



**N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission  
November 2024 Quarterly Business Meeting  
Online Public Comment**

Name	State	Please type your comments in the box below.
Marc Boettger	North Carolina	<p>A slot limit with a reduction in bag limit is too much. A slot is all that is needed. That along with seasonal closures as needed for cold stuns. Commercials need to be kept from increasing their take of trout. Especially during winter months when they are more vulnerable to gill nets in creeks. As is a problem in the SE part of the state. Trout are currently the only fish left for recs besides 1 drum. We cannot continue to reduce rec limits without addressing bigger issues such as bycatch from shrimp trawls and gill nets.</p>
Kenneth L Moors	North Carolina	<p>Hi Folks,</p> <p>I wanted to leave a comment on the proposed speckled trout plan. I am OK with the plan as written for the recreational sector. I would like to see gill nets banned for the commercial sector and the commercial sector turned into a rod and reel fishery only.</p> <p>I also think that the adaptive management approach is long overdue, so that needs to be adopted ASAP.</p> <p>Thanks,</p> <p>Ken Moors</p>
Dick Gray	North Carolina	<p>We recreational fishermen pay our taxes, buy our licenses and every year are allowed to keep less and less fish. We spend a lot more money and generate a lot more jobs and taxes for the state and local economies but don't seem to have a voice in how the resources are dolled out.</p> <p>The problem with the lack of fish in NC is obvious and has been forever. Stop trawling in the inside waters, stop killing the baby fish before they have a chance to spawn and grow up to marketable size.</p> <p>Common Sense is needed, When you see a tail bag come over board with 10,000 small fish, crabs and bottom grass for only a handful of shrimp it's easy to see what is wrong.</p> <p>Political donations seem to keep the same ole people running this show and ruining what could be the best</p>

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		<p>fishery in the Southern US.  I hope my grandchildren will be allowed to keep some of what they catch when they grow up.  Thanks for the opportunity to voice my feelings.  Dick Gray</p>
cl webster	North Carolina	<p>Im going to start playing golf again. Enough of these people.....</p>
shane Bufmeyer	North Carolina	<p>I want an answer!! How does the hook and line fisherman deplete a resource ?? I'll answer it for you. They dont!  This all boils down to money. We can keep as many pinfish and oyster toads as we want because our state has not put a monetary value on them!  On an average week trip to the coast my wife and I will catch and release 100 plus flounder. 1/3 or more would be legal.  The tax paying, license holding fisherman in your state deserve the truth. The citizens give power to the government ,, the government does not give power to the people!  A grass roots movement is underway to set our own conservative limits and enforce them amongst ourselves.  So again,,,answer my question.  Shane Bufmeyer  </p>
Brent McLeod	North Carolina	<p>When will the Marine Fisheries understand that trawlers in our estuaries are the problem with the fish population and not the hook and line fisherman? How deep are those boys in your pockets?</p>
Ricky Smith	North Carolina	<p>Would like to know why I can buy Fishing License but not allowed to keep a few flounder for Dinner but Yal!! let boats continue to slaughter our fisherys with nets, and why the states beside NC still allow catch and keep limits, you people in charge are doing a horrible joblets git the act together, Rick Smith  </p>
Michael R. Medlin	North Carolina	<p>I am a recreational fisherman. I fish the NC coast a few times a year. I would like to support the following.  Option 5,i:.</p>

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		<p>For the commercial fishery 350,000 lb. annual quota with payback and Jan.-Feb. closure. Adaptive Management which I feel is very important for the future of our fishery to allow the DMF to address management needs on the fly.</p>
Wilson McGraw	North Carolina	<p>I support the following in relation to the Spotted Sea Trout fishery:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Recreational Option 5.i</li> <li>2) Commercial quota of 350,000 pounds annually with paybacks and Jan-Feb closure.</li> <li>3) Adaptive management</li> </ol> <p>I believe these options allow responsible management of our resources for all fishery sectors.</p>
Lydia Medlin	North Carolina	<p>I am a recreational fisherman. I support the following. Option5.I.: Commercial fishery 350,000 pound annual quota with payback and Jan.-Feb. closure. Adoptive management.</p>
Cora Medlin	North Carolina	<p>I am a recreational fisherman. I support the following. Option5.I.: Commercial fishery 350,000 pound annual quota with payback and Jan.-Feb. closure. Adoptive management.</p>
Kena Medlin	North Carolina	<p>I am a recreational fisherman. I support the following. Option5.I.: Commercial fishery 350,000 pound annual quota with payback and Jan.-Feb. closure. Adoptive management.</p>
Jerry James	North Carolina	<p>What fish are you going to take next? This regulation on our fisheries is getting out of hand. You will not be happy until we can't keep anything and then all DMF employees can just draw a check</p>
John Kiser	North Carolina	<p>As a recreational fisherman, i don't understand why the shrimp trawlers can go up and down the coast destroying fish habitat and we cannot harvest a single flounder, while our brethren north and south of us can. Please do better.</p>
Lee Parker	North Carolina	<p>I am a recreational fisherman. I support the following.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1-Option 5.I.:</li> <li>2-Commercial fishery 350,000 pound annual quota with payback and Jan.-Feb. closure.</li> </ol>

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		3-Adoptive management.
Wyatt B Parker	North Carolina	<p>I am a recreational fisherman. I support the following for specked trout.</p> <p>1-Option 5.I:.</p> <p>2-Commercial fishery 350,000 pound annual quota with payback and Jan.-Feb. closure.</p> <p>3-Adoptive management.</p>
RANDY SMITH	North Carolina	
Ronnie Hatley	North Carolina	<p>I am a recreational fisherman. I support the following.</p> <p>1-Option 5.I:.</p> <p>2-Commercial fishery 350,000 pound annual quota with payback and Jan.-Feb. closure.</p> <p>3-Adoptive management.</p>
Stuart Creighton	North Carolina	<p>I will limit my comments this time to the upcoming decision regarding speckled trout, as this is easily the most important decision facing the Commission at this meeting. I have been closely involved throughout this entire process, frequently speaking to the MFC, commenting throughout the scoping process, serving on the Advisory Committee, and attending the recent standing AC sessions. So, I feel my opinions are well informed.</p> <p>I support the AC recommendations for the recreational sector, which were: a four fish daily limit under a slot of 16-20” with an allowance for one fish over 24”. Most importantly, NO SEASONAL CLOSURE will be needed. Since the stock remains healthy overall, and since so many other important stocks are under severe restrictions, it is vital that full access to this stock remain.</p> <p>Commercially, the best option would be to initiate a 350,000 lb quota. It gives them an increase over their traditional average harvest, provides a similar reduction to what the division recommends, and prevents the</p>

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		<p>industry from expanding into the fishery. They could start fishing on March 1, and remove the gear when the quota is reached.</p> <p>I will close by saying that the speckled trout fishery is too important to restrict too severely. This one fishery contributes \$500 million annually to NCs economy. Previous votes by this Commission have shown an eagerness to protect the commercial sector. It is time to vote to protect the recreational sector.</p>
Chris McCaffity	North Carolina	<p>November 2024 NC Marine Fisheries Commission Public Comment</p> <p>It seems as if much of our state’s saltwater fishery management is intended to create waste and animosity rather than making our fisheries the best they can be. The waste and animosity appear to be a way of advancing questionable agendas like eliminating most commercial fishing and replacing it with industrial fish farming in our Public Waters. It is time to start focusing more on enhancing our fisheries and food supply than restricting our freedom to access them. Wise use of hatcheries and habitat enhancements can be the perfect blend of Public Water Aquaculture and wild-caught seafood that lives free and self-sufficient. This fundamental shift in fishery management philosophy would quickly restore mismanaged fisheries along with our lost liberty. We could set an example for solving problems with solutions that promote freedom rather than restricting it. Fishery managers could use their talents and our resources to help nature overcome habitat related spawning obstacles that are the reason many stocks are struggling. This solution would benefit everyone and the environment. Can you think of a better way to sustainably support more recreational and commercial harvest? The course we are on will lead to stricter regulations requiring more enforcement until it is illegal to keep almost anything as entire quotas are allocated to assumed dead discards.</p>
Burl Mitchell	North Carolina	<p>It's hard to imagine that I have paid all of my license requirements but get no fish to eat. I guess the commercial and restaurant industry is really in charge.</p>
Jamie Lane	North Carolina	<p>I am strongly against any additional reductions/closures in the commercial sector for Speckled Trout. I feel that until another stock assessment can be completed that does not have so much uncertainty with regards to SSB and fishing mortality, it would be irresponsible to make 40% harvest cuts and enact further weekend and long term closures. Considering that these changes directly impact the livelihoods of numerous individuals, I think it would be best if any changes to rules pertaining to the commercial sector harvest of speckled trout were</p>

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		<p>delayed until a study was completed that had less uncertainty and less "concern" from peer reviewers. I think it would also benefit the fishery if changes were delayed until enough recreational data with the new reporting requirements come online so that better discard and harvest data is available to make more statistically significant decisions.</p>
Paul Lane	North Carolina	<p>The data from the last three stock assessments on Speckled Trout is so inconsistent that it would be ill-advised to make drastic (i.e. 40%) harvest reductions based on this information. Please do not enact these outrageous reductions and closures. Thank you.</p>
Barbara Garrity-Blake	North Carolina	<p>Please accept these comments from NC Catch:</p> <p>NC Catch, a nonprofit dedicated to educating the public about the benefits of eating local seafood, offers the following comments about the Spotted Seatrout FMP Draft Amendment 1. NC Catch is concerned about how the proposed measures will impact consumer access to spotted seatrout (speckled trout), one of our state's most traditional, affordable, and desired sources of local seafood.</p> <p>NC Catch promotes sustainably harvested seafood and supports conservation measures based on science that ensure sustainability of fishery resources. However, we do not support the Division of Marine Fisheries' (DMF) recommended 40% reduction in harvest. The speckled trout population is not overfished. Spawning stock biomass is high, abundance is high, recruitment levels are sustainable, and overfishing has only been observed in the last year of most recent population assessment time series (2019). A 40% reduction in harvest exceeds what is necessary to stop overfishing as required by law for FMPs.</p> <p>The DMF is proposing a 2 month total fishing closure during the winter and a 3 day/week closure for commercial harvest other months. NC Catch is opposed to those proposals, as they have a high probability for affecting availability of speckled trout to seafood consumers. The population data do not justify such significant actions.</p> <p>Experts note substantial inconsistencies among three stock assessments for speckled trout since 2009. The first assessment found that the population had been overfished for nearly 20 years prior and overfishing was substantial.</p>

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		<p>The 2014 assessment estimated that overfishing had not been occurring for the prior 18 years and found that natural mortality was the major factor affecting population levels. Experts have known for many years that mortality from low winter temperature heavily influences population levels in North Carolina.</p> <p>Instead of a 40% reduction, NC Catch asks that the MFC approve measures that will stop overfishing no greater than what is necessary to achieve legislative mandates. We urge the MFC to consider consumer availability of this highly in-demand seafood approving new measures.</p> <p>Thank you.</p>