

PROCLAMATION

RE: WEAKFISH COMMERCIAL FISHING OPERATIONS

Dr. Louis B. Daniel III, Director, Division of Marine Fisheries, hereby announces that effective at **10:00 A.M. Sunday, November 11, 2012**, the following restrictions will apply to the commercial weakfish fishery:

I. SIZE LIMITS, EXCLUDING HOOK-AND-LINE

- A. No person may take, possess, transport, buy, sell, or offer for sale weakfish less than 12 inches total length in state waters or within 200 miles of shore in the Atlantic Ocean except as provided below:
below.
- B. From April 1 through November 15, weakfish 10 inches total length or more may lawfully be taken in North Carolina internal waters by use of long haul seines or pound nets only and possessed, transported, bought, sold, or offered for sale.
- C. Commercial flounder trawl and flynet operations are allowed to land a tolerance of no more than 100 undersized weakfish (< 12 inches) per day or trip, whichever is longer. It is unlawful to sell undersized weakfish.

II. HARVEST LIMITS

No person may take, possess, transport, buy, sell or offer for sale more than 100 pounds of weakfish per trip in state waters or within 200 miles of the shore in the Atlantic Ocean.

III. GEAR RESTRICTIONS

A. GILL NETS:

No person may possess aboard or land from any vessel using or having on board a **gill net with a mesh length less than 2 7/8 inches stretched mesh**, more than 100 pounds of weakfish during any one day or on any trip, whichever is longer, in state waters or within 200 miles of the shore in the Atlantic Ocean. The weight of the weakfish possessed with gill nets with a mesh length less than 2 7/8 inches shall not exceed 50% of the total weight of the combined catch up to 100 pounds of weakfish.

B. FLYNETS:

No person may possess aboard or land from any vessel using a flynet more than 100 pounds of weakfish during any one day or trip, whichever is longer, in state waters or within 200 miles of the shore in the Atlantic Ocean. This harvest limit applies to vessels using a flynet on board that meets the following requirements:

1. The flynet is constructed with large mesh in the wings that measure not less than 8 inches or more than 64 inches (inside stretched mesh length);
2. The first body section (belly) of the net has 35 or more meshes that are at least 8 inches (inside stretched mesh length);

3. The mesh decreases in size throughout the body of the net to a tailbag with a minimum length of 15 feet with a minimum inside stretched mesh length of 3 1/2 inches hung on the square or 3 3/4 inches hung on a diamond; and
4. Extensions must be a minimum of 20 feet in length and constructed of webbing with a minimum inside stretched mesh length of 3 inches hung on a square, except that when the tailbag is 25 feet or greater in length, extensions may be constructed of either square or diamond meshes.
5. **Flynets not meeting the requirements in III.B.1.through 4. above are subject to the following:** The weight of the weakfish possessed shall not exceed 50% of the total weight of the combined catch up to 100 pounds of weakfish.

C. SHRIMP/CRAB TRAWLS:

No person may possess more than 100 pounds of weakfish (12 inches or more in total length) taken with a shrimp or crab trawl. The weight of the weakfish shall not exceed 50% of the total weight of the combined catch up to 100 pounds of weakfish. This limit does not apply to a Recreational Commercial Gear License shrimp trawl.

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. It is unlawful to use flynets south of Cape Hatteras to the North Carolina/South Carolina line according to N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission Rule 15A NCAC 03J .0202.
- D. The intent of this proclamation is to implement restrictions required to comply with the Addendum II of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's Weakfish Management Plan.
- E. This proclamation supersedes Proclamation FF-66-2010, dated August 17, 2010.

By: _____
Dr. Louis B. Daniel III, Director
DIVISION OF MARINE FISHERIES