



ROY COOPER  
*Governor*

MICHAEL S. REGAN  
*Secretary*

STEPHEN W. MURPHEY  
*Director*

**FF-25-2020**

## **PROCLAMATION**

### **RE: FLOUNDER – COMMERCIAL PURPOSES- INTERNAL COASTAL WATERS AND ATLANTIC OCEAN WATERS (GEAR SPECIFIC) - SEASON DATES, SIZE AND GEAR RESTRICTIONS**

**This proclamation supersedes Proclamation FF-34-2019, dated September 12, 2019. It establishes commercial flounder season dates for Internal Coastal Waters by Flounder Management Area. It maintains a 15-inch total length minimum size limit. It also maintains the regulation making it unlawful to possess flounder taken from anchored large mesh gill nets with a stretched mesh length less than 6 inches. It makes it unlawful for a commercial fishing operation to possess flounder from the Atlantic Ocean Waters taken by any method other than trawls. This action is being taken to comply with the requirements of Amendment 2 to the N.C. Southern Flounder Fishery Management Plan.**

Stephen W. Murphey, Director, Division of Marine Fisheries, hereby announces that effective at **12:01 A.M., Tuesday, September 15, 2020**, the following restrictions will apply to the taking of flounder for **commercial purposes in Internal Coastal Waters and Atlantic Ocean Waters (Section I. D. ONLY):**

#### **I. AREA AND SEASON OPENING AND CLOSING DATES (See Maps)**

- A. **Northern Management Area:** includes Albemarle, Currituck, Roanoke, and Croatan sounds and their associated rivers or waters north from a line extending across the 35° 46.3000'N latitude which runs approximately from the north end of Pea Island (old Coast Guard station) westerly to a point on the mainland Dare County shore at Point Peter Canal.
  1. **The flounder harvest period for the Northern Management Area will open at 12:01 A.M., Tuesday, September 15, 2020 and close at 8:00 P.M., Tuesday, October 6, 2020.**
- B. **Central Management Area:** including Pamlico Sound and the Tar-Pamlico, Neuse, Pungo, and Bay rivers and their tributaries north of a line starting at a point on Portsmouth Island 35° 0.0765' N – 76° 7.4123' W running westerly to Cedar Island Ferry following the shoreline to a point at Cedar Island Ferry landing 35° 1.1349' N – 76° 18.7599' W following Highway 12 to the intersection of Highway 70 to the Core Creek bridge.
  1. **The flounder harvest period for the Central Management Area will open at 12:01 A.M., Thursday, October 1, 2020 and close at 8:00 P.M., Monday, October 19, 2020.**
- C. **Southern Management Area:** encompasses all Internal Coastal Waters from the line described above in I. B. south to the North Carolina/South Carolina border.
  1. **The flounder harvest period for the Southern Management Area will open at 12:01 A.M., Thursday, October 1, 2020 and close at 8:00 P.M., Monday, November 2, 2020.**
- D. **Atlantic Ocean Waters**

It is unlawful for a commercial fishing operation to possess flounder from the Atlantic Ocean Waters if taken by any method other than trawl and in accordance with N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission Rule 15A NCAC 03M .0503.

#### **II. MINIMUM SIZE LIMIT**


It is unlawful to possess flounder less than 15 inches total length in Internal Coastal Waters.

III. **GEAR RESTRICTIONS**

- A. It is unlawful to possess flounder taken from anchored large mesh gill nets with a stretched mesh length less than 6 inches.
- B. For the purpose of this proclamation an anchored large mesh gill net is any gill net in Internal Coastal Waters with a stretched mesh length of 4 inches through 6 ½ inches that is anchored by any means at either or both ends of the net.
- C. It is unlawful to use any puncturing devices, such as pics, gigs, or spears to retrieve or cull flounder taken from pound nets.

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 Rules 15A NCAC 03H .0103; 03M .0503 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 Rule 15A NCAC 03H .0103.
- C. The intent of this proclamation is to manage the commercial flounder fishery in accordance with Amendment 2 to the N.C. Southern Flounder Fishery Management Plan.
- D. **In accordance with N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission Rule 15A NCAC 03J .0505 (a)(3) it is unlawful to fail to render a flounder pound net set inoperable during the closed flounder season.**
- E. See additional regulations on flounder from the Atlantic Ocean in N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission Rule 15A NCAC 03M .0503.
- F. For additional restrictions on gill nets please refer to gill net proclamations issued for specific management areas.
- G. In accordance with M-34-2015, it is unlawful to use flounder pound net sets without four unobstructed escape panels in each pound. The escape panels shall be fastened to the bottom and corner ropes on each wall on the side and back of the pound opposite the heart. The escape panels shall be a minimum mesh size 5 ¾ inches, hung on the diamond, and shall be at least six meshes high and eight meshes long.
- H. In accordance with N.C. General Statute 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.
- I. Contact 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).
- J. **This proclamation supersedes Proclamation FF-34-2019, dated September 12, 2019. It establishes commercial flounder season dates for Internal Coastal Waters, by Flounder Management Area. It maintains a 15-inch total length minimum size limit. It maintains the regulation making it unlawful to possess flounder taken from anchored large mesh gill nets with a stretched mesh length less than 6 inches. It also makes it unlawful for a commercial fishing operation to possess flounder from the Atlantic Ocean Waters taken by any method other than trawls. This action is being taken to comply with the requirements of Amendment 2 to the N.C. Southern Flounder Fishery Management Plan.**

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

June 15, 2020  
10:09 A.M.