% guaranteed chance of success of any plan or action. Coupled with an ever growing number of users and other environmental and bureaucratic factors, managing this resource effectively is like trying to hang wallpaper with your hands tied behind your back. No matter the decision, people will be unhappy and users feel disenfranchised.

I would like to remind the commission that our marine fisheries are a public trust resource, that belong to all of the people of the Old North State, and not just one user group. This is an issue that we must put the resource first and foremost, and not user groups. take care of the resource, and the resource, in return, will take care of the user groups. In regards to the management of southern flounder over the last 20 years, that has not been the case. Southern flounder, in my honest, humble opinion, has been managed solely for maximum commercial extraction, at the expense of recreational fishermen having to shoulder the a majority of the burden in management philosophies. As many of you know full well, you can manage for yield, and you can manage for quality, but the two management philosophies are not very compatible. We have also have had a tendency to manage for gear use too. We have done everything possible to ensure non-selective, destructive gear (gill nets) stays in the water, when nearly every state north and south of us have either banned, or severely restricted this gear. I find it disturbing that we work diligently to export our seafood out of state, for pennies on the dollar, to places that protect their own, at the expense to our resource and its beneficiaries.

I find the proposals to address the southern flounder issue extremely disappointing, but not surprising. Again, as in the last 20 years, we choose to kick the can down the road and ignore the science, in order to keep one user group fishing with no limits/reductions on catch or gear, and effectively disenfranchising one user group completely out of a public trust resource. With a one fish limit on southern flounder, most recreational fishermen, especially giggers, won't even

bother going out. The science tells us that we must reduce harvest by somewhere between 40%-60%. If you completely shut down the recreational fishery, it would effectively only reduce the harvest by only 12%. Considering that the recreational fishermen account for only around 20% of the total harvest, why are they being asked to shoulder a majority of the reduction in reducing the bag limit from six to one fish a day?

I highly suggest that the Marine Fisheries Commission consider and move to implement some of, if not all of the proposals already outlined by the Recreational Fishing Alliance - North Carolina and the Coastal Conservation Association - North Carolina. Considering those proposals and their subtle differences, I would personally like to suggest the following:

1. Reduction of daily recreational bag limit to four fish a day.
2. Minimum size limit of 16" length for both recreational and commercial fishery.
3. Seasonal closure for both recreational and commercial fishery by October 1st for north of Hatteras, and November 1st for south of Hatteras, to ensure escapement if TAC (mentioned in note 4) is not met.
4. A hard TAC, with paybacks, is implemented for the commercial industry that is 40% less than the yearly commercial harvest average between 2011 & 2103.
5. An immediate moratorium on all large mesh gill nets. (this option alone would completely meet the catch reduction requested by the MFC)
6. Immediate moratorium on all new pound net applications.
7. Implement required reporting of all commercial gear catches kept above and beyond recreational limits, that is not sold. This is to be able to gauge impact of fish kept for personal consumption/use while using an SCFL to avoid recreational limits.
8. Implement circle hook requirement for all hook & line southern flounder fishermen using live bait, to reduce undersized discard mortality.

We simply cannot kick the can down the road another time. Please consider these recommendations for implementation. Put the public trust resource, and its balanced use ahead of profits and personal politics. I have two teenage sons who would love to continue fishing, and have a quality fishery that benefits both recreational and commercial fishermen alike. We can do better. We must do better.

Yours In Service,  
  
Alton L. Raynor, Jr.  
7004 Long Boat Circle  
Wilmington, NC 28405  
  
alraynor@bellsouth.net

## Fish, Nancy

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**From:** Jeff Sampson <jrsampson@fedex.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 20, 2015 9:06 AM  
**To:** Vandervaart, Donald; 'captgorgesmfc@gmail.com'; 'annabarriosbeckwith@yahoo.com'; 'sobxl1@gmail.com'; 'captjoemfc@yahoo.com'; 'kdarden@embarqmail.com'; 'amikewicker@gmail.com'; Daniel, Louis; Fish, Nancy; 'awillis.mfc@gmail.com'; 'preynolds@ncdoj.gov'; 'samjcorbett3@gmail.com'; 'ccroakerjoe@yahoo.com'  
**Subject:** Public comment

I have written this email to ask this commission to start managing for the public resource and not the interests of a small group of profit driven users. I have grown up fishing and enjoying the coastal resources of NC for 40 plus years. I have watched the species decline and resource being abused. I have family who works as waterman and profit from the public resource. They acknowledge the damage being done by destructive gear and improper reporting. But they also are fearful that as the public gains knowledge of abuses finally coming out will hurt them as well because that's what the unions are telling them, give nothing because they will shut down all comm fishing. I have learned to live with the disappointments from this and past administrations, failing to protect for the many(public of NC) over the few. I will back a reduction in recreation catch on the flounder if it will help this speciefies recover, but as we all know this will not fix the problem. The large mesh gill nets and bottom trawlers are the root causes of the issue. they have failed to reduce the harvest while rec harvest is reduced over and over and will never fix the problem. More information is reaching the people of all NC not just the coastal counties as in the past, and I'm optimistic the curtain will be pulled back and we will see the real wizard of failed fisheries management. Remove destructive gears from our waters and recovery our fish populations...

Thank you for time.



## Fish, Nancy

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**From:** john evenson <john.evenson@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 20, 2015 8:46 AM  
**To:** Fish, Nancy  
**Subject:** MFC Thoughts

Dear Ms. Fish,

My name is John Evenson and I am a recreational fisherman who was born and raised in North Carolina. My Father taught me how to saltwater fish at an early age and instilled a love and a passion for fishing and our great state at an early age.

I am writing to request that you PLEASE take the necessary steps to get the GILL NETS out of our inshore waters! While I respect, love, and am proud of our fishing heritage in North Carolina, we are doing ourselves and my children a huge disservice by allowing these nets in our water. The fishery in North Carolina is leaps and bounds behind other southeastern states. Our fish stocks are depleted and there is no excuse to continue to allow gill netting while taking from recreational fisherman (who spend more to catch less fish!).

Please take the necessary steps to get rid of GILL NETS in our waters. Thank you for your service and for protecting our resources.

Sincerely,

John Evenson

Fuquay-Varina, NC  
919-337-3331

## Fish, Nancy

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**From:** Herrmann, Nathan <nlherrmann0329@email.campbell.edu>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 20, 2015 8:45 AM  
**To:** Daniel, Louis  
**Subject:** DMF Meeting in New Bern

Good Morning,

I am unable to attend the meeting tonight in New Bern, but wanted to take the time to write you a note with my thoughts. I am located in the greater Raleigh area and frequently travel to the coast to fish the Carolina coast. I am asking you to please get gill nets out of the water. The time is now. Every other state in the Southeast took this step years ago to protect the fishery in their state.

It simply does not make sense any more from a economic or conservation stand point. One flounder per day rec. limit is crazy. We will lose recreational anglers to South Carolina and Virginia all day because of the strong rec. restrictions in North Carolina.

Please make the right decision for North Carolina and protect our fishery.

Nathan Herrmann

## Fish, Nancy

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**From:** Hensley, Michelle L  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 20, 2015 7:46 AM  
**To:** Fish, Nancy  
**Subject:** FW: Gill nets

??

Michelle Hensley, Executive Assistant  
Director's Office  
NC Division of Marine Fisheries  
3441 Arendell Street/Post Office Box 769 Morehead City, NC 28557-0769  
Phone: (252) 808-8013  
Fax: (252) 726-0254  
michelle.hensley@ncdenr.gov

Email correspondence to and from this address is subjected to the North Carolina Public Records Law and may be disclosed to third parties unless the content is exempt by statute or other regulation.

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Robert [mailto:rlcherry@suddenlink.net]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 19, 2015 6:40 PM  
**To:** Hensley, Michelle L  
**Subject:** Gill nets

Please use common sense and remove gills nets from our hater hoed. Politics should have no say so in doing what is right. I have fished all my life and obeyed the law, but nothing is turning around in our stock management program. One grey trout per person, and nothing had changed since this regulation has been put in place. Stop putting restrictions on the recreational fisherman and take some pride in banning the gill nets, then see what happens. Politics should not play a roll in fisheries management program.

Sent from my iPhone

# COUNTY OF HYDE

30 Oyster Creek Road  
PO Box 188

SWAN QUARTER, NORTH CAROLINA 27885

252-926-4400

252-926-3701 Fax

Bill Rich  
County Manager

Fred Holscher  
County Attorney

## Board of Commissioners

Barry Swindell, Chair  
Earl Pugh, Jr., Vice-chair  
Benjamin Simmons, III  
John Fletcher  
Dick Tunnell



Dr. Louis Daniel  
N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries  
3441 Arendell Street  
Morehead City, NC 28557

Re: Draft supplement to the N.C. Southern Flounder Fishery Management Plan

Dear Dr. Daniel,

The people of Hyde County have depended upon its vast fishery resources for over 300 years. Mainland Hyde wraps itself around the Pamlico Sound with its many tributaries reaching far into the mainland and the county extends across the broad Pamlico to Ocracoke Island only to be met by the Atlantic Ocean. Our mainland villages have traditionally and currently been supported by the commercial fishermen and seafood businesses that line our harbors while Ocracoke is supported by a strong commercial presence and a healthy tourism industry supported by recreational fishermen.

When managing such a critical fishery, decisions should be scientifically based and should take into account the views of all stakeholders. In Hyde County, our stakeholders include: commercial fishermen, for-hire charter fishermen and recreational fishermen along with the many business owners and residents that earn their livelihood in related businesses. The input of these stakeholders when changes are made to NC Fishery Management Plans should be considered comprehensively with scientific data that leads us to smart decisions.

Adopting a supplement to the N.C. Southern Flounder Fishery Management Plan without going through the full fishery management plan process will allow the commission to adopt temporary management measures that are not scientifically based, lack proper public input and will have adverse economic impacts to Hyde County and the state of N.C. that have not been thoroughly examined.

Hyde County encourages the N.C. DMF to take a more holistic view of the situation and reevaluate its decision to pursue this supplement until proper procedure including a thorough regional stock assessment can be completed. Reduction of catch of southern flounder by between 25 percent and 60 percent will have a significant adverse impact on our fishermen, supporting

businesses and the county itself and such a decision should not be entered into lightly but with the upmost care and due diligence that takes into account all stakeholders of the fishery.

It is with great appreciation that we thank the N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries Commission for considering our request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill Rich". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "B".

Bill Rich,  
Hyde County Manager

Cc: N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission Members  
Hyde County Board of Commissioners

## Fish, Nancy

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**From:** Thomas Roller <capttom@ncguidesassociation.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 20, 2015 4:38 PM  
**To:** samjcorbett3@gmail.com  
**Cc:** annabarriosbeckwith@yahoo.com; nccroakerjoe@yahoo.com; kdarden@embarqmail.com; captgorgesmfc@gmail.com; sobxl1@gmail.com; 6111captjoemfc@yahoo.com; amikewicker@gmail.com; awillis.mfc@gmail.com; Hensley, Michelle L; Fish, Nancy; Pugh, Maryjoan; Vandervaart, Donald  
**Subject:** North Carolina Guides Association Position Letter  
**Attachments:** NCGAflounderposition.pdf

Capt. Tom Roller, President  
[capttom@ncguidesassociation.com](mailto:capttom@ncguidesassociation.com)

Capt. Jeff Cronk, Vice President  
[captjeff@ncguidesassociation.com](mailto:captjeff@ncguidesassociation.com)

Capt. Mike Pedersen, Secretary/Treasurer  
[captmike@ncguidesassociation.com](mailto:captmike@ncguidesassociation.com)

Dear Commissioner Corbett,

**I'm writing on behalf of the North Carolina Guides Association (NCGA) to provide our recommendations for rebuilding southern flounder, and to express our great concern for the status of the resource.** As a member of the commission, your decisions this week could shape the future of our southern flounder fishery. Now is the time for leadership, and to chart a more sustainable path forward.

The North Carolina Guides Association (NCGA), a 501(c)6 trade-organization, is comprised of for-hire captains united by our concern for the sustainable future of our state-managed finfish stocks. The NCGA aims to represent the interests of the for-hire industry through informed involvement by our members.

The NCGA formed out of concern that the interests of the inshore for-hire industry are not adequately represented in the management process. Our interests are often aligned with but different from those of other recreational voices, including the offshore for-hire industry. Our members and their business models are diverse. Many of our members belong to conservation groups, including the Coastal Conservation Association (CCA) and Recreational Fishing Alliance (RFA), and many also fish commercially using sustainable gear types. The positions of the NCGA are solely intended to represent the perspectives of the inshore for-hire industry.

The NCGA is very concerned about the future of North Carolina's southern flounder stock. Southern flounder are, without question, one of our state's most valuable recreational species. Their viability is crucial to the long-term economic health of the for-hire industry, and for providing North Carolina citizens and visitors with access to a public resource. **It is clear to recreational fishermen that the quality of the recreational fishery has steadily declined since the early 90s during which time, as stated by the division, "the North Carolina southern flounder stock appears to have been overfished in all years, 1991 – 2013."**

### ***Current challenges***

The NCGA believes the current state of our southern flounder fishery reflects a lack of vision and could be improved using a comprehensive management approach. For decades, past commissions have failed to take the necessary actions to rebuild our declining stock and transition our fishery to one that is modern and sustainable. The end result is that we are left with a fishery that has been, by default, allocated to the source of most of our management problems: the large mesh gill net fishery.

The problems facing our southern flounder fishery stem from a failure to curb overfishing, and from the inequities that exist in managing southern flounder primarily for preferential access by the large mesh gillnet fishery. The southern flounder large mesh gill net fishery, which is unique to North Carolina, has proven to be an exceptionally difficult fishery to manage. The fishery's interactions with threatened and endangered sea turtles, and Atlantic sturgeon have created the need for expensive observing programs. This fishery costs nearly as much, or more, to observe than it produces in income, and in some regions observing costs exceed total ex-vessel landings. This is not a sustainable financial decision.

The costs of the observer program are also financially taxing to other unrelated commercial fisheries, and result in a disparity in management focus. NCGA members who commercially fish are very unhappy that their SCFL license fees will be increasing solely to fund observing for the large mesh fishery. The NCGA believes that these funds could be better used to support other initiatives that enhance the productivity of our fisheries and provide greater recreational and commercial opportunities.

The problems facing our southern flounder fishery are further perpetuated by the extraordinary inequity that exists in current southern flounder management. Extremely efficient and mobile commercial gear types like large mesh gill nets put the public and the for-hire industry at a severe disadvantage. The commercial industry enjoys an approximately 78.6% allocation and a 14" size limit that gives commercial gear types several months of exclusive harvest access, while failing to adequately reduce commercial fishing mortality.

It is time for the Commission to make the bold changes that will shape the future of this fishery. To use today's fishery as a template for future management will condemn us to the same cycle of problems that have plagued us for decades: a declining fishery increasingly and unnecessarily dominated by gear that is expensive and complicated to manage. The overcapitalized large mesh gill net fishery diverts the Division's valuable time and resources to the detriment of all other users who would benefit from a healthy southern flounder fishery: the pound net fishery, the commercial gig fishery, the for-hire industry, recreational fishermen, and the public.

### ***NCGA Recommendations***

The NCGA commends the Commission for requesting management options, at the February 2015 meeting, to reduce catch by 25 to 60%. We also commend the DENR Secretary in authorizing the use of the supplement to implement short-term management measures.

The NCGA believes the supplement offers a tremendous opportunity to look forward and create a new management strategy. **We ask the Commission to consider the long-term benefits of a rebuilt southern flounder stock.** While rebuilding the stock will clearly result in hard choices, we ask that you also recognize that the costs of no action will be much greater. The decline of our southern flounder stock has already impacted our recreational and commercial fisheries, and the loss of this stock would be simply devastating to our coastal communities. The long-term viability of any fish stock or marine resources should take precedence over any stakeholder or user group no matter how loud their voice.

The NCGA fully supports *sustainable* commercial fishing and wants to recognize the importance of commercial fishing, and the local seafood it provides our coastal communities and tourism-based economy. The NCGA encourages the commission to focus on our sustainable commercial flounder fisheries: pound nets and gigs. These sustainable gears can supply the entirety of the catch to our communities at less biological and financial cost.

**The NCGA does not support any further reductions to recreational catch** Since the adoption of the first southern flounder FMP, all reductions have come upon the backs of the recreational community. Commercial harvest has rebounded to the levels seen prior to the sea turtle settlement, primarily due to the efficiency of large mesh gear. Meanwhile, the recreational fishery has seen considerably less abundance and opportunity. Lack of availability resulted in a recreational harvest reduction of 60% in 2014.

The draft supplement clearly demonstrates that reductions to the recreational bag limit will result in minimal harvest reductions and will come at a massive economic and social cost to the for-hire recreational industry and the public. NCGA members are specifically concerned that a bag limit reduction will unfairly penalize fishermen who primarily catch summer and gulf flounder in the ocean. With the depressed state of our southern flounder, gulf and summer flounder is a very important fishery to the for-hire industry.

The NCGA does not believe the options in the draft supplement are adequate. These options do not address needed gear modifications and are too focused on “equal cuts.” Proportional reductions by user group and gear type will continue to perpetuate the same cycle or problems. Moreover, experience has proven the difficulty of achieving mortality reductions given the overcapitalized state of the large mesh fishery, and the efficiency of this gear.

The NCGA believes the concept of “equal reductions” is flawed. Our management history clearly demonstrates that effort reduction in the gill net fishery has ultimately had little effect on harvest. We do not believe that further effort reductions through mesh size increases, seasons or yardage allowances can or will have any measurable effect. The NCGA is of the opinion that as long as the southern flounder fishery has a gill net fishery that it may be nearly impossible to manage for sustainable harvest. The recent NCDMF personal consumption survey also indicated that commercial catches could be much higher than reported. We are also of the opinion that past inability to decrease commercial gill net harvest should require us to make larger cuts as estimated cuts will likely be less effective than intended.

The NCGA strongly urges the Commission to modify the draft supplement and pass a modified version for public comment. The NCGA asks that total reductions be, at a minimum 50%. Such a reduction will both bring equality in harvest and reduce mortality to recover the stock and safeguard long term economic viability. The NCGA strongly urges that the unsustainable large mesh gill net fishery should bear the bulk of the reductions.

**The NCGA asks that the following modifications be considered.**

1. Complete closure of the large mesh flounder fishery (both recreational and commercial).
2. Raise the commercial size limit to 15”
3. Require that all pound nets modify escape panels to 6” to minimize discards
4. Suspend the issuance of any new pound net applications until the fishery has been deemed recovered
5. Cap pound net harvest at the current level and manage the fishery under a TAC or cap in the immediate season.



6. No further restrictions to recreational fishermen.

If the Commission chooses to pass a supplement, we request that the Commission consider only accepting written comments. Those of us who are experienced participants in the fisheries management process are very concerned with the public comment process when issues of particular controversy are addressed. These public hearings inflame passions and create an environment that is intimidating for members of the public. We believe that such tense public meetings prevent fair and equitable public comment from taking place and in no way accurately represent the opinions of the public. Past experiences have only served to disenfranchise many from participating in the management process and voicing their concerns on fisheries issues.

Clearly southern flounder management is one of these unfortunate contentious issues, and the NCGA believes public hearings on the subject will not be conducive to productive comment.

We thank you for the opportunity to present our concerns and encourage you to be leaders and take a stand in shaping this fishery for the future.

Sincerely,



Tom Roller, President North Carolina Guides Association

cc: Ms. Anna Barrios Beckwith, [annabarriosbeckwith@yahoo.com](mailto:annabarriosbeckwith@yahoo.com), MFC  
Mr. Mikey Daniels, [nccroakerjoe@yahoo.com](mailto:nccroakerjoe@yahoo.com), MFC  
Mr. Kelly Darden, Jr., [kdarden@embarqmail.com](mailto:kdarden@embarqmail.com), MFC  
Mr. Mark Gorges, [captgorgesmfc@gmail.com](mailto:captgorgesmfc@gmail.com), MFC  
Mr. Chuck Laughridge, [sobxl1@gmail.com](mailto:sobxl1@gmail.com), MFC  
Mr. Joe Shute, [6111captjoemfc@yahoo.com](mailto:6111captjoemfc@yahoo.com), MFC  
Mr. Mike Wicker, [amikewicker@gmail.com](mailto:amikewicker@gmail.com), MFC  
Ms. Alison Willis, [awillis.mfc@gmail.com](mailto:awillis.mfc@gmail.com), MFC  
Dr. Louis Daniel, [louis.daniel@ncdenr.gov](mailto:louis.daniel@ncdenr.gov), DMF  
Mary Joan Pugh, [maryjoan.pugh@nczoo.org](mailto:maryjoan.pugh@nczoo.org), Assistant Secretary, NC DENR  
Donald R. van der Vaart, [donald.vandervaart@ncdenr.gov](mailto:donald.vandervaart@ncdenr.gov), Secretary, NC DENR

## Fish, Nancy

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**From:** DOM SCOTT <domscott15@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 21, 2015 6:21 PM  
**To:** Pugh, Maryjoan; Vandervaart, Donald; captgorgesmfc@gmail.com;  
annabarriosbeckwith@yahoo.com; sobxl1@gmail.com; captjoemfc@yahoo.com;  
kdarden@embarqmail.com; amikewicker@gmail.com; Daniel, Louis; Fish, Nancy;  
awillis.mfc@gmail.com; preynolds@ncdoj.gov; samjcorbett3@gmail.com;  
ccroakerjoe@yahoo.com  
**Subject:** Flounder Fishing

Hello,

We are Dominic and Scott. We fish with our grandfather every chance we can. We fish from the boat around Sunset Beach and Ocean Isle Beach. We are twins. Grandpa has pictures of fish from when our mother was young with more flounder in a day than we can catch in many days. Grandpa and grandmas friends told us the problem is gillnets. Stuff on Google says NC is the only state with them. We can catch more when we go to Georgetown. nets are not allowed there. Grandpa says you can take the nets out and soon we can catch more fish.

Dominic

Scott

Jimison

## Fish, Nancy

---

**From:** busterg@atmc.net  
**Sent:** Friday, May 22, 2015 11:35 AM  
**To:** Smith, Tricia; Hensley, Michelle L; Clark, Brenda; Greg.Bodnar@ncdenr.gov; Bianchi, Alan; Fish, Nancy; Mumford, Doug; Duval, Michelle; Batsavage, Chris; Rawls, Kathy; Schmidt, Al; Mroch, Raymond M; Smith, William E; Lee, Laura  
**Subject:** Proposed New Flounder Regulations  
**Attachments:** fishing charter 5-20-15 003 (Small).JPG; fishing charter 5-14-15-Lee 003 (Small).JPG; fishing trip - Lee- 5-5-15 005 (Small).JPG

My name is Charles Gillis. I have had a charter business in Brunswick County for 43 years. I ran offshore fishing trips until 2010. I put up with the unreal regulations the NMFC came up with through the 90's and until 2010. Then I became so tired of cuts and stops on fishing I sold my offshore boat and went to the backwater trout, flounder and drum fishing, like so many other captains did.

I flounder fished the last season and caught more flounder than ever and ending up catching a total of 507 for the season. Now there is talk of cutting the number and raising the size of flounder when there is plenty of flounder out there.

I do not know where your information is coming from but you have not got log books on catches. I do not know where are you getting your information from, but where ever it is coming from, is definitely not accurate.

Your are not only hurting my business but the tackle shops, marinas, house rentals, motels, restaurants, etc. When you make these decisions you hurt the entire economy along the coast. I am for log books to see where stiffer regulations are needed and some to be loosen up. For instance, sea bass off our coast are very plentiful and more sea bass than all other fish combined and we are stuck with a restriction of only 5 sea bass per person. A person can not go sea bass fishing and get enough for a fish fry for a family of 3. Also the shark limit of 1 shark per person is nonsense. I ran an average of 40 trips shark fishing per season when I was ocean chartering and the regulation was one shark per person on the boat. When the regulations changed to one shark per boat I lost those 40 trips a season. When I lose the marinas lose, the tackle shops loss along with all other businesses in the area

As of now, flounder is our best fishery as we can catch 6 per person, 15 inches or more. We can only catch 1 gray trout per person, and I can't depend on red drum at 1 per person 18-27 inches. Our trout that was 10 per person dropped to 4 per person and size went from 12 to 14 inches. To top this off, you closed the trout season last year for four months because of a one day ice storm. These trout were never stunned or whatever you all called it. Anyway, it cost me 21 trips I had already booked for the spring season.

What I am getting down to is we need less government from the top Obama down to the National Marine Fisheries. We don't need useless regulations when there is no evidence as to the need. No one wants to hurt the fisheries or hunting that participate in these sports. We want what is best, not what unnecessary regulations just pulled out of the sky.

I was raised hunting and fishing and I like to get young children started as young as I can. However, with the strict rules and laws people are going to quit buying fishing licenses or hunting licenses. When this happens we will not need North Carolina Marine Fisheries or Wildlife Officers.

Open your eyes and realize that we are over regulated already and our economy needs a boost not destroyed.

I am sending pictures of my 4 flounder trips this season so far. You can see the keepers we caught, not counting the under 15 inchers we put back. We averaged over 10 keepers per trip last season when we were flounder fishing. This is guiding the one to three people.

The reason people are not catching flounder is 80% who are flounder fishing do not fish the right bait, the right places or use the right tackle. Your flounder tournaments 85% of the fish are caught by 10% who know how and where to fish.

I ask that you give this email serious thought and if you have more questions please feel free to contact me at 910-754-6169 or 910-231-8909.

Thank you for you time and consideration of this important decision.

Captain Buster Gillis  
Busters Outdoors Guide Service  
1217 Riverview Drive, SW  
Shallotte, NC 28470  
www.bustersoutdoorsguideservice.com  
<<http://www.bustersoutdoorsguideservice.com>>

## Fish, Nancy

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**From:** rick sasser <rick.sasser@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 04, 2015 12:04 PM  
**To:** Pugh, Maryjoan; Vandervaart, Donald; captgorgesmfc@gmail.com; annabarriosbeckwith@yahoo.com; sobxl1@gmail.com; captjoemfc@yahoo.com; kdarden@embarqmail.com; amikewicker@gmail.com; Daniel, Louis; Fish, Nancy; awillis.mfc@gmail.com; preynolds@ncdoj.gov; samjcorbett3@gmail.com; nccroakerjoe@yahoo.com  
**Subject:** Public Comment on the Southern Flounder Supplement Management Options

June 4, 2015

Sammy Corbett, Chair  
North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries  
3441 Arendell Street  
Morehead City, NC 28557

RE: Public Comment Period for Southern Flounder Management Options

Dear Chairman Corbett,

In regards to your recent decision to set a public meeting from 1-5 p.m. June 17 at the New Bern Riverfront Convention Center, 203 South Front St., New Bern to hear comments under the southern flounder supplement process, I respectfully ask that you reconsider both the day, time and place.

In my May 18th written comments to you, the Commission and NCDENR staff, I wrote the following-

*"There is one last issue that I would like to address. It is my opinion and that of others with whom I have spoken, that the process of public involvement in fisheries management issues is tailored to produce an environment of intimidation. There is no better example than the Hergenrader petition hearing in New Bern. These types of gatherings serve no useful purpose in resource management other than to facilitate a mob mentality and ensure those who have the most numbers and the loudest voices get their way. That is no way to manage our public trust resources. Not only is it discouraging citizen involvement in open government, it is preventing public servants from performing their duties. I have personally experienced such intimidation, talked to other citizens who have also experienced intimidation and been told by members of the MFC and Division staff that intimidation, the fear of threats and violence against them or their personal property, has*

*and is effecting decisions they are making on behalf of the resource. I urge the MFC to consider means of public involvement in fisheries management that is not designed to disenfranchise pro-resource citizens and recreational anglers who support rule change to revive our fisheries and protect our marine resources from exploitation, goals that serve all of NC's citizens and not just the ones who fish for profit."*

Your decision to hold the June 17 meeting, a Wednesday, from 1-5pm at the New Bern Convention Center is a continued disenfranchisement of pro-resource citizens and recreational anglers with what many will perceive as a deliberate attempt as such. I ask that you reconsider your decision.

The public trust resources of NC belong to ALL her citizens and as such, a proper venue should be provided that allows equitable participation for all who wish to participate. May I suggest that this venue be move to Raleigh to be scheduled on August 19th as part of the public comment period for the August 19-21 MFC meeting. A full day of comments should be allowed with the ending time running into the night time hours.

I ask that you review the letter from Mr. Tim Hergenrader dated April 23, 2015 in which Tim clearly stated his personal experience and concerns about public involvement in venues like the one scheduled for June 17th. If history repeats its self, is the Director going to be able to provide an armed escort for every individual who would like to speak on behalf of the resource at the June 17th meeting like he felt necessary to do for Tim on July 30, 2013 in the same venue?

When considering my request, please consider the importance of open, fair and transparent rule making and those obligations to the people of NC for public comment is an important part of the ruling making process.

Respectfully Submitted with Best Regards,

Rick Sasser

Goldsboro

## Fish, Nancy

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**From:** Marian Parker <marip1028@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, June 05, 2015 8:09 PM  
**To:** Fish, Nancy  
**Subject:** Southern flounder proposals

In regards to southern flounder proposals, I am very concerned about the proposal that states that commercial giggers will only be able to fish Monday through Thursday. I work a public job and can only gig on weekends to supplement my income. Also if commercial giggers have a limit per trip, I feel that recreational should have a boat limit also as they can put numerous passengers in their boat and catch as many as commercial giggers without paying the commercial license fee.

I hope that you will give my concerns consideration.

Regards,  
Elton Parker

Sent from Samsung tablet

## Fish, Nancy

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**From:** Michael Bannan <drbannan@att.net>  
**Sent:** Monday, July 13, 2015 3:27 PM  
**To:** Pugh, Maryjoan; Vandervaart, Donald; captgorgesmfc@gmail.com; annabarriosbeckwith@yahoo.com; sobxl1@gmail.com; captjoemfc@yahoo.com; kdarden@embarqmail.com; amikewicker@gmail.com; Daniel, Louis; Fish, Nancy; awillis.mfc@gmail.com; preynolds@ncdoj.gov; samjcorbett3@gmail.com; nccroakerjoe@yahoo.com  
**Subject:** Southern Flounder

Dear Commissioners,

As a concerned citizen, I am aware of the continued downward slide of North Carolina's depleted southern flounder stock. It is well past time to reverse this slide and you now have a real opportunity to make that happen at the Marine Fisheries Commission meeting in August.

I would like to see you do everything necessary to place into temporary rule under the supplement process to the Southern Flounder Fishery Management Plan measures that will support and ensure the following:

1. Reduce the harvest of southern flounder by commercial fishermen by at least 50%.
2. Implement a yearly Total Allowable Catch (TAC) for commercially harvested southern flounder. This TAC should be at least 50% lower than the average commercial southern flounder harvest of the last 3 years.

Without a TAC, you cannot have a harvest reduction that will work. An unlimited harvest has led to our depleted fish stock and these fish will not recover until a TAC is in place.

3. Suspend the harvest of southern flounder by any and all gill nets.

Doing this will achieve most of the 50% reduction requested above and solve many problems for our inshore marine fisheries. The management costs, conflicts, bycatch issues and unsustainable harvest associated with the use of gill nets has created an unmanageable situation for marine fisheries in North Carolina. It's time to stop the use of this highly destructive gear.

Please support these three simple changes and help our southern flounder stock begin the recovery that it deserves and many citizens expect.



Thank you,

--  
Michael J Bannan DDS, FAGD

Accredited Member of the American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry

Member American Academy of Dental Sleep Medicine

[www.drannan.com](http://www.drannan.com)

8001-201 Creedmoor Rd

Raleigh, NC 27613

(919) 870-7104

803 South Walker Street

PO Box 1209

Burgaw, NC 28425

910-259-1503



7/14/15

**Recreational Fishing Alliance of North Carolina Southern Flounder Public Comment**

North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries Commissioners and Division Staff,

My name is Joe Robbins

I live and vote in Pender County.

My address is 321 Batson Rd.  
Hampstead, N.C. 28443

Email oddball883@gmail

Phone 910-685-1711

Thank you for allowing me to participate in the public comment on the management of Southern Flounder. Based on options given to the public by NCDMF staff and commissioners, I believe option 1 is the best for management of Southern flounder. I appreciate the opportunity to participate in the management of North Carolina's fisheries.

Thank you,

You can email this form: [flounder.supplement@ncdmf.gov](mailto:flounder.supplement@ncdmf.gov)

You can mail this form:

Southern Flounder Comments  
c/o Nancy Fish  
P.O. Box 769  
Morehead City, N.C. 28552

RFA-NC recommends Option 1, based on data provided by the NCDMF staff and scientist in the document "NC Southern Flounder Draft Supplement. Option 1 will allow the southern flounder population to recover the quickest out of all the options presented.

The deadline for public comment is July 10<sup>th</sup>, so have your comments ready by then.

July 15, 2015

To: Nancy Fish, Southern Flounder Comments  
PO Box 769, Morehead City, NC 28557

From: Doug Elliott, Recreational Fisherman

Hello Nancy,

I have reviewed the proposals regarding managing the Flounder fishery. The statistics bear out that the lion share of damage is being done by the commercial industry. I rarely keep any recreational catch of any species. Few recreational fisherman "feed" their family with catch so I believe that Proposal 1 plus a total ban for the appropriate portion of this season is the right approach. It allows for a good kick start followed by a longer term solution.

The commercial guys are flirting with their long term well being that cannot be fixed by only slowing down the recreational catch. I grew up on Great South Bay on Long Island and put myself through college digging clams. I watched first hand as the commercial clammer's destroyed the bay through over harvest. I bet if given the opportunity to do it all over, they would now choose taking small short term hits than to lose it all. I believe it is fair for all parties to take a hit for the good of the fishery.

Thanks for your efforts to protect our waters.

Douglas Elliott  
7034 Ascension Drive  
OIB, NC 28469  
e: 140thnyvi@gmail.com  
Cell; (585) 313-1655

# REMINDER

## MANDATORY EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

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### MANDATORY EDUCATION.

**Public Servants and Ethics Liaisons.** The State Government Ethics Act *requires* that every public servant and ethics liaison complete an ethics and lobbying education presentation/program approved by the State Ethics Commission *within 6 months* of the person's election, reelection, appointment, or employment **and** complete a refresher ethics presentation *at least every two years thereafter*.

The willful failure of a public servant serving on a board to comply with the education requirements may subject the person to removal from the board. The willful failure of a public servant who is a State employee to comply with the education requirement may be considered a violation of a written work order permitting disciplinary action. Therefore, if there are public servants in your agency or on your covered state board or commission who are past due for completing their ethics education requirements, **those individuals should attend a live presentation, distance video-streamed presentation or complete the online education as soon as possible.**

**Legislators.** The State Government Ethics Act *requires* that every legislator complete an ethics and lobbying education presentation/program approved by the State Ethics Commission and the Legislative Ethics Committee *within 2 months* of either the convening of the General Assembly to which the legislator is elected or the legislator's appointment, whichever is later, **and** complete a refresher ethics education presentation *at least every two years thereafter*.

The willful failure of a legislator to comply with these education requirements may subject the legislator to sanctions under the Legislative Ethics Act.

**Legislative Employees.** The State Government Ethics Act *requires* that every legislative employee complete an ethics and lobbying education presentation/program approved by the State Ethics Commission and the Legislative Ethics Committee *within 3 months* of the person's employment **and** complete a refresher ethics education presentation *at least every two years thereafter*.

The willful failure of a legislative employee to comply with these education requirements may subject the person to disciplinary action by their hiring authority.

**Legislators and Legislative Employees** may check the status of their ethics education by going to the General Assembly intra-net page. Legislators and legislative employees who are past due for completing their ethics education requirements should contact Denise Adams with the Research Division of the General Assembly at [denise.adams@ncleg.net](mailto:denise.adams@ncleg.net) or 919-301-1991 to coordinate/schedule their ethics education training.

## **ETHICS AND LOBBYING EDUCATION TRAINING.**

**Public Servants and Ethics Liaisons** may complete the required basic or refresher ethics and lobbying education training by either attending a live presentation, a distance video streamed presentation or completing the online education modules.

- **Live and Distance Video-Streamed Presentation Dates.** The State Ethics Commission has scheduled live ethics and lobbying education presentations and distance video-streamlined presentations for the remainder of 2014. Dates, locations, and registration information are on the Commission's website at:  
[www.ethicscommission.nc.gov/education/eduSchedule.aspx](http://www.ethicscommission.nc.gov/education/eduSchedule.aspx).
- **Online Education.** The State Ethics Commission also offers online ethics and lobbying education. The education modules and instructions are on the Commission's website at:  
[www.ethicscommission.nc.gov/education/eduOnline.aspx](http://www.ethicscommission.nc.gov/education/eduOnline.aspx).

**Legislators** may complete the required basic or refresher ethics and lobbying education training by attending a live presentation at the beginning of the legislative session jointly provided by the Ethic Commission and the Research Division of the General Assembly.

**Legislative Employees** may complete the required basic or refresher ethics and lobbying education training by going online to the General Assembly intra-net page.

## **REGISTRATION AND QUESTIONS.**

- **Public Servants and Ethics Liaisons** please contact Sue Lundberg at (919) 715-2071 or by e-mail at [Education.Ethics@doa.nc.gov](mailto:Education.Ethics@doa.nc.gov) to register for ethics and lobbying education training or if you have ethics education questions.
- **Legislators and Legislative Employees** please contact the General Assembly ethics hotline at 919-301-1991 or email Denise Adams at [denise.adams@ncleg.net](mailto:denise.adams@ncleg.net) if you have questions about the ethics and lobbying education training or have ethics education questions.

Thank you for giving this matter your immediate attention and for sharing this information with all members of your covered board, commission or committee, all staff and employees covered under the State Government Ethics Act, and all legislators and legislative employees.

# 2015 Meeting Planning Calendar

January						
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #ffff00; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> MFC</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #90ee90; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> ASMFC</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #ffcc99; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> SAFMC</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #ccccff; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> MAFMC</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #cccccc; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> State Holiday</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #90ee90; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Sea Turtle AC</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px; position: relative;"> <span style="position: absolute; top: 50%; left: 50%; transform: translate(-50%, -50%); font-size: 10px;">X</span> </span> Meeting Cancelled</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #00ffff; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Southern Regional AC</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #ccccff; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Northern Regional AC</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #ffccff; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Finfish AC</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #ccccff; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Habitat and Water Quality AC</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #ff9933; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Shellfish/Crustacean AC</li> </ul> |
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# 2016 Meeting Planning Calendar

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- MFC
- ASMFC
- SAFMC
- MAFMC
- State Holiday
- Sea Turtle AC

- Southern Regional AC
- Northern Regional AC
- Finfish AC
- Habitat and Water Quality AC
- Shellfish/Crustacean AC