



ROY COOPER  
*Governor*

MICHAEL S. REGAN  
*Secretary*

STEPHEN W. MURPHEY  
*Director*

**FF-8-2021**

## **PROCLAMATION**


### **RE: COBIA - COASTAL FISHING WATERS – RECREATIONAL AND COMMERCIAL**

**This proclamation supersedes proclamation FF-15-2020 dated March 23, 2020. This proclamation opens the commercial cobia fishery beginning January 1, 2021. The season for the recreational harvest of cobia will open at 12.01 A.M. on May 1, 2021.**

Stephen W. Murphey, Director, Division of Marine Fisheries, hereby announces that effective **at 12:01 A.M., January 1, 2021**, the following restrictions will apply to the cobia fishery in Coastal Fishing Waters:

- I. **SUSPENSION OF N.C. MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION RULE 15A NCAC 03M .0516**  
N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission Rule 15A NCAC 03M. 0516 that reads as follows **is suspended in its entirety**:
  - A. It is unlawful to possess cobia less than 33 inches fork length.
  - B. It is unlawful to possess more than two (2) cobia per person per day.
- II. **RECREATIONAL SEASON**
  - A. **It is unlawful to possess cobia for recreational purposes.** The season for the recreational harvest of cobia will open on **May 1, 2021**.
- III. **COMMERCIAL SIZE AND HARVEST LIMIT**
  - A. It is unlawful to possess cobia less than 36 inches fork length in a commercial operation.
  - B. It is unlawful to possess more than two (2) cobia per person per day or six (6) per vessel per day, whichever is more restrictive in a commercial operation.
  - C. The commercial cobia fishery will close by proclamation when the quota is met or projected to be met or will close at 12.01 AM January 1, 2022, whichever occurs first.
- IV. **GENERAL INFORMATION**
  - A. This proclamation is issued under the authority of N.C. G.S. 113-170.4; 113-170.5; 113-182; 113-221.1; 143B-289.52 and N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission Rules 15A NCAC 03H .0103, and 03M .0512.
  - B. It is unlawful to violate the provisions of any proclamation issued by the Fisheries Director under his delegated authority pursuant to N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission Rule 15A NCAC 03H .0103.
  - C. Fishermen are encouraged to return all cobia not meeting harvest requirements to the water in a manner that ensures the highest likelihood of survival.
  - D. The intent of this proclamation is to manage the commercial and recreational fishery for cobia in Coastal Fishing Waters consistent with the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's Interstate Cobia Fishery Management Plan.
  - E. Contact the N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries, P.O. Box 769, Morehead City, NC 28557; 252-726-7021 or 800-682-2632 for more information or visit the division website at [www.ncmarinefisheries.net](http://www.ncmarinefisheries.net).

- F. In accordance with N.C.G.S. 113-221.1(c) all persons who may be affected by proclamations issued by the Fisheries Director are under a duty to keep themselves informed of current proclamations.
- G. **This proclamation supersedes proclamation FF-15-2020 dated March 23, 2020. This proclamation opens the commercial cobia fishery beginning January 1, 2021. The season for the recreational harvest of cobia will open at 12.01 A.M. on May 1, 2021.**

By:   
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Stephen W. Murphey, Director  
DIVISION OF MARINE FISHERIES

December 17, 2020  
8.37 A.M.