



AGENDA
N.C. WILDLIFE RESOURCES COMMISSION
WEBINAR MEETING
December 16, 2025 9:00 a.m.

CALL TO ORDER – Chairman Mark Craig

This electronic meeting is being streamed live for the public to attend and recorded as a public record. The recording of the meeting will be available at www.ncwildlife.gov.

ROLL CALL OF COMMISSIONERS PRESENT – Margo Minkler, Commission Liaison

MANDATORY ETHICS INQUIRY – North Carolina General Statute §138A-15 mandates that the Commission Chair shall remind all Commissioners of their duty to avoid conflicts of interest and appearances of conflict under this Chapter, and that the chair also inquires as to whether there is any known conflict of interest or appearance of conflict with respect to any matters coming before the Commission at this time. It is the duty of each Commissioner who is aware of such personal conflict of interest or of an appearance of a conflict to notify the Chair of the same. *Chairman Craig*

WATER SAFETY RULEMAKING

Emergency & Temporary Rulemaking – 10F .0314 New Hanover County – Consider emergency and temporary rulemaking for a request to create a no-wake zone in the waters of the Cape Fear River in Wilmington 160 yards southwest of the Cape Fear Memorial Bridge – *Will Casola, Policy Analyst (EXHIBIT A)*

RULEMAKING

Temporary Rulemaking Notice of Text – 10C .0218 Harvest Reporting Requirements – Consider request to notice proposed rule text with an open comment period and public hearings for temporary amendments to 10C .0218 – *Corey Oakley, Inland Fisheries Division Chief (EXHIBIT B)*

Temporary Rulemaking Notice of Text – 10C .0414 Bluefish – Consider request to notice proposed rule text with an open comment period and public hearings for temporary amendments to 10C .0414 – *Corey Oakley (EXHIBIT C)*

COMMENTS BY THE CHAIRMAN – Chairman Craig

COMMENTS BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR – Executive Director Briggs

ADJOURN

EXHIBIT A

December 16, 2025



Emergency/Temporary Amendment to 15A NCAC 10F .0314 New Hanover County Recommended by Agency Staff for Adoption

The proposed amendment creates a no-wake zone in the waters of the Cape Fear River in Wilmington, 160 yards southwest of the Cape Fear Memorial Bridge on Business US Hwy 17.

NC Department of Transportation (NCDOT) has subcontracted with a geotechnical engineering firm to conduct soil testing and to evaluate the condition of the soil and rock beneath the Cape Fear River, south of the Cape Fear Memorial Bridge. This investigation is to develop foundation recommendations for the bridge replacement, NCDOT Project Number HB-0039.

To gather the necessary information, a drill machine has been attached to a barge and affixed to specific points at proposed bridge bent locations. The nature of the drilling rig requires drill operators to be stationed at the rear of the equipment, placing the workers at the extreme bow or stern end of the barge. They are drilling up to 250' deep, using about 300' of drilling rod, which comes in and out of the boring hole dozens of times per day.

Vessels moving under and around the bridge above no-wake speed endanger the safety of operators on the barge. Barge stability is critical to ensure that operators are not thrown from the barge, thrown into moving drilling equipment, or crushed under falling equipment. Operators are not advised to tether themselves to the barge as tethers pose an entanglement hazard around moving drilling equipment. Thus, a stable barge is critical to ensure drilling safety.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Wilmington District was consulted, and concur, with proposed rulemaking in the federal channel.

The NCDOT will be responsible for implementing this rule. The temporary no-wake zone is expected to be lifted approximately two months after the effective date.

15A NCAC 10F .0314 NEW HANOVER COUNTY

1 15A NCAC 10F .0314 is amended under emergency procedures as follows:

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3 **15A NCAC 10F .0314 NEW HANOVER COUNTY**

4 (a) Regulated Areas. This Rule applies to the following waters in New Hanover County:

- 5 (1) the area bounded on the north by the U.S. Highway 74-76 bridge crossing the Intracoastal
6 Waterway, on the south by a line shore to shore intersecting Intracoastal Waterway channel marker
7 number 127, on the west by the shore of Wrightsville Sound, and on the east by a line perpendicular
8 to U.S. Highway 74-76 and intersecting channel marker number 25 in Motts Channel;
- 9 (2) the area of Motts Channel between channel marker number 25 at the Intracoastal Waterway on the
10 west and channel marker number 16 at the entrance from Banks Channel on the east;
- 11 (3) Wilmington. The waters shore to shore in that portion of Bradley Creek in the City of Wilmington
12 between the U.S. Highway 76 bridge crossing Bradley Creek and a point at 34.20794 N, 77.82158
13 W, near the mouth of Bradley Creek;
- 14 (4) Lee's Cut from its western intersection with the Intracoastal Waterway at 34.21979 N, 77.80965 W,
15 to its eastern intersection with Banks Channel at 34.21906 N, 77.79645 W;
- 16 (5) Town of Wrightsville Beach. The unnamed channel lying between the shore west of Bahama Drive
17 in the Town of Wrightsville Beach and an unnamed island located approximately 500 feet northeast
18 of the U.S. Highway 74 bridge over Banks Channel; and
- 19 (6) Castle Hayne. The waters of the Northeast Cape Fear River between the U.S. Highway 117 bridge
20 and the railroad trestle 60 yards east of the Castle Hayne Boating Access Area, 6418 Orange Street,
21 Castle Hayne.
- 22 (7) the waters of the Cape Fear River in Wilmington shore to shore, 160 yards southwest of the Cape
23 Fear Memorial Bridge on Business US Hwy 17, north of a line from a point on the west shore at
24 34.22675 N, 77.95400 W, to a point on the east shore at 34.22567 N, 77.95109 W.

25 (b) Speed Limit. No person shall operate a vessel at greater than no-wake speed within any of the regulated areas
26 described in Paragraph (a) of this Rule.

27 (c) Placement of Markers. The Board of Commissioners of New Hanover County shall place the no-wake markers
28 implementing Subparagraphs (a)(1), (a)(2), (a)(3), (a)(4), and (a)(5) of this Rule, subject to the approval of the United
29 States Coast Guard and the United States Army Corps of Engineers.

30 (d) Placement and Maintenance of Markers. The Wildlife Resources Commission shall place and maintain markers
31 for the area designated in Subparagraph (a)(6) of this Rule, subject to the approval of the United States Coast Guard
32 and the United States Army Corps of Engineers.

33 (e) Placement of Markers. The North Carolina Department of Transportation shall be the designated agency
34 implementing Subparagraph (a)(7) of this Rule.

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36 *History Note: Authority G.S. 75A-3; 75A-15;*

37 *Eff. February 1, 1976;*

1 *Amended Eff. July 1, 1993; May 1, 1989; June 1, 1987; May 1, 1987;*
2 *Pursuant to G.S. 150B-21.3A, rule is necessary without substantive public interest Eff. December*
3 *6, 2016;*
4 *Amended Eff. July 1, 2023; February 1, 2023; October 1, 2018; April 1, 2017;*
5 *Amended Eff. March 24, 2025.*

EXHIBIT B

December 16, 2025



Proposed Temporary Amendments to 15A NCAC 10C .0218 Harvest Reporting Requirements Recommended by Agency Staff for Public Notice, Comment, and Presentation at Public Hearing

The proposed temporary amendments add additional detail for locations where harvest reporting requirements are mandatory. The amendments add clarity and will better ensure the regulated community understands where this rule applies.

15A NCAC 10C .0218 HARVEST REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

1 15A NCAC 10C .0218 is proposed for amendment under temporary procedures as follows:

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3 **15A NCAC 10C .0218 HARVEST REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

4 (a) For the purpose of this Rule, the following definitions shall apply:

5 (1) "Division" means the North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries.

6 (2) "inland fishing waters adjacent to joint or coastal fishing waters" means inland fishing waters
7 upstream of joint or coastal fishing waters of the Roanoke River downstream of Roanoke Rapids
8 Dam, the Tar River downstream of Rocky Mount Mill Dam, the Neuse River downstream of Falls
9 Lake Dam and the Cape Fear River downstream of Buckhorn Dam, and their tributaries extending
10 upstream to the first impoundment, Roanoke, Tar, Neuse, and Cape Fear rivers and their tributaries
11 extending upstream to the first impoundment of the main course on the river or its tributaries, and
12 in all other inland fishing waters east of Interstate 95 except in the Lumber and Waccamaw rivers
13 River and their its tributaries.

14 (3) "harvest" means catching or taking a fish and reducing it to permanent possession by not returning
15 it to the water.

16 (b) An individual who harvests the following species, from joint fishing waters or inland fishing waters adjacent to
17 joint or coastal fishing waters, shall report the information required in Rule 15A NCAC 03I .0124(b) to the Division
18 at <https://www.ncmarinefisheries.net> or record the harvest on a Division-issued report card when harvest is complete:

19 (1) flounder;

20 (2) red drum;

21 (3) spotted seatrout;

22 (4) striped bass; and

23 (5) weakfish.

24 (c) Individuals using a Division-issued report card shall report the information electronically at
25 <https://www.ncmarinefisheries.net> in a manner consistent with requirements of Rule 15A NCAC 03I .0124(b).

26 (d) An individual shall not remove the head or tail or otherwise change the appearance of the fish to render it
27 impractical to identify, count, or measure while fishing or afield and until harvest has been recorded or reported.

28 (e) The requirements of this Rule shall be effective in accordance with the schedule in S.L. 2023-137, s. 6(f).

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30 *History Note: Authority G.S. 113-134; 113-170.3;*

31 *Temporary Adoption Eff. July 5, 2024.*

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EXHIBIT C

December 16, 2025



Proposed Temporary Amendments to 15A NCAC 10C .0414 Bluefish Recommended by Agency Staff for Public Notice, Comment, and Presentation at Public Hearing

The proposed temporary amendments increase the daily creel limit from three fish to five fish.

15A NCAC 10C .0414 BLUEFISH

1 15A NCAC 10C .0414 is proposed for amendment under temporary procedures as follows:

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3 **15A NCAC 10C .0414 BLUEFISH**

4 (a) The daily creel limit for bluefish is five. ~~three~~.

5 (b) There is no size limit.

6 (c) There is no closed season.

7 (d) Bluefish shall not be sold.

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9 *History Note: Authority G.S. 113-134; 113-292; 113-304; 113-305;*

10 *Temporary Adoption Eff. September 1, 2022;*

11 *Eff. March 15, 2023.*

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