



JOSH STEIN
Governor

D. REID WILSON
Secretary

KATHY B. RAWLS
Director

PT-1-2026

PROCLAMATION

RE: POTS OPEN – ATLANTIC OCEAN AND INTERNAL COASTAL AND JOINT FISHING WATERS WEST AND SOUTH OF HIGHWAY 58 BRIDGE

This proclamation describes areas open to crab, eel, fish, and shrimp pots in the Atlantic Ocean and Internal Coastal and Joint Fishing Waters from west and south of the Highway 58 Bridge to the North Carolina/South Carolina state line. This proclamation will expire at 11:59 PM, November 30, 2026, unless superseded by another proclamation.

Kathy B. Rawls, Director, Division of Marine Fisheries, hereby announces that effective at **12:01 A.M., Sunday, May 3, 2026, until 11:59 PM, Monday, November 30, 2026**, the following restrictions shall apply to crab, eel, fish and shrimp pots in the Atlantic Ocean and Internal Coastal and Joint Fishing Waters:

IT SHALL BE UNLAWFUL TO USE POTS, EXCEPT IN AREAS DESCRIBED BELOW:

- I. ATLANTIC OCEAN – Statewide
- II. Designated primary nursery areas in all Internal Coastal and Joint Waters west and south of the Highway 58 Bridge at Emerald Isle which are listed in N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission Rule 15A NCAC 03R .0103. For more information about designated nursery areas visit the [NCDMF Interactive Map](#).
- III. **All Internal Coastal and Joint Fishing Waters west and south of the Highway 58 Bridge at Emerald Isle which are closed by N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission Rule or Division of Marine Fisheries proclamation for crab trawling and taking shrimp with nets.**
- IV. All Shellfish Management Areas which have been designated by proclamation.
- V. **CARTERET COUNTY/ONSLow COUNTY**
 - A. That area between the Highway 58 Bridge and the Bogue Inlet Channel. ([Map 1](#))
 - B. That area in White Oak River upstream from the Highway 24 Bridge at Swansboro. ([Map 1](#))
- VI. **ONSLow COUNTY**
 - A. West Channel - Island Channel - from Intracoastal Waterway (IWW) Buoy #47A to IWW #45C. ([Map 1](#))
 - B. West Channel - from IWW Marker #48 to Bogue Inlet. ([Map 1](#))
 - C. Queens Creek – from the Inland and Coastal Waters boundary east of the Inland and Coastal Waters boundary line as described in N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission Rule 15A NCAC 03Q .0202(20)(h) to the IWW. ([Map 2](#))
 - D. Banks Channel - (behind Hammock Beach State Park) from Bogue Inlet to Bear Inlet. ([Map 2](#))
 - E. Fosters Bay – northwest of the IWW between IWW Marker #49 to Marker #46C. ([Map 2](#))
 - F. Saunders Creek - from IWW Marker #55 to Bear Inlet. ([Map 2](#))

- G. Bear Creek – upstream from IWW Marker #58 and from the IWW downstream to Bear Inlet. ([Map 2](#))
- H. Muddy Creek - from Bear Creek to Saunders Creek. ([Map 2](#))
- I. New River - upstream of the Highway 172 Bridge. ([Map 3](#))
- J. New River - Hall's Point Bay as shown on attached map. ([Map 3](#))

VII. **PENDER COUNTY**

- A. That area 100 feet on either side of the IWW Channel from the site of the “old” Highway 50 Bridge at Surf City to IWW Marker #49 at Morris Landing. ([Map 4](#))
- B. Topsail Sound - from IWW Marker #86 to Topsail Inlet. ([Map 4](#))
- C. Marker #98 Channel - from IWW Flasher #98 to New Topsail Inlet. ([Map 4](#))
- D. Green Channel - from IWW Marker #105 to Rich's Inlet. ([Map 5](#))
- E. Nixon Channel - from the IWW to Rich's Inlet. ([Map 5](#))
- F. Butler Creek (Utley's Channel) - from the IWW Marker #112 south to Nixon Channel. ([Map 5](#))
- G. That area west of the IWW Channel from Marker #93 near Sloop Point to Marker #105 at Green Channel, from the IWW Channel to the marsh line bordering the IWW. ([Map 4](#))

VIII. **NEW HANOVER COUNTY**

- A. Mason Channel - from the IWW opposite the mouth of Pages Creek to Mason Inlet. ([Map 5](#))
- B. Banks Channel - from the Highway #74 Bridge to Masonboro Inlet. ([Map 5](#))
- C. Stokley's Cut (Old Moore Inlet Channel) - from the IWW near Marker #125 to Old Moore Inlet, including the dredged basin. ([Map 5](#))
- D. Lee Cut (Spring Landing Channel) - from the IWW to Highway 74 Bridge at Banks Channel, including the area known locally as “The Lagoon.” ([Map 5](#))
- E. Motts Channel - from the IWW near Marker #127 to Banks channel, including the area known locally as “The Borrow Pit” or “The Everett Hole,” located adjacent to Motts Channel from Marker #22 to near Marker #26. ([Map 5](#))
- F. Cape Fear River - all waters south of a line beginning at a point on the west shore 34° 04.6040' N – 77° 56.4780' W; running easterly to a point on the east shore 34° 04.7920' N – 77° 55.4740' W. ([Map 6](#))
- G. Carolina Beach Boat Basin - from IWW Marker #161 to the municipal docks. ([Map 6](#))

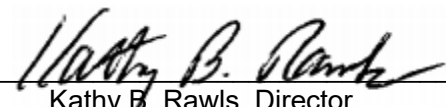
IX. **BRUNSWICK COUNTY**

- A. Elizabeth River - including Lower Dutchman Creek from the IWW to the Cape Fear River. ([Map 6](#))
- B. Eastern Channel - Montgomery Slough - from the IWW Marker #36 to Lockwood Folly Inlet. ([Map 7](#))
- C. Shalotte River Inlet - from the IWW Marker #75 to the Atlantic Ocean. ([Map 7](#))
- D. Jinks Creek - from the IWW to Tubbs Inlet. ([Map 8](#))
- E. Bonaparte Creek - from the IWW Marker #111 to Little River Inlet. ([Map 8](#))

X. **GENERAL INFORMATION**

- A. This proclamation is issued under the authority of N.C.G.S. 113-134; 113-134.1; 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, 03J .0301, and 03K .0103.
- B. It is unlawful to violate the provisions of any proclamation issued by the Fisheries Director under their delegated authority pursuant to N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission Rule 15A NCAC 03H .0103.
- C. The intent of this proclamation is to manage the pot fishery in the Atlantic Ocean and the Internal Coastal and Joint Fishing Waters of the state from the Highway 58 Bridge west and south to the North Carolina/South Carolina state line.

- D. In accordance with N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission Rule 15A NCAC 03J .0301(b)(1), it shall be unlawful to use pots in any navigation channel marked by State or Federal agencies.
- E. **Hatched areas on the attached maps indicate areas open to potting by Items II. and V. through IX. of this proclamation. The maps may not reflect all areas closed to shrimp and crab trawling noted in Item III. of this proclamation and may be open to pots. Go to the [latest proclamation](#) for areas in Internal Coastal and Joint Fishing Waters west and south of Highway 58 Bridge closed to shrimp and crab trawling, for additional information on those areas.**
- F. In accordance with N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission Rule 15A NCAC 03L .0205, **crab spawning sanctuaries** have been established in Bogue, Bear, Browns, New River, Topsail, Rich, Mason, Masonboro, Carolina Beach, Cape Fear River, Shallotte, Lockwood Folly, and Tubbs inlets with a March 1 through October 31 closure to pots as described in N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission Rule [15A NCAC 03R .0110](#)(2).
- G. In accordance with 15A NCAC 03O .0302(a)(3) the only commercial fishing gear authorized (including restrictions) for use under a valid Recreational Commercial Gear License with or without a vessel, five eel, fish, shrimp, or crab pots in any combination, except only two pots of the five may be eel pots. Peeler pots are not authorized for recreational purposes.
- H. See proclamation [PT-1-2024](#) for details regarding Diamondback Terrapin Management Areas and crab pot restrictions within these areas.
- I. 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.
- J. Contact N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries, P.O. Box 769, Morehead City, NC 28557; 252-515-5500 or 800-682-2632 for more information or visit our website at <http://ncmarinefisheries.net>.
- K. **This proclamation describes areas open to crab, eel, fish, and shrimp pots in the Atlantic Ocean and Internal Coastal and Joint Fishing Waters from west and south of the Highway 58 Bridge to the North Carolina/South Carolina state line. This proclamation will expire at 11:59 PM, November 30, 2026, unless superseded by another proclamation.**

By: 
Kathy B. Rawls, Director,
DIVISION OF MARINE FISHERIES

April 30, 2026
2:15 P.M.