



Coastal Recreational Fishing License

Fund Update

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

Marine Fisheries

Marine Fisheries Commission | Beth Govoni | May 16, 2018



Overview

- Sport Fish Restoration Act
- Assent
- Federal Audit
- New Roles and Processes
- Accountability



Sport Fish Restoration Act

Assent Requirements

Who is eligible to receive the benefits of the Acts?

- States acting through their fish and wildlife agencies are eligible for benefits of the Acts only if they pass and maintain legislation that:
 - a) Assents to the provisions of the Acts
 - b) Ensures the conservation of fish and wildlife
 - c) Requires that revenue from hunting and fishing licenses be
 - 1) Controlled by the State fish and wildlife agency
 - 2) Used only for administration of the State fish and wildlife agency



Sport Fish Restoration Act

Federal and State Government working together



- Sport Fish Restoration program provides funds to programs in a cooperative effort involving federal and state government agencies.
- Program maximizes dollars spent on fishing equipment and motorboat fuel by matching federal dollars with state dollars.
- North Carolina receives between \$18 and \$20 million annually.
- Routine audits are a requirement of receiving funds.



- During a routine audit in 2013, the US Fish and Wildlife Service determined North Carolina did not have specific assent legislation related to control of the Coastal Recreational Fishing License revenues.
- The division worked with the Department of Environmental Quality to submit provisions to the legislature.
- March 2, 2017 memo from United States Fish and Wildlife Service stated the Division of Marine Fisheries continued to lack control of license revenues.
- Session Law 2017-57 was enacted to assent to provisions of certain federal fisheries acts, including the Pittman-Robertson Act and the Dingell-Johnson Sport Fish Restoration Act.





- **§ 113-307.1. Legislative assent to specific federal acts**
 - No funds shall be diverted for any other purpose than the administration by the Division of Marine Fisheries of the Department of Environmental Quality.
 - Revenues collected from Coastal Recreational Fishing Licenses in accordance with the provisions of General Statute 113-175.1(c) and 113-175.5(c) shall be used solely for the administration of the Division of Marine Fisheries and for program functions described by this subsection.
- **§ 113-175.1. North Carolina Marine Resources Fund**

Removed reference of Marine Fisheries Commission and adds Division of Marine Fisheries of the Department of Environmental Quality throughout legislation.
- **§ 113-175.5. North Carolina Marine Resources Endowment Fund**

Removed reference of Marine Fisheries Commission and adds Division of Marine Fisheries of the Department of Environmental Quality throughout legislation.



New Roles and Processes

- Division of Marine Fisheries of the Department of Environmental Quality has oversight and authority concerning the distribution of recreational license revenues.
- Legislation says the division may authorize disbursement of principal of Marine Resources Fund and marine resources investment income to manage, protect, restore, develop, cultivate, conserve, and enhance marine resources of State.
- The division is in the final stages of development of the Coastal Recreational Fishing License Strategic Plan and Administrative Procedures.





- Funds will continue to only be used for intended purpose
- All projects receiving funds are required to submit reports to the division.
- The division will provide an annual fund update to the Marine Fisheries Commission during November meeting for the previous fiscal year.
- The division will consider any requests by the Marine Fisheries Commission with regard to the disbursement of funds.



Conclusion

- Audit finding in 2013 determined that the division did not have legislation in place assenting to the provisions of the Sport Fish Restoration Act.
- Session Law 2017-57 amended legislation granting authority over the Marine Resources Fund and Marine Resources Endowment Fund to the Division of Marine Fisheries of the Department of Environmental Quality.
- The division will continue to use funds for purposes specified within legislation and will provide status report of the fund annually to the Marine Fisheries Commission.
- The division intends to release a directed request for proposal during the summer.



Questions?

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