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From: Tim Hergenrader

Sent: Monday, August 13, 2018 11:43 AM

To: Fish, Nancy <nancy.fish@ncdenr.gov>

Subject: [External] MFC

Greetings. Please forward to the MFC members as my written comments for the upcoming meeting. Thank you.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Once again we have new members, including a new chairman. Hopes are high that the pieces are finally in place for action on behalf of not me, my recreational angling brethren, nor commercial fishermen, but for the RESOURCE.

I heard the presentation at the New Bern meeting claiming blue crabs are in trouble. They join the flounder. We've known about flounder being in trouble for some time, but the crab was a relative stunner for many.

But I suppose we shouldn't have been too surprised. A lengthy season with no limits. Allowing the harvest of females as well as males. As a sidebar, I talked to a crabber and he exclaimed "I'll bet most of you people can't tell the difference between a male and female crab. Hell, my five year old does." They CAN return females to the water.

To add insult to injury, we still allow the harvest of sponge crabs. That's like cutting off your nose to spite your face.

I believe in the Kevin Brown tail bag survey, blue crabs were higher on the list of species found in the bags than Shrimp! I believe we still allow dredging of some fashion in the winter that surely can and should be stopped.

Dredging of our sounds as a commercial fishing method for any specie should be and must be banned.

If you wait for the AC to provide you with guidance, good luck to the crabs. You won't get science from that source. Follow the science and start the ball rolling for change.

The flounder are waiting as we all are. Further delays won't serve the flounder well.

The CSMA is another study in kicking the can down the road. I won't bore you with the stats; I'm sure you've got stats on what ails the stripers and what needs to be done that have dulled your brains.

A 26" inch size limit that I've heard is in the works will penalize recreational anglers who aren't the problem. We all know it's cryptic mortality due to unreported catches and regulatory discards of stripers in the large mesh gill net fishery.

The 26" size limit won't solve the problem. IMO, It will result in additional by catch discards, translated to more carnage, in the large mesh flounder fishery.

Ignore the scientific evidence at the peril of a native, wild reproducing population. We lose the stripers in the Neuse and Tar/Pamlico the golden goose drops its last egg!

The one giant issue that is still looming is the shrimp petition. That fiscal note was and is an insult. The writers of that didn't even look at the fiscal statistics of banning shrimp trawling in South Carolina, Florida, Texas and most of Louisiana inshore waters. NC just has to be different, those stats wouldn't apply here.

I was also in attendance at the last Commission meeting and was a witness to the DMF staff admitting they are in violation of state law, but they didn't know how to solve the problem re commercial fishing licenses. If they haven't figured it out by this meeting, you, the MFC, will have to do it yourselves. After all the MFC calls the shots, not the DMF!

I sincerely hope this MFC will finally begin looking out for the resource. Unfortunately, The Governor's campaign promise has yet to be met. Good luck.

Thank you for your service.

Tim Hergenrader, Pamlico County conservationist and angler.

Sent from my iPad