From: jack.dunn@cpgre.com
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Expanded bombing range
Date: Thursday, October 1, 2026 2:12:45 PM

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To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed Range Operations Update at Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point and, in particular, the proposed expansion of the intermittent water-restricted area and the addition of a permanent 500-foot restricted-area safety buffer around BT-11.

I recognize the importance of military readiness and the role that MCAS Cherry Point plays in eastern North Carolina. However, the proposed changes would substantially increase military activity in and around the coastal waters and natural resources that are also relied upon by local residents, recreational users, fishermen, and the broader coastal community. The Coastal Consistency Determination does not adequately demonstrate that these increased impacts can be reconciled with North Carolina's stated policies protecting public-trust waters, coastal resources, water quality, and public access.

Most importantly, the document itself acknowledges that the proposed expansion of the intermittent water-restricted area would infringe upon public-trust rights. The Marine Corps states that the expanded danger zone would restrict access to portions of Pamlico Sound and that local users would be excluded from those waters when the restricted area is activated. The document similarly acknowledges that the proposal has the potential to restrict public access to public-trust waters.

This is not a minor change in activity. The proposal would increase the frequency and intensity of operations at multiple locations. Among other changes, the proposal calls for a fivefold increase in UAS operations at MCOLF Atlantic, a fivefold increase at BT-11, increased munitions expenditures, new watercraft access points, new amphibious operations, and recurring unmanned surface and underwater vessel operations in public-trust waters.

The proposal also raises particular concerns regarding coastal and wetland resources. The document acknowledges that establishing the proposed watercraft access points

could temporarily increase turbidity and could result in damage to wetland vegetation or alteration of the natural wetland environment. It further acknowledges the possibility of minor wetland loss and loss of floodplain water-storage capacity. These potential effects deserve careful consideration rather than being dismissed primarily on the basis of the anticipated infrequency of use.

There are also concerns regarding water quality and existing conditions in the area. The document acknowledges that waters surrounding MCALF Bogue are already impaired for shellfish harvesting and fish and shellfish consumption because of bacteria and other microbes. In an environment already subject to water-quality concerns, additional amphibious and watercraft activity should be approached with particular caution and supported by comprehensive monitoring and mitigation measures.

The proposal would also increase the frequency of range-clearance activities and expand the restricted area associated with BT-9 and BT-11. At BT-11, for example, annual munitions expenditures are projected to increase by approximately 87 percent, while UAS operations would increase fivefold. These are substantial increases that warrant more than an assumption that impacts will remain insignificant.

I am particularly concerned that the determination relies heavily on the assertion that impacts will be temporary, minor, negligible, or otherwise manageable while simultaneously acknowledging that the proposed action would restrict public access and infringe upon public-trust rights. North Carolina's coastal-management policies recognize that these waters have important public, recreational, economic, biological, and aesthetic values. The applicable policy specifically calls for water- and wetland-based military training activities, to the maximum extent practicable, not to infringe upon public-trust rights or damage public-trust resources.

For these reasons, I respectfully request that the proposed Range Operations Update not be approved in its current form. At a minimum, the Marine Corps and the reviewing agencies should require a more thorough evaluation of:

1. The cumulative effects of the proposed increases in aircraft, UAS, watercraft, munitions, and training activity;
2. The loss or restriction of public access to public-trust waters;
3. Potential effects on wetlands, shellfish habitat, fisheries, wildlife, and water quality;
4. The consequences of increased munitions use and range-clearance activity;
5. The effects of the permanent 500-foot restriction around BT-11;
6. Whether alternatives exist that would meet military training requirements while producing fewer impacts to coastal resources and public-trust waters; and

7. Specific, enforceable measures for monitoring, mitigation, and restoration if the proposal proceeds.

Military readiness and coastal-resource protection do not have to be mutually exclusive. The goal should be to ensure that necessary training can occur while preserving the public's ability to use North Carolina's coastal waters and protecting the natural resources upon which coastal communities depend.

I therefore respectfully ask the reviewing authorities to reject the proposed changes as currently presented, or at minimum require additional analysis, public participation, and meaningful mitigation before allowing the proposed expansion of activities and restrictions to proceed.

Thank you for considering my comments and for protecting North Carolina's coastal resources and public-trust waters.

Respectfully,

Jack Dunn
Raleigh, North Carolina

From: Harrison M
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Opposition to proposed expansion of BT-9 and BT-11
Date: Thursday, October 1, 2026 12:45:49 PM

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I respectfully oppose the Marine Corps' determination that the proposed expansion of bombing range operations and associated restricted areas at BT-9 and BT-11 is consistent, to the maximum extent practicable, with North Carolina's Coastal Management Program (CMP).

The proposed action would significantly increase military activity within Pamlico Sound, including substantial increases in munitions use, unmanned aircraft operations, debris removal activities, and expansion of restricted waters available for public use. The determination understates direct and cumulative effects on public trust resources, commercial and recreational fishing, navigation, local economies, wildlife habitat, and public access rights protected under North Carolina law. The proposal therefore fails to demonstrate consistency with multiple enforceable policies contained in the Coastal Area Management Act (CAMA), NC Administrative Code provisions governing public trust waters, and county Land Use Plans.

1. Failure to Adequately Protect Public Trust Rights
The determination explicitly acknowledges that "The Proposed Action would infringe on public trust rights." This admission alone raises serious concerns regarding consistency with North Carolina coastal policies.

The Marine Corps attempts to justify the expansion by noting that mariners would be notified when closures occur. However, Notices to Mariners do not eliminate or mitigate the actual loss of access to public trust waters. North Carolina's Coastal Management Program recognizes that public trust waters belong to all citizens for navigation, fishing, recreation, and commerce.

Expanding the danger zone northward to connect BT-9 and BT-11 and establishing a permanent 500-foot exclusion zone would result in reduced access for recreational fishermen, reduced access for commercial fishing vessels, increased displacement of boating traffic, concentration of fishing pressure into remaining open waters, and loss of traditional fishing grounds.

The determination does not quantify the number of affected fishermen, the number of recreational users displaced, the economic value of affected fisheries, or the cumulative acreage of waters effectively removed from

public use. Without such analysis, the finding of consistency is unsupported.

2. Inadequate Analysis of Economic Impacts
Pamlico Sound supports commercial fishing, charter fishing, recreational boating, tourism, and waterfowl hunting. The expansion creates direct restrictions on access to publicly usable coastal waters.

The document repeatedly states the proposal benefits the economy by supporting Marine Corps operations. However, it fails to evaluate economic losses to local fishing communities, charter operators, marina operators, bait and tackle businesses, and tourism-related businesses.

The determination considers economic benefits to military operations while ignoring losses to existing coastal industries. This represents an incomplete consistency analysis.

3. Significant Increase in Munitions Activity at BT-11
The proposal includes an 87% increase in munitions expenditures at BT-11, a fivefold increase in UAS operations, and expanded use of danger zones. An 87% increase in munitions usage is not a minor operational adjustment.

The determination repeatedly concludes that water quality impacts would be insignificant without presenting sufficient supporting data demonstrating that heavy metals will not accumulate, explosive residues will not increase, sediment contamination will not occur, or aquatic organisms will not be exposed to increased contaminants.

Given the magnitude of the increase, reliance on existing environmental conditions is insufficient. A detailed cumulative contamination study should be required before consistency can be determined.

4. Insufficient Consideration of Fisheries Resources
Pamlico Sound is one of the most productive estuarine ecosystems on the Atlantic Coast. The CZMA and North Carolina CMP require protection of spawning areas, nursery habitat, fishery resources, and biological productivity.

The determination concludes that "The Proposed Action would not affect the life cycles of estuarine or ocean resources." However, this conclusion is unsupported by evidence of long-term monitoring addressing increased aircraft activity, increased munitions deployment, increased debris removal operations, increased vessel operations, noise impacts on fish behavior, or disturbance to spawning and nursery habitat.

The burden should be on the applicant to demonstrate no adverse impacts rather than simply asserting impacts will not occur.

5. Inadequate Analysis of Wildlife Effects
The proposed training areas are located within ecologically significant coastal waters used by migratory birds, waterfowl, shorebirds, marine mammals, and sea turtles.

Although the determination claims no significant effects on sensitive resources, little discussion is provided regarding increased aircraft activity, expanded UAS operations, increased military vessel activity, and increased training frequency. Repeated disturbance can alter feeding, nesting, migration, and wintering behavior. The absence of a demonstrated impact is not proof that no impact exists.

6. Inconsistency With County Land Use Plan Public Access Goals
The Carteret, Craven, and Pamlico County Land Use Plans each emphasize maintaining public access, protecting public trust waters, and preserving recreational opportunities.

The determination argues that closures are acceptable because mariners will receive notice. However, notification does not preserve access. The practical result of the proposal is more closures, larger restricted areas, greater uncertainty for users, and reduced public access to coastal waters. This directly conflicts with local public access objectives.

7. Cumulative Effects Were Not Adequately Addressed
The proposal includes numerous simultaneous increases, including increased UAS operations, increased F-35 operations, increased KC-130 operations, increased munitions use, expanded danger zones, new amphibious operations, increased debris removal activities, and new unmanned vessel operations.

Individually, each action is characterized as insignificant. Collectively, however, they represent a substantial intensification of military activity throughout the range complex. The consistency determination lacks a meaningful cumulative-effects analysis evaluating combined ecological impacts, fisheries impacts, public-access impacts, and water-quality impacts.

8. Safety Buffer Expansion Is Not Adequately Justified
The Marine Corps proposes a permanent 500-foot restricted safety buffer around BT-11. The determination provides no quantitative analysis demonstrating that existing safety measures are inadequate, that historical incidents justify expansion, or that alternative measures were evaluated.

Under coastal management policies, restrictions on public waters should be narrowly tailored and supported by necessity. The record does not demonstrate that the proposed exclusion zone represents the least

restrictive alternative.
Conclusion

The Marine Corps has not adequately demonstrated that the proposed expansion of military operations and restricted waters surrounding BT-9 and BT-11 is consistent with North Carolina's Coastal Management Program.

The proposal infringes upon public trust rights, reduces access to public waters, increases military use intensity substantially, fails to fully evaluate fisheries impacts, fails to fully evaluate economic losses, fails to adequately address cumulative environmental effects, and provides insufficient justification for expanded exclusion zones.

For these reasons, North Carolina should reject the Consistency Determination as submitted and require additional analysis, mitigation measures, and alternatives before finding the proposal consistent with the enforceable policies of the Coastal Area Management Act and the North Carolina Coastal Management Program.

--
Harrison Masters
Mobile 910.734.7743

From: Brad Jackson
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] BT-9 BT-11 objections
Date: Thursday, October 1, 2026 9:46:42 AM

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I am emailing to express objection to the extension of the bombing ranges in the Pamlico Sound. There is a curious lack of evidence provided in the project plan to address contaminants introduced to the environment from increased training operations. Another main concern I have is the extension of BT-9 in the area around Sow Island Point. It is unclear from the plan if there will be an extension towards Sow Island Point. There is currently only a few yards of navigable water between the point and the existing border of the restricted area. Extension in this area will effectively close the entire shoreline from Jones Bay to Pamlico point for recreational fishing and hunting. Small boats leaving Jones Bay are unable to run around the outside of the range due to often dangerous marine conditions. As a lifetime resident and business owner in Beaufort County, this is an area that I frequent and it would be a violation of the rights of the citizens of North Carolina to restrict access to such a large swath of coastline.

While I support our military and its training, I feel that the citizens should be informed of the environmental impacts and that their rights to use the public resource should not be infringed upon.

Respectfully,

Bradford W Jackson DDS PA
Washington, NC

From: Richard Paylor
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Public Comment on Proposed BT-9 & BT-11 Expansion
Date: Wednesday, September 30, 2026 9:40:44 AM

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Dear Federal Consistency Coordinator:

I am writing to express my strong concern about the proposed expansion of military training activities and restricted areas associated with the BT-9 and BT-11 bombing ranges.

I have lived and worked in Carteret County for all of my life, and for approximately 30 years, a small group of friends and I have duck hunted and fished in the waters around these ranges. For us, this has never simply been about hunting. It has been about friendships, the outdoors, and a connection to a part of Carteret County that we have come to know and appreciate over three decades.

I understand and respect the importance of Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point and the need for our military to have adequate places to train. I have never had an issue with the military's presence in our community or with its training mission. In fact, I am proud that Carteret County plays a role in supporting our military.

But I am concerned about what this proposal could mean for the people who have traditionally used these waters for recreation.

The issue, from my perspective, is much bigger than losing a place to duck hunt. Expanding restricted areas and establishing additional permanent safety buffers can take away meaningful public access to coastal waters that have been used for generations. Those restrictions can affect duck hunters, but they also affect fishermen, boaters, wildlife watchers, and other people who simply want to enjoy the natural resources of this area.

After 30 years of being on these waters, I also know that you cannot always look at a restriction on a map and understand its real-world impact. A relatively small change in a restricted area can make a much larger portion of the surrounding waters impractical or inaccessible for someone trying to safely navigate, hunt, fish, or otherwise enjoy the area.

That is what concerns me most about this proposal.

I worry that we are gradually losing access to some of the very coastal resources that make Carteret County such a special place to live. Once access is permanently restricted, it is very difficult to get it back.

I respectfully ask the Division of Coastal Management to look closely at the full impact of this proposal—not just the acreage involved, but what these changes will mean to the people who have responsibly used these waters for decades.

I would specifically ask that DCM consider:

- The impact on longstanding recreational uses, including waterfowl hunting, fishing, boating, and wildlife observation;
- The cumulative effect of additional military activity and expanded restricted areas on public access to our coastal waters;
- Whether the proposed restrictions are larger or more permanent than necessary to accomplish the military's legitimate training and safety objectives;
- Whether there are alternatives that could accomplish the military's mission while minimizing the loss of public recreational access; and
- Whether reasonable measures such as limiting the timing of restrictions, providing advance notice, or otherwise mitigating the impact on recreational users could be incorporated into the proposal.

I am not asking anyone to choose duck hunting over military readiness. I am asking that the people who have used and cared about these waters for generations not be forgotten when decisions are made about their future.

For 30 years, these waters have given me and my friends something that is difficult to put a dollar value on. They have given us a place to spend time together, to enjoy the outdoors, and to create memories that we will carry with us for the rest of our lives.

I realize that change is inevitable, and I understand that our military must have the ability to train. But I also believe that we have a responsibility to be thoughtful about what we permanently give up in the process.

I respectfully ask DCM to carefully consider the impact of this proposal on public access to these coastal waters and to look for every reasonable opportunity to protect the recreational use of this area while still allowing the Marine Corps to meet its training and national security requirements.

Thank you for allowing me to provide my comments. I sincerely hope that the people who have spent decades enjoying and responsibly using these waters will have a meaningful voice in what happens to them in the future.

Sincerely,

Richard Paylor
Carteret County Native

From: Teddy Guthrie
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency:USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Tuesday, September 29, 2026 8:00:28 PM

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Dear Federal Consistency Coordinator:

I am writing to provide comments regarding the proposed expansion of military training activities and restricted water areas associated with the BT-9 and BT-11 bombing ranges at Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point.

I fully recognize the importance of MCAS Cherry Point and the vital role that military training plays in our national defense. I also recognize that the men and women who train in this area need safe and effective training opportunities. My concerns are not with the military mission itself, but with the potential impact that the proposed changes could have on public access to and recreational use of our coastal waters.

I have personally used and observed the area around these ranges for approximately 30 years, primarily as a recreational waterfowl hunter with a small group of friends. Over that period, I have developed a firsthand understanding of how people use these waters and surrounding areas for hunting, fishing, boating, wildlife observation, and other recreational activities.

The proposed changes are concerning because they would not simply affect the footprint of a military target. Expanding restricted water areas and establishing a permanent 500-foot safety buffer around BT-11 could substantially limit access to surrounding waters and alter how recreational users can safely and practically navigate and use the area.

For those of us who have used these waters for decades, these are not insignificant changes. Restrictions in one location can have a much greater practical effect because they may force recreational users to travel farther, relocate to less suitable areas, or abandon activities that they have participated in for generations. This is particularly significant for waterfowl hunters, whose use of the area is dependent upon access to specific coastal habitats and seasonal conditions.

I respectfully ask the Division of Coastal Management to give careful consideration to the following issues as part of its federal consistency review:

1. **Public recreational access.**Please evaluate the actual effect that expanded and permanent restricted areas will have on recreational access to coastal waters, including hunting, fishing, boating, and wildlife-related activities.
2. **Cumulative impacts.** Please consider the cumulative effect of additional training activities, increased watercraft and aircraft operations, and expanded restrictions rather than evaluating each restriction in isolation.
3. **Traditional recreational uses.** The area has long been used by local residents for hunting, fishing, boating, and other outdoor activities. These longstanding uses should be meaningfully considered when evaluating the proposal's effect on coastal resources

and coastal-dependent recreation.

4. **Alternatives and mitigation.**Please consider whether there are ways to accomplish the military's training objectives while reducing the permanent loss of public access. This could include examining the size and location of restricted areas, the timing and duration of restrictions, advance notification of closures, and other measures that could reduce impacts on recreational users.
5. **Long-term effects.** I encourage DCM to consider not only the immediate effect of this proposal but also the precedent and cumulative consequences of continuing to expand restrictions on public use of Carteret County's coastal waters.

I understand that military readiness and public access must sometimes be balanced. My request is simply that the impact on the public's longstanding use of these coastal resources receive serious and thorough consideration before the proposed changes are approved.

After approximately 30 years of personally using this area, I can say that the waters surrounding BT-9 and BT-11 are much more than lines on a map. They are an important part of the recreational and outdoor heritage of our community. Changes that permanently restrict access deserve careful consideration of their full impact on the people who live here and have responsibly used these waters for decades.

Thank you for considering my comments as part of the federal consistency review. I respectfully request that my concerns, along with the concerns of other recreational users of these waters, be fully considered in DCM's review of the proposed MCAS Cherry Point range training and operations expansion.

Sincerely,

Teddy Guthrie

From: Gene Wooster
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] BT9 -BT11 Expansion
Date: Saturday, October 3, 2026 7:34:42 PM

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The expansion of the bombing ranges in the Neuse River would be a disaster for the economy of Pamlico County . Whoever is responsible for this proposal has no knowledge of the area or the importance of this resource for the local communities. There are many oyster rocks and live bottom throughout the proposed boundary that are extremely valuable for local guides , commercial fishermen and recreational fishermen . This will be a Public Relations nightmare for Cherry Point. Terrible Idea.

From: Teddy Guthrie
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Concerns about BT-9 and BT-11
Date: Tuesday, September 29, 2026 7:29:35 PM

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Dear Federal Consistency Coordinator:

I am writing to provide comments regarding the proposed expansion of military training activities and restricted water areas associated with the BT-9 and BT-11 bombing ranges at Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point.

I fully recognize the importance of MCAS Cherry Point and the vital role that military training plays in our national defense. I also recognize that the men and women who train in this area need safe and effective training opportunities. My concerns are not with the military mission itself, but with the potential impact that the proposed changes could have on public access to and recreational use of our coastal waters.

I have personally used and observed the area around these ranges for approximately 30 years, primarily as a recreational waterfowl hunter with a small group of friends. Over that period, I have developed a firsthand understanding of how people use these waters and surrounding areas for hunting, fishing, boating, wildlife observation, and other recreational activities.

The proposed changes are concerning because they would not simply affect the footprint of a military target. Expanding restricted water areas and establishing a permanent 500-foot safety buffer around BT-11 could substantially limit access to surrounding waters and alter how recreational users can safely and practically navigate and use the area.

For those of us who have used these waters for decades, these are not insignificant changes. Restrictions in one location can have a much greater practical effect because they may force recreational users to travel farther, relocate to less suitable areas, or abandon activities that they have participated in for generations. This is particularly significant for waterfowl hunters, whose use of the area is dependent upon access to specific coastal habitats and seasonal conditions.

I respectfully ask the Division of Coastal Management to give careful consideration to the following issues as part of its federal consistency review:

1. **Public recreational access.**Please evaluate the actual effect that expanded and permanent restricted areas will have on recreational access to coastal waters, including hunting, fishing, boating, and wildlife-related activities.
2. **Cumulative impacts.** Please consider the cumulative effect of additional training activities, increased watercraft and aircraft operations, and expanded restrictions rather than evaluating each restriction in isolation.
3. **Traditional recreational uses.** The area has long been used by local residents for hunting, fishing, boating, and other outdoor activities. These longstanding uses should be meaningfully considered when evaluating the proposal's effect on coastal resources

and coastal-dependent recreation.

4. **Alternatives and mitigation.**Please consider whether there are ways to accomplish the military's training objectives while reducing the permanent loss of public access. This could include examining the size and location of restricted areas, the timing and duration of restrictions, advance notification of closures, and other measures that could reduce impacts on recreational users.
5. **Long-term effects.** I encourage DCM to consider not only the immediate effect of this proposal but also the precedent and cumulative consequences of continuing to expand restrictions on public use of Carteret County's coastal waters.

I understand that military readiness and public access must sometimes be balanced. My request is simply that the impact on the public's longstanding use of these coastal resources receive serious and thorough consideration before the proposed changes are approved.

After approximately 30 years of personally using this area, I can say that the waters surrounding BT-9 and BT-11 are much more than lines on a map. They are an important part of the recreational and outdoor heritage of our community. Changes that permanently restrict access deserve careful consideration of their full impact on the people who live here and have responsibly used these waters for decades.

Thank you for considering my comments as part of the federal consistency review. I respectfully request that my concerns, along with the concerns of other recreational users of these waters, be fully considered in DCM's review of the proposed MCAS Cherry Point range training and operations expansion.

Sincerely,

Teddy Guthrie

From: Carlie Guthrie
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Concerns Regarding Expansion of BT-9 and BT-11
Date: Tuesday, September 29, 2026 7:44:38 PM

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Dear Federal Consistency Coordinator:

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed expansion of military training activities and restricted water areas associated with the BT-9 and BT-11 bombing ranges at Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point.

I understand and respect the importance of MCAS Cherry Point and the need for military training and readiness. However, I strongly disagree with permanently restricting additional coastal waters that have long been enjoyed by the people who live here.

My family has spent years on these waters fishing, boating, hunting, and spending time together. These places are part of our traditions and our connection to this area, just as they are for many families throughout Carteret County. To us, this is not simply a change to a boundary on a map. It means losing access to places that have been part of our lives for generations.

The proposed expansion, particularly the permanent 500-foot safety buffer around BT-11, is upsetting. I understand that temporary restrictions may sometimes be necessary for safety during active military training. A permanent restriction is different. Once that access is gone, it may never be returned.

I am also troubled by the direction this could continue to take. Each new restriction may seem relatively small when considered on its own, but over time they add up. How much more of these waters will the public be expected to give up as training operations continue to expand? There has to be a point where the impact on the local community carries real weight.

There are also practical consequences. Expanding these boundaries affects where people can boat, fish, and hunt and how they can navigate the surrounding waters. Those effects should be considered as a whole, not simply based on the size of the proposed restricted area.

I believe alternatives should be considered before permanently closing additional waters to the public, including temporary restrictions when training is actually taking place, changes to the size or location of the proposed boundaries, and advance notice when closures are necessary.

There should be a reasonable balance between the needs of military training and preserving access for the people who call this area home. I do not believe continuing to permanently expand restricted areas achieves that balance.

For these reasons, I oppose the proposed expansion of the restricted water areas associated with BT-9 and BT-11. I ask DCM to fully consider what these changes will mean for local families today and what continued loss of access could mean for future generations.

Thank you for considering my comments as part of the federal consistency review.

Sincerely,
Carlie Guthrie

From: Timothy Gillikin
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC Cherry Point
Date: Monday, September 28, 2026 6:31:04 PM

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These comments are to address the USMC recent proposals concerning BT-11 (Piney Island). The federal government's incursion into these public waterways cannot be allowed. Piney Island area encompases some of the best trout, red drum and flounder fishing in the entire coastal area. Adding a 500 ft buffer around the island would completely strip the public's ability to effectively fish, hunt and recreate around these high quality areas.

The USMC has not demonstrated why a buffer area is even necessary. The areas around Rattan Bay and Cedar Bay are already closed to boat traffic. These areas are where the majority of range activities occur. To my knowledge there has never been an accident south of Cedar Bay around BT-11. All of these areas in the 500 ft buffer are deep, navigable waters and should not be restricted.

This proposal should be substantially amended and should take into account how the public is currently safely using these areas. No citizen of Eastern North Carolina should support these changes.

Respectfully,

Paul Gillikin

From: Stuart Creighton
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consisteny: USMC MCAS Cherry Point BT-9 and BT-11 Area Expansions
Date: Monday, October 12, 2026 2:03:33 PM
Attachments: image.png

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To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing these comments regarding the proposed restricted area expansion for BT-9 in Western Pamlico Sound and BT-11 on Piney Island. MCAS Cherry Point describes minor changes to their operations schedule, yet they are asking for major changes to the restricted areas in which they operate. Particularly troubling is the proposed PERMANENT 500 ft. Safety closure that would take away approximately 20 miles of public trust shoreline for no goo reason. It is not reasonable to ask recreational and commercial fishermen to give up productive and popular areas that include but are not limited to: all the eastern shoreline of Turnigan Bay, the entirety of Racoon Island, and numerous productive areas on the western side of West Bay. Included along much of this shoreline are areas of cultch plantings of oysters that represent a further loss to fishermen. Recreational anglers use them as prime fishing habitat, and commercial fishermen use them in a rotation to augment their oyster harvests in the fall and winter. The state of North Carolina has spent hundreds of thousands of dollars in this cultch planting program to develop these areas. What a waste of funds it would be to lose access through this ill-conceived acquisition of public trust waters.

There would be an obvious, deleterious impact to the economies of Pamlico, Craven, and Carteret Counties. Of these, the small economy of Pamlico County would be the most directly impacted by these proposed actions.

Why are these closures being considered? If you look at the military objectives of MCAS Cherry Point, they intend to add 220 UAS operations to a schedule that includes 15000 other operations per year, an increase of only 1.4%. In addition, they intend to increase the ordinance expended by 87% without adding any additional targets tot he range at BT-11. So, in effect, they are going to shoot the same targets more often per operation. Adding an additional 220 target runs to their current schedule in no way warrants changing the current restricted areas. This is an unnecessary over-reach.

If MCAS Cherry Point feels that these changes are necessary, then broader questions must be answered. Has the Marine Corps done an economic impact study for what losing access to these public trust waters will do to the fishermen in the surrounding counties?

Have they done an environmental impact study on what firing additional ordinance will do to

the wildlife that calls Piney Island home? That area is prime nesting habitat for any different species of shorebird, some of which have populations that are endangered. Will the increased number of sorties adversely affect their nesting habits? The island is also home to the diamondback terrapin, a species of special concern. How will the proposed changes affect their habitat on the island?

Have they adequately considered what the temporary closures will do to navigating the Neuse River? The proposed connections between BT-9 and BT-11 will, at times, block access to the river. How frequently will the proposed closures occur? How long will such closures be in effect? Hours? Days?

In your proposal, rule 4.1.1G states: "Development shall not impede navigation or create undue interference with access to, or use of, public trust areas or estuarine waters."
I respectfully submit that, based on this very rule, and based on the specifics of your own proposal, that the 500 ft permanent closure be dropped completely. There is absolutely no need to change any of the current restricted zones based on what MCAS Cherry Point intends to do. Adding a few more operations and shooting more over the same targets does not provide sufficient rationale for making such sweeping changes to the area surrounding BT-9 and BT-11. I say wholeheartedly and emphatically that no changes are necessary. Leave things as they currently are on Piney Island!!!

Sincerely,
Stuart Creighton

Stuart Creighton
CCA NC Eastern Regional Director
Coastal Conservation Association
www.ccanc.org
(919) 770-3817

COASTAL
CONSERVATION
ASSOCIATION
NORTH CAROLINA

From: Jesse Tally
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Opposition to Expansion of BT-9 and BT-11
Date: Thursday, October 1, 2026 3:45:07 PM

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I'm writing to express my opposition to the expansion of the bombing/target areas BT-9 and 11. An expansion of these would take away a public resource that I and many others use frequently for hunting, fishing, and general boating. I'm not aware of any major incidents at these ranges previously which would necessitate an expansion to help protect the public from range activities.

Under the proposal when the area between BT-9 and BT-11 is closed vessels larger than can fit through the "indian ditch" to the south (which is only about 5 ft mean depth) would have absolutely no way to cross from the intracoastal waterway to the west toward the eastern half of Pamlico Sound, Ocracoke, Hatteras, Wanchese, Manteo, ect. It would effectively cut off a major portion of our coastline from vessel traffic.

I vehemently oppose this expansion.

Thanks,
Jesse Tally

From: Henry Tanner
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External]
Date: Thursday, October 1, 2026 3:08:20 PM
Attachments: image001.png

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To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed Range Operations Update at Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point and, in particular, the proposed expansion of the intermittent water-restricted area and the addition of a permanent 500-foot restricted-area safety buffer around BT-11.

I recognize the importance of military readiness and the role that MCAS Cherry Point plays in eastern North Carolina. However, the proposed changes would substantially increase military activity in and around the coastal waters and natural resources that are also relied upon by local residents, recreational users, fishermen, and the broader coastal community. The Coastal Consistency Determination does not adequately demonstrate that these increased impacts can be reconciled with North Carolina's stated policies protecting public-trust waters, coastal resources, water quality, and public access.

Most importantly, the document itself acknowledges that the proposed expansion of the intermittent water-restricted area would infringe upon public-trust rights. The Marine Corps states that the expanded danger zone would restrict access to portions of Pamlico Sound and that local users would be excluded from those waters when the restricted area is activated. The document similarly acknowledges that the proposal has the potential to restrict public access to public-trust waters.

This is not a minor change in activity. The proposal would increase the frequency and intensity of operations at multiple locations. Among other changes, the proposal calls for a fivefold increase in UAS operations at MCOLF Atlantic, a fivefold increase at BT-11, increased munitions expenditures, new watercraft access points, new amphibious operations, and recurring unmanned surface and underwater vessel operations in public-trust waters.

The proposal also raises particular concerns regarding coastal and wetland resources. The document acknowledges that establishing the proposed watercraft access points could temporarily increase turbidity and could result in damage to wetland vegetation or alteration of the natural wetland environment. It further acknowledges the possibility of minor wetland loss and loss of floodplain water-storage capacity. These potential effects deserve careful consideration rather than being dismissed primarily on the basis of the anticipated infrequency of use.

There are also concerns regarding water quality and existing conditions in the area. The document acknowledges that waters surrounding MCALF Bogue are already impaired for shellfish harvesting and fish and shellfish consumption because of bacteria and other

microbes. In an environment already subject to water-quality concerns, additional amphibious and watercraft activity should be approached with particular caution and supported by comprehensive monitoring and mitigation measures.

The proposal would also increase the frequency of range-clearance activities and expand the restricted area associated with BT-9 and BT-11. At BT-11, for example, annual munitions expenditures are projected to increase by approximately 87 percent, while UAS operations would increase fivefold. These are substantial increases that warrant more than an assumption that impacts will remain insignificant.

I am particularly concerned that the determination relies heavily on the assertion that impacts will be temporary, minor, negligible, or otherwise manageable while simultaneously acknowledging that the proposed action would restrict public access and infringe upon public-trust rights. North Carolina's coastal-management policies recognize that these waters have important public, recreational, economic, biological, and aesthetic values. The applicable policy specifically calls for water- and wetland-based military training activities, to the maximum extent practicable, not to infringe upon public-trust rights or damage public-trust resources.

For these reasons, I respectfully request that the proposed Range Operations Update not be approved in its current form. At a minimum, the Marine Corps and the reviewing agencies should require a more thorough evaluation of:

1. The cumulative effects of the proposed increases in aircraft, UAS, watercraft, munitions, and training activity;
2. The loss or restriction of public access to public-trust waters;
3. Potential effects on wetlands, shellfish habitat, fisheries, wildlife, and water quality;
4. The consequences of increased munitions use and range-clearance activity;
5. The effects of the permanent 500-foot restriction around BT-11;
6. Whether alternatives exist that would meet military training requirements while producing fewer impacts to coastal resources and public-trust waters; and
7. Specific, enforceable measures for monitoring, mitigation, and restoration if the proposal proceeds.

Military readiness and coastal-resource protection do not have to be mutually exclusive. The goal should be to ensure that necessary training can occur while preserving the public's ability to use North Carolina's coastal waters and protecting the natural resources upon which coastal communities depend.

I therefore respectfully ask the reviewing authorities to reject the proposed changes as currently presented, or at minimum require additional analysis, public participation, and meaningful mitigation before allowing the proposed expansion of activities and restrictions to proceed.

Thank you for considering my comments and for protecting North Carolina's coastal resources and public-trust waters.

Respectfully,

M. Henry Tanner
Senior Originator
BWE 2710 Wycliff Road | Suite 120 | Raleigh, NC 27607
m: 919.801.0926 | Henry.Tanner@bwe.com | bwe.com

From: Gary Robertson
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External]
Date: Saturday, December 20, 2025 4:06:07 AM

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This objection asserts that the Draft EIS is insufficient under NEPA and the North Carolina Coastal Area Management Act (CAMA). It fails to model the resuspension of ultrashort-chain PFAS (TFA) found in December 2025 sediment studies. Without this data, "beneficial use" on public beaches constitutes an unpermitted discharge of hazardous substances.

From: Robin Middleton
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External]
Date: Friday, December 19, 2025 9:15:04 PM

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Dear North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality,

I am writing to formally *oppose the proposed plan* to dredge and deepen the Cape Fear River near Wilmington. This project presents serious, long-term risks to the ecological health, climate resilience, and cultural heritage of the Lower Cape Fear region, and I urge NC DEQ to deny or significantly revise any permits associated with this effort.

Ecological Context: A System Already Under Stress

The Cape Fear River estuary is not a blank slate. It is already experiencing significant stress from sea-level rise, saltwater intrusion, habitat loss, and the cumulative impacts of past and ongoing dredging projects. Channel deepening has repeatedly altered hydrology and salinity regimes in ways that push saltwater farther upriver, undermining freshwater wetlands and forests that evolved under very different conditions. Additional dredging would accelerate these processes, compounding damage rather than addressing it.

One visible and alarming consequence of these changes is the rapid expansion of ghost forests—areas where once-thriving coastal forests have died due to increased salinity and altered water levels. I documented this phenomenon in a recent article for *Coastal Review*, which explains how dredging and other human interventions intensify saltwater intrusion and forest loss in the Cape Fear watershed:

https://coastalreview.org/2025/10/cape-fear-ghost-forests-tell-tale-of-ever-saltier-water-upriver/

The Irreplaceable Value of Trees—Especially Old-Growth Bald Cypress

Of particular concern is the threat this project poses to forested wetlands and old-growth bald cypress stands. These trees are not interchangeable units of "green infrastructure." Many are centuries old, serving as living archives of regional history while providing critical ecosystem services: carbon storage, flood attenuation, water filtration, wildlife habitat, and shoreline stabilization.

The proposed mitigation measures do not—and cannot—replace these forests. Planting saplings (which is not part of the current mitigation plan) or restoring wetlands elsewhere does not compensate for the loss of mature bald cypress systems that took hundreds of years to develop. Once these trees are killed by saltwater intrusion, they are effectively gone within any meaningful human or planning timeframe.

Contaminants and Public Health: PFAS Concerns

Another critical issue is the disturbance of contaminated sediments. As discussed in a subsequent article I published with WHQR, dredging the Cape Fear River raises serious concerns about PFAS and other persistent pollutants that are already present in the river system. Resuspending these contaminants threatens downstream ecosystems, drinking water sources, and public health:

https://www.whqr.org/local/2025-11-15/the-proposed-plan-to-dredge-the-cape-fear-river-balancing-progress-and-preservation

Any environmental review that does not fully account for PFAS risks—and the long-term costs of spreading them further through the watershed—is incomplete.

Conclusion

The Cape Fear River is a living system, not simply a navigation channel. Its forests, wetlands, and waters support communities, economies, and ecosystems that cannot be easily repaired once damaged. Proceeding with this dredging plan would prioritize short-term industrial convenience over long-term environmental stability and public trust.

I respectfully urge NC DEQ to reject the proposed dredging plan or require a fundamentally different approach—one that prioritizes climate resilience, protects irreplaceable old-growth forests, fully addresses contamination risks, and includes enforceable accountability for mitigation commitments.

Sincerely,

Robin Middleton

Wilmington, NC 28412

From: Jim Fletcher
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Thursday, October 1, 2026 4:52:16 PM

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I live on the Bay River; this expansion cannot happen.

Sent from my iPhone

From: jackson Willis
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Monday, September 28, 2026 10:35:20 PM

[You don't often get email from jacksonlwillis@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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I spend over 200 days a year in these areas working on the water. From commercial fishing to guide recreational fishing or taking tours across our sound to ocracoke. This area is one of the last oyster estuaries left of the south side of pamlico sound. The state department has spent countless hours building those oyster rock rock giving places for the working class to make money off it and for the fish to spawn on in the fall. Bt-11 is 12,000 acres includes a 5 mile radius of active bombing. Bt-9 is over 5 mile radius of open water blocking channels, shoreline and destroying estuary’s and the working man’s life style who has spent decades out on those waters

From: James Tanner
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Proposed BT-9 and BT-11 Bombing Range Expansions
Date: Monday, October 5, 2026 2:23:31 PM

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To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to oppose the proposed Range Operations Update at Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point, particularly the expansion of the intermittent water-restricted area and permanent 500-foot safety buffer around BT-11.

I recognize the importance of military readiness. However, this proposal would substantially increase military activity in coastal waters also used by residents, fishermen, recreational users, and surrounding communities. The Coastal Consistency Determination does not adequately demonstrate that these impacts are consistent with North Carolina's protections for public-trust waters, coastal resources, water quality, and public access.

The determination itself acknowledges that the expanded restricted area would limit access to portions of Pamlico Sound and infringe upon public-trust rights when activated. Meanwhile, the proposal includes fivefold increases in UAS operations at MCOLF Atlantic and BT-11, increased munitions expenditures, new watercraft and amphibious activities, and recurring unmanned vessel operations. At BT-11, annual munitions expenditures are projected to increase by approximately 87 percent.

The proposal also acknowledges potential impacts to wetlands and water quality, including turbidity, wetland vegetation damage, minor wetland loss, and reduced floodplain storage capacity. These impacts deserve careful review, particularly in areas already experiencing water-quality concerns.

I respectfully request that the proposal not be approved in its current form. Before proceeding, the reviewing agencies should more fully evaluate **cumulative impacts, loss of public access, effects on wetlands and water quality, increased munitions activity, the permanent BT-11 restriction, less-impactful alternatives, and enforceable mitigation and monitoring measures.**

Military readiness can and should be balanced with protecting North Carolina's coastal resources and the public's right to use its coastal waters. I therefore ask that the proposed changes be rejected as presented or subjected to additional analysis, public participation, and meaningful mitigation.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Respectfully,
James M. Tanner, III
Morehead City/Carteret County, NC

From: Scott Gould
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Proposed BT-9 and BT-11 Bombing Range Expansions
Date: Thursday, October 1, 2026 8:05:37 AM
Attachments: image002.png

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DEQ,

I am strongly opposed to the proposed bombing range expansions in the Neuse river.

As NC grows and the population near the coastal areas increases, more and more people will be wanting to explore our amazing estuary and this expansion unduly limits access to public waters.

The current BT11 military range area already limits access to our public resources and this expansion is absolutely ridiculous.

My assumption is that the proposal is knowingly an overreach, and the proposers are hoping for a settlement that includes a smaller area. I oppose the proposed expansion and any lesser settlements.

Has there ever been an incident with the bombing range and the public resulting in harm? To my knowledge, none are documented.

This action unnecessarily infringes on public rights.

Dr. Scott Gould

Scott Gould, DDS, MS
Board Certified - American Board of Periodontology
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From: Greyson Gwaltney
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Proposed Expansion of Military Range
Date: Tuesday, October 6, 2026 9:27:18 PM

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I am emailing in opposition to the expansion of the range. We frequently navigate these waters as well as other friends and family and losing access would hurt a lot of local fisherman. We live in a world where access is constantly being taken away, and this would hurt a lot.

Thanks.

Get Outlook for Android

From: Mark Brewington
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Resolution and Cover Letter Opposing MCAS Cherry Point Bombing Range Expansion BT-9 & BT-11
Date: Tuesday, October 6, 2026 1:47:55 PM
Attachments: image001.png
Resolution Opposing BT9 BT11 Cover Letter.pdf
Resolution Opposing BT9 BT11 Expansion.pdf

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Please find attached a Resolution prepared by the Pamlico County Board of Commissioners Opposing the proposed expansion of Training Actives and restricted water areas with in the MCASA Cherry Point Range Complex. Pamlico County formally request CAMA conduct a public hearing in Pamlico County to allow Residents, and Commercial Business to be able to voice their concerns reference this matter. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Thanks

Mark Brewington
County Manager
P.O. Box
Bayboro, NC 28515
(252) 745-3133
mark.brewington@pamlicocounty.org



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COUNTY OF PAMLICO

POST OFFICE BOX 776
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FAX (252) 745-5514

COUNTY MANAGER
MARK BREWINGTON

CLERK TO THE BOARD
TRACY BOYD

COUNTY ATTORNEY
DAVID B. BAXTER, JR.

Date: October 6, 2026

To: Federal Consistency Coordinator
N.C. Division of Coastal Management (DCM)
400 Commerce Avenue
Morehead City, NC 28557
Email: federalconsistencycomments@deq.nc.gov

Subject: Formal Submission of Resolution and Public Comment: Federal Consistency Determination – MCAS Cherry Point Range Complex Expansion (BT-9 and BT-11)

Dear Federal Consistency Coordinator,

Please accept this cover letter and the attached resolution adopted on October 5, 2026, by the **Pamlico County Board of Commissioners** regarding the United States Marine Corps' Federal Consistency Determination for proposed training and boundary expansions at **MCAS Cherry Point**, specifically affecting **Bombing Range 9 (BT-9)** and **Bombing Range 11 (BT-11)**.

Pamlico County deeply values the national defense mission of MCAS Cherry Point and its contributions to our regional economy. However, we must register our **strong opposition** to the proposed expansion of water-based restricted areas, safety buffers, and prohibited zones across the Pamlico Sound, Brant Island Slough, and the Neuse River.

These proposed changes threaten:

- **Traditional Livelihoods & Commerce:** Severe disruptions to commercial and recreational fishing, shrimping, crabbing, oystering, and local water transport.
- **Mariner Safety:** Forcing local vessels out of safe historic channels and into hazardous, exposed open waters.

- **Public Trust Rights:** Unprecedented restrictions on public access to state trust waters, compounded by harsh federal penalties for displaced boaters.

Action Requested by Pamlico County:

1. **Host a Formal Public Hearing:** We formally request that the N.C. Division of Coastal Management hold a public hearing directly within Pamlico County prior to finalizing this review so local fishers, business owners, and residents can provide testimony.

2. **Object to the Federal Consistency Determination:** We urge DCM to find the proposal inconsistent with the enforceable policies of North Carolina's Coastal Management Program.

3. **Pursue Less Restrictive Alternatives:** We call on the U.S. Marine Corps to scale back closures, protect public navigation rights, and consult meaningfully with local governments.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and commitment to a transparent public review process. Please confirm receipt of this submission prior to the October 15, 2026, deadline.

Sincerely,

Kenny Heath

Kenny Heath
Chairman, Pamlico County Board of Commissioners
Pamlico County, North Carolina

Attested by:

Tracy Boyd
Clerk to the Board, Pamlico County

Cc:
- MCAS Cherry Point Command
- North Carolina State Legislative Delegation
- United States Congressional Representatives

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COUNTY MANAGER
MARK BREWINGTON

CLERK TO THE BOARD
TRACY BOYD

COUNTY ATTORNEY
DAVID B. BAXTER, JR.

RESOLUTION OPPOSING THE PROPOSED EXPANSION OF TRAINING ACTIVITIES AND RESTRICTED WATER AREAS WITHIN THE MCAS CHERRY POINT RANGE COMPLEX

WHEREAS, the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality, Division of Coastal Management (DCM), has received a Federal Consistency Determination concerning proposed changes to training activities and operations within the Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Cherry Point Range Complex; and

WHEREAS, the United States Marine Corps has proposed expanding water-based restricted boundaries and training activities, including aircraft, unmanned systems, and watercraft operations, near BT-9 at Brant Island Shoals and BT-11 at Piney Island, including establishing a permanent 500-foot safety buffer around BT-11; and

WHEREAS, the Board is particularly concerned with the proposed restricted water area between BT-9 and BT-11, as restricting this intervening area would close the mouth of the Neuse River, interfering with a vital corridor within North Carolina's public trust waters used by commercial and recreational fishermen, local and interstate boaters, commercial traffic, NCDOT ferry traffic and other mariners traveling through the Pamlico Sound and accessing the Neuse River, Intracoastal Waterway, inlets and State Port in Morehead City; and

WHEREAS, the proposed expansion of the intermittent Use Water Restricted Area does not include any information on the frequency of activation and waterway closures, and such restriction of public trust waters is counter to CAMA's stated goal to protect public rights for navigation and recreation and

WHEREAS, Pamlico County and its coastal communities are deeply rooted in maritime heritage and recognize the importance of MCAS Cherry Point to national defense and the regional economy, while depending upon access to public waterways for livelihoods, commercial and recreational fishing, shrimping, crabbing, oystering, transportation, and coastal commerce; and

WHEREAS, the Board is gravely concerned that restricting the waters between BT-9 and BT-11 and expanding restrictions surrounding those ranges would reduce access to valuable fishing grounds, displace local mariners from customary channels onto more exposed and potentially hazardous alternative navigation routes, interfere with traditional uses of coastal waters, and adversely affect the County's residents and local economy; and

WHEREAS, expanding federally restricted areas within historic marine corridors could expose local water users to enforcement actions and applicable penalties for entering waters previously available for customary navigation and fishing; and

WHEREAS, a permanent restriction around BT-11 would limit public access even during periods when training activities are not occurring, warranting careful consideration of less restrictive alternatives; and

WHEREAS, given the substantial economic, navigational, and public safety implications of this proposal, affected residents must have a transparent and accessible opportunity to present their concerns directly to state regulatory authorities through a public hearing within Pamlico County; and

WHEREAS, the Board believes that military training needs should be addressed through meaningful consultation with affected local governments and water users and through measures that protect public safety while preserving the greatest practicable public access;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Pamlico County Board of Commissioners unequivocally opposes the proposed expansion of training activities and restricted water areas within the MCAS Cherry Point Range Complex as submitted, with particular opposition to the proposed restriction of waters between BT-9 and BT-11, the expansion of restricted boundaries surrounding those ranges, and the permanent 500-foot safety buffer around BT-11, because of their potential effects on public access, customary navigation routes, fishing activities, and the livelihoods of Pamlico County residents.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board formally requests that the North Carolina Division of Coastal Management conduct a public hearing within Pamlico County before finalizing its federal consistency review, ensuring that local mariners, commercial and recreational fishermen, business owners, and residents have a full opportunity to provide public testimony, and extend the written comment period as necessary to accommodate that hearing and meaningful public participation.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board requests that the Division of Coastal Management fully evaluate the proposal's effects on public access, navigation, commercial and recreational fishing, coastal resources, public safety, and the economies of surrounding communities, with particular attention to the proposed restricted water area between BT-9 and BT-11, and object to the Federal Consistency Determination to the extent the proposal is inconsistent with the enforceable policies of North Carolina's Coastal Management Program.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board demands that the United States Marine Corps preserve public access through the waters between BT-9 and BT-11, protect safe navigation within these traditional coastal waters, refrain from implementing the proposed restrictions as submitted, and pursue alternatives that minimize additional water restrictions, limit closures to periods reasonably necessary for safety, avoid disproportionate economic impacts on local fisheries, address navigational hazards, and provide clear and timely notice to affected water users.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the County Manager is authorized to submit this resolution as the County's formal public comment and official objection and hearing request to the North Carolina Division of Coastal Management before the October 15, 2026, deadline, and transmit copies to MCAS Cherry Point, the County's state legislative delegation, and its congressional representatives.

ADOPTED this 5th day of October, 2026, by the Pamlico County Board of Commissioners.

Kenny Heath, Chairman
Pamlico County Board of Commissioners

Attest:

Tracy Boyd, Clerk to the Board

[SEAL]



From: helena mayo
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] "Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Tuesday, October 6, 2026 9:28:18 PM

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Dear Federal Consistency Coordinator,

I am writing to formally oppose the proposed expansion of restricted water areas associated with MCAS Cherry Point training operations near BT-9 and BT-11.

As a Pamlico County resident with strong ties to Goose Creek Island and our commercial fishing community, I am deeply concerned about the effects these restrictions could have on local livelihoods and public access to our waters.

Commercial fishermen depend on access to fishing grounds to support their families. Expanded restrictions could disrupt their work, increase fuel costs, and place additional burdens on an industry already facing significant challenges. These waterways are also important to recreational fishermen, boaters, and local businesses.

I respect our military and its training needs, but I oppose this proposal because of its potential harm to our coastal communities. Public access and the livelihoods of those who depend on these waters must be protected.

I urge the North Carolina Division of Coastal Management to object to this proposal and protect access to the Pamlico Sound and surrounding waterways.

Please include my opposition in the public record.

Sincerely,
Helena Mayo
Pamlico County, North Carolina

From: don
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] "Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Sunday, September 27, 2026 1:59:27 PM

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I'm writing to oppose the proposed 500 ft exclusion area on BT-11. This area is some of the most productive fishing grounds on the Pamlico Sound. Excluding this from recreational fishing is a non-starter. We are already burdened by the 500 yd rule for duck hunting that eliminates thousands of acres of water for us duck hunters.
How many "accidents have occurred in the proposed 500 ft range at BT-11 over the last 20 years? None, is my guess.

From: Shane Ravan
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Protection of North Carolina Public Trust Waters and Public Access
Date: Thursday, October 8, 2026 5:32:32 AM

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To the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality, Division of Coastal Management:

I respectfully submit this comment regarding the proposed MCAS Cherry Point Range Operations Expansion, particularly the proposed expansion of restricted water areas associated with BT-9 and BT-11 and the proposed permanent 500-foot safety buffer around BT-11.

I want to be clear that this comment is **not opposition to MCAS Cherry Point, the Marine Corps mission, military readiness, or national defense.** Those missions are vital to Eastern North Carolina and to our nation. My concern is the continued expansion of restrictions on North Carolina's public-trust waters and the precedent established by allowing additional public access to be removed without demonstrating that the restriction is the minimum practicable impact.

Protecting Public Trust Waters

North Carolina's coastal waters are held in trust for the benefit of the public. Navigation, fishing, and recreation are longstanding public uses of these waters.

The Marine Corps' own consistency determination acknowledges that the proposed action **"would impede navigation or interfere with access or use of public trust areas or estuarine waters"** and that it **"would infringe on public trust rights."**

That admission deserves significant consideration.

North Carolina's Coastal Management Program specifically calls for military water-target areas to, to the maximum extent practicable, avoid infringement upon public-trust rights and avoid undue interference with navigation and public access.

The fact that a federal agency can establish a restricted or danger zone does not eliminate the State's responsibility to determine whether the proposed expansion is consistent with North Carolina's coastal policies.

Notification Does Not Equal Mitigation

The proposal relies in part upon Notices to Mariners to inform the public when the expanded danger zone is activated.

Notification is necessary for safety, but notification does not mitigate the loss of access.

Telling a fisherman or boater that an area of public-trust water is closed does not restore the right to use that water. The State should therefore require the Marine Corps to demonstrate that the proposed geographic and temporal restrictions are actually necessary—not simply that the public will be notified when they occur.

The Permanent 500-Foot BT-11 Buffer Requires Particular Scrutiny

The proposed permanent 500-foot safety buffer around BT-11 is especially concerning.

There is an important distinction between temporarily restricting public access during an active training event and permanently establishing additional waters as restricted.

If the 500-foot area is necessary for safety only during particular training activities, DCM should require the Marine Corps to explain why that restriction must be permanent rather than activated only when the specific activity creates the identified safety hazard.

A permanent restriction establishes a new baseline from which future restrictions can be expanded.

That creates a legitimate concern regarding the cumulative loss of public access over time.

Demonstrate the Minimum Necessary Restriction

Before approving the expansion, DCM should require the Marine Corps to demonstrate:

- The exact acreage of additional public-trust waters affected;
- Why the proposed boundaries are the minimum area necessary;
- Why the permanent 500-foot BT-11 buffer is necessary rather than temporary;
- How many days and hours per year the expanded area is expected to be closed;
- Whether training can be scheduled to minimize conflicts with recreational and commercial fishing;
- Whether smaller or temporary exclusion zones could accomplish the same safety objectives;
- Whether existing military property or training areas could accommodate portions of the proposed training; and
- The cumulative impact of existing and proposed restrictions on public-trust waters throughout the Cherry Point operating area.

This is particularly important because some individual training activities are increasing substantially more than the proposal's generalized 10-percent increase suggests. For example, BT-11 UAS operations are proposed to increase from 55 to 275 annually, a fivefold increase.

If those increased activities are driving the need for additional restricted waters, the public and DCM should be provided a clear explanation of that relationship.

Prevent Incremental Loss of Public Access

The most important issue is cumulative impact.

One additional restriction may appear relatively small. Another may also appear reasonable.

Over time, however, repeated expansions can substantially reduce the waters available for public navigation, fishing, and recreation.

Public access should not be evaluated only one incremental closure at a time.

DCM should establish a clear baseline of existing restrictions and evaluate how the proposed expansion changes the total amount, frequency, and duration of public access restrictions.

The State should also ensure that any future expansion of restricted public-trust waters receives independent review rather than becoming an automatic extension of this approval.

Requested Action

I respectfully request that DCM **not approve the proposed expansion as currently presented** until the Marine Corps demonstrates that the proposed restrictions represent the **minimum practicable infringement upon North Carolina's public-trust rights.**

At a minimum, DCM should require:

1. A detailed map and acreage calculation of the additional public-trust waters affected;
2. A site-specific justification for the permanent 500-foot BT-11 buffer;
3. An explanation of why a temporary, activity-specific restriction would not adequately address the identified safety concern;
4. An estimate of the number and duration of anticipated public closures each year;
5. A cumulative-impact analysis of existing and proposed restrictions surrounding the Cherry Point range complex; and
6. Evaluation of less restrictive alternatives that preserve public navigation and fishing access whenever reasonably possible.

Conclusion

North Carolina does not have to choose between military readiness and protecting public access.

The Marine Corps should have the ability to conduct necessary training safely and effectively. At the same time, North Carolina should ensure that restrictions on public-trust waters are **necessary, narrowly tailored, and limited to the smallest area and shortest duration reasonably required.**

The Marine Corps' own analysis acknowledges that this proposal will interfere with navigation and public access and will infringe upon public-trust rights.

That should not be treated as an unavoidable administrative consequence. It should be the reason for heightened scrutiny.

Protect the mission. Protect public safety. But also protect the public trust.

Once public access to public-trust waters is surrendered, restoring it is far more difficult than protecting it in the first place.

Respectfully,

Shane Ravan

From: Van Parrish
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Fwd: : Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Thursday, October 8, 2026 4:41:09 AM

You don't often get email from vparrish1455@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear Federal Consistency Coordinator,
I am writing to express my concerns regarding the proposed update to training activities and operations within the MCAS Cherry Point Range Complex.
I am a North Carolina resident and a recreational fisherman and waterfowl hunter who regularly uses the Neuse River and Pamlico Sound and the surrounding coastal waters. I personally spend time fishing and hunting in this area, so the potential expansion of restricted-water areas directly affects my ability to use these waters.
I want to make clear that I support our military and the Marine Corps' need for realistic and effective training. My concern is not with military readiness. My concern is making sure that military training can be accomplished while also protecting the public's longstanding ability to use North Carolina's coastal waters.
North Carolina's coastal waters are public trust waters. The state recognizes public-trust rights that include the rights to navigate, fish, hunt and enjoy recreational activities in the waters of the state. These waters and their resources are held for the benefit of the people of North Carolina.
The proposed increase in restricted-water areas around BT-9 and BT-11, along with the proposed permanent 500-foot safety buffer around BT-11, therefore deserves particularly careful consideration. NC DEQ confirms that the proposal would increase restricted-water areas while adding or expanding aircraft, unmanned-system and watercraft training activities.
As someone who actually uses these waters, I know that a restriction that may look relatively small on a map can have a much larger practical impact. Closing or restricting access to one area can force fishermen and hunters to make substantial detours, eliminate access to traditional fishing and hunting locations, or make an otherwise safe and routine trip impractical.
I respectfully ask NC DEQ and the Marine Corps to carefully consider the following:
1. Protect reasonable access to North Carolina's public trust waters whenever military training does not require a closure.
2. Minimize the size and duration of restricted-water areas to what is actually necessary for training and public safety.
3. Provide the public with clear maps showing the existing restrictions and every proposed additional restricted-water area.
4. Clearly explain when intermittent restrictions will be activated, how long they will last, and how fishermen, hunters and recreational boaters will be notified.
5. Consider the cumulative effect of these restrictions on public-trust uses, including fishing, hunting, navigation and recreation.
6. Maintain access through these waters whenever it can be done safely without interfering with active military training.
I also ask that the state consider the fact that these waters are used by people who have fished and hunted them for generations. Public-trust waters should not be viewed simply as empty space on a military training map. They are working waters that support recreational fishermen, hunters, commercial fishermen, guides, boaters and coastal communities.

I believe it is possible to support the Marine Corps' training mission while also protecting the public's ability to exercise its longstanding rights in North Carolina's public trust waters.
I respectfully request that NC DEQ carefully evaluate the proposed changes and, if the project is approved, include appropriate conditions to minimize unnecessary restrictions on public access.
Finally, I request that the state provide a clear comparison of the existing restricted-water areas versus the proposed restricted-water areas, including the permanent BT-11 500-foot buffer. I would also like clarification regarding whether fishermen and hunters will be permitted to transit through the affected areas when military training is not taking place and what system will be used to notify the public when temporary restrictions are active.
Thank you for considering my comments and for including them in the official record.
Sincerely,
Van Parrish
North Carolina

Please submit written comments by Oct. 15, 2026, to Federal Consistency Coordinator, 400 Commerce Avenue, Morehead City, NC 28557, or by email to federalconsistencycomments@deq.nc.gov. Please put “Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point” in the subject

From: Duncan Leach
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency : UCMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Wednesday, October 7, 2026 2:38:11 PM
Attachments: image001.png

You don't often get email from duncan.leach@natpow.com. Learn why this is important

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I am a huge supporter of the military, but this closure of public waters is a dangerous government overreach. My family & friends all spend a lot of time in this area boating, fishing & hunting. The elimination of this resource is not acceptable.

Duncan Leach
Senior Power Consultant
National Power, LLC

Cell: 919.815.4252



From: Josh Hardison
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Pamlico Sound Government Access Proposal Impact on locals
Date: Wednesday, October 7, 2026 1:14:08 PM

You don't often get email from joshhardisonbr945@icloud.com. Learn why this is important

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Due to the information about the proposal from the federal government that would essentially shut down our access to the Pamlico Sound. For the federal government to close the mouth of the Neuse River and a large portion of the Pamlico Sound during training exercises. We do not want this to happen. Our waterways are a huge part of our community and our way of life, and our local economy. Fishermen, boaters, families, and businesses all depend on access to the Pamlico Sound, Neuse River, and surrounding waters. These are public waters that generations of families have enjoyed, and we should not sit back and watch access to them be taken away.

We understand the importance of military training and supporting our military, but there has to be a reasonable solution that allows our military to train while also protecting the rights and access of the people who live, work, fish, and enjoy these waters. Closing these areas could have a serious impact on many's lives, our community and many businesses.

From: Web_Inc!
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Tuesday, October 6, 2026 10:39:06 PM

You don't often get email from jkcapefear@aol.com. Learn why this is important

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I am a recreational fisherman who enjoys fishing at Raccoon Island and Turnagain Bay. The proposed increase in the Restricted Bombing area would substantially reduce my favorite fishing spots.
I am writing to you to ask your consideration in not approving this proposed increase.
Respectfully submitted,
J.K. Hall
910-520-2447

Sent from AOL on Android

From: Cheryle Pope
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Thursday, October 8, 2026 8:56:27 AM

You don't often get email from pope.cheryle.anne@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear Federal Consistency Coordinator,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposal that would allow the federal government to close the mouth of the Neuse River and a large portion of the Pamlico Sound during Cherry Point training exercises.

These proposed restrictions would severely impact access to our state's public water resources for local boaters, transient boaters, and both recreational and commercial fishermen. The affected areas include critical habitats for our world-class old drum fishery, North Carolina's seasonal Tarpon migration, and numerous other species. The noise of increased boat engines and environmental impact of soldiers practicing war games in the Pamlico would further damage fishing on our coast.

Closing these waters would cripple our local commercial fishing industry and severely limit general navigation, including popular recreational trips to places like Ocracoke. Furthermore, restricting access will harm local tourism, negatively impacting state and local businesses and reducing vital tax revenue.

I urge you to oppose this water access expansion to protect our public waters, local economy, and coastal community.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this vital matter.

Sincerely,
Cheryle Pope

From: Cooper Stanley
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Wednesday, October 7, 2026 12:58:35 PM

You don't often get email from sobx3@icloud.com. Learn why this is important

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To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to express my strongest opposition to any proposed closure of the mouth of the Neuse River and portions of Pamlico Sound associated with B-T11 and B-T9 bombing and weapons-training operations.

Let me be perfectly clear: North Carolina's coastal waters are not an empty training ground. They are a workplace.

These waters support commercial fishermen, charter captains, recreational fishermen, guides, boat owners, and countless coastal businesses whose livelihoods depend on access to these waters. Closing additional areas — particularly productive fishing grounds and access routes — is not a minor inconvenience. It directly interferes with people's ability to make a living.

The Marine Corps has an important national-security mission, and I respect the men and women who serve. But respect for the military cannot mean that working fishermen are expected to continually surrender access to the public waters they depend on without meaningful consideration of the economic consequences.

The proposed expansion or continuation of closures associated with B-T11 and B-T9 raises serious questions that deserve clear answers:

• Exactly how many acres of public water would be closed?

• How frequently and for how long would those closures occur?

• What commercial fishing grounds, transit routes, and gear locations would become inaccessible?

• What analysis has been performed regarding the economic impact on North Carolina's commercial fishing industry?

• How were commercial fishermen and the coastal communities that

depend on these waters consulted before these restrictions were proposed?

• What alternatives were considered to reduce interference with commercial and recreational fishing?

• What compensation, mitigation, or other relief is being considered for fishermen whose access and income are affected?

It is particularly troubling when restrictions on fishermen are considered in isolation from the cumulative burden already placed on North Carolina's fishing industry. Commercial fishermen are already navigating seasons, quotas, gear restrictions, weather, fuel costs, market conditions, environmental regulations, and numerous area closures. Every additional closure takes another piece of the water away from the people whose livelihoods depend on it.

You cannot continue treating these impacts as though they are insignificant simply because the closure occurs on water rather than on land.

A commercial fisherman cannot simply move his business to another location because the government has decided that the area where he works is now needed for training. Fishing grounds are not interchangeable. Gear is not always easily relocated. Weather, tides, species distribution, bottom conditions, distance from ports, and existing regulations all determine where and when fishermen can actually operate.

And this is bigger than one river, one sound, or one group of fishermen.

If the precedent is established that increasingly large portions of North Carolina's public waters can be restricted for military training without adequately accounting for the economic consequences, commercial fishing communities across the entire state should be concerned.

North Carolina should not be forced to choose between national defense and the survival of its working waterfront.

There needs to be a serious, transparent examination of whether these training requirements can be accomplished while minimizing the disruption to commercial and recreational fishing. At an absolute minimum, affected fishermen deserve meaningful consultation, detailed maps and schedules, a transparent economic-impact assessment, and a genuine effort to identify less disruptive alternatives.

I am asking the State of North Carolina, the appropriate federal agencies, and the Marine Corps to stop and fully evaluate the consequences before moving forward with additional restrictions.

Do not make decisions about fishermen without fishermen at the table.

Do not sacrifice working coastal communities for administrative convenience.

And do not treat public waters as though the people who depend on them have no legitimate stake in how those waters are used.

North Carolina's commercial fishermen have earned the right to be heard, and they deserve more than a notice telling them where they can no longer work.

I expect this matter to receive the seriousness it deserves and request a detailed response addressing the economic impact, geographic scope, frequency, duration, and alternatives associated with the proposed B-T11 and B-T9 training closures.

Our coastal waters are part of North Carolina's economy, heritage, and working waterfront. They should be managed with the same seriousness and respect given to the military mission — not treated as expendable.

Respectfully,

[Cooper Stanley]
[Harkers Island/Carteret, North Carolina]
[252-269-7773]

From: Richard Duvall
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Wednesday, October 7, 2026 11:52:32 AM

You don't often get email from ricdduvall@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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To whom it may concern, the Pamlico sound is a public area and should not be restricted for the public for target practice. This also can not be good for the wildlife in the area. The area is known for fish hatchlings and other marine animals. The restrictions placed on the area for fishing now are restrictive and removing freedoms from the citizens of the US in the name of wildlife conservation. With this in mind how can you justify bombing the area without violating your own laws of restriction. Stop destroying our environment and stealing our lands. The military is known for destroying and contaminating lands and waters it sits on. Enough is enough with the government taking our freedom and lands away from we the people. Thank you

From: Harrison Mabry
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Wednesday, October 7, 2026 10:23:58 AM

You don't often get email from harrisonmabry@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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To whom it may concern,

I am writing in concern of the proposed expansion of BT-9 and BT-11. I believe this will take away waters in public trust. The expansion and purposed 500ft buffer zone restrict access to NC water by recreational anglers, boaters, and commercial fisherman. I believe this to be in contradiction to county land access goals of Carteret, Crave, and Pamlico County. Our fisheries have large economic value for commercial and recreational fishermen and I believe restricting more water will do economic harm. There is also no evidence that the increased training area will not affect the ecology of our coastal waters.

Thank you,
Harrison Mabry

From: Pepi Stahlmann
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Tuesday, October 6, 2026 8:19:17 PM

You don't often get email from pstahlmann@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear Sir or Madam,

The plan to cut off the Pamlico Sound from the Neuse River with a military exclusion zone is unacceptable to commercial and recreational fishermen, and to anyone else traveling these waters. You surely know the huge economic impact this would cause.

It is simply a land/water grab by the military. As much as we appreciate their work, whoever came up with this plan simply doesn't know our area and local waters.

Thanks
Pepi Stahlmann

From: Jane Potter
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] "Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point"
Date: Thursday, October 8, 2026 9:08:13 AM

You don't often get email from jcpotter0108@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Please do NOT close waterways as proposed:

There is a proposal from the federal government that would essentially shut down our access to the Pamlico Sound. This proposal includes provisions for the federal government to close the mouth of the Neuse River and a large portion of the Pamlico Sound during training exercises. This would have major impacts on access to this public resource for local boaters and transient boating as well as recreational and commercial fishermen. The proposed restrictions affect areas that are home to our world class old drum fishery, as well as North Carolina's seasonal Tarpon migration and numerous other species. It would cripple our commercial fishermen in the sound and limit access to other areas such as the outer banks.

From: Karen Oneal
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] "Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point"
Date: Tuesday, October 6, 2026 9:34:18 PM

You don't often get email from kso28515@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear Federal Consistency Coordinator,

I am writing to formally oppose the proposed expansion of restricted water areas associated with MCAS Cherry Point training operations near BT-9 and BT-11.

As a Pamlico County resident with strong ties to Goose Creek Island and our commercial fishing community, I am deeply concerned about the effects these restrictions could have on local livelihoods and public access to our waters.

Commercial fishermen depend on access to fishing grounds to support their families. Expanded restrictions could disrupt their work, increase fuel costs, and place additional burdens on an industry already facing significant challenges. These waterways are also important to recreational fishermen, boaters, and local businesses.

I respect our military and its training needs, but I oppose this proposal because of its potential harm to our coastal communities. Public access and the livelihoods of those who depend on these waters must be protected.

I urge the North Carolina Division of Coastal Management to object to this proposal and protect access to the Pamlico Sound and surrounding waterways.

Please include my opposition in the public record.

Sincerely,
Karen Oneal
Pamlico County, North Carolina

From: Darin Mayo
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] "Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point"
Date: Tuesday, October 6, 2026 9:31:19 PM

You don't often get email from dm28515@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

CAUTION: External email. Do not click links or open attachments unless verified. Report suspicious emails with the Report Message button located on your Outlook menu bar on the Home tab.

Dear Federal Consistency Coordinator,

I am writing to formally oppose the proposed expansion of restricted water areas associated with MCAS Cherry Point training operations near BT-9 and BT-11.

As a Pamlico County resident with strong ties to Goose Creek Island and our commercial fishing community, I am deeply concerned about the effects these restrictions could have on local livelihoods and public access to our waters.

Commercial fishermen depend on access to fishing grounds to support their families. Expanded restrictions could disrupt their work, increase fuel costs, and place additional burdens on an industry already facing significant challenges. These waterways are also important to recreational fishermen, boaters, and local businesses.

I respect our military and its training needs, but I oppose this proposal because of its potential harm to our coastal communities. Public access and the livelihoods of those who depend on these waters must be protected.

I urge the North Carolina Division of Coastal Management to object to this proposal and protect access to the Pamlico Sound and surrounding waterways.

Please include my opposition in the public record.

Sincerely,
Darin Mayo
Pamlico County, North Carolina

From: Lara Manetta
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Cherry Point Range Complex
Date: Friday, October 9, 2026 11:27:24 AM

You don't often get email from laramanettawriter@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Hi there-
Pamlico Sound is a natural treasure and part of the appeal that drew me and my husband to coastal North Carolina 4 year ago. We love the area's sailing waters enough to have purchased property in Pamlico County. We love it here. We spend locally, donate time and money to local causes and want to see this region thrive.
Please listen to the pro and hobby fishermen, sailors and others who would be negatively impacted by this planned change. I urge you to block this request and keep Pamlico Sound vital and vibrant for coastal NC.
Best,
Lara Manetta

From: Gardner Reynolds
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMA MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Friday, October 9, 2026 11:19:57 AM

You don't often get email from gardner.reynolds@longandfoster.com. Learn why this is important

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Sirs,

I'm a native North Carolinian and paid taxes for many years to now trying to enjoy my partial retirement on the inner banks near Oriental.

We are a fishing family and are adamantly opposed to the proposed buffer around BT-11 and areas in the Neuse and Pamlico waters.

Thank you,

Gardner Reynolds

Gardner Reynolds

Residential Broker & ALC
Accredited Land Consultant
for Farms and Ranches

The Legacy Group

919.749.3177
gardner.reynolds@longandfoster.com
https://longandfoster.com/gardnerreynolds
https://legacyfarmsandranchesnc.com/
8521 Six Forks Road, Ste 105
Raleigh, NC 27615

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Warning: If you receive an email from anyone concerning a transaction involving our company which requests that you wire funds or that you provide nonpublic personal

information by unsecured return email, do not respond to the message. To protect yourself, immediately call our company.

From: Chris West
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] BT9 & BT11 Bombing Range
Date: Friday, October 9, 2026 10:55:05 AM

You don't often get email from cwest@cbcnc.com. Learn why this is important

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The combination and closure, any closure between these 2 bombing ranges is a gross over reach of government authority. This should not be allowed and will be violated by Boaters who frequent the area. This idea needs to be shot down, pun intended!
Thanks,
Chris West
Greenville, NC
252-714-2710

Sent from my Galaxy

From: LuAnn Parins
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] "Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point".
Date: Friday, October 9, 2026 9:47:11 AM

You don't often get email from lmparins@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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To whom it may concern,
With all due respect, are you serious about closing off the mouth of the Neuse River? U.S. Rivers are Public Trust waters. Thousands of people navigate the waters at the mouth of the Neuse year round. Crabbers, shrimpers, and fishing guides all make their living in these waters. Recreational boaters travel to and from Ocracoke, New Bern, Oriental, Bath/Washington and Manteo. Every Spring and Fall boats travel North and South through the Neuse along the Intercoastal Waterway. Many people in our area depend on the Neuse River for their livelihood. I understand that the military needs readiness drills and training, and Turnagain Bay is already heavily restricted. Please be considerate of the rest of the population that uses the Neuse River. We all have the right to navigate in Public Trust waters.
Sincerely,
LuAnn Parins
118 Button Gut Rd.
P O Box 368
Oriental, NC 28571

From: stephenvnoe@gmail.com
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Cc: lynnscott18@gmail.com
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point exclusion area
Date: Friday, October 9, 2026 7:03:13 AM

You don't often get email from stephenvnoe@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear Federal Consistency Coordinator,

I am writing to express my concerns regarding the proposed Range Operations Update at Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point, specifically the '**Exclusion area'**.
I am a North Carolina resident and a recreational sailor who regularly uses the Neuse River and Pamlico Sound and the surrounding coastal waters. I personally spend considerable time sailing and boating in this area, so I am directly affected by any additional restrictions placed on these waters.
I want to make clear that I support our military and the Marine Corps' need for realistic and effective training. My concern is not with military readiness. My concern is protecting reasonable public access to North Carolina's public trust waters while allowing the Marine Corps to accomplish its legitimate training mission.

I have reviewed the Marine Corps' August 2026 Coastal Consistency Determination, and I am particularly concerned by the document's own acknowledgment that the proposed '**exclusion area'** at BT-9 and BT-11 would impede navigation or interfere with access or use of public trust areas or estuarine waters." The document further states that the proposed action "would infringe on public trust rights."
That is a significant issue to me as a boater who actually uses these waters.

North Carolina's coastal management policies recognize these waters as public trust areas and establish a management objective of protecting public rights for navigation and recreation and conserving public trust areas for their biological, economic and aesthetic value. The state's policy concerning water- and wetland-based military training specifically states that such activities should, to the maximum extent practicable, not infringe on public trust rights.

I understand that the proposal does not expand the overall Cherry Point range complex or its special-use airspace. However, that does not mean the practical effect on people using the water is insignificant. The proposal would expand the intermittent restricted-water danger zone north of BT-11 toward BT-9 and establish a permanent 500-foot restricted-area safety buffer around BT-11.

The proposal also substantially increases some military activities at BT-11, including increasing unmanned aircraft system operations from 55 to 275 annually.

For someone who fishes and hunts these waters, the practical impact of a restricted area is more than what its size may look like on a map. A closure can prevent access to traditional fishing and hunting areas, force boaters to make substantial detours, and interfere with navigation and recreational use of waters that are otherwise available to the public.

I respectfully request that NC DEQ carefully consider the following:

- Protect reasonable public access to North Carolina's public trust waters whenever military training does not require a closure.
- Minimize the size and duration of restricted-water areas to what is actually necessary for military training and public safety.
- Provide a clear map comparing the existing restricted areas with every proposed additional restricted area, including the proposed permanent 500-foot BT-11 buffer.
- Clearly explain how frequently the expanded intermittent restrictions are expected to be activated and how long each closure is expected to last.
- Provide timely and reliable notification to fishermen, hunters and recreational boaters whenever an intermittent restriction is activated.
- Consider the cumulative impact of these restrictions on navigation, fishing, hunting and recreation in public trust waters.
- Maintain public access whenever it can safely occur without interfering with active military training.
- I also respectfully ask that the state give particular consideration to the fact that these are public trust waters, not simply unused water surrounding a military training range. North Carolina's own policies recognize navigation, fishing, hunting and recreation as important uses of its coastal waters.
- I support the Marine Corps and recognize the importance of military readiness. I believe, however, that military readiness and protection of the public's established rights in North Carolina's public trust waters should be balanced to the greatest extent practicable.

I respectfully request that my comments be included in the official record and that NC DEQ carefully evaluate whether additional conditions or modifications can reduce unnecessary impacts to public access while still allowing the Marine Corps to accomplish its training mission.
Thank you for considering my comments.
Sincerely,

Thanks,

Steve Noe
Oriental NC

919-946-9960

From: Scott Kinsey
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] BT-11 Proposal
Date: Thursday, October 8, 2026 9:17:23 PM

You don't often get email from scottkinsey40@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

CAUTION: External email. Do not click links or open attachments unless verified. Report suspicious emails with the Report Message button located on your Outlook menu bar on the Home tab.

Hello,

My name is Scott Kinsey and I would hate to see this military training area be so close to our shoreline around the Jones Bay Area. I have grown up hunting and fishing these waters for over fifteen years. Our wildlife needs rest areas untouched by humans, these fish come here every year to spawn in the oyster beds and grassy shoals. This area specifically produces some of the best red drum fishing on the east coast. I do not support this movement, for whatever it's worth please do not bring anything like this closer to shore. The training area that is there already is plenty big and hardly used as is. Make use of what you already have.

Thank you
Scott Kinsey
919-710-1955

From:	Owen Andrews
To:	DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Cc:	Owen Andrews
Subject:	[External] Cherry Point MCAS bombing range expansion
Date:	Thursday, October 8, 2026 3:23:49 PM

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I support MCAS whole heartedly. However, expanded the bombing range and blocking the mouth of the Neuse River, mouth of the Bay river and Jones Bay will severely interrupt both commercial and recreation activities as well as block the Intercoastal waterway.
Please accept this as my objection and others to this expansion.
Thank you,

Owen Andrews

Owen Andrews
President & CEO
Printelect
Direct: (252) 385-5096
Main Office: (252) 633-3197
www.printelect.com
3731 Trent Rd. New Bern, NC 28562

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From: Chris Dozier
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Cc: RGD
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: MCAS Cherry Point Range Operations Update (BT-9 / BT-11)
Date: Thursday, October 8, 2026 11:26:23 AM

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Chris Dozier <cgbdozier@gmail.com> 9:50 AM (1 hour ago)

to RGD

To the North Carolina Division of Coastal Management:

I respectfully request that the Division object to, or at minimum condition any concurrence with, the Marine Corps' Final CZMA Consistency Determination for the Range Operations Update at MCAS Cherry Point (August 2026), specifically the proposed expansion of the intermittent-use water restricted area danger zone at BT-9 and BT-11 and the new permanent 500-foot restricted area safety buffer.

My interest: My family owns property in Pamlico County, including the coastal marsh and impoundments of a multigenerational hunting and fishing club, owned by JEBB Corporation and Gra-Bar Properties, LLC, and a home at River Dunes in Oriental, owned by Barbara B. Dozier. I am a member of the club and regularly hunt, fish, and navigate the Pamlico Sound between the mouth of the Neuse and Cedar Island. I am a licensed North Carolina attorney but submit this comment in my individual capacity. I am copying R. Graham Dozier, Jr., on behalf of those landowners.

1. The determination concedes inconsistency with the enforceable policies, then concludes consistency anyway.
Section 4.2.9 states that the expanded danger zone "would infringe on public trust rights," contrary to 15A NCAC 07M.1000. Section 4.1.1 states that it would "impede navigation or interfere with access or use of public trust areas," contrary to the use standards of 15A NCAC 07H.0208 (standard G as listed in Section 4.1.1). The only basis offered for nonetheless finding the action consistent "to the maximum extent practicable" is that the Army Corps will amend 33 CFR 334.420 and a Notice to Mariners will issue. That describes how the restriction will be imposed, not why it is consistent. Under 15 CFR 930.32(a)(1), "consistent to the maximum extent practicable" means fully consistent unless full consistency is prohibited by existing law applicable to the federal agency. Where an agency knows its activity is not fully consistent, 15 CFR 930.32(a)(2) and 930.39(a) require it to describe in writing the legal authority that prohibits full consistency. The determination identifies none. I also note that the determination recites that it was prepared under 15 CFR 930.35, the regulation governing negative determinations, rather than 930.36 and 930.39, which govern consistency determinations.

2. The scope of the action is understated, "intermittent" is never defined, and the permanent buffer threatens the only alternate route.
Section 2.1 states that the Proposed Action "does not include changes to the size of range complex training areas," yet Figure 2 shows the expanded Exclusion Area running from the BT-11 shoreline north past BT-9 as a single closed block of the Sound, joining what are today two separate danger zones. The determination gives no frequency, duration, hours, days of the week, seasons, or advance-notice period for closures of this area. Without those parameters the Division cannot evaluate the effect on navigation or public trust use, and nothing prevents "intermittent" closures from becoming a de facto permanent exclusion.

During a closure, a vessel leaving the mouth of the Neuse for the eastern Sound must either detour north around the entire zone or use the Indian Ditch, the marked channel between Piney Island and the mainland. Yet Figure 2 draws the new permanent 500-foot buffer along the entire Piney Island shoreline, and portions of that channel lie within 500 feet of the island. The determination does not address whether the buffer will permanently restrict the very route boaters would be forced to use when the Sound is closed, or whether the channel would remain lawfully navigable at all. That is a serious navigation safety concern for small craft, particularly in poor weather.

3. The public safety and resource conclusions are contradicted by the determination's own figures.
Table 1 shows annual munitions expenditures at BT-11 rising from 1,229,863 to 2,294,912, an 87% increase. It also shows no clearance cycle for the BT-11 waters at Rattan Bay ("Rattan Bay not cleared"), and that BT-9 waters are cleared only every seven years. Yet Section 4.2.9 concludes, without citing any sampling data on lead, metals, or unexploded ordnance, that the action will not damage public trust resources, violate water quality standards, or create public safety hazards. 15 CFR 930.39(a) requires a consistency determination to include comprehensive data and information sufficient to support its conclusions; this one does not. The proposed four-year clearance cycle is welcome, but clearance and baseline sampling should precede, not follow, any expansion.

4. There is no alternatives or minimization analysis.
The 07H.0208 use standards (standard A as listed in Section 4.1.1) require a showing that the selected combination of sites and design will have minimum adverse impact. The determination does not consider limiting closure days, preserving a marked transit corridor during closures, keeping the buffer clear of existing marked channels, or reducing the footprint of the expanded zone. To my knowledge there has been no documented accident involving the public within the existing boundaries in more than 50 years, which calls into question the need for the expansion in the first place.

5. Effects on fisheries, access, and the local economy are ignored.
Section 4.1.1 states the action "would not affect the life cycles of estuarine or ocean resources," and Section 4.3.6 states it would not affect resource-based industries in Pamlico County. Neither statement is supported by any analysis. The affected waters hold North Carolina's world-class adult red drum fishery and spawning grounds, and they lie on the path of the state's seasonal tarpon migration. The 07H.0208 use standards (standards A and F as listed in Section 4.1.1) specifically protect spawning and nursery areas and require that activity be timed to minimize effects on their life cycles. Closures blocking the route from the mouth of the Neuse into the Sound would also cut off routine boat access to Drum Inlet and Ocracoke for local families and transient boaters. They would hit hardest the commercial fishermen, guides, waterfowl hunters, and sporting clubs whose livelihoods and traditions depend on these waters.

Requested action:
I ask that the Division object under 15 CFR 930.43. In the alternative, any concurrence should be conditioned under 15 CFR 930.4 on:

1. a defined maximum number of closure days and hours per year, with no closures on weekends, holidays, during peak waterfowl and fishing seasons, during the fall red drum spawning season, or during the summer tarpon run;
2. a published closure schedule with meaningful advance notice through Notices to Mariners, VHF broadcast, and local outlets;
3. a marked, navigable transit corridor that remains open during every closure;
4. completion of range clearance at BT-11, including Rattan Bay, and baseline sediment and water-quality sampling before the expanded zone is activated;
5. annual public reporting of closure days and clearance results;
6. limiting the permanent 500-foot buffer to the minimum area demonstrably necessary; and
7. confirmation that the permanent 500-foot buffer will not restrict navigation in the Indian Ditch or any other marked channel.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Respectfully,

Chris Dozier
1424 Dellwood Drive, Raleigh, NC 27607
(919) 818-1767
cgbdozier@gmail.com

cc: R. Graham Dozier, Jr., on behalf of JEBB Corporation, Gra-Bar Properties, LLC, and Barbara B. Dozier, landowners in Pamlico County

From:	Jennifer Respass
To:	DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject:	[External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point – Strong Opposition to Proposed Restrictions on Commercial Fishing
Date:	Thursday, October 8, 2026 9:55:05 AM

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Dear Federal Consistency Coordinator,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed restrictions on access to Pamlico Sound and the mouth of the Neuse River associated with military training exercises at MCAS Cherry Point.

My greatest concern is the potentially devastating impact these restrictions could have on North Carolina's commercial fishing industry and the hardworking men and women whose livelihoods depend on these waters.

Commercial fishing is not a hobby or a recreational pastime. It is a way of life, a profession, and, for many families, a tradition passed down through generations. These fishermen work long, physically demanding hours, often under dangerous and unpredictable conditions, to earn an honest living and provide seafood for our communities and beyond.

Their livelihoods depend on access to the waters where they have worked for decades. Restricting that access does not simply inconvenience them. It threatens their ability to support their families, meet their financial obligations, and remain in an industry that is already facing tremendous challenges.

Commercial fishermen cannot simply relocate their operations whenever an area is closed. Their fishing grounds, equipment, seasonal opportunities, fuel expenses, and weather conditions all determine whether a trip is financially viable. A lost day of fishing can mean thousands of dollars in lost revenue, while the expenses associated with maintaining and operating a commercial fishing vessel continue regardless.

For commercial shrimp fishermen in particular, access to productive fishing grounds during limited seasonal opportunities is critical. Shrimp do not wait for military exercises to conclude. Once that opportunity passes, the potential income is gone, and it cannot simply be recovered another day.

The economic consequences extend far beyond the individual fisherman. Seafood dealers, fish houses, processing facilities, marine suppliers, fuel distributors, mechanics, and numerous small businesses depend on the commercial fishing industry. When fishermen cannot work, entire coastal communities feel the impact.

I recognize and respect the importance of our military and the mission of MCAS Cherry Point. However, protecting military readiness should not come at the expense of destroying the economic stability of hardworking North Carolina families.

These are public waterways, and commercial fishermen deserve reasonable, dependable access to the resources upon which their livelihoods depend. They should not be forced to bear the financial burden of restrictions imposed without meaningful consideration of their operations and economic survival.

I respectfully urge the agencies involved to reconsider these proposed restrictions, fully evaluate the economic impact on commercial fishing, and pursue alternatives that allow military training to continue without unnecessarily displacing the men and women who make their living on Pamlico Sound.

Most importantly, I ask that commercial fishermen be given a meaningful voice in this process. Decisions that could jeopardize their livelihoods should never be made without listening to the people who know these waters, work these waters, and depend on them every single day.

North Carolina's commercial fishing industry is part of our heritage, our economy, and our future. Once we lose these hardworking fishermen and the generations of knowledge they represent, we may never get them back.

Please protect their right to work, their ability to provide for their families, and the future of commercial fishing in eastern North Carolina.

Sincerely please hear the voices from the most affected,

Jennifer Respass
Captain Christopher B. Tate
Belhaven NC

From: Hayden Conner
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Bombing range expansion
Date: Friday, October 9, 2026 12:56:07 PM

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My public comment that I am submitting today on the BT-11 bombing range expansion.

Hayden Conner
233 Russells Creek Rd Beaufort Nc

10/9/26

The Federal Consistency Coordinator
400 Commerce Avenue
Morehead City, NC 28557

Subject: Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point- Opposition to the Proposed Expansion of BT-9 and BT-11 Ranges

To: NC Department of Environmental Quality- Division of Coastal Management

I am a lifelong recreational angler and have boated and fished the waters of Pamlico Sound for over fifty years. Over the last ten years, the waters and shorelines around the BT-9 and BT-11 ranges have accounted for roughly 75 percent of my fishing effort, much of it spent taking friends and family with me. I submit this comment in opposition to the proposed permanent 500-foot closure along the shoreline of the range perimeter, including both Piney Island and Raccoon Island. Using the measuring tool on NOAA's interactive ENC chart viewer, which displays the current safety closure areas, I estimate that the proposed buffer would close approximately 21 miles of shoreline around the two islands that is currently available to recreational anglers, commercial fishermen, birdwatchers and boaters. These are public trust waters, and a permanent closure would end access to water and shoreline my family and friends have fished across generations.

1. The affected waters are premier fishing habitat, and closing them would concentrate users into fewer areas.
This area is truly the last frontier for many anglers, birdwatchers, boaters, and waterfowl hunters. The shallow waters and shorelines that would be closed are not just my preferred fishing grounds. They are among the most productive habitats for red drum, speckled trout, and flounder in the State of NC. Closing roughly 21 miles of shoreline permanently would remove access to some of the best fishing in the area. The closure would also displace commercial gillnet and pound net effort, forcing recreational anglers and commercial fishermen into the same smaller, more crowded areas, along with birdwatchers, boaters and hunters. That would heighten user conflict, with consequences for gear interactions, safety, and concentrated pressure on the remaining habitat.

2. Fifty years of experience show no safety need for this closure.
In half a century of boating and angling beside the existing BT-11 boundaries, I have coexisted with the range safely and respectfully. In my experience, there is no history on these waters that justifies suddenly removing public access to these zones when considering the existing level and the proposed increase in range activity.

3. The proposal conflicts with the Marine Corps' prior representations.
In its 2015 submission to NOAA (80 FR 21212, Document 2015-08841), MCAS Cherry Point stated that "The Marine Corps conducts all inert and live-fire exercises so that all ammunition and other ordnances strike and/or fall on the land or water-based targets or within in the existing danger zone or water restricted areas." On that record, the existing danger zones and restricted areas were sufficient to contain range operations. Nothing in the current proposal explains why an additional 500-foot permanent closure around the full perimeter is now necessary.

4. If the existing zones are no longer sufficient, something material has changed.
If the Marine Corps now believes the current zones cannot contain their operations, then the scale, type, or trajectory of the proposed activities must differ significantly from what was documented in 2015. A change of that kind cannot be handled as a routine boundary adjustment. The public is entitled to know what changed and why.

5. Rigorous economic and environmental review is required.
A material change in operations or in the area affected calls for updated review, including:

• An assessment of environmental impacts on the Pamlico Sound ecosystem, including fish habitat and fisheries, under the National Environmental Policy Act and related statutes;
• An analysis of economic impacts on recreational and commercial fishing and on the communities that depend on them;
• A reassessment of effects on marine mammals and updated compliance with the Marine Mammal Protection Act; and
• Review of consistency with applicable state coastal management policies and the public trust doctrine governing access to these waters for all the Citizens of NC under 15A NCAC 07M.0400.

6. A permanent closure is not the least restrictive option.
Even if some additional safety measures are justified, a permanent, year-round closure of the entire perimeter is the most restrictive approach available. Alternatives should be analyzed such as limited closures near specific hazard areas.

7. Adequate buffers exist for the existing and proposed increase in range activity.
There currently exist 4,000-to-18,000-foot buffers from the target area danger zones to the range shoreline boundary for much of the range. MCAS-Cherry Point is asking to permanently close an additional 500 feet of water past the existing shoreline range boundary. Adding an additional 500 feet of permanent water closure from the existing shoreline boundary provides no meaningful or measurable level of additional safety margin.

8. MCAS-Cherry Point Needs to enforce its existing range boundary vs asking for an additional 500-foot buffer.
The additional 500 feet of buffer is severe overreach by MCAS-Cherry Point. The Consistency Determination states that “the additional stand-off [500-foot buffer] restrictions would also

provide an added level of safety since areas of armed overflight pose an added risk to interlopers.” MCAS-Cherry Point controls all existing authority to enforce the current range boundary and needs to do so if “interlopers” are a concern. Asking boaters to adhere to an additional 500 feet of water buffer marked by an imaginary line is an irresponsible overreach. There is no better boundary definition, nor visual boundary line, than "the shoreline”.

Request.
I ask that the permanent 500-foot shoreline closure be withdrawn or, at minimum, not finalized until the Marine Corps (a) explains how the impact of its current and proposed operations differ from those described in NOAA 80 FR 21212 Document 2015-08841, (b) publishes the data and safety analysis supporting the buffer, including its own calculation of the shoreline miles and water acreage currently open to public access that will be permanently closed, (c) completes updated environmental, economic, and Marine Mammal Protection Act reviews, and (d) evaluates less restrictive alternatives. I also request notice of any further public comment periods or hearings.

Thank you for considering my comments.
Sincerely,
Hayden Conner
(804) 297-4842

From: Jack Hollingsworth
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Bombing range expansion
Date: Tuesday, October 6, 2026 7:24:57 PM

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This not needed. You have the whole clean. Does this men it is under federal rule and will federal employees and associated agency will be allowed to harvest and recreate this area this area upon approval? Is this a property grab like eminent domain or national security? Is there a process or like ferry fees shoved on us with discussion following? NC needs a change where people are heard and needs expressed. I am not in favor of using the shallow sound as a dump for munitions ease of rules to protect its populace compared to the feds. The motives for this should be suspect.

Cordially, Jack Hollongsworth

From: Martin DeGraw
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC Cherry Point
Date: Friday, October 9, 2026 7:03:04 PM

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As a longtime resident of Craven County and sport fisherman, I oppose USMC Cherry Point seizing shoreline and the southern mouth of the Neuse River and adjacent Pamlico Sound for training and target practice. This will be detrimental to the environment and is not necessary. This reminds me of the military's attempt to commandeer land in northeastern NC several years ago for yet another outlying landing field (OLF). The military lost this OLF scheme in court. The proposed military use of environmentally sensitive water and land may end up on court again, and I predict similar results. Fortunately for us, the same attorney that won the OLF battle, Derb S. Carter Jr, is still in practice.

Martin DeGraw, MD
New Bern

From: reed jarvis
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Increase to Military Training Operations in the Pamlico Sound, Specifically Cherry Point Range Complex
Date: Friday, October 9, 2026 4:16:13 PM

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My Name is Frank Reed Jarvis and I live in Atlantic, NC. When I retired approximately 25 years I moved to Atlantic for one reason, fishing. During part of this time I have been a licensed fishing guide. The majority of my fishing trips have been for Red Drum and Spotted Sea Trout in the vicinity of BT-11. As every fisherman knows you don't catch fish in open waters, but you do catch them around structure. In the case of West Bay, Turnagain Bay, and Long Bay the structure is the shoreline. If you take away the shoreline from fishermen, there is no fishing.

I strongly urge all parties involved to deny the addition of a permanent 500-foot restricted area safety buffer around BT-11. As has been stated in the public documents provided this does remove public use of existing Public Trust Waters. This will have a negative economic impact on "Down East" Carteret County.

Some other points to consider:

1. If the shoreline is so dangerous, why have you left the Indian Ditch open? By doing so you are creating a very dangerous condition for navigation. Currently hundreds of vessels move to the Pamlico Sound from the Neuse River via the "Narrows" at Raccoon Island or directly from the Neuse River into the Pamlico Sound. The proposed "intermittent use of water restricted area danger zones" would force all of these vessels to use the Indian Ditch which will create a very real danger to navigation.

2. Recreational fishermen are already being squeezed out of traditional fishing areas because of permits being issued to Commercial fishermen for pound nets and oyster farming which take away our access to shorelines and lead to user group conflicts. The proposed "500-foot restricted safety buffer" will lead to more user group conflicts.

3. The public documents provided states that " additional stand-off restrictions would also provide an added level of safety since areas of armed overflight pose an added risk to interlopers." I take great exception to this statement, first, I should not be considered an interloper when I am legally enjoying the Public Trust Waters of North Carolina and second, an aircraft could just as easily drop ordinance anywhere after it leaves the ground, so why not close all areas from Cherry Point to the bombing ranges. I know this sounds extreme, but that is what you are proposing to us in "Down East" Carteret County.

4. The proposed is simply not fair to "Down East" Carteret County. Why is it proposed to increase training at the Cherry Point Ranges? One reason may be that

other ranges across the nation have been closed or restricted because of complaints from larger populations in more affluent communities. We should not be required to carry the burden alone.

5. It has been mentioned that these activities are economically beneficial to Craven County. Well they certainly will not be beneficial to Carteret County.

6. In item 4 "Current Rules Governing Coastal Management, Section 4.2.7 Coastal Water Quality (15A NC07M.0800} of the documents provided it states "Coastal waters support a wide variety of commercial and recreational activities, including fishing, swimming, hunting, boating and commerce, among others. The coastal waters of North Carolina provide natural and economic value in support of these various activities. Land or water uses, within or outside the coastal zone, with the potential to degrade water quality should be avoided, minimized, or mitigated so as not to impair their continued beneficial use. No significant impacts to surface water, ground water, wetlands, and floodplains would occur with implementation of the Proposed Action. Therefore the Proposed Action is consistent with this policy.

The above statement is absolutely false. When you close the entire shoreline of BT-11 and take public access away from this area of Public Trust Waters you have definitely had a negative impact on commercial and recreational activities, including fishing, swimming, hunting and boating.

In closing I urge that this proposed egregious taking of Public Trust Waters not be allowed.

Sincerely,

Frank Reed Jarvis

From: sleonard27520@gmail.com
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point- Opposition to the Proposed Expansion of BT-9 and BT-11 Ranges
Date: Friday, October 9, 2026 4:09:57 PM

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To: NC Department of Environmental Quality- Division of Coastal Management

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This area is truly the last frontier for many anglers, birdwatchers, boaters, and waterfowl hunters. The shallow waters and shorelines that would be closed are not just my preferred fishing grounds. They are among the most productive habitats for red drum, speckled trout, and flounder in the State of NC. Closing roughly 21 miles of shoreline permanently would remove access to some of the best fishing in the area. The closure would also displace commercial gillnet and pound net effort, forcing recreational anglers and commercial fishermen into the same smaller, more crowded areas, along with birdwatchers, boaters and hunters. That would heighten user conflict, with consequences for gear interactions, safety, and concentrated pressure on the remaining habitat.

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restricted areas were sufficient to contain range operations. Nothing in the current proposal explains why an additional 500-foot permanent closure around the full perimeter is now necessary.

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• An analysis of economic impacts on recreational and commercial fishing and on the communities that depend on them;

• A reassessment of effects on marine mammals and updated compliance with the Marine Mammal Protection Act; and

• Review of consistency with applicable state coastal management policies and the public trust doctrine governing access to these waters for all the Citizens of NC under 15A NCAC 07M.0400.

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Request.

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Thank you for considering my comments.

Sincerely,

Shawn Leonard

sleonard27520@gmail.com


Virus-free.www.avg.com

From: Stanhope
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Friday, October 9, 2026 3:13:21 PM

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From: mesaltymerl
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal consistency/cherry point.
Date: Friday, October 9, 2026 3:00:05 PM

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60 years as a commercial and recreational fisherman. Don't see any reason to change.

Sent from my Galaxy

From: Katie Branch
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Opposition to Proposed Restrictions on Pamlico Sound Access — USMC MCAS Cherry Point Federal Consistency Review
Date: Friday, October 9, 2026 2:20:57 PM

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Katie Branch
New Bern, North Carolina
October 9, 2026

Dear Elected Officials and Federal and State Representatives,

I am writing to express my serious concerns regarding the proposed federal restrictions associated with USMC MCAS Cherry Point that could limit public access to the Neuse River and significant portions of the Pamlico Sound during military training exercises.

The Pamlico Sound and its surrounding waterways are an essential part of Eastern North Carolina's heritage, economy, and way of life. These waters support generations of recreational and commercial fishermen, boaters, local businesses, tourism, and families who depend on and enjoy our coastal resources. Any proposal that could significantly restrict access to these public waterways deserves careful scrutiny and meaningful input from the communities that would be affected.

The proposed restrictions raise serious concerns about the potential impacts on recreational boating, commercial fishing operations, and access to some of North Carolina's most valuable fisheries. The Pamlico Sound is renowned for its red drum fishery, seasonal tarpon migration, and many other important fish species. Restricting access to these areas could negatively affect fishing opportunities, local businesses, commercial fishermen's livelihoods, and the broader coastal economy.

These waterways are more than recreational destinations. They are an integral part of our coastal communities and a resource that should remain accessible to the public whenever possible. Families who travel by boat to Ocracoke, anglers who navigate to traditional fishing grounds, and commercial fishermen who rely on these waters could all face significant disruptions if the proposed restrictions are implemented.

I recognize the importance of military readiness and the need for our armed forces to conduct necessary training. However, I strongly urge the responsible agencies to pursue reasonable alternatives that allow essential military training to take place without imposing unnecessary or excessive restrictions on public waterways and the people who depend on them.

I respectfully request that our elected officials and the appropriate state and federal agencies:

- Carefully review the full extent and duration of the proposed closures and their potential effects on the public.
- Ensure that recreational boaters, commercial fishermen, fishing organizations, local businesses, and affected coastal communities have a meaningful opportunity to participate in the decision-making process.
- Explore alternatives that protect military training requirements while preserving reasonable public access to the Neuse River and Pamlico Sound.
- Evaluate the economic, environmental, and recreational consequences of these restrictions before any final decision is made.
- Advocate for measures that protect public access to these waterways and minimize disruption to established fishing grounds and navigation routes.

I urge you to take this matter seriously and to represent the interests of the coastal communities and citizens who rely on these waters. Decisions of this magnitude should not move forward without a

thorough assessment of their long-term consequences and meaningful consideration of public concerns.

Please oppose any unnecessary restrictions that would substantially limit access to the Pamlico Sound and the Neuse River, and work with the appropriate agencies to find a balanced solution that protects both our national security and our coastal way of life.

Thank you for your time, your attention to this important issue, and your service to the people of North Carolina. I respectfully request that you make your position on this proposal known and advocate for the protection of public access to our coastal waterways.

Sincerely,

Katie Branch

From: Jeff Boring
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] "Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point"
Date: Saturday, October 10, 2026 12:27:18 PM

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My name is Jeff Boring and I live in New Bern, NC.

I strongly oppose the proposed expansion of Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point's military training waters in the Pamlico Sound.

This restriction would nearly DOUBLE the length of time it would take me to travel to Ocracoke from my home port. This would effectively mean that I could no longer make this trip over a weekend. The suggested detour is completely unacceptable and an extreme hardship on recreational and commercial boating.

Please reconsider this expansion.
--

Jeff Boring
jeffreyboring@gmail.com
(336) 407-3384 (cell)

From: Paul Marlow
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] "Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point"
Date: Friday, October 9, 2026 6:03:35 PM

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Most will agree that we want our military to remain well equipped and trained. However, I do not agree with the proposed changes involving the Pamlico Sound target ranges. In particular, I am concerned with the proposed 500 foot permanent closure of shoreline . Please review and give this aspect closer consideration. Lots of North Carolina sportsmen would like to retain access those areas for fishing purposes.
Thank you
Paul Marlow

From: Larry Deglandon
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency:USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Saturday, October 10, 2026 6:09:27 PM

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I don't know what the NC Coastal Management Program says, but I doubt it allows for the impediment of marine navigation from the Neuse River . With your proposed restricted area, if I was to sail from New Bern to Ocracoke I would have to go offshore at Fort Macon and working my way back up. This extends my voyage and creates a possible hazard by restricting my options of staying inland. Don't you guys have enough control over public lands and water now???
Thanks for your consideration.

Larry Deglandon
336-259-5536
New Bern
Tax paying citizen and boat owner

From: Phillip Ambler
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal consistency:USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Wednesday, October 7, 2026 3:40:16 PM
Attachments: Bombing range closures.docx

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Sir,
I want you to know that I wholeheartedly agree with the attached document.
Phillip Ambler
Arapahoe, NC

From: johnnie burgess
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] MCAS Bombing Range
Date: Sunday, October 11, 2026 5:15:24 PM

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I believe that we the citizens of Eastern North Carolina should allow the Base to proceed with their plans concerning the Bombing Range request.

Regards

Johnnie Burgess
Retired USMC
Sent from my iPhone

From: Shane Ravan
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Subject: Protection of North Carolina's Public Trust Waters, Navigation, and Public Access
Date: Sunday, October 11, 2026 11:29:01 AM

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To the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality, Division of Coastal Management:

I strongly oppose the proposed expansion of restricted water areas associated with BT-9 and BT-11, including the proposed permanent 500-foot safety buffer around BT-11, as currently presented.

Let me be clear: **I support our military, national defense, and the critical mission of MCAS Cherry Point. I do not support the continued erosion of the public's right to access North Carolina's public-trust waters without clear, compelling justification that the loss of access is absolutely necessary.** Supporting our military does not require surrendering public access to our coastal waters without meaningful scrutiny.

North Carolina's navigable waters are a public resource, not an unlimited reserve of space available for permanent or recurring government restrictions. The public's ability to navigate, fish, and recreate in these waters deserves more than an acknowledgment that access will be lost followed by a promise to notify the public when closures occur.

The Government Acknowledges the Loss of Public Access

The Marine Corps' own consistency determination acknowledges that this proposal would impede navigation, interfere with access to public-trust areas, and infringe upon public-trust rights.

That admission should be a warning—not a justification for approval.

If the government acknowledges that its proposal will infringe upon the public's rights, then the burden should be on the government to demonstrate why that infringement is necessary, why less restrictive alternatives are insufficient, and why the public must bear the consequences.

The ability to establish a restricted area does not automatically make every proposed restriction necessary or acceptable. North Carolina must independently and rigorously evaluate whether this proposal meets the requirements of its Coastal Management Program.

A Notice of Closure Does Not Protect Public Access

Providing a Notice to Mariners is a safety measure, not a solution to the loss of public access.

A fisherman who can no longer access productive fishing grounds, a boater forced to alter an established route, or a commercial operator displaced by a closure does not regain that access simply because a notice was published.

The question is not whether the public will be informed of the closures. The question is why additional public waters must be restricted in the first place and whether the proposed restrictions are truly the minimum necessary.

The public should not be expected to accept the permanent loss of access—or recurring exclusion from public waters—as an inevitable consequence of expanding government operations.

A Permanent Buffer Creates a Dangerous Precedent

The proposed permanent 500-foot safety buffer around BT-11 deserves particular scrutiny. A permanent restriction is fundamentally different from a temporary closure needed to conduct a specific training event safely.

Establishing permanent restricted boundaries creates a new baseline for future operations. Once public access is reduced, subsequent expansions can be justified against that reduced baseline, making each additional loss easier to normalize.

This is precisely why the State must act before restrictions become entrenched.

If a safety buffer is necessary only during certain activities, the Marine Corps should be required to explain why an activity-specific restriction would not suffice. A permanent restriction should not be accepted merely because it is administratively convenient or anticipates future training requirements.

Public access must not become the expendable variable every time the government seeks additional operational flexibility.

Require Proof, Not Assurances

The proposal describes a general increase in training activity of approximately 10 percent, yet certain activities increase substantially more. BT-11 unmanned aircraft system operations, for example, are proposed to increase from 55 to 275 annually.

DCM should require the Marine Corps to establish a clear, evidence-based connection between its expanded training requirements and the additional waters it seeks to restrict.

Before approving this proposal, DCM must require:

- An exact map and acreage calculation identifying every additional area of public-trust water affected.
- A documented justification for the proposed permanent 500-foot BT-11 buffer.
- An explanation of why smaller, temporary, or activity-specific restrictions cannot adequately address legitimate safety requirements.
- An estimate of the actual number of days and hours the expanded area will be closed to the public each year.

- An assessment of impacts on recreational fishing, commercial fishing, navigation, and established public uses.
- A cumulative-impact analysis of existing and proposed restrictions throughout the Cherry Point operating area.
- A clear explanation of how public access will be protected against further incremental restrictions.

These are reasonable requirements. The public should not be asked to accept additional restrictions without understanding their full geographic extent, practical consequences, and necessity.

Stop the Incremental Loss of Public Waters

The greatest concern is the precedent this proposal establishes.

Public access is rarely lost all at once. It is reduced incrementally, with each individual restriction presented as a limited and reasonable adjustment. Over time, those adjustments can fundamentally change the public's ability to use waters that have long served as shared resources.

The State must evaluate not only the immediate proposal, but also the cumulative effect of repeatedly expanding government control over public-trust waters.

Public access should not be diminished by default. The burden should remain on the party seeking to restrict that access to demonstrate why the restriction is necessary and why a less restrictive alternative will not work.

Requested Action

I request that DCM **withhold approval of the proposal as currently presented** until the Marine Corps demonstrates that the proposed restrictions are necessary, narrowly tailored, and the least restrictive practicable means of accomplishing the stated training objectives.

DCM should require a thorough evaluation of alternatives, full disclosure of the anticipated impacts on public access, and specific justification for making the BT-11 safety buffer permanent. Any approval should include enforceable safeguards against unnecessary closures and future expansions that have not undergone appropriate review.

North Carolina must not allow the existence of a military installation to become a blanket justification for progressively reducing public access to surrounding waters.

Our military can train. Our government can protect national security. And North Carolina can protect its public-trust waters. These objectives are not mutually exclusive, and the public should not be expected to sacrifice one of its longstanding rights simply because balancing these interests requires additional effort.

The public should not have to repeatedly defend its right to access its own public-trust waters against a steady expansion of restrictions.

I urge DCM to protect the public interest, demand proof of necessity, and reject any expansion

that has not demonstrated that the loss of public access is the minimum practicable and unavoidable consequence of legitimate military requirements.

Support the mission. Protect public safety. Stop the unnecessary loss of public access. Protect the public trust.

Respectfully,

Shane Ravan

From: Curtis Rollosson
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Military using costal waters
Date: Sunday, October 11, 2026 8:11:02 AM

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We need the military so we can fish & the commercial fishing can keep going. We have more fishing rights then the no free countries.
Sent from my iPhone

From: Wayne Dunbar
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] USMC MCAS Cherry Point - Formal Objection to Proposed Expansion of BT-11 Bombing Range
Date: Sunday, October 11, 2026 7:46:58 AM

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To: Federal Consistency Coordinator / North Carolina Division of Coastal Management
From: Herman Wayne Dunbar (Commercial Fisherman and USCG Licensed Captain)
Date: October 11, 2026

PUBLIC COMMENT SUBMISSION

1. Statement of Qualifications and Experience
My name is Herman Wayne Dunbar. For 45 years, I have operated as a commercial fisherman and charter hunting and fishing guide in the waters surrounding Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point's BT-11 bombing range in Pamlico Sound. As a lifelong user of these waters, I serve on advisory boards for both the North Carolina Fisheries Association and the Marine Fisheries Commission to protect coastal resources and the working waterfronts that rely on them.

2. Excessive Appropriation of Public Trust Waters
The proposed expansion threatens to drastically increase federal control over state public trust waters. Currently, military operations at BT-11 encompass approximately 65 square miles of Pamlico Sound waters. The new expansion proposal seeks to claim an additional 60 square miles, which would bring the total restricted area to roughly 125 square miles.

Taking control of nearly 125 square miles of open coastal water is an unnecessary overreach that strips North Carolina citizens of public trust access. Local mariners and commercial operators have peacefully coexisted with military activities for decades; everyone in our community understands shoreline boundary limits, and in 45 years, safety has been maintained without needing further water closures. Given modern aircraft targeting precision and advanced military technology, operations are safer today than ever before, making this vast territorial extension unwarranted.

3. Severe Economic Impact on Commercial Fishing and Local Guide Services
Closing an additional 60 square miles will inflict severe economic damage on eastern North Carolina's coastal economy. These waters house some of the most fertile bottom in the state, supporting vital commercial harvests for oysters, blue crabs, and finfish. Between 1987 and 2017 alone, the State of North Carolina invested millions of tax dollars into planting 60 to 70 oyster cultch sites in these exact waters, with additional plantings added in subsequent years. Restricting access to these state-funded beds directly undermines state investments and eliminates primary income sources for local watermen.

Independent charter fishing captains and waterfowl hunting guides depend on open access to these traditional grounds. Cutting off access to 125 square miles of prime habitat will decimate local guiding businesses and choke off tourism spending in Pamlico County and surrounding coastal communities.

4. Disruption of Essential Marine Navigation
Beyond the loss of fishing grounds, closing or restricting this vast swath of water disrupts critical marine traffic routes. The expansion encroaches on vital transit corridors connecting the Neuse River to Pamlico Sound. Forcing commercial vessels, charter boats, and recreational mariners around a 125-square-mile restricted block forces boats into narrower channels or rougher, less safe waters. Increased travel times and higher fuel costs will further penalize working boats attempting to navigate between local ports and open sound waters.

5. Conclusion and Recommendation
Under federal consistency guidelines, federal actions must be consistent to the maximum extent practicable with the enforceable policies of North Carolina's approved coastal management program, specifically those safeguarding public trust rights, coastal economics, and traditional fishing access. This proposed expansion goes far beyond reasonable operational needs. I strongly urge the State of North Carolina to find this proposal inconsistent with state coastal policies to protect our heritage, our working waterfronts, and our coastal economy for future generations.

Respectfully submitted,

Herman Wayne Dunbar
Commercial Fisherman / Guide
Oriental, North Carolina

From: Wayne Mills
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] BT-11 Bombing range expansion
Date: Sunday, October 11, 2026 7:27:32 AM

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Wayne Mills
New Bern Nc 28562

10/9/2026

The Federal Consistency Coordinator
400 Commerce Avenue
Morehead City, NC 28557

Subject: Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point- Opposition to the Proposed Expansion of BT-9 and BT-11 Ranges

To: NC Department of Environmental Quality- Division of Coastal Management

I am a lifelong recreational angler and have boated and fished the waters of Pamlico Sound for over 10 years. Over the last ten years, the waters and shorelines around the BT-9 and BT-11 ranges have accounted for roughly 75 percent of my fishing effort, much of it spent taking friends and family with me. I submit this comment in opposition to the proposed permanent 500-foot closure along the shoreline of the range perimeter, including both Piney Island and Raccoon Island. Using the measuring tool on NOAA's interactive ENC chart viewer, which displays the current safety closure areas, I estimate that the proposed buffer would close approximately 21 miles of shoreline around the two islands that is currently available to recreational anglers, commercial fishermen, birdwatchers and boaters. These are public trust waters, and a permanent closure would end access to water and shoreline my family and friends have fished across generations.

1. The affected waters are premier fishing habitat, and closing them would concentrate users into fewer areas.
This area is truly the last frontier for many anglers, birdwatchers, boaters, and waterfowl hunters. The shallow waters and shorelines that would be closed are not just my preferred fishing grounds. They are among the most productive habitats for red drum, speckled trout, and flounder in the State of NC. Closing roughly 21 miles of shoreline permanently would remove access to some of the best fishing in the area. The closure would also displace commercial gillnet and pound net effort, forcing recreational anglers and commercial fishermen into the same smaller, more crowded areas, along with birdwatchers, boaters and hunters. That would heighten user conflict, with consequences for gear interactions, safety, and concentrated pressure on the remaining habitat.

2. 10 years of experience show no safety need for this closure.

In half a century of boating and angling beside the existing BT-11 boundaries, I have coexisted with the range safely and respectfully. In my experience, there is no history on these waters that justifies suddenly removing public access to these zones when considering the existing level and the proposed increase in range activity.

3. The proposal conflicts with the Marine Corps' prior representations.
In its 2015 submission to NOAA (80 FR 21212, Document 2015-08841), MCAS Cherry Point stated that "The Marine Corps conducts all inert and live-fire exercises so that all ammunition and other ordnances strike and/or fall on the land or water-based targets or within in the existing danger zone or water restricted areas." On that record, the existing danger zones and restricted areas were sufficient to contain range operations. Nothing in the current proposal explains why an additional 500-foot permanent closure around the full perimeter is now necessary.

4. If the existing zones are no longer sufficient, something material has changed.
If the Marine Corps now believes the current zones cannot contain their operations, then the scale, type, or trajectory of the proposed activities must differ significantly from what was documented in 2015. A change of that kind cannot be handled as a routine boundary adjustment. The public is entitled to know what changed and why.

5. Rigorous economic and environmental review is required.
A material change in operations or in the area affected calls for updated review, including:
• An assessment of environmental impacts on the Pamlico Sound ecosystem, including fish habitat and fisheries, under the National Environmental Policy Act and related statutes;
• An analysis of economic impacts on recreational and commercial fishing and on the communities that depend on them;
• A reassessment of effects on marine mammals and updated compliance with the Marine Mammal Protection Act; and
• Review of consistency with applicable state coastal management policies and the public trust doctrine governing access to these waters for all the Citizens of NC under 15A NCAC 07M.0400.

6. A permanent closure is not the least restrictive option.
Even if some additional safety measures are justified, a permanent, year-round closure of the entire perimeter is the most restrictive approach available. Alternatives should be analyzed such as limited closures near specific hazard areas.

7. Adequate buffers exist for the existing and proposed increase in range activity.
There currently exist 4,000-to-18,000-foot buffers from the target area danger zones to the range shoreline boundary for much of the range. MCAS-Cherry Point is asking to permanently close an additional 500 feet of water past the existing shoreline range boundary. Adding an additional 500 feet of permanent water closure from the existing shoreline boundary provides no meaningful or measurable level of additional safety margin.

8. MCAS-Cherry Point Needs to enforce its existing range boundary vs asking for an additional 500-foot buffer.
The additional 500 feet of buffer is severe overreach by MCAS-Cherry Point. The Consistency Determination states that “the additional stand-off [500-foot buffer] restrictions would also provide an added level of safety since areas of armed overflight pose an added risk to interlopers.” MCAS-Cherry Point controls all existing authority to enforce the current range

boundary and needs to do so if “interlopers” are a concern. Asking boaters to adhere to an additional 500 feet of water buffer marked by an imaginary line is an irresponsible overreach. There is no better boundary definition, nor visual boundary line, than "the shoreline”.

Request.
I ask that the permanent 500-foot shoreline closure be withdrawn or, at minimum, not finalized until the Marine Corps (a) explains how the impact of its current and proposed operations differ from those described in NOAA 80 FR 21212 Document 2015-08841, (b) publishes the data and safety analysis supporting the buffer, including its own calculation of the shoreline miles and water acreage currently open to public access that will be permanently closed, (c) completes updated environmental, economic, and Marine Mammal Protection Act reviews, and (d) evaluates less restrictive alternatives. I also request notice of any further public comment periods or hearings.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Sincerely,
Wayne Mills
2028 Tarpon Trl
New Bern NC 29562

From: Russell Hudson
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Restrictions
Date: Sunday, October 11, 2026 4:43:37 AM

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To whom it may concern.

This email is a verbal protest concerning the restrictions being placed on public trust waters by the federal government.

If there are any more restrictions than what you have in place already our waters will become dangerous and costly to our way of life. Commercial routes present and future would be affected as well as pleasure boating and fishing.

Citizen
Russell Hudson

From: David Evans
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Monday, October 12, 2026 1:27:15 PM

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Sirs,
As a resident of Pamlico County and a long time boater on Neuse River and Pamlico Sound, I wish to offer a few ideas. How is the public to know when the bombing sector is closed? Most likely the answer is 'check the website'. How will that site be broadcast? Pamlico County is poorly served via cell tower. The southeast and the eastern sectors have blackout zones. Many residents still have landlines because of this. It is difficult to get an internet signal on the land. Also, the Bay River mouth to the Pamlico Sound is part of the inland waterway system. Many small craft transit the waterway by traveling south in the fall and back north in the spring. Snowbirds, we call them. Will there be any warning if a boat does not know of the closure? Any closure will be a disruption to the commercial and recreational boaters and fishers. Very good oysters are found along the coast of Pamlico County. Fishing is a prime occupation and recreational activity in the county. The residents do not wish to see any further blockage.

I strongly disagree with this proposal.

Thank you.

Dave

From: Kim Moss
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Cc: olivia.imhoff@mail.house.gov
Subject: [External] Federal consistency USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Thursday, October 8, 2026 9:40:26 AM

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It is an extreme over-reach taking Public Trust Waters away from recreational anglers, commercial fishermen, and boater by asking for a 500-foot shoreline permanent safety closure! This closure would completely cut off transit, commercially and recreationally, to major areas along our coast and negatively impact businesses and North Carolinians.

Please stop this over-reach!

Have a blessed day

Kim and Dean Moss
Morehead City, NC

From: Catherine Hackett
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Monday, October 12, 2026 2:15:01 PM

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To whom it may concern:

I am very concerned about the proposed expansion of the restricted area across the mouth of the Neuse River and into Pamlico Sound. We have been accustomed to the restrictions at Turnagain Point and in West Bay neither of which significantly affects either fishing or recreational activities. This new restricted area would severely affect both professional and recreational fishing as well as recreational boating. It would effectively cut off access to Ocracoke as a weekend destination which would have effects on their economy. It also significantly affects shrimping and other fishing in the sound by professional fisheries in the area.
Would the public receive any notification of the closing of the area? How much of an advance notice would we receive?
It is unconscionable for the marines to just announce this change to what has been public water for decades without a thorough explanation of why this change is necessary, the probable duration of restriction, and how long the training exercises would last. While I appreciate the need of the marines to have adequate targeting sites, I fail to understand why this sudden increase and change is necessary.

Catherine Hackett
Oriental, NC

It's never too late, in fiction or in life, to revise.

Life is love lived in connection with ALL THAT IS.

"You're only given a little spark of madness, you mustn't lose it." Robin Williams

From: Dave Phipps
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Monday, October 12, 2026 11:57:13 AM

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Dear Sir or Madam,

As a recreational boater who has deliberately retired to a home on the water on the Neuse River for the recreational boating opportunities available on the Mid Atlantic seaboard, I have invested heavily in both my boat and my home. That investment took a lifetime to earn.

The proposed restrictions on the use of the Eastern end of the Neuse River threaten all that I worked for in retirement, and are unnecessary given the multiple training and restricted areas currently designated by the military. The Federal government's continuous encroachment into both airspace and land/water based environments is regrettable, and imposes unnecessary burdens on the local citizen. Airspace in the area and along the coast is completely dominated by restriction, and several existing target areas exist.

In this case, any proposal that blocks access between Pamlico Sound and the Neuse River, even on an intermittent basis, is *totally and completely unacceptable*. The area is a critical fishing and recreational boating paradise that contributes millions to the local economy.

NO to the proposed restrictions.

Capt. Dave Phipps
6109 Cutlass Ct.
New Bern, NC 28560

From: Gabe Nucci
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Monday, October 12, 2026 11:11:48 AM

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Please find my statement here in opposition to the undefined and open-ended proposal to increase training activities around BT-9 and BT-11, on NC's Pamlico Sound.

As a recreational sailor and defender of my State's environmental treasure, I am a direct stakeholder in this matter. While I understand and accept that some use of the Sound is appropriate, the proposal to exclude boaters during some training by MCAS Cherry Point's operations is poorly defined and potentially onerous. I am calling for MCAS CP and the US Government to clearly define the limits of this proposal such that NC Dept of Environmental Quality can ascertain whether it complies with Federal Consistency laws. We also demand fair warning and a limit to exclusions from public use of the Sound. The proposal calls for intermittent expansion of training operations that would “impede navigation or interfere with access or use of public trust areas or estuarine waters.”

Use of the term "intermittent" is purposely vague and highly suspicious. Any operations that effectively close access to the Neuse and Bay Rivers, together with a number of smaller estuaries that are home to thousands of recreational boaters should be subject to limitations. At a minimum, the public deserves to know the number of occurrences, the timing and the method of notification.

I live in Western North Carolina and make a 6 hr drive to the coast. If I plan a week of sailing and arrive there to find that training has shut me off from the Sound, that represents a significant disruption to my enjoyment. It also bears real costs to me and to the local economy that supports recreational boaters like me.

Please consider that we are all entitled to access to, and enjoyment of our beautiful Sound. The Federal Consistency law was passed in order to ensure a fair and equitable application of our State's Environmental Protection Laws. Do the work and show us your plan. And get into compliance.

- --

gabe nucci
75 Cambridge Rd
Asheville, NC 28804
617-699-1790
gabe@piepowder.tv

From: Jack Jackson
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Sunday, October 11, 2026 9:49:33 PM

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I am asking to please say no to the proposed 500 foot buffer and closure of any new water for BT-9 and BT-11. As a 20 year Marine Corps veteran, I understand the need for training and a place to do it, but this new proposal is an overreach that should not be allowed. I am now a fishing guide that utilizes that area to provide for my family and closing it for access will harm my business. It will also harm the livelihood of many others. Additionally, the proposed rerouting of traffic through the Indian ditch is not well thought out as it cannot support that and would pose a safety risk to mariners. Please say no.

Respectfully,
Anthony Jackson
GySgt USMC- Retired

From: George Bryan
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal consistency: usmc Mcas cherry point
Date: Sunday, October 11, 2026 7:07:51 PM

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I would like to object to the closing of this area . A number of cruising sailboats have to navigate by Roanoke Island because the Wilkerson bridge was built too low to handle high water. To require this traffic to head to the Pamlico River and the Hobucken cut is unreasonable. They need direct access from the Neuse to and from.

Personally I will have to change my frequent route to Beaufort because of this change.
While I don't shrimp in this area I am sensitive to the folks that make their meager wages from this area as I see them as I transverse Brant Shoal cut

George Bryan
Belhaven
iPhone

From: david spain
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Sunday, October 11, 2026 11:58:02 AM

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I strongly object to the creation of this traing area.

This would have major impacts on access to this public resource for local boaters and transient boating as well as recreational and commercial fishermen. The proposed restrictions affect areas that are home to our world class old drum fishery, as well as North Carolina's seasonal Tarpon migration and numerous other species. It would cripple our commercial fishermen in the sound and limit access to other areas.

I appreciate you taking time to read this message and feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Thank you,

David Spain

From: Shane Ravan
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS CHERRY POINT
Date: Sunday, October 11, 2026 11:35:18 AM

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To anyone willing to listen:

I strongly oppose the proposed expansion of restricted water areas associated with BT-9 and BT-11, including the proposed permanent 500-foot safety buffer around BT-11.

I support our military, national defense, and the vital mission of MCAS Cherry Point. However, supporting our military does not mean accepting the continued loss of public access to North Carolina's coastal waters without compelling justification. **Our public-trust waters are not an unlimited resource for government appropriation, and public access should not be sacrificed simply because restricting it is operationally convenient.**

The State Must Protect the Public Trust

The Marine Corps' own consistency determination acknowledges that this proposal would impede navigation, interfere with access to public-trust waters, and infringe upon public-trust rights.

That admission should demand heightened scrutiny—not automatic approval.

North Carolina's public-trust waters support recreational and commercial fishing, navigation, hunting, birdwatching, tourism, and the livelihoods of people who depend on access to these resources. These waters belong to the public, and the State has a responsibility to protect their continued use.

The proposed permanent 500-foot buffer around BT-11 and expansion of intermittent danger zones threaten to further restrict access to the waters surrounding Piney Island and the Neuse and Pamlico Sound systems. For those who fish, work, hunt, and recreate in these areas, this is not an abstract policy question. It is the potential loss of places they have lawfully used for generations.

The public should not have to surrender access to its own waters without the government first proving that the proposed restrictions are necessary and that less restrictive alternatives will not work.

Public Safety Must Be Considered, Not Overlooked

The potential effects on navigation deserve particular attention. Concerns have been raised that restricting the canal connecting Turnagain Bay and West Bay could force boaters to travel miles farther through exposed open water to reach the Neuse River.

If that access is restricted, boaters could face longer routes and greater exposure to adverse weather and rough-water conditions. DCM must require a site-specific assessment of these potential consequences before approving any restriction that could eliminate or compromise an established navigation route.

A proposal intended to improve military safety should not create avoidable safety hazards for the public.

The Economic and Environmental Consequences Matter

Fishing guides depend on access to productive fishing grounds to earn a living. Commercial fishermen, shrimpers, crabbers, and oystermen depend on access to the waters that sustain their operations. Local businesses and tourism also benefit when residents and visitors can lawfully enjoy these public resources.

Restricting access around Piney Island, West Bay, and Turnagain Bay could displace established fishing activity, reduce opportunities for guided trips, and impose economic costs on people who have no control over the proposed restrictions.

These waters also support valuable fish and wildlife habitat. The continued presence of wildlife in areas adjacent to existing military training activity demonstrates the importance of preserving the ecological character of these marshes and shorelines. Any expansion should be supported by a meaningful assessment of its potential effects on aquatic resources and wildlife, not merely an assumption that additional restrictions are environmentally inconsequential.

A Permanent Restriction Requires Proof

A permanent 500-foot buffer is fundamentally different from a temporary closure during an active training event. Once established, permanent restrictions can become the baseline for future expansions, gradually reducing public access with each subsequent proposal.

The Marine Corps also proposes substantial increases in certain activities, including a fivefold increase in BT-11 unmanned aircraft system operations, from 55 to 275 annually. DCM should require a clear explanation of how these changes necessitate additional restricted waters and why the proposed boundaries represent the minimum area required.

Before approving this expansion, DCM should require:

- Exact maps and acreage calculations identifying all additional waters affected.

A documented safety justification for the permanent BT-11 buffer.
- An assessment of the canal connecting Turnagain Bay and West Bay and the consequences of restricting this route.
- Estimates of the frequency and duration of public closures.
- An assessment of impacts on recreational and commercial fishing, navigation, and local businesses.
- Evaluation of smaller, temporary, activity-specific restrictions and other less restrictive alternatives.
- A cumulative-impact analysis addressing the continuing loss of public access across the Cherry Point operating area.

A Notice to Mariners does not mitigate the loss of access. Notification tells the public when an area is closed; it does not restore the public's ability to use that water.

Requested Action

I respectfully request that DCM **deny the proposed expansion as currently presented**unless and until the Marine Corps demonstrates that the additional restrictions are necessary, narrowly tailored, and the least restrictive practicable means of accomplishing legitimate military training objectives.

The State should not approve permanent restrictions simply because future operational requirements may benefit from them. Nor should it allow incremental expansions to progressively reduce public access without a thorough evaluation of cumulative impacts and alternatives.

North Carolina can support military readiness while protecting the public trust. These objectives are not mutually exclusive, and the burden should remain on the party seeking to restrict public access to demonstrate why that restriction is necessary.

Our public waters are not vacant space waiting to be claimed. They are a shared resource and a public trust that the State has a responsibility to protect.

Once access is surrendered, restoring it can be extremely difficult. DCM must consider not only the immediate effects of this proposal, but also the precedent it establishes for future restrictions.

I urge DCM to deny this proposal as currently presented and require a solution that protects legitimate military training needs without unnecessarily sacrificing public navigation, fishing access, local livelihoods, and the rights of North Carolina citizens.

Support the mission. Protect public safety. Stop the continued erosion of public access. Protect the public trust.

From: steven.yochum@y-water.com
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Sunday, October 11, 2026 9:30:07 AM

You don't often get email from steven.yochum@y-water.com. Learn why this is important

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I am writing to provide comments on the additional restrictions proposed for training activities and operations within the MCAS Cherry Point Range Complex. Specifically, I object to the proposed intermittent blockage of what is essentially the entire mouth of the Nuese River during training activities. This blockage effectively barricades the river mouth, restricting free navigation during an unspecified number of training periods. This proposed modification is contrary to tradition, and an undue hardship to recreational and commercial use of this portion of Pamlico Sound.

I urge the state of North Carolina to do all in its power to prevent the expansion of the training-associated exclusion zones.

Please keep me informed on the status of this MCAS Cherry Point proposal.

Sincerely,

Steven Yochum
202 Whittaker Point Road
Oriental, NC 28571

From: Gary Wood
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Saturday, October 10, 2026 2:16:40 PM

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Dear Sirs,

I am writing to oppose the proposal to close a large portion of the Pamlico Sound and the mouth of Neuse River to expand military training opportunities for the US Marine Corps. While I believe in troop readiness and support those who defend our nation and the liberties we are afforded, I am not in favor of this proposal. I own property along Bay River and fish and hunt in the Pamlico Sound, and travel into Neuse River via the Pamlico Sound. There currently are restricted areas that hunters and fisherman are to not enter to allow our military to train. This proposal will cause hardship for the commercial fishing industry requiring them to have to travel long distances to by-pass proposed closure area to reach their fishing grounds. Commercial fishing guides, commercial duck hunting guides, duck hunters and recreational fisherman will be impacted as well. If closure is in place, it could require boaters to be in an expanse of open water that gets dangerous quick and prevent them from seeking safe harbor in the many bays, guts and ditches along this proposed closure area. This would put many lives at risk.

The fisheries in the Pamlico Sound are already challenged, and commercial and recreational fisherman are faced with many obstacles already to fish these waters. Our coastal sound is home to a world class Old Red Drum fishery as well as a seasonal migration area for Tarpon and other species of fish. Additional training in this area could cause damage and loss of this valued natural resource and habitat. The rivers and sounds are open water that should be accessible to all NC residents and travelers alike. We do not need to have this area restricted and closed. There are plenty open water areas in other locations for our military to train that will pose less harm to our fisheries, and allow boaters safe entry and exit to our rivers and sound.

Thank you for the opportunity to express my concerns and to state opposition to this proposal by the US Marine Corps at MCAS Cherry Point. I thank our military for the service and sacrifice they endure to allow me and my family to live in a safe country that allows us the freedom to fish and hunt. Please deny this proposal and keep our coastal areas open.

Respectfully,
Gary C. Wood
3277 US Highway 70 Business East
Smithfield, NC 27577

Property owner on Bay River in Pamlico County

From: stephen Rice
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Saturday, October 10, 2026 12:53:38 PM

You don't often get email from stephenwrice@yahoo.com. Learn why this is important

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Hello,

I am a resident of Pamlico County; we do not want any extension of the range already imposed on our waters that would interfere with water travel and fishing in our waters.

Thank You
Stephen Rice



Virus-free.www.avg.com

From: DAN MURPHY
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Saturday, October 10, 2026 8:31:41 AM

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I am an enthusiastic supporter of our military and with family members actively serving, I am particularly interested in a robust program of training and skill development. I would love to find common ground on how we can further those goals but I have concerns about the proposal to close public access to areas around BT11 and BT9 in the Pamlico Sound.

I have been fishing with my family for many years in the areas that are being proposed for closure. Sailing out of Paradise Shores as we do, this area near BT11 represents some of the best fishing that is accessible to us. Over the years I've seen the fishing pressure around Oriental and the Bay River gradually increase, and escaping to the areas near BT11 is a key part of my strategy on many days. The closure would also displace commercial gill net and pound net effort, forcing recreational anglers and commercial fishermen into the same smaller, more crowded areas. That would heighten user conflict, with consequences for gear interactions, safety, and fishing pressure on the remaining habitat.

The proposed closure feels like a move in the wrong direction. Considering the ever increasing population in NC and the resulting ever increasing pressure on usage of public waters, we should be seeking solutions to increase access wherever possible. To that end, is there a possibility that the USMC could consider deactivating BT11 and BT9 altogether, and instead opening a new target strategy offshore such as near the Camp Legeune danger zone? There could be floating targets, tow drones, scoring could be done from observers on ships, there are all kinds of possibilities to make that work and it wouldn't have a negative impact on the public at all given all the space available out there. Especially compared to the dramatic negative impact that the proposed closure of the Pamlico areas would have.

As a conscientious and respectful citizen who appreciates the responsibilities and skill development required of our armed forces, I am requesting the permanent 500-foot shoreline closure be withdrawn or, at minimum, not finalized until the Marine Corps (a) can elaborate on how its current operations differ from those described in 2015 and thus the risk has changed, (b) publishes the data and safety analysis supporting the buffer, including its own calculation of the shoreline and acreage affected, (c) completes updated environmental, economic, and Marine Mammal Protection Act reviews, and (d) evaluates less restrictive alternatives.

--
Daniel Murphy

Imperial Home Projects LLC
ph. 919 671 8129

From: Scott Westwood
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Friday, October 9, 2026 7:14:20 PM

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As a homeowner and Boat owner on Bay River, we strongly object to having the area covered by munitions increased; the current area does not impede our travel to a large extent, but increasing that certainly would. We travel quite frequently to Ocracoke, West Bay and to Manteo and other parts north frequently. First of all, how are you going to alert people that there's a closure and what if people are already underway? This not only hurts boaters but greatly hurts the fisherman of the Neuse, Pamlico and Bay River areas.
Just "Some" questions:
1. How often are we talking? Worst case?
2. How long are the normal closures? worst case?
3. What types of notifications will go out?
4. If somebody misses the notification and goes through the area, then what happens?
5. What alternative areas are being discussed?

Sincerely,

Scott Westwood scottwestwood@bellsouth.net C (919)- 819-9794

From: Nathan Herrmann
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Friday, October 9, 2026 4:31:55 PM

You don't often get email from nherrmann0329@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing in strong opposition to the proposal from the federal government to close the mouth of the Neuse River and a large portion of the Pamlico Sound during training exercises.

I'm the co-owner of an outdoor company that frequently utilizes the pamlico sound to help my business grow. I'm concerned that temporary closings would stretch on and lead to more permanent bans.

Please consider keeping the public resource a public resource and don't move forward with this plan.

Thank you for your time,
Nathan Herrmann

From: rick sasser
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Cc: Michelle Nowlin, J.D.; derbc@selcnc.org; Tim Gestwicki; David Sneed; Joe Albea; Chad Thomas; Wilson, Reid
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Friday, October 9, 2026 2:04:01 PM
Attachments: image.png
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You don't often get email from rick.sasser@hotmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Rick Sasser
111 Pineridge Lane
Goldsboro, NC 27534

10/09/2026

The Federal Consistency Coordinator
400 Commerce Avenue
Morehead City, NC 28557

Federalconsistencycomments@deq.nc.gov

Subject: Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point- Opposition to the Proposed Expansion of BT-9 and BT-11 Ranges

To: NC Department of Environmental Quality- Division of Coastal Management

I am a lifelong recreational angler and have boated and fished the waters of Pamlico Sound for over fifty years. Over the last ten years, the waters and shorelines around the BT-9 and BT-11 ranges have accounted for roughly 75 percent of my fishing effort; much of it spent taking friends and family with me. I submit this comment in opposition to the proposed permanent 500-foot closure along the shoreline of the range perimeter, including both Piney Island and Raccoon Island. Using the measuring tool on NOAA's interactive ENC chart viewer, which displays the current safety closure areas, I estimate that the proposed buffer would close approximately 21 miles of shoreline around the two islands that is currently available to recreational anglers, commercial fishermen, birdwatchers and boaters. These are public trust waters, and a permanent closure would end access to water and shoreline my family and friends have fished across generations.

1. The affected waters are premier fishing habitat, and closing them would concentrate users into fewer areas.
This area is truly the last frontier for many anglers, birdwatchers, boaters, and waterfowl hunters. The shallow waters and shorelines that would be closed are not just my preferred fishing grounds. They are among the most productive habitats for red drum, speckled trout, and flounder in the State of NC. Closing roughly 21 miles of shoreline permanently would remove access to some of the best fishing in the area. The closure would also displace commercial gillnet and pound net effort, forcing recreational anglers and commercial fishermen into the same smaller, more crowded areas, along with birdwatchers, boaters and hunters. That would heighten user conflict, with consequences for gear interactions, safety, and concentrated pressure on the remaining habitat.

2. Fifty years of experience show no safety need for this closure.
In half a century of boating and angling beside the existing BT-11 boundaries, I have coexisted with the range safely and respectfully. In my experience, there is no history on these waters that justifies suddenly removing public access to these zones when considering the existing level and the proposed increase in range activity.

3. The proposal conflicts with the Marine Corps' prior representations.
In its 2015 submission to NOAA (80 FR 21212, Document 2015-08841), MCAS Cherry Point stated that "The Marine Corps conducts all inert and live-fire exercises so that all ammunition and other ordnances strike and/or fall on the land or water-based targets or within in the existing danger zone or water restricted areas." On that record, the existing danger zones and restricted areas were sufficient to contain range operations. Nothing in the current proposal explains why an additional 500-foot permanent closure around the full perimeter is now necessary.

4. If the existing zones are no longer sufficient, something material has changed.
If the Marine Corps now believes the current danger zones cannot contain their operations, then the scale, type, or trajectory of the proposed activities must differ significantly from what was documented in 2015. A change of that kind cannot be handled as a routine boundary adjustment. The public is entitled to know what changed and why.

5. Rigorous economic and environmental review is required.
A material change in operations or in the area affected calls for updated review, including:

- An assessment of environmental impacts on the Pamlico Sound ecosystem, including fish habitat and fisheries, under the National Environmental Policy Act and related statutes;
- An analysis of economic impacts on recreational and commercial fishing and on the communities that depend on them;
- A reassessment of effects on marine mammals and updated compliance with the Marine Mammal Protection Act; and
- Review of consistency with applicable state coastal management policies and the public trust doctrine governing access to these waters for all the Citizens of NC under 15A NCAC 07M.0400.

6. A permanent closure is not the least restrictive option.
Even if some additional safety measures are justified, a permanent, year-round closure of the entire perimeter is the most restrictive approach available. Alternatives should be analyzed such as limited closures near specific hazard areas.

7. Adequate buffers exist for the existing and proposed increase in range activity.
There currently exist 4,000-to-18,000-foot buffers from the target area danger zone to the range shoreline boundary for much of the range. MCAS-Cherry Point is asking to permanently close an additional 500 feet of water past the existing range shoreline boundary. Adding an additional 500 feet of permanent water closure from the existing shoreline boundary provides no meaningful or measurable level of additional safety margin.

8. MCAS-Cherry Point Needs to enforce its existing range boundary vs asking for an additional 500-foot buffer.
The additional 500 feet of buffer is severe overreach by MCAS-Cherry Point. The Consistency Determination states that “the additional stand-off [500-foot buffer] restrictions would also provide an added level of safety since areas of armed overflight pose an added risk to interlopers.” MCAS-Cherry Point controls all existing authority to enforce the current range boundary and needs to do so if “interlopers” are a concern. Asking boaters to adhere to an additional 500 feet of water buffer marked by an imaginary line is an irresponsible overreach. There is no better boundary definition, nor visual boundary line, than "the shoreline”.

Request.
I ask that the permanent 500-foot shoreline closure be withdrawn or, at minimum, not finalized until the Marine Corps (a) explains how the impact of its current and proposed operations differ from those described in NOAA 80 FR 21212 Document 2015-08841, (b) publishes the data and safety analysis supporting the buffer, including its own calculation of the shoreline miles and water acreage currently open to public access that will be closed, (c) completes updated environmental, economic, and Marine Mammal Protection Act reviews, and (d) evaluates less restrictive alternatives. I also request notice of any further public comment periods or hearings.

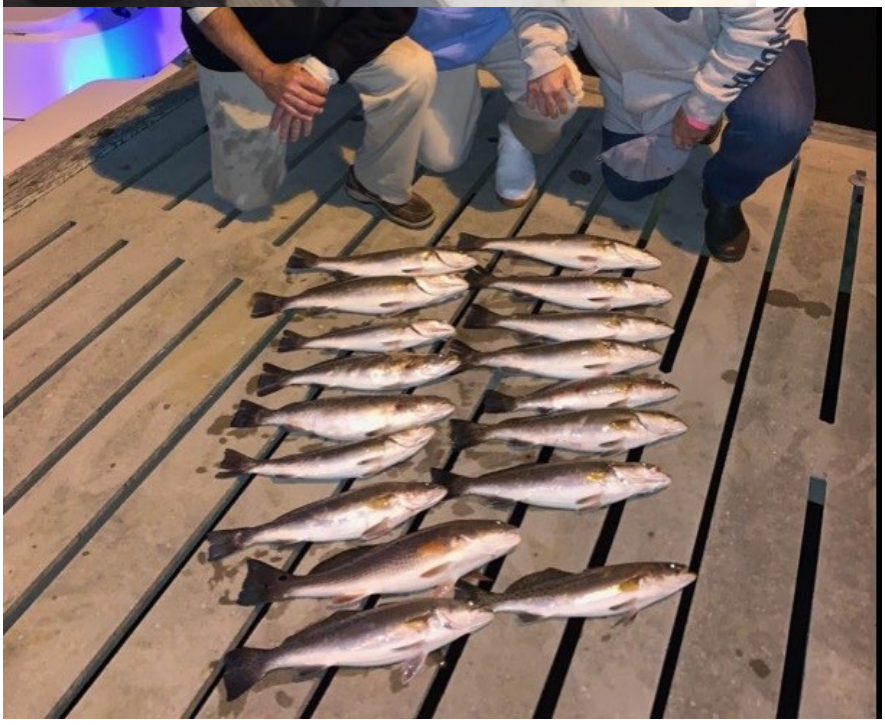
Thank you for considering my comments.

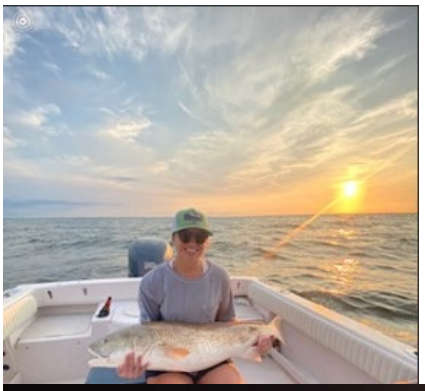
Sincerely,
Rick Sasser

rick.sasser@hotmail.com

The photos below show fishing effort by me or me with my family and/or my friends in the areas being considered for additional closures. Yes, that child with the nice old drum is the man fishing the same spot twenty-five years later.










245 DW













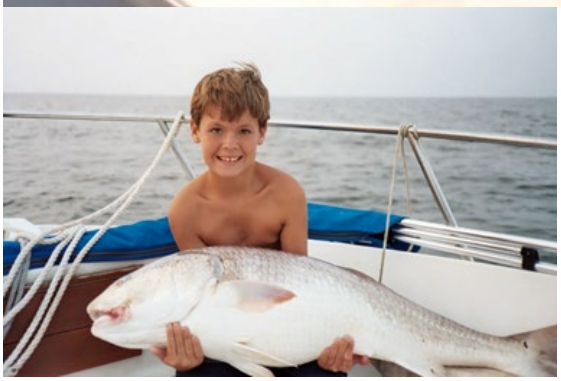










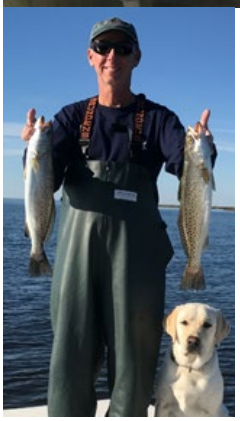






















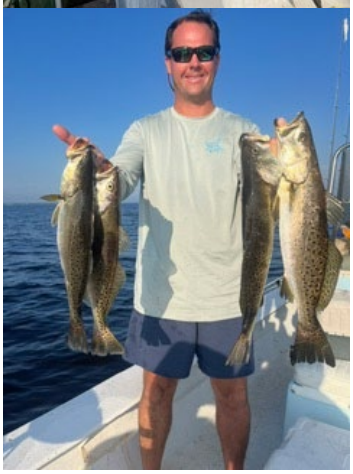




















From: J. Angle
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Friday, October 9, 2026 11:57:03 AM

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Good afternoon!

Please do not allow the bombing areas to expand in our waterways. The military already has plenty of land and water to it's exclusive use in our state. We have always supported them but this is government overreach t it's worst.

Thank you for taking them time to read this and I hope ya'll make the rught decision!

Jon Anglemyer
Chocowinity, NC

From: David Sneed
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Friday, October 9, 2026 11:49:41 AM

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To Whom It May Concern,

Please accept our comments being submitted on behalf of the more than 15,000 members and supporters of the Coastal Conservation Association North Carolina (CCA NC) regarding a proposed update to training activities and operations within the Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Cherry Point Range Complex.

The proposal would increase and add training activities, including aircraft, unmanned systems, and watercraft operations, and increase restricted water areas near BT-9 in western Pamlico Sound and BT-11 on Piney Island, including establishing a permanent 500-foot safety buffer around BT-11. MCAS Cherry Point describes minor changes to their operations schedule, yet they are asking for major changes to the restricted areas in which they operate. Particularly troubling is the proposed PERMANENT 500 ft. safety closure around Piney Island that would take away miles of public trust shoreline for no good reason. It is not reasonable to ask recreational and commercial fishermen and hunters to give up productive and popular areas that include but are not limited to: all of the northern shoreline of Turnigan Bay, the entirety of Racoon Island, and numerous productive points on the western side of West Bay. There would be an obvious, negative impact on the economies of Pamlico, Craven, and Carteret Counties. Of these, the small economy of Pamlico County would be most strongly impacted by these proposed actions.

Why are these closures being considered? If you look at the military objectives of MCAS Cherry Point, they intend to add 220 UAS operations to a schedule that includes 15,000 other operations per year, an increase of only 1.4%. In addition, they intend to increase the ordinance expended by 87% without adding any additional targets to the range at BT-11. So, in effect, they are going to shoot the same targets more often per operation. Adding an additional 220 target runs to their current schedule in no way warrants changing the current restricted areas. This is an unnecessary overreach.

If MCAS Cherry Point feels that these changes are necessary, then broader questions must be answered. Has the Marine Corps done an economic impact study for what losing access to these public trust waters will do to the fishermen in the surrounding counties?

Have they done an environmental impact study on what firing increased ordinance will do to the wildlife that calls Piney Island home? That area is prime nesting habitat for many different species of shorebird, some of which have populations that are endangered. Will the increased number of sorties adversely affect their nesting habits?

Have they adequately considered what the temporary closures will do to navigating the

Neuse River? The proposed connection between BT-9 and BT-11 will, at times, block access to the river. How frequently will the proposed closures occur? How long will such closures be in effect? Hours? Days?

In the MCAS proposal, rule 4.1.1 G states: Development shall not impede navigation or create undue interference with access to, or use of, public trust areas or estuarine waters. If this update is approved by DCM, the public's access to the public trust areas and estuarine waters of the Pamlico Sound and around Piney Island will undoubtedly be unduly interfered with and severely restricted.

CCA NC objects to the loss of public citizen access to these public trust waters and lands, particularly the permanent restrictions around Piney Island. We respectfully ask that the permanent 500-foot shoreline closure be withdrawn or, at minimum, not finalized until the Marine Corps (a) explains how its current operations differ from those described in 2015, (b) publishes the data and safety analysis supporting the buffer, including its own calculation of the shoreline and acreage affected, (c) completes updated environmental, economic, and Marine Mammal Protection Act reviews, and (d) evaluates less restrictive alternatives.

Thank you for your consideration.

Best Regards,

David A. Sneed, Executive Director
Coastal Conservation Association North Carolina
Mobile 252.341.2096
Office 919.781.FISH

From: Alice Wesselman
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Friday, October 9, 2026 11:49:15 AM

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As an avid coastal fishing enthusiast and eco- tourist, I question the need for the 500 ft barrier and temporary closures to access the Neuse River. Does the Cherry Point plan consider the seasonal access and tourist economy that many North Carolina Piedmont residents treasure, in their justification for these additional restrictions on non-military use and access as requested.

I am concern that that fishing charter and eco boat touring businesses will not be able to maintain economic viability and will remove this amazing heritage for North Carolina public. I personally look forward to annual trips for fishing and general enjoyment of the unique birds population found in this area.

In the MCAS proposal, rule 4.1.1 G states: Development shall not impede navigation or create undue interference with access to, or use of, public trust areas or estuarine waters. If this update is approved by DCM, the public's access to the public trust areas and estuarine waters of the Pamlico Sound and around Piney Island will undoubtedly be unduly interfered with and severely restricted.

There should be limits on this additional access requested so that the public has access that allows the current economic fishing and tourism charters, restaraunts, accomadation to continue to exist economically. There is no imminent threat that would justify or legitimize the public taking this request would effect. Please consider this in your evaluation of this request.

Sincerely,

Alice Wesselman
Burlington, NC

From: Chandler Creech
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Cc: Will Blackley; Karl Blackley
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Friday, October 9, 2026 10:29:55 AM

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I oppose any expansion to the Piney Island Bombing range in the Pamlico sound.

This is an extreme overreach by the Federal Government and military.

https://www.carolinacoastonline.com/article_eb53a602-df28-4c80-a54e-9cfd1b148629.html

From: Jeff Bennett
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Cc: Chandler Creech
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Friday, October 9, 2026 10:25:44 AM

You don't often get email from jeff@seswatertech.com. Learn why this is important

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I oppose any expansion to the Piney Island Bombing range in the Pamlico sound.

This is an extreme overreach by the Federal Government and military.

https://www.carolinacoastonline.com/article_eb53a602-df28-4c80-a54e-9cfd1b148629.html

Jeff Bennett

From: Diane Lemieux
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Friday, October 9, 2026 7:59:27 AM

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Please do not implement the expanded bombing range in Pamlico Sound and the Neuse River in NC. This will negatively affect pleasure and commercial boaters and our local economies and our access to a public resource.
Diane Lemieux
Arapahoe, NC

I am one voice and I will raise it up in pursuit of truth, justice and the American Way.



From: C Hoyt
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Friday, October 9, 2026 7:59:15 AM

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To Who. It May Concern
I am a resident of Merritt, NC which is in Pamlico County. I have read with some dismay of the request from USMC MCAS Cherry Point to expand the training exercise area in the Pamlico Sound. As a proud daughter of a veteran, I understand the need for training in order to keep our soldiers sharp. However, the area they are requesting blocks access to the sound from anyone in Pamlico County. The Bay River and the Neuse are both access points to get to the sound. Blocking this egress would cause great economic hardship for the fishermen of Pamlico which in turn would cause issues for all of its citizens. If they do need that size of training ground, surely they have looked south to the area known as Onslow Bay or east over the Atlantic. Please do not destroy the livelihood for the proud citizens of our Downeast area.
Sent from my iPad

From: Kaitlin Rouse
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Friday, October 9, 2026 7:56:54 AM

You don't often get email from kaitlinhrouse@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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To whom is may concern,

I respectfully oppose the Marine Corps' determination that the proposed expansion of bombing range operations and associated restricted areas at BT-9 and BT-11 is consistent, to the maximum extent practicable, with North Carolina's Coastal Management Program (CMP).

The proposed action would significantly increase military activity within Pamlico Sound, including substantial increases in munitions use, unmanned aircraft operations, debris removal activities, and expansion of restricted waters available for public use. The determination understates direct and cumulative effects on public trust resources, commercial and recreational fishing, navigation, local economies, wildlife habitat, and public access rights protected under North Carolina law. The proposal therefore fails to demonstrate consistency with multiple enforceable policies contained in the Coastal Area Management Act (CAMA), NC Administrative Code provisions governing public trust waters, and county Land Use Plans.

1. Failure to Adequately Protect Public Trust Rights
The determination explicitly acknowledges that "The Proposed Action would infringe on public trust rights." This admission alone raises serious concerns regarding consistency with North Carolina coastal policies.

The Marine Corps attempts to justify the expansion by noting that mariners would be notified when closures occur. However, Notices to Mariners do not eliminate or mitigate the actual loss of access to public trust waters. North Carolina's Coastal Management Program recognizes that public trust waters belong to all citizens for navigation, fishing, recreation, and commerce.

Expanding the danger zone northward to connect BT-9 and BT-11 and establishing a permanent 500-foot exclusion zone would result in reduced access for recreational fishermen, reduced access for commercial fishing vessels, increased displacement of boating traffic, concentration of fishing pressure into remaining open waters, and loss of traditional fishing grounds.

The determination does not quantify the number of affected fishermen, the number of recreational users displaced, the economic value of affected fisheries, or the cumulative acreage of waters effectively removed from public use. Without such analysis, the finding of consistency is unsupported.

2. Inadequate Analysis of Economic Impacts
Pamlico Sound supports commercial fishing, charter fishing, recreational boating, tourism, and

waterfowl hunting. The expansion creates direct restrictions on access to publicly usable coastal waters.

The document repeatedly states the proposal benefits the economy by supporting Marine Corps operations. However, it fails to evaluate economic losses to local fishing communities, charter operators, marina operators, bait and tackle businesses, and tourism-related businesses.

The determination considers economic benefits to military operations while ignoring losses to existing coastal industries. This represents an incomplete consistency analysis.

3. Significant Increase in Munitions Activity at BT-11
The proposal includes an 87% increase in munitions expenditures at BT-11, a fivefold increase in UAS operations, and expanded use of danger zones. An 87% increase in munitions usage is not a minor operational adjustment.

The determination repeatedly concludes that water quality impacts would be insignificant without presenting sufficient supporting data demonstrating that heavy metals will not accumulate, explosive residues will not increase, sediment contamination will not occur, or aquatic organisms will not be exposed to increased contaminants.

Given the magnitude of the increase, reliance on existing environmental conditions is insufficient. A detailed cumulative contamination study should be required before consistency can be determined.

4. Insufficient Consideration of Fisheries Resources
Pamlico Sound is one of the most productive estuarine ecosystems on the Atlantic Coast. The CZMA and North Carolina CMP require protection of spawning areas, nursery habitat, fishery resources, and biological productivity.

The determination concludes that "The Proposed Action would not affect the life cycles of estuarine or ocean resources." However, this conclusion is unsupported by evidence of long-term monitoring addressing increased aircraft activity, increased munitions deployment, increased debris removal operations, increased vessel operations, noise impacts on fish behavior, or disturbance to spawning and nursery habitat.

The burden should be on the applicant to demonstrate no adverse impacts rather than simply asserting impacts will not occur.

5. Inadequate Analysis of Wildlife Effects
The proposed training areas are located within ecologically significant coastal waters used by migratory birds, waterfowl, shorebirds, marine mammals, and sea turtles.

Although the determination claims no significant effects on sensitive resources, little discussion is provided regarding increased aircraft activity, expanded UAS operations, increased military vessel activity, and increased training frequency. Repeated disturbance can alter feeding, nesting, migration, and wintering behavior. The absence of a demonstrated impact is not proof that no impact exists.

6. Inconsistency With County Land Use Plan Public Access Goals
The Carteret, Craven, and Pamlico County Land Use Plans each emphasize maintaining public

access, protecting public trust waters, and preserving recreational opportunities.

The determination argues that closures are acceptable because mariners will receive notice. However, notification does not preserve access. The practical result of the proposal is more closures, larger restricted areas, greater uncertainty for users, and reduced public access to coastal waters. This directly conflicts with local public access objectives.

7. Cumulative Effects Were Not Adequately Addressed
The proposal includes numerous simultaneous increases, including increased UAS operations, increased F-35 operations, increased KC-130 operations, increased munitions use, expanded danger zones, new amphibious operations, increased debris removal activities, and new unmanned vessel operations.

Individually, each action is characterized as insignificant. Collectively, however, they represent a substantial intensification of military activity throughout the range complex. The consistency determination lacks a meaningful cumulative-effects analysis evaluating combined ecological impacts, fisheries impacts, public-access impacts, and water-quality impacts.

8. Safety Buffer Expansion Is Not Adequately Justified
The Marine Corps proposes a permanent 500-foot restricted safety buffer around BT-11. The determination provides no quantitative analysis demonstrating that existing safety measures are inadequate, that historical incidents justify expansion, or that alternative measures were evaluated.

Under coastal management policies, restrictions on public waters should be narrowly tailored and supported by necessity. The record does not demonstrate that the proposed exclusion zone represents the least restrictive alternative.
Conclusion

The Marine Corps has not adequately demonstrated that the proposed expansion of military operations and restricted waters surrounding BT-9 and BT-11 is consistent with North Carolina's Coastal Management Program.

The proposal infringes upon public trust rights, reduces access to public waters, increases military use intensity substantially, fails to fully evaluate fisheries impacts, fails to fully evaluate economic losses, fails to adequately address cumulative environmental effects, and provides insufficient justification for expanded exclusion zones.

For these reasons, North Carolina should reject the Consistency Determination as submitted and require additional analysis, mitigation measures, and alternatives before finding the proposal consistent with the enforceable policies of the Coastal Area Management Act and the North Carolina Coastal Management Program.

Thank you.

Kaitlin Rouse

From: Matt K
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Friday, October 9, 2026 7:22:47 AM

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To whom it may concern:

I am a Carteret County resident, angler, and boater who opposes the proposed MCAS Cherry Point training update, especially the permanent 500-foot safety buffer around BT-11.

This closure would permanently remove public access to roughly 21 miles of productive shoreline—including Turnigan Bay's northern shore, Racoon Island, and key points in West Bay—prime habitat for red drum, speckled trout, and flounder. It would harm recreational and commercial fishing, increase crowding and user conflicts, and damage the local economies of Carteret, Pamlico, and Craven Counties.

The Marine Corps proposes only a minor increase (220 UAS operations, ~1.4%) and more ordnance on existing targets. This does not justify a permanent loss of public-trust waters. In 2015, MCAS Cherry Point stated existing restricted areas were sufficient to contain all operations. Nothing explains why a permanent perimeter buffer is now needed.

I ask that the permanent shoreline closure be withdrawn—or at least delayed—until the Marine Corps explains the change from its 2015 position, provides supporting safety data, completes updated economic and environmental reviews, and considers less-restrictive alternatives.

Thank you for considering the concerns of local residents who rely on these public waters.

Sincerely,

Matthew Kaushagen
252.227.2636
Carteret County Resident

From: John Gurganus
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Friday, October 9, 2026 6:12:00 AM

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I am writing to you to voice my concerns about losing open water access in the sound off of Jones bay. I have spent time out there fishing and my son and daughter are almost big enough to start going fishing with me and I don't want to lose access to that water. Please don't make it so we can't use this water.

John Gurganus

Sent from my iPhone

From: Bennett Branch
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Thursday, October 8, 2026 8:04:52 PM

You don't often get email from bennett@branchhomeimprovement.com. Learn why this is important

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My name is Bennett Branch. I own a house and live near by this area of the pamlico sound. I frequent these waters. Fishing, recreation etc. I've grown up doing so as well as numerous other family members and friends I know. Please understand the effect this will have. Not only on recreation, but for people who make their livelihood on these waters. Please deny this proposal for further expansion!

Thanks,

Bennett Branch
Licensed General Contractor
Branch Home Improvement LLC
(919) 995-6325
www.branchhomeimprovement.com



From: North State Guide DJR
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Thursday, October 8, 2026 7:25:39 PM

You don't often get email from djrosenc@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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My name is Jennings Rose and I am a full time fishing guide in Pamlico county. I fish the waters around BT-11 frequently with clients from all over the country. Piney island simply put is a special place. Even with consistent live fire practice and bombing, the area wildlife and Finfish still find away to inhabit this marsh and shoreline. Putting a 500yard buffer around piney island would directly affect my business negatively. I would no longer be able to take fishermen, bird watchers, and families to enjoying remote scenic areas for income. A large portion of my livelihood is made in west bay, turnagain bay, and the Neuse River. I ask the this proposal be denied for the simple fact that this would further restrict public water to the tax paying citizens of North Carolina. Shutting down the canal from turnagain bay to west bay would also put boaters in danger, forcing them to alter their course miles around to open water to gain access back into Neuse River. Cutting Fishermans income and reducing boater safety by exposing them to open water should be reason alone to deny this proposal of further expansion of BT-11.

Capt. Jennings Rose IV
North State Guide Service
910-231-7741
northstateguide.com

From: rob@yondercove.com
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Thursday, October 8, 2026 3:59:21 PM

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To Whom it may Concern,

The proposed expansion of MCAS Cherry Point Range Complex will interfere with my ability to enjoy those Public Trust Waters.
I belong to a boating club with some 200 members out of Oriental, NC. We regularly sail these areas.

I strongly oppose this expansion.

Thank you for your consideration,

Robert McDonald
5006 Topsail Drive
Oriental, NC 28571
802-363-6119

From: Chris McCutcheon
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Thursday, October 8, 2026 3:31:12 PM

You don't often get email from cmccutcheon99@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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I oppose any forward movement with the USMC proposed expansion of the restricted waters around BT-9 and BT-11 due to potential estuary and wetland impacts and the incomplete and vague nature of the proposal's 'intermittent' restriction and undemonstrated
need. In addition this will have major negative economic and quality of life impacts on the people who live and fish in the area.
Kind Regards,
Chris McCutcheon

From: Cherilyn Walley
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Thursday, October 8, 2026 1:54:40 PM

You don't often get email from cawalley@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Please do not expand the exclusion zone at the mouth of the Neuse River / Pamlico Sound. The communities around this area depend on unrestricted water access in this area throughout the year. To close it off, even intermittently, would significantly impact our ability to not only fish these and surrounding waters, but block important water routes through between communities.

Sincerely,

Cherilyn Walley, PhD

From: Mark Mullen
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Thursday, October 8, 2026 11:43:52 AM

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To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed changes to the MCAS Cherry Point Range Complex and the associated expansion of restricted areas in the surrounding waters.

I regularly fish and boat in this area with my family, and continued access to these waters is very important to us. These are public waters that provide valuable opportunities for fishing, boating, and family recreation. Increasing or making permanent restrictions around areas such as BT-9 and BT-11 would reduce access to areas that local residents and recreational users have enjoyed for years.

I understand and respect the important training mission of the Marine Corps and the need to maintain appropriate safety measures. However, I am concerned that expanding restricted areas and establishing permanent buffers could unnecessarily limit recreational access to these waters.

I respectfully ask that NC DEQ carefully consider the impact these proposed changes could have on recreational fishermen, boaters, and families who use these waters. I encourage the Department to seek alternatives that allow the Marine Corps to accomplish its training objectives while preserving as much public access as possible.

Please consider my concerns as part of the Federal Consistency review and oppose any changes that would unnecessarily reduce public access to these waters.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Mark Mullen

From: Sara Pace
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Thursday, October 8, 2026 11:01:27 AM

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To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed expansion of Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point.

I am concerned that this expansion could increase impacts to eastern North Carolina's natural resources, coastal communities, and public use of our waters. The affected area supports valuable fisheries, recreational opportunities, and residential communities that are important to the local economy and quality of life.

I am particularly concerned about potential impacts to commercial and recreational fishermen, who may face increased restrictions, reduced access to fishing grounds, or disruptions from expanded military operations. Boaters, paddlers, anglers, and other recreational users of our coastal waters could also experience reduced access and enjoyment of public waterways.

In addition, nearby residents will be negatively affected by increased aircraft noise, traffic, and other disruptions associated with expanded operations. These impacts have the potential to diminish quality of life and affect communities that have long lived, worked, and recreated in this region.

I urge DEQ to thoroughly evaluate the potential environmental and socioeconomic consequences of this project, including impacts to fisheries, water quality, wildlife, public access, recreation, and nearby residents. Any uncertainties regarding these impacts should be fully addressed before permits are approved.

Thank you for considering my comments and ensuring that the interests of coastal communities, residents, and natural resources are carefully protected during the review process.

Sincerely,

Sara Pace

Newport, NC

From: Zach Ayotte
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Thursday, October 8, 2026 10:52:04 AM

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To Whom It May Concern:
I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed Range Operations Update at Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point and, in particular, the proposed expansion of the intermittent water-restricted area and the addition of a permanent 500-foot restricted-area safety buffer around BT-11.
I recognize the importance of military readiness and the role that MCAS Cherry Point plays in eastern North Carolina. However, the proposed changes would substantially increase military activity in and around the coastal waters and natural resources that are also relied upon by local residents, recreational users, fishermen, and the broader coastal community. The Coastal Consistency Determination does not adequately demonstrate that these increased impacts can be reconciled with North Carolina's stated policies protecting public-trust waters, coastal resources, water quality, and public access.

Most importantly, the document itself acknowledges that the proposed expansion of the intermittent water-restricted area would infringe upon public-trust rights. The Marine Corps states that the expanded danger zone would restrict access to portions of Pamlico Sound and that local users would be excluded from those waters when the restricted area is activated. The document similarly acknowledges that the proposal has the potential to restrict public access to public-trust waters.
This is not a minor change in activity. The proposal would increase the frequency and intensity of operations at multiple locations. Among other changes, the proposal calls for a fivefold increase in UAS operations at MCOLF Atlantic, a fivefold increase at BT-11, increased munitions expenditures, new watercraft access points, new amphibious operations, and recurring unmanned surface and underwater vessel operations in public-trust waters.

The proposal also raises particular concerns regarding coastal and wetland resources. The document acknowledges that establishing the proposed watercraft access points could temporarily increase turbidity and could result in damage to wetland vegetation or alteration of the natural wetland environment. It further acknowledges the possibility of minor wetland loss and loss of floodplain water-storage capacity. These potential

effects deserve careful consideration rather than being dismissed primarily on the basis of the anticipated infrequency of use.

There are also concerns regarding water quality and existing conditions in the area. The document acknowledges that waters surrounding MCALF Bogue are already impaired for shellfish harvesting and fish and shellfish consumption because of bacteria and other microbes. In an environment already subject to water-quality concerns, additional amphibious and watercraft activity should be approached with particular caution and supported by comprehensive monitoring and mitigation measures.
The proposal would also increase the frequency of range-clearance activities and expand the restricted area associated with BT-9 and BT-11. At BT-11, for example, annual munitions expenditures are projected to increase by approximately 87 percent, while UAS operations would increase fivefold. These are substantial increases that warrant more than an assumption that impacts will remain insignificant.

I am particularly concerned that the determination relies heavily on the assertion that impacts will be temporary, minor, negligible, or otherwise manageable while simultaneously acknowledging that the proposed action would restrict public access and infringe upon public-trust rights. North Carolina's coastal-management policies recognize that these waters have important public, recreational, economic, biological, and aesthetic values. The applicable policy specifically calls for water- and wetland-based military training activities, to the maximum extent practicable, not to infringe upon public-trust rights or damage public-trust resources.

For these reasons, I respectfully request that the proposed Range Operations Update not be approved in its current form. At a minimum, the Marine Corps and the reviewing agencies should require a more thorough evaluation of:

1. The cumulative effects of the proposed increases in aircraft, UAS, watercraft, munitions, and training activity;
2. The loss or restriction of public access to public-trust waters;
3. Potential effects on wetlands, shellfish habitat, fisheries, wildlife, and water quality;
4. The consequences of increased munitions use and range-clearance activity;
5. The effects of the permanent 500-foot restriction around BT-11;
6. Whether alternatives exist that would meet military training requirements while producing fewer impacts to coastal resources and public-trust waters; and
7. Specific, enforceable measures for monitoring, mitigation, and restoration if the proposal proceeds.

Military readiness and coastal-resource protection do not have to be mutually exclusive. The goal should be to ensure that necessary training can occur while preserving the public's ability to use North Carolina's coastal waters and protecting the natural resources upon which coastal communities depend.
I therefore respectfully ask the reviewing authorities to reject the proposed changes as currently presented, or at minimum require additional analysis, public participation, and meaningful mitigation before allowing the proposed expansion of activities and restrictions to proceed.

Thank you for considering my comments and for protecting North Carolina's coastal resources and public-trust waters.

Respectfully,
Zachary Ayotte
Craven County, North Carolina

From: smh0824
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Thursday, October 8, 2026 9:55:35 AM

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I am writing to vocalize my concerns as a native of Eastern North Carolina in regard to the proposed expansion of excluded waters for military training. The proposed expansion significantly reduces boater and fisher access to our waters, and it would potentially harm tourism for Ocracoke, NC. The proposed expansion, especially without defined closure timelines, would open doors for the military to operate whenever it wants without concern for recreation, or rules to protect recreation for civilians and tourist activities. As a recreational boater and fisher coming out of the Pamlico and Pungo Rivers to the Pamlico Sound and often over the waterway to Ocracoke, I highly encourage you to deny this expanded exclusion proposal. If the proposed is due to recreational negligence over the years, perhaps address the root of the problem by focusing on how to reduce those safety risks of the negligent individuals rather than the negatively impacting the entire population using those waters.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Shannon Neal
Washington, NC native

From: Kyle van Althuis
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Thursday, October 8, 2026 9:25:24 AM

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Please do not expand these areas and harm access to public water and lands. I concur entirely with the following opinion:

I respectfully oppose the Marine Corps' determination that the proposed expansion of bombing range operations and associated restricted areas at BT-9 and BT-11 is consistent, to the maximum extent practicable, with North Carolina's Coastal Management Program (CMP).

The proposed action would significantly increase military activity within Pamlico Sound, including substantial increases in munitions use, unmanned aircraft operations, debris removal activities, and expansion of restricted waters available for public use. The determination understates direct and cumulative effects on public trust resources, commercial and recreational fishing, navigation, local economies, wildlife habitat, and public access rights protected under North Carolina law. The proposal therefore fails to demonstrate consistency with multiple enforceable policies contained in the Coastal Area Management Act (CAMA), NC Administrative Code provisions governing public trust waters, and county Land Use Plans.

1. Failure to Adequately Protect Public Trust Rights
The determination explicitly acknowledges that "The Proposed Action would infringe on public trust rights." This admission alone raises serious concerns regarding consistency with North Carolina coastal policies.

The Marine Corps attempts to justify the expansion by noting that mariners would be notified when closures occur. However, Notices to Mariners do not eliminate or mitigate the actual loss of access to public trust waters. North Carolina's Coastal Management Program recognizes that public trust waters belong to all citizens for navigation, fishing, recreation, and commerce.

Expanding the danger zone northward to connect BT-9 and BT-11 and establishing a permanent 500-foot exclusion zone would result in reduced access for recreational fishermen, reduced access for commercial fishing vessels, increased displacement of boating traffic, concentration of fishing pressure into remaining open waters, and loss of traditional fishing grounds.

The determination does not quantify the number of affected fishermen, the number of recreational users displaced, the economic value of affected fisheries, or the cumulative acreage of waters effectively removed from public use. Without such analysis, the finding of consistency is unsupported.

2. Inadequate Analysis of Economic Impacts
Pamlico Sound supports commercial fishing, charter fishing, recreational boating, tourism, and

waterfowl hunting. The expansion creates direct restrictions on access to publicly usable coastal waters.

The document repeatedly states the proposal benefits the economy by supporting Marine Corps operations. However, it fails to evaluate economic losses to local fishing communities, charter operators, marina operators, bait and tackle businesses, and tourism-related businesses.

The determination considers economic benefits to military operations while ignoring losses to existing coastal industries. This represents an incomplete consistency analysis.

3. Significant Increase in Munitions Activity at BT-11
The proposal includes an 87% increase in munitions expenditures at BT-11, a fivefold increase in UAS operations, and expanded use of danger zones. An 87% increase in munitions usage is not a minor operational adjustment.

The determination repeatedly concludes that water quality impacts would be insignificant without presenting sufficient supporting data demonstrating that heavy metals will not accumulate, explosive residues will not increase, sediment contamination will not occur, or aquatic organisms will not be exposed to increased contaminants.

Given the magnitude of the increase, reliance on existing environmental conditions is insufficient. A detailed cumulative contamination study should be required before consistency can be determined.

4. Insufficient Consideration of Fisheries Resources
Pamlico Sound is one of the most productive estuarine ecosystems on the Atlantic Coast. The CZMA and North Carolina CMP require protection of spawning areas, nursery habitat, fishery resources, and biological productivity.

The determination concludes that "The Proposed Action would not affect the life cycles of estuarine or ocean resources." However, this conclusion is unsupported by evidence of long-term monitoring addressing increased aircraft activity, increased munitions deployment, increased debris removal operations, increased vessel operations, noise impacts on fish behavior, or disturbance to spawning and nursery habitat.

The burden should be on the applicant to demonstrate no adverse impacts rather than simply asserting impacts will not occur.

5. Inadequate Analysis of Wildlife Effects
The proposed training areas are located within ecologically significant coastal waters used by migratory birds, waterfowl, shorebirds, marine mammals, and sea turtles.

Although the determination claims no significant effects on sensitive resources, little discussion is provided regarding increased aircraft activity, expanded UAS operations, increased military vessel activity, and increased training frequency. Repeated disturbance can alter feeding, nesting, migration, and wintering behavior. The absence of a demonstrated impact is not proof that no impact exists.

6. Inconsistency With County Land Use Plan Public Access Goals
The Carteret, Craven, and Pamlico County Land Use Plans each emphasize maintaining public

access, protecting public trust waters, and preserving recreational opportunities.

The determination argues that closures are acceptable because mariners will receive notice. However, notification does not preserve access. The practical result of the proposal is more closures, larger restricted areas, greater uncertainty for users, and reduced public access to coastal waters. This directly conflicts with local public access objectives.

7. Cumulative Effects Were Not Adequately Addressed
The proposal includes numerous simultaneous increases, including increased UAS operations, increased F-35 operations, increased KC-130 operations, increased munitions use, expanded danger zones, new amphibious operations, increased debris removal activities, and new unmanned vessel operations.

Individually, each action is characterized as insignificant. Collectively, however, they represent a substantial intensification of military activity throughout the range complex. The consistency determination lacks a meaningful cumulative-effects analysis evaluating combined ecological impacts, fisheries impacts, public-access impacts, and water-quality impacts.

8. Safety Buffer Expansion Is Not Adequately Justified
The Marine Corps proposes a permanent 500-foot restricted safety buffer around BT-11. The determination provides no quantitative analysis demonstrating that existing safety measures are inadequate, that historical incidents justify expansion, or that alternative measures were evaluated.

Under coastal management policies, restrictions on public waters should be narrowly tailored and supported by necessity. The record does not demonstrate that the proposed exclusion zone represents the least restrictive alternative.
Conclusion

The Marine Corps has not adequately demonstrated that the proposed expansion of military operations and restricted waters surrounding BT-9 and BT-11 is consistent with North Carolina's Coastal Management Program.

The proposal infringes upon public trust rights, reduces access to public waters, increases military use intensity substantially, fails to fully evaluate fisheries impacts, fails to fully evaluate economic losses, fails to adequately address cumulative environmental effects, and provides insufficient justification for expanded exclusion zones.

For these reasons, North Carolina should reject the Consistency Determination as submitted and require additional analysis, mitigation measures, and alternatives before finding the proposal consistent with the enforceable policies of the Coastal Area Management Act and the North Carolina Coastal Management Program.

Regards,
Kyle van Althuis

From: helena mayo
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Thursday, October 8, 2026 8:46:41 AM

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Dear Federal Consistency Coordinator,

I am writing to formally oppose the proposed expansion of restricted water areas associated with MCAS Cherry Point training operations near BT-9 and BT-11.

As a Pamlico County resident with strong ties to Goose Creek Island and our commercial fishing community, I am deeply concerned about the effects these restrictions could have on local livelihoods and public access to our waters.

Commercial fishermen depend on access to fishing grounds to support their families. Expanded restrictions could disrupt their work, increase fuel costs, and place additional burdens on an industry already facing significant challenges. These waterways are also important to recreational fishermen, boaters, and local businesses.

I respect our military and its training needs, but I oppose this proposal because of its potential harm to our coastal communities. Public access and the livelihoods of those who depend on these waters must be protected.

I urge the North Carolina Division of Coastal Management to object to this proposal and protect access to the Pamlico Sound and surrounding waterways.

Please include my opposition in the public record.

Sincerely,
Helena Mayo
Pamlico County, North Carolina

From: Dolly Rever
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Thursday, October 8, 2026 8:06:14 AM

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To the Federal Consistency Coordinator:

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed expansion of military training areas and associated restrictions on public access to portions of the Neuse River and Pamlico Sound.

For years, my family, friends, and I have enjoyed spending long, peaceful days on these beautiful North Carolina waterways. They are much more than places on a map to us - they are where we gather, make memories, enjoy the natural beauty of our coast, and experience a freedom that makes living in North Carolina so special. I recognize and respect the importance of military training and the mission of MCAS Cherry Point, however, the military already has established training areas, including the bombing range just off of Jones Bay in the Pamlico Sound. I am deeply concerned about the prospect of expanding restrictions into additional public waterways and allowing access to be suspended at the government's discretion, potentially for extended periods.

These waters belong to the public and are an important part of the lives and livelihoods of countless North Carolinians. Recreational boaters, families, fishermen, and coastal communities should not have to wonder whether they will be permitted to enjoy waterways that have been accessible to generations before us, and I am particularly concerned about the potential for these restrictions to interfere with recreational boating, established fishing grounds, and the ability to travel freely between our coastal communities.

I respectfully ask that the proposed expansion be reconsidered and that alternatives be explored that meet military training needs without unnecessarily restricting public access to the Neuse River and Pamlico Sound. At a minimum, any proposed closures should be narrowly defined, limited in duration, and subject to clear public notification and accountability. Our coastal waters are a treasured public resource. Once unrestricted access is surrendered, there is no guarantee it will ever be fully restored.

Please consider this my formal opposition to the proposed expansion and include my comments in the public record.

Sincerely,

D. S. Rever

Raleigh, NC

From: Dan Murphy
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Thursday, October 8, 2026 7:46:21 AM

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Regarding the proposal to further limit public access to the waters around the mouth of the Neuse river and other pamlico sound areas related to bombing targets, I could not be more enthusiastically opposed to such a move.

If anything, we should be talking about how to increase public access to these areas. Please do not pursue this restriction.

Respectfully,

Daniel Murphy

919.671.8129

Yahoo Mail: Search, Organize, Conquer

From: Michael Gooding
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Wednesday, October 7, 2026 6:07:08 PM

You don't often get email from mdgooding11@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear Federal Consistency Coordinator,

I am writing to formally express my opposition to the proposed restrictions associated with the U.S. Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point training exercises that would restrict access to portions of the Neuse River and Pamlico Sound.

As a North Carolina resident and someone who values our coastal waterways, I am deeply concerned about the potential impact these proposed closures could have on public access, recreational boating, fishing, and the commercial fishing industry.

The Pamlico Sound and surrounding waterways are an important part of North Carolina's coastal communities. They provide opportunities for families to enjoy the water, support recreational and commercial fishermen, and are important habitat for a variety of fish and wildlife. Restricting access to substantial portions of these waterways, even if only during certain training exercises, could have significant consequences for the people who depend on and enjoy them.

I understand and respect the importance of military training and national security. However, I believe there needs to be a careful balance between those interests and the public's longstanding access to these waters. Any proposed restrictions should be narrowly tailored and should minimize the impact on recreational boaters, fishermen, commercial fishing operations, and access to places such as Ocracoke and Drum Inlet.

I respectfully ask that the State and federal agencies fully consider the concerns of the public before moving forward with these proposed restrictions. I also ask that alternatives be explored that would allow necessary military training to continue while preserving reasonable public access to these important waterways.

These waters belong to the public, and decisions that could substantially affect access to them deserve meaningful public consideration.

Please include my comments as part of the public record and consider my opposition to any proposal that would unnecessarily or excessively restrict public access to the Pamlico Sound, Neuse River, and surrounding waterways.

Thank you for your time and for considering my concerns.

Respectfully,

Michael D. Gooding
North Carolina Resident

Sent from my iPhone.

From: Sam Lawhorn
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Wednesday, October 7, 2026 5:07:29 PM

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I am writing to strongly oppose the proposed permanent 500-foot shoreline safety closure associated with the MCAS Cherry Point bombing range.

I urge DEQ to reject the proposed expansion of the permanent closure to include an additional 500-foot shoreline area of public trust waters.

These waters are used by recreational anglers, commercial fishermen, and boaters, and permanently restricting access would be an unnecessary overreach and loss of public access.

The existing bombing-range safety restrictions already provide for closures when training activities require them. A permanent expansion of the closure is not justified.

Please protect North Carolina’s public trust waters and reject the proposed permanent 500-foot shoreline closure.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Sincerely,

Sam Lawhorn

From: Clamlady Jane
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Wednesday, October 7, 2026 3:15:04 PM

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The proposal from the federal government that would essentially shut down our access to the Pamlico Sound is among the worst that I have ever heard.

As a commercial fisherman and a longtime Ocracoke resident the enactment of such a proposal will be devastating. Coming, as it does, on the heels of the states proposed $40 fee to enter and leave our homes (the only community in the state), your proposal, by denying access to the sound, will further discourage our remaining tourist trade and eliminate many of the remaining jobs.

The proposal will cause excessive unemployment, mass relocation along with a decrease in property values. Enrollment in our school will decrease along with the need for teachers and staff. Property values will decrease placing a financial burden on Hyde County (the poorest in the state).

I respectfully request that the proposal be withdrawn immediately.

Arleen Burley
P.O. Box 405
Ocracoke, NC 27960
(252) 928-6361

From: John Phillips
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Wednesday, October 7, 2026 3:00:07 PM

[You don't often get email from phillips.john.howard744@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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Please don’t shut down a large section of the Pamela sound for military training. This area is usually filled with recreational fisherman and boaters. It is also used for commercial fishing and shrimping. Doing this would be unsafe and inconvenient for many people. I own a home on the sound and Boat across this area frequently for both fishing and recreation. We have put up with the bombing of Cedar Island for years and though it’s annoyance, it does not shut off recreation or endanger the public. Please don’t do this.
Sent from my iPhone

From: Matt Rever
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Wednesday, October 7, 2026 2:09:22 PM

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To Whom it May Concern,

I am 100% AGAINST the possible expansion of the BT-11 bombing range/corridor.

The proposal infringes upon public trust rights, reduces access to public waters, increases military use intensity substantially, fails to fully evaluate fisheries impacts, fails to fully evaluate economic losses, fails to adequately address cumulative environmental effects, and provides insufficient justification for expanded exclusion zones.

mjr

From: Braxton Tutor
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Wednesday, October 7, 2026 12:55:48 PM

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Closing this area of the Pamlico sound will be detrimental to local communities. Many people rely on these waters to make a living from commercial fisherman to charter captains for old drum. This is a migration spot for Atlantic tarpon as well as many other species. Not to mention the impacts it would have on waterfowl in the winter time if arms training were to be conducted. I along with many others are against closing this area of the Pamlico sound for any amount of time.

Please re consider this proposal
Thank you
Braxton Tutor.

From: Cooper Stanley
To: federalconsistencycomments@deq.nc.gov.
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Wednesday, October 7, 2026 12:55:34 PM

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To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to express my strongest opposition to any proposed closure of the mouth of the Neuse River and portions of Pamlico Sound associated with B-T11 and B-T9 bombing and weapons-training operations.

Let me be perfectly clear: North Carolina's coastal waters are not an empty training ground. They are a workplace.

These waters support commercial fishermen, charter captains, recreational fishermen, guides, boat owners, and countless coastal businesses whose livelihoods depend on access to these waters. Closing additional areas — particularly productive fishing grounds and access routes — is not a minor inconvenience. It directly interferes with people's ability to make a living.

The Marine Corps has an important national-security mission, and I respect the men and women who serve. But respect for the military cannot mean that working fishermen are expected to continually surrender access to the public waters they depend on without meaningful consideration of the economic consequences.

The proposed expansion or continuation of closures associated with B-T11 and B-T9 raises serious questions that deserve clear answers:

• Exactly how many acres of public water would be closed?

• How frequently and for how long would those closures occur?

• What commercial fishing grounds, transit routes, and gear locations would become inaccessible?

• What analysis has been performed regarding the economic impact on North Carolina's commercial fishing industry?

• How were commercial fishermen and the coastal communities that depend on these waters consulted before these restrictions were proposed?

• What alternatives were considered to reduce interference with commercial and recreational fishing?

• What compensation, mitigation, or other relief is being considered for fishermen whose access and income are affected?

It is particularly troubling when restrictions on fishermen are considered in isolation from the cumulative burden already placed on North Carolina's fishing industry. Commercial fishermen are already navigating seasons, quotas, gear restrictions, weather, fuel costs, market conditions, environmental regulations, and numerous area closures. Every additional closure takes another piece of the water away from the people whose livelihoods depend on it.

You cannot continue treating these impacts as though they are insignificant simply because the closure occurs on water rather than on land.

A commercial fisherman cannot simply move his business to another location because the government has decided that the area where he works is now needed for training. Fishing grounds are not interchangeable. Gear is not always easily relocated. Weather, tides, species distribution, bottom conditions, distance from ports, and existing regulations all determine where and when fishermen can actually operate.

And this is bigger than one river, one sound, or one group of fishermen.

If the precedent is established that increasingly large portions of North Carolina's public waters can be restricted for military training without adequately accounting for the economic consequences, commercial fishing communities across the entire state should be concerned.

North Carolina should not be forced to choose between national defense and the survival of its working waterfront.

There needs to be a serious, transparent examination of whether these training requirements can be accomplished while minimizing the disruption to commercial and recreational fishing. At an absolute minimum, affected fishermen deserve meaningful consultation, detailed maps and schedules, a transparent economic-impact assessment, and a genuine effort to identify less disruptive alternatives.

I am asking the State of North Carolina, the appropriate federal agencies,

and the Marine Corps to stop and fully evaluate the consequences before moving forward with additional restrictions.

Do not make decisions about fishermen without fishermen at the table.

Do not sacrifice working coastal communities for administrative convenience.

And do not treat public waters as though the people who depend on them have no legitimate stake in how those waters are used.

North Carolina's commercial fishermen have earned the right to be heard, and they deserve more than a notice telling them where they can no longer work.

I expect this matter to receive the seriousness it deserves and request a detailed response addressing the economic impact, geographic scope, frequency, duration, and alternatives associated with the proposed B-T11 and B-T9 training closures.

Our coastal waters are part of North Carolina's economy, heritage, and working waterfront. They should be managed with the same seriousness and respect given to the military mission — not treated as expendable.

Respectfully,

[Cooper Stanley]
[Harkers Island/Carteret, North Carolina]
[252-269-7773]

From: Nathaniel Ellison
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Wednesday, October 7, 2026 12:50:07 PM

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To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to express my serious frustration and opposition regarding the closure of the mouth of the Neuse River.

This decision has real consequences for the people who depend on these waters. It is extremely disappointing to see a decision of this magnitude made without what appears to be adequate consideration for the individuals, businesses, fishermen, boaters, and communities directly affected by it.

People have invested their time, money, livelihoods, and years of their lives into this area. Closing access to the mouth of the Neuse River is not some minor inconvenience that can simply be brushed aside. It directly interferes with people's ability to use the water they have every right to enjoy and, for some, make a living from.

What is particularly frustrating is the apparent lack of meaningful consideration for the people who will actually have to live with the consequences of this decision. If officials expect the public to accept a closure of this nature, then they owe the public a clear explanation of the reasoning behind it, the evidence supporting it, and why less restrictive alternatives were not pursued.

I strongly urge the responsible officials to reconsider this closure and take the concerns of the affected community seriously. The public deserves transparency, accountability, and an opportunity to have its concerns heard before decisions are made that have such significant consequences.

We should not have to fight simply to have our voices heard about access to the waters that are an important part of our community, our economy, and our way of life.

I expect a substantive response addressing the justification for this closure,

the anticipated duration, the specific authority under which it was implemented, and what steps are being taken to address the concerns of those affected.

This issue deserves more than a generic response or bureaucratic dismissal. It deserves serious attention and accountability.

Sincerely,

Nathaniel Ellison

Sent from my iPhone

From: Marc Boettger
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Wednesday, October 7, 2026 12:18:12 PM

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Dear Federal Consistency Coordinator,

I am writing to oppose the proposed Range Operations Update at MCAS Cherry Point. The Marine Corps' own consistency determination says the expanded water restricted area near BT-9 and BT-11 would be closed to non-military users when active, and that a permanent 500-foot buffer would be added around BT-11. These are public trust waters in Pamlico Sound that local fishermen and boaters rely on. At the same time, the proposal would increase munitions expended at BT-11 by 87 percent and increase unmanned aircraft operations there fivefold. Taken together, that is a substantial and lasting reduction in public access paired with a major increase in military activity, and I urge the Division to object to the determination or, at a minimum, require the Marine Corps to work with commercial and recreational users on the extent and timing of closures before any expansion moves forward.

Sincerely,

Marc Boettger

(252)-558-6930

From: sleonard2@nc.rr.com
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Wednesday, October 7, 2026 11:08:46 AM

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Dear Federal Consistency Coordinator,

I am writing to express my concerns regarding the proposed update to training activities and operations within the MCAS Cherry Point Range Complex.

I am a North Carolina resident and a recreational fisherman and waterfowl hunter who regularly uses the Neuse River and Pamlico Sound and the surrounding coastal waters. I personally spend time fishing and hunting in this area, so the potential expansion of restricted-water areas directly affects my ability to use these waters.

I want to make clear that I support our military and the Marine Corps' need for realistic and effective training. My concern is not with military readiness. My concern is making sure that military training can be accomplished while also protecting the public's longstanding ability to use North Carolina's coastal waters.

North Carolina's coastal waters are public trust waters. The state recognizes public-trust rights that include the rights to navigate, fish, hunt and enjoy recreational activities in the waters of the state. These waters and their resources are held for the benefit of the people of North Carolina.

The proposed increase in restricted-water areas around BT-9 and BT-11, along with the proposed permanent 500-foot safety buffer around BT-11, therefore deserves particularly careful consideration. NC DEQ confirms that the proposal would increase restricted-water areas while adding or expanding aircraft, unmanned-system and watercraft training activities.

As someone who actually uses these waters, I know that a restriction that may look relatively small on a map can have a much larger practical impact. Closing or restricting access to one area can force fishermen and hunters to make substantial detours, eliminate access to traditional fishing and hunting locations, or make an otherwise safe and routine trip impractical.

I respectfully ask NC DEQ and the Marine Corps to carefully consider the following:

1. Protect reasonable access to North Carolina's public trust waters whenever military training does not require a closure.

2. Minimize the size and duration of restricted-water areas to what is actually necessary for training and public safety.

3. Provide the public with clear maps showing the existing restrictions and every proposed additional restricted-water area.

4. Clearly explain when intermittent restrictions will be activated, how long they will last, and how fishermen, hunters and recreational boaters will be notified.

5. Consider the cumulative effect of these restrictions on public-trust uses, including fishing, hunting, navigation and recreation.

6. Maintain access through these waters whenever it can be done safely without interfering with active military training.

I also ask that the state consider the fact that these waters are used by people who have fished and hunted them for generations. Public-trust waters should not be viewed simply as empty space on a military training map. They are working waters that support recreational fishermen, hunters, commercial fishermen, guides, boaters and coastal communities.

I believe it is possible to support the Marine Corps' training mission while also protecting the public's ability to exercise its longstanding rights in North Carolina's public trust waters.

I respectfully request that NC DEQ carefully evaluate the proposed changes and, if the project is approved, include appropriate conditions to minimize unnecessary restrictions on public access.

Finally, I request that the state provide a clear comparison of the existing restricted-water areas versus the proposed restricted-water areas, including the permanent BT-11 500-foot buffer. I would also like clarification regarding whether fishermen and hunters will be permitted to transit through the affected areas when military training is not taking place and what system will be used to notify the public when temporary restrictions are active.

Thank you for considering my comments and for including them in the official record.

Sincerely,

Shawn Leonard

North Carolina

Virus-free.www.avg.com

From: Sherri Hollister
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Wednesday, October 7, 2026 10:55:06 AM

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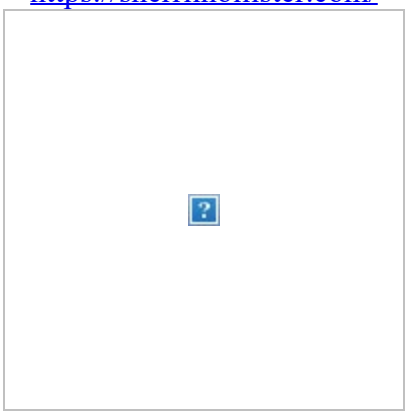
To Whom It May Concern:

I have been made aware that there is a proposal from the federal government that would essentially shut down our access to the Pamlico Sound. I live in Aurora right on the Pamlico Sound and we depend on this river and sound for our livelihood, tourism and recreation.This proposal includes provisions for the federal government to close the mouth of the Neuse River and a large portion of the Pamlico Sound during training exercises. This would have major impacts on access to this public resource for local boaters and transient boating as well as recreational and commercial fishermen. For a small town that is struggling to survive this threatens are very existence. Please, reconsider your plans and help us protect our community.

Thank you for your time

Sherri Lupton Hollister

S L Hollister
Romance, Suspense and Mystery
with a quirky cast of family and friends
set in small towns where everyone knows your business sometimes before you do.
https://sherrilhollister.com/



From: Preston Godwin
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Wednesday, October 7, 2026 10:28:40 AM

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To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to strongly oppose the proposed expansion of the bombing range at Piney Island and near Brant Island Shoals.

I have spent most of the past 40 years hunting and fishing in this area. During that time, I have personally witnessed a steady reduction in public access to these waters and surrounding areas. There was a time when the public could hunt and fish these waters without the level of interference and restrictions that exist today. I believe that public access to these areas is an important part of our state's outdoor heritage and should be protected—not continually reduced.

I want to make clear that I support our military and recognize the importance of providing the United States Marine Corps with the facilities and training areas necessary to maintain the highest level of readiness and performance. I understand that military training requires the use of significant areas of land and water, and I support reasonable measures that allow our service members to train effectively.

However, the proposed expansion comes at an unacceptable cost to the public.

The waters around Piney Island and Brant Island Shoals provide some of the most productive hunting and fishing opportunities on the entire south side of the sound. Further restricting access to these areas would effectively eliminate public access to some of the most valuable recreational fishing and hunting grounds available to local residents and sportsmen.

For those of us who have spent decades on these waters, this is not simply a matter of losing another place to pursue game. It represents the continued loss of access to an area that has been an important part of our outdoor lives and our connection to the coast for generations.

I respectfully ask that MCAS Cherry Point and the appropriate federal and state agencies carefully consider the cumulative impact that this expansion would have on public

access. Military readiness and public access should not automatically be treated as mutually exclusive. Alternatives should be thoroughly examined that would allow the Marine Corps to accomplish its training objectives while preserving reasonable opportunities for the public to hunt and fish in these productive waters.

At a minimum, existing public access should be protected to the greatest extent possible, and any additional restrictions should be narrowly tailored to what is genuinely necessary for military training and safety.

After nearly 40 years of hunting and fishing in this area, I have seen firsthand how much has already been lost. I strongly oppose any further expansion of restrictions that would prevent the public from accessing Piney Island and Brant Island Shoals bombing ranges, and the surrounding waters.

Our military deserves the resources necessary to train and protect this country. At the same time, the public deserves to retain access to the natural resources and public waters that have been enjoyed by generations of North Carolina sportsmen and women.

I respectfully request that my opposition to the proposed bombing range expansion be entered into the official record and fully considered as part of the Federal Consistency review and decision-making process.

Thank you for your consideration.

Preston Godwin

From: Jeffrey Rouse
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Wednesday, October 7, 2026 9:40:10 AM

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To whom is may concern,

I respectfully oppose the Marine Corps' determination that the proposed expansion of bombing range operations and associated restricted areas at BT-9 and BT-11 is consistent, to the maximum extent practicable, with North Carolina's Coastal Management Program (CMP).

The proposed action would significantly increase military activity within Pamlico Sound, including substantial increases in munitions use, unmanned aircraft operations, debris removal activities, and expansion of restricted waters available for public use. The determination understates direct and cumulative effects on public trust resources, commercial and recreational fishing, navigation, local economies, wildlife habitat, and public access rights protected under North Carolina law. The proposal therefore fails to demonstrate consistency with multiple enforceable policies contained in the Coastal Area Management Act (CAMA), NC Administrative Code provisions governing public trust waters, and county Land Use Plans.

1. Failure to Adequately Protect Public Trust Rights
The determination explicitly acknowledges that "The Proposed Action would infringe on public trust rights." This admission alone raises serious concerns regarding consistency with North Carolina coastal policies.

The Marine Corps attempts to justify the expansion by noting that mariners would be notified when closures occur. However, Notices to Mariners do not eliminate or mitigate the actual loss of access to public trust waters. North Carolina's Coastal Management Program recognizes that public trust waters belong to all citizens for navigation, fishing, recreation, and commerce.

Expanding the danger zone northward to connect BT-9 and BT-11 and establishing a permanent 500-foot exclusion zone would result in reduced access for recreational fishermen, reduced access for commercial fishing vessels, increased displacement of boating traffic, concentration of fishing pressure into remaining open waters, and loss of

traditional fishing grounds.

The determination does not quantify the number of affected fishermen, the number of recreational users displaced, the economic value of affected fisheries, or the cumulative acreage of waters effectively removed from public use. Without such analysis, the finding of consistency is unsupported.

2. Inadequate Analysis of Economic Impacts
Pamlico Sound supports commercial fishing, charter fishing, recreational boating, tourism, and waterfowl hunting. The expansion creates direct restrictions on access to publicly usable coastal waters.

The document repeatedly states the proposal benefits the economy by supporting Marine Corps operations. However, it fails to evaluate economic losses to local fishing communities, charter operators, marina operators, bait and tackle businesses, and tourism-related businesses.

The determination considers economic benefits to military operations while ignoring losses to existing coastal industries. This represents an incomplete consistency analysis.

3. Significant Increase in Munitions Activity at BT-11
The proposal includes an 87% increase in munitions expenditures at BT-11, a fivefold increase in UAS operations, and expanded use of danger zones. An 87% increase in munitions usage is not a minor operational adjustment.

The determination repeatedly concludes that water quality impacts would be insignificant without presenting sufficient supporting data demonstrating that heavy metals will not accumulate, explosive residues will not increase, sediment contamination will not occur, or aquatic organisms will not be exposed to increased contaminants.

Given the magnitude of the increase, reliance on existing environmental conditions is insufficient. A detailed cumulative contamination study should be required before consistency can be determined.

4. Insufficient Consideration of Fisheries Resources
Pamlico Sound is one of the most productive estuarine ecosystems on the Atlantic Coast. The CZMA and North Carolina CMP require protection of spawning areas, nursery

habitat, fishery resources, and biological productivity.

The determination concludes that "The Proposed Action would not affect the life cycles of estuarine or ocean resources." However, this conclusion is unsupported by evidence of long-term monitoring addressing increased aircraft activity, increased munitions deployment, increased debris removal operations, increased vessel operations, noise impacts on fish behavior, or disturbance to spawning and nursery habitat.

The burden should be on the applicant to demonstrate no adverse impacts rather than simply asserting impacts will not occur.

5. Inadequate Analysis of Wildlife Effects
The proposed training areas are located within ecologically significant coastal waters used by migratory birds, waterfowl, shorebirds, marine mammals, and sea turtles.

Although the determination claims no significant effects on sensitive resources, little discussion is provided regarding increased aircraft activity, expanded UAS operations, increased military vessel activity, and increased training frequency. Repeated disturbance can alter feeding, nesting, migration, and wintering behavior. The absence of a demonstrated impact is not proof that no impact exists.

6. Inconsistency With County Land Use Plan Public Access Goals
The Carteret, Craven, and Pamlico County Land Use Plans each emphasize maintaining public access, protecting public trust waters, and preserving recreational opportunities.

The determination argues that closures are acceptable because mariners will receive notice. However, notification does not preserve access. The practical result of the proposal is more closures, larger restricted areas, greater uncertainty for users, and reduced public access to coastal waters. This directly conflicts with local public access objectives.

7. Cumulative Effects Were Not Adequately Addressed
The proposal includes numerous simultaneous increases, including increased UAS operations, increased F-35 operations, increased KC-130 operations, increased munitions use, expanded danger zones, new amphibious operations, increased debris removal activities, and new unmanned vessel operations.

Individually, each action is characterized as insignificant. Collectively, however, they represent a substantial intensification of military activity throughout the range complex.

The consistency determination lacks a meaningful cumulative-effects analysis evaluating combined ecological impacts, fisheries impacts, public-access impacts, and water-quality impacts.

8. Safety Buffer Expansion Is Not Adequately Justified
The Marine Corps proposes a permanent 500-foot restricted safety buffer around BT-11. The determination provides no quantitative analysis demonstrating that existing safety measures are inadequate, that historical incidents justify expansion, or that alternative measures were evaluated.

Under coastal management policies, restrictions on public waters should be narrowly tailored and supported by necessity. The record does not demonstrate that the proposed exclusion zone represents the least restrictive alternative.
Conclusion

The Marine Corps has not adequately demonstrated that the proposed expansion of military operations and restricted waters surrounding BT-9 and BT-11 is consistent with North Carolina's Coastal Management Program.

The proposal infringes upon public trust rights, reduces access to public waters, increases military use intensity substantially, fails to fully evaluate fisheries impacts, fails to fully evaluate economic losses, fails to adequately address cumulative environmental effects, and provides insufficient justification for expanded exclusion zones.

For these reasons, North Carolina should reject the Consistency Determination as submitted and require additional analysis, mitigation measures, and alternatives before finding the proposal consistent with the enforceable policies of the Coastal Area Management Act and the North Carolina Coastal Management Program.

Thank you.

Jeffrey Rouse
Triple-R Electric, Inc.
jrouse@tripler.com
Office: 252-523-3558
Mobile: 252-560-7437

TRIPLE-R ELECTRIC, INC.

From: Wright Sizemore
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Wednesday, October 7, 2026 8:45:36 AM

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We are against the proposal from the Federal Government to shut down portions of the Neuse River and Pamlico Sound during training exercises. It would cripple North Carolina commercial fishing and ruin a large part of sport fishing and pleasure boating.

Sincerely,
Cary Wright Sizemore and Ellen D. Sizemore

From: Jaiden Dupree
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Wednesday, October 7, 2026 8:12:56 AM

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Hey, my name is Jaiden Dupree.

I am reaching out about the proposed update to training activities and operations within the MCAS Cherry Point Range Complex.
I am a North Carolina resident and a recreational fisherman and waterfowl hunter who regularly uses the Neuse River and Pamlico Sound and the surrounding coastal waters. I personally spend time fishing and hunting in this area, so the potential expansion of restricted-water areas directly affects my ability to use these waters.
I want to make clear that I support our military and the Marine Corps' need for realistic and effective training. My concern is not with military readiness. My concern is making sure that military training can be accomplished while also protecting the public's longstanding ability to use North Carolina's coastal waters.
North Carolina's coastal waters are public trust waters. The state recognizes public-trust rights that include the rights to navigate, fish, hunt and enjoy recreational activities in the waters of the state. These waters and their resources are held for the benefit of the people of North Carolina.

These waters have been used for generations and generations, I have grown up fishing and hunting these waters and I would love to one day have kids of my own experience the same.

A lot of people rely on these exact waters to make a living and I would hate to see our locals and our communities suffer from this kind of change.

I just want to say thank you for time and have a blessed day!

Sincerely, Jaiden Dupree

From: david branchsfurniture.com
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Wednesday, October 7, 2026 7:57:26 AM
Attachments: image001.png

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Dear Federal Consistency Coordinator,

I am writing to express my concerns regarding the proposed update to training activities and operations within the MCAS Cherry Point Range Complex.

I am a fifth-generation Pamlico County North Carolina resident and a recreational fisherman and waterfowl hunter who regularly uses the Neuse River and Pamlico Sound and the surrounding coastal waters. For over 50 years is have spent time fishing and hunting in this area, so the potential expansion of restricted-water areas directly affects my ability to use these waters.

I want to make clear that I support our military and the Marine Corps' need for realistic and effective training. My concern is not with military readiness. My concern is making sure that military training can be accomplished while also protecting the public's longstanding rights in North Carolina's coastal waters.

North Carolina's coastal waters are public trust waters. The state recognizes public-trust rights that include the rights to navigate, fish, hunt and enjoy recreational activities in the waters of the state. These waters and their resources are held for the benefit of the people of North Carolina.

The proposed increase in restricted-water areas around BT-9 and BT-11, along with the proposed permanent 500-foot safety buffer around BT-11, therefore, deserves particularly careful consideration. NC DEQ confirms that the proposal would increase restricted-water areas while adding or expanding aircraft, unmanned-system, and watercraft training activities.

As someone who uses these waters, I know that a restriction that may look relatively small on a map can have a much larger practical impact. Closing or restricting access to one area can force fishermen and hunters to make substantial detours, eliminate access to traditional fishing and hunting locations, or make an otherwise safe and routine trip impractical.

I respectfully ask NC DEQ and the Marine Corps to carefully consider the following:

1. Protect reasonable access to North Carolina's public trust waters.
2. Minimize the size of training area for public safety.
3. Provide the public with clear maps showing the existing restrictions and every proposed additional restricted-water area.
4. Clearly explain when intermittent restrictions will be activated, how long they will last, and how fishermen, hunters and recreational boaters would be notified.
5. Consider the cumulative effect of these restrictions on public-trust uses, including fishing, hunting, navigation, and recreation.
6. Maintain access through these waters whenever it can be done safely without interfering with active military training.

I ask that the state consider the fact that these waters are used by people who have fished and hunted them for generations. Public-trust waters should not be viewed simply as empty space on a

military training map. They are working waters that support recreational fishermen, hunters, commercial fishermen, guides, boaters, and coastal communities.
I believe it is possible to support the Marine Corps' training mission while also protecting the public's ability to exercise its longstanding rights in North Carolina's public trust waters.
I respectfully request that NC DEQ carefully evaluate the proposed changes and site the reasons against NCDEQ's responsibilities for protecting the citizens' rights.
Finally, I request that the state provide a clear comparison of the existing restricted-water areas versus the proposed restricted-water areas, including the permanent BT-11 500-foot buffer. I would also like clarification regarding whether fishermen and hunters would be permitted to transit through the affected areas when military training is not taking place and what system will be used to notify the public when temporary restrictions are active.
Thank you for considering my comments and for including them in the official record.

Sincerely,

David Blythe

David Blythe
Branch's Furniture
252-617-7717
309 Pollock Street
New Bern, NC 28560
https://www.branchsfurniture.com

From: Mayo, Wendy H.
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Wednesday, October 7, 2026 7:51:47 AM
Attachments: image.png
image.png

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To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to strongly oppose the proposed restrictions that would close portions of the Neuse River and Pamlico Sound during military training exercises.

The Pamlico Sound is a public resource that is important to North Carolina families, recreational and commercial fishermen, boaters, and the many businesses and communities that depend on access to these waters.

These proposed restrictions would have a significant impact on our ability to enjoy and use the waterways we have relied on for generations. Areas that are critical to the old drum fishery, tarpon migration, recreational fishing, commercial fishing, and boating could become inaccessible for extended periods of time.

This isn't just about fishing. It's about access to a resource that belongs to the public and supports our coastal communities and economy.

I fully support the mission and training needs of our military, but I believe there must be a way to accomplish that mission without essentially shutting down large portions of the Pamlico Sound and restricting access for the people who live, work, fish, and recreate there.

I respectfully ask that you consider the impact these proposed restrictions will have on North Carolina's coastal communities and reject any plan that unnecessarily limits public access to these waters.

Please protect our access to the Pamlico Sound.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Sincerely,

Wendy Mayo
Resident of Oriental, North Carolina

Wendy Mayo | Owner

Express Employment Professionals

Wilmington NC Office 910.392.2300

Raleigh NC Office 919.788.9575

910-431-2094 (cell)

wendy.mayo@ExpressPros.com<mailto:wendy.mayo@ExpressPros.com%20>

We match Talent with Opportunity!

[signatureImage]

[signatureImage]

From:	Zack
To:	DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject:	[External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date:	Wednesday, October 7, 2026 6:15:15 AM

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Please do not go through with the new proposed bombing range and extend the area from BT-9 all the way to BT-11. I understand the military needs places to practice, and I am beyond thankful for everything they do for us. However this proposal would essentially cut the Neuse River off of the pamlico sound, and would take away lots of fishing area, or make it very difficult to get too. We also enjoy driving the boat over to okracoke on a very calm day, and that would also make that very difficult to do. The current bombing ranges already take away some great fishing areas, there is not a reason to take away even more, and make getting to other areas outside of the proposed range even more difficult to get too. Keep the bombing ranges how they are!

Thanks,
Zack Gurkin
Solutions Advisor - Sales
Kinston, NC
Mobile - (252)-325-5747

From: Christina Warren
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Tuesday, October 6, 2026 9:07:32 PM

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Dear Federal Consistency Coordinator,

I am writing to express my concern regarding the proposed Range Operations Update at MCAS Cherry Point and, specifically, the proposed expansion of the intermittent water-restricted danger zones in the Pamlico Sound around BT-9 and BT-11.

As someone who lives in Pamlico County and enjoys using the Pamlico Sound, I am concerned about the impact these expanded restrictions could have on recreational boaters and both recreational and commercial fishermen. I understand and respect the Marine Corps' need to conduct safe and effective training. However, the Pamlico Sound is also an important public resource that is used extensively by our local communities.

The Marine Corps' own Coastal Consistency Determination acknowledges that the proposed expansion would impede navigation and interfere with access to and use of public trust waters. I am particularly concerned about how these restrictions could affect travel across the Sound, including trips between the Vandemere area and Ocracoke, as well as access to important fishing areas.

I respectfully ask that NC DEQ carefully consider the cumulative impact of these expanded restrictions on public access, navigation, recreational boating, and commercial and recreational fishing. I would also ask that the Marine Corps provide clear information regarding how frequently these expanded areas would be closed, how long closures would typically last, and what safe and reasonable alternative routes would remain available to the public when the areas are active.

Military training and public access are both important. I hope a solution can be reached that allows the Marine Corps to accomplish its training mission while minimizing unnecessary restrictions on North Carolina's public trust waters and the people who depend on them.

Thank you for considering my comments and for protecting the interests of the communities and citizens who use the Pamlico Sound.

Sincerely,

Christina Warren
Pamlico County, North Carolina

From: Captain Brad
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Tuesday, October 6, 2026 8:22:53 PM

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To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Brad Smith. I am an active charter captain and duck hunting guide, as well as a retired U.S. Marine Corps Gunnery Sergeant. I am writing to express my concerns regarding the proposed updates to training activities and operations within the MCAS Cherry Point Range Complex.

If approved as proposed, these changes would have a significant impact on my day-to-day fishing and duck hunting operations, as well as those of many other local recreational and commercial users who depend on access to Pamlico Sound.

The proposed exclusion area, along with the additional 500-foot safety buffer, would restrict access to open water and some of the most productive fishing and waterfowl hunting areas in the middle of Pamlico Sound. I understand and respect the need for military training and appropriate safety measures. However, I believe the proposed restrictions should be carefully reconsidered to ensure they do not unnecessarily eliminate safe access for the boating public.

To my knowledge, there have been no incidents involving military aircraft or vessels and boaters in this particular area that would warrant such a significant expansion of the restricted area. There are already established safety zones that prevent boaters from entering or traveling through certain areas during military operations.

The proposed changes also appear to create significant access problems with no practical way around the exclusion area. For example, if I launch from Lower Broad Creek and need to travel toward Cedar Island for a duck hunting trip, the proposed zone could effectively prevent me from reaching those areas by boat.

As a small-business owner, these restrictions would have a substantial financial impact on my business. Based on my current operations, I estimate that approximately 50% of my income could be affected by the loss of access to these areas. This is not simply a recreational inconvenience—it could directly affect my ability to operate my business and provide fishing and hunting opportunities to my customers.

I respectfully ask that the proposed updates be reconsidered and that alternatives be explored that allow the military to safely conduct necessary training while maintaining reasonable access for local commercial and recreational boaters.

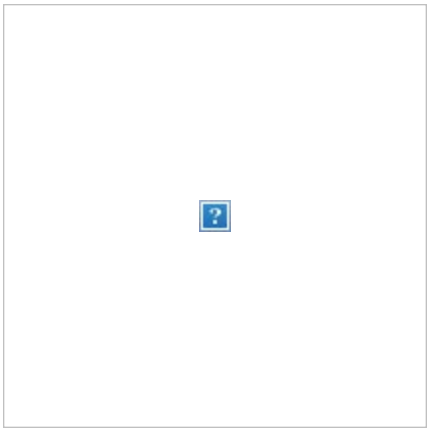
As a retired Marine, I understand the importance of military readiness and safe training operations. At the same time, as a local small-business owner and waterman, I also understand how important access to these waters is to our local economy and community.

I respectfully ask that the agencies involved consider the impact these changes would have on local businesses, guides, fishermen, hunters, and other users of Pamlico Sound before implementing the proposed restrictions.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Brad Smith

--



Captain Brad Smith
Owner Gunny B Outdoors LLC
Eastern, NC
803-920-5501
Gunnyboutdoors@gmail.com
Gunnyboutdoors.com



From: Paul Baker
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Tuesday, October 6, 2026 7:55:31 PM

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To: federalconsistencycomments@deq.nc.gov

Dear Federal Consistency Coordinator,

I am writing as someone who regularly enjoys the waters of the Pamlico Sound and surrounding waterways for recreational boating and fishing. These waters are more than just a place for recreation to me and my family. They are an important part of our way of life and a resource that has been enjoyed by generations of North Carolina families.

I am very concerned about the proposed expansion and modification of training activities associated with MCAS Cherry Point and the potential impact these changes could have on public access to the Pamlico Sound, the Neuse River, and surrounding waters.

As someone who spends time on these waters, I understand the importance of military training and the need for safe operations. However, I also know firsthand how quickly access to the Sound can become limited when areas are closed or restricted. Additional restricted areas or longer periods of restriction could make it much more difficult for recreational boaters and fishermen to safely reach the places they have traditionally used.

The Pamlico Sound is home to some of the finest fishing opportunities in North Carolina. The old drum fishery is an important part of our area's identity, and the seasonal tarpon migration brings fishermen from throughout the region. Recreational fishermen, commercial fishermen, charter operators, and local businesses all depend on continued access to these waters.

I am also concerned about the effect on boaters traveling between communities and recreational destinations. Routes through the Neuse River, Pamlico Sound, and surrounding waterways provide important access for people traveling by boat to places such as Ocracoke and the Outer Banks, as well as countless local fishing and boating destinations.

These are public waters, and restrictions that affect access can have consequences far beyond the immediate training area. They can affect fishing trips, family boating, charter businesses, commercial fishing operations, tourism, and the local economies that depend on people being able to use these waterways.

I respectfully ask NC DEQ to carefully consider the following:

• The total amount of public water that could be restricted;

• How often and for how long restrictions would occur;

• The cumulative effect of the proposed restrictions on recreational and commercial fishing;

• The impact on established boating and navigation routes;

• The effect on fishing-dependent businesses, charter operations, tourism, and local communities;

• Whether restrictions can be reduced or scheduled to minimize impacts during important fishing seasons and periods of high recreational use;

• Whether alternative locations, schedules, or procedures could accomplish the necessary military training objectives while reducing impacts to the public; and

• Whether boaters and fishermen will receive adequate advance and real-time notice of closures and restrictions.

I fully support the need for our military to train and maintain readiness. At the same time, I believe there must be a reasonable balance between those needs and the longstanding public use of the Pamlico Sound and surrounding waterways.

The Pamlico Sound is an irreplaceable public resource. I respectfully request that its continued accessibility be given significant consideration in the state's review.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my concerns and the concerns of the many people who depend on and enjoy these waters.

Sincerely,

Paul Baker
Grantsboro, NC

Sent from my iPhone

From: Chip Smith
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Tuesday, October 6, 2026 7:53:16 PM

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I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed changes to operations and expanding restricted water areas around active training targets in the Pamlico Sound and Neuse River.

I am a proud supporter of our military.

However, I am strongly opposed the proposed changes in the Pamlico Sound and Neuse River.

Our States coastal waters are an amazing resource for many recreational and commercial users and should not be restricted in the way proposed.

Please do not restrict our access to our coastal waters and fisheries.

Sincerely,

William L Smith Jr
9211 Hornigold Ave
Oriental, NC 27571

Sent from my iPhone

From: Graham Parker
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Tuesday, October 6, 2026 7:47:06 PM

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The Recreational Angler — Old Drum Fishery
Subject: Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
To the Federal Consistency Coordinator:
I am writing to oppose the proposed expansion of restricted waters between BT-11 and BT-9 in the Pamlico Sound. I have fished these waters for 10+ years, and the area around the Neuse River mouth is home to North Carolina's world-class old drum fishery — a resource anglers travel from across the country to experience.
The consistency determination proposes an intermittent restricted-water expansion north of BT-11 toward BT-9, plus a permanent 500-foot buffer around BT-11. "Intermittent" closures still mean I cannot plan a trip, book a guide, or count on access during prime fishing season. You cannot schedule around a closure you don't control.
These are public trust waters. Please find this proposal inconsistent with North Carolina's Coastal Management Program unless the restricted-water expansion is removed.
Sincerely,

Graham Parker,

Washington, NC

From: Holli Scott
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Tuesday, October 6, 2026 7:34:01 PM

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To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to express my concerns regarding the proposed restrictions that could limit access to portions of the Pamlico Sound and surrounding waterways during military training exercises.

This issue is personal to me and my family. My fiancé's mother is a commercial fisherman, and my granddaddy was also a commercial fisherman. I have seen firsthand how important our local waterways are to the people who make their living on the water. Commercial fishermen depend on access to these waters to work, provide for their families, and continue a way of life that has been passed down through generations.

I am also someone who simply loves being on the water. I enjoy running a boat and spending time on the Pamlico Sound. Being able to travel our waterways is a huge part of what makes living here special to me. I would hate to see restrictions make it difficult or impossible for people to make trips that so many of us take for granted—whether that is heading from New Bern toward Cedar Island, traveling through the waterways around the sound, or making a trip to Ocracoke.

I understand that military training and national security are important, and I am not opposed to the military or to responsible training activities. However, I believe it is important to carefully consider the impact that proposed closures or restrictions could have on commercial fishermen, recreational boaters, local families, and the communities that depend on these waterways.

Our waterways are not simply places on a map. They are workplaces, recreational spaces, transportation routes, and an important part of our coastal heritage. Any restrictions should be carefully evaluated to make sure they do not unnecessarily prevent commercial fishermen from working or unnecessarily limit the public's ability to safely access and enjoy these waters.

I respectfully ask that the impacts on commercial fishermen and the local boating community be seriously considered before any permanent or recurring restrictions are put into place. I also ask that alternatives be explored that would allow military training to continue while minimizing the disruption to the people who depend on and enjoy

these waterways.

Thank you for taking the time to consider the concerns of the people who live, work, and spend their time on these waters.

Sincerely,

Holli Scott

From: Jeff Aydelette
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Tuesday, October 6, 2026 5:43:42 PM

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Test of email address

From Jeff Aydelette w/ County Compass
newspaper for front page news item
in Oct. 8 paper

Thanks,
Jeff 252 745-3155

From: Jonathan E
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Tuesday, October 6, 2026 2:39:47 PM

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To whom it may concern,

Rebuttal to the CZMA Consistency Determination
Range Operations Update at MCAS Cherry Point Range Complex
Proposed Expansion of BT-9 and BT-11 Restricted Areas in Pamlico Sound
Submitted regarding the August 2026 Final Coastal Zone Management Act Consistency Determination

Introduction

I respectfully oppose the Marine Corps' determination that the proposed expansion of bombing range operations and associated restricted areas at BT-9 and BT-11 is consistent, to the maximum extent practicable, with North Carolina's Coastal Management Program (CMP).

The proposed action would significantly increase military activity within Pamlico Sound, including substantial increases in munitions use, unmanned aircraft operations, debris removal activities, and expansion of restricted waters available for public use. The determination understates direct and cumulative effects on public trust resources, commercial and recreational fishing, navigation, local economies, wildlife habitat, and public access rights protected under North Carolina law. The proposal therefore fails to demonstrate consistency with multiple enforceable policies contained in the Coastal Area Management Act (CAMA), NC Administrative Code provisions governing public trust waters, and county Land Use Plans.

1. Failure to Adequately Protect Public Trust Rights

The determination explicitly acknowledges that "The Proposed Action would infringe on public trust rights." This admission alone raises serious concerns regarding consistency with North Carolina coastal policies.

The Marine Corps attempts to justify the expansion by noting that mariners would be notified when closures occur. However, Notices to Mariners do not eliminate or mitigate the actual loss of access to public trust waters. North Carolina's Coastal Management Program recognizes that public trust waters belong to all citizens for navigation, fishing, recreation, and commerce.

Expanding the danger zone northward to connect BT-9 and BT-11 and establishing a permanent 500-foot exclusion zone would result in reduced access for recreational fishermen, reduced access for commercial fishing vessels, increased displacement of boating traffic, concentration of fishing pressure into remaining open waters, and loss of traditional fishing grounds.

The determination does not quantify the number of affected fishermen, the number of recreational users displaced, the economic value of affected fisheries, or the cumulative acreage of waters effectively removed from public use. Without such analysis, the finding of consistency is unsupported.

2. Inadequate Analysis of Economic Impacts

Pamlico Sound supports commercial fishing, charter fishing, recreational boating, tourism,

and waterfowl hunting. The expansion creates direct restrictions on access to publicly usable coastal waters.

The document repeatedly states the proposal benefits the economy by supporting Marine Corps operations. However, it fails to evaluate economic losses to local fishing communities, charter operators, marina operators, bait and tackle businesses, and tourism-related businesses. The determination considers economic benefits to military operations while ignoring losses to existing coastal industries. This represents an incomplete consistency analysis.

3. Significant Increase in Munitions Activity at BT-11

The proposal includes an 87% increase in munitions expenditures at BT-11, a fivefold increase in UAS operations, and expanded use of danger zones. An 87% increase in munitions usage is not a minor operational adjustment.

The determination repeatedly concludes that water quality impacts would be insignificant without presenting sufficient supporting data demonstrating that heavy metals will not accumulate, explosive residues will not increase, sediment contamination will not occur, or aquatic organisms will not be exposed to increased contaminants.

Given the magnitude of the increase, reliance on existing environmental conditions is insufficient. A detailed cumulative contamination study should be required before consistency can be determined.

4. Insufficient Consideration of Fisheries Resources

Pamlico Sound is one of the most productive estuarine ecosystems on the Atlantic Coast. The CZMA and North Carolina CMP require protection of spawning areas, nursery habitat, fishery resources, and biological productivity.

The determination concludes that "The Proposed Action would not affect the life cycles of estuarine or ocean resources." However, this conclusion is unsupported by evidence of long-term monitoring addressing increased aircraft activity, increased munitions deployment, increased debris removal operations, increased vessel operations, noise impacts on fish behavior, or disturbance to spawning and nursery habitat.

The burden should be on the applicant to demonstrate no adverse impacts rather than simply asserting impacts will not occur.

5. Inadequate Analysis of Wildlife Effects

The proposed training areas are located within ecologically significant coastal waters used by migratory birds, waterfowl, shorebirds, marine mammals, and sea turtles.

Although the determination claims no significant effects on sensitive resources, little discussion is provided regarding increased aircraft activity, expanded UAS operations, increased military vessel activity, and increased training frequency. Repeated disturbance can alter feeding, nesting, migration, and wintering behavior. The absence of a demonstrated impact is not proof that no impact exists.

6. Inconsistency With County Land Use Plan Public Access Goals

The Carteret, Craven, and Pamlico County Land Use Plans each emphasize maintaining public access, protecting public trust waters, and preserving recreational opportunities.

The determination argues that closures are acceptable because mariners will receive notice. However, notification does not preserve access. The practical result of the proposal is more closures, larger restricted areas, greater uncertainty for users, and reduced public access to coastal waters. This directly conflicts with local public access objectives.

7. Cumulative Effects Were Not Adequately Addressed

The proposal includes numerous simultaneous increases, including increased UAS operations, increased F-35 operations, increased KC-130 operations, increased munitions use, expanded danger zones, new amphibious operations, increased debris removal activities, and new unmanned vessel operations.

Individually, each action is characterized as insignificant. Collectively, however, they represent a substantial intensification of military activity throughout the range complex. The consistency determination lacks a meaningful cumulative-effects analysis evaluating combined ecological impacts, fisheries impacts, public-access impacts, and water-quality impacts.

8. Safety Buffer Expansion Is Not Adequately Justified

The Marine Corps proposes a permanent 500-foot restricted safety buffer around BT-11. The determination provides no quantitative analysis demonstrating that existing safety measures are inadequate, that historical incidents justify expansion, or that alternative measures were evaluated.

Under coastal management policies, restrictions on public waters should be narrowly tailored and supported by necessity. The record does not demonstrate that the proposed exclusion zone represents the least restrictive alternative.

Conclusion

The Marine Corps has not adequately demonstrated that the proposed expansion of military operations and restricted waters surrounding BT-9 and BT-11 is consistent with North Carolina's Coastal Management Program.

The proposal infringes upon public trust rights, reduces access to public waters, increases military use intensity substantially, fails to fully evaluate fisheries impacts, fails to fully evaluate economic losses, fails to adequately address cumulative environmental effects, and provides insufficient justification for expanded exclusion zones.

For these reasons, North Carolina should reject the Consistency Determination as submitted and require additional analysis, mitigation measures, and alternatives before finding the proposal consistent with the enforceable policies of the Coastal Area Management Act and the North Carolina Coastal Management Program.

Respectfully submitted,

Jonathan Edwards

From: Brad Bickel
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Tuesday, October 6, 2026 12:55:33 PM

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It is an extreme overreach trying to take Public Trust Waters away from the public. I fish these waters regularly and am very concerned. Recreational anglers, commercial fishermen, and boaters will be heavily affected if this is allowed to go through. This whole deal of possibly having to call in to the Range Notifications or go online for Notice to Mariners is entirely too complicated. The 500 foot shoreline permanent safety closure is the absolute worst part of this and whoever came up with this should be ashamed of themselves. I hope these comments will be considered when developing the stats consistency response. Thanks, Brad Bickel

From: Kent Tawes
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Monday, October 5, 2026 10:41:13 AM

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I respectfully oppose the further closure of NC waterways at BT-9 and BT-11 by the Federal Government for the following reasons. Safe navigation, taking away a public resource and public trust rights, hunting, fishing, the fact that there have been no documented accidents within the existing boundaries in over 50 years, not mention the environmental degradation (from no telling how many live rounds, lead, unexploded ordinances, etc.). Currently MCAS is doing range clearance (defined as "destruction, removal and proper disposition of debris") every 7 years at BT-9 and not at all at BT-11 (effectively doing nothing to prevent public safety hazards). Under 15A NCAC 07M.1000, "The use of water and wetland based target areas for military training purposes should, to the maximum extent practicable, not infringe on public trust rights, cause damage to public trust resources, violate existing water quality standards, or result in public safety hazards." The Final CZMA Consistency Determination explicitly notes, "Due to the expansion of the intermittent use water restricted area danger zone at BT-9 and BT-11, the Proposed Action would infringe on public trust rights."
Respectfully,
James K. Tawes
Raleigh, NC

From: John Kaplan
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Thursday, October 1, 2026 5:18:05 PM

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I am opposed to USMC MCAS Cherry Point expanding their areas of no access. This proposed new ruling will severely limit valuable fishing area if we have the Piney Island shorelines and Racoon Island taken away.

Close it for active exercises but otherwise it should remain open.

Thank you for your consideration,

John Kaplan
Oriental NC

From: harriett blood
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Thursday, October 1, 2026 3:40:22 PM

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The closing of fishing Piney Island area would be a huge lose for us recreational fishermen.
Matthew Bolyard
Oriental, NC

From: Bill Sloan
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Thursday, October 1, 2026 2:19:12 PM

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To whom it may concern,
I would like to voice my opposition to restricting the public from fishing in the waters outlined in this proposal.
William A Sloan
290 Spicers Creek Dr
Oriental, NC 28571

From: Ted Arndt
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Cc: Kidwell@ncleg.gov
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Wednesday, September 30, 2026 9:22:36 AM

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To whom it may concern:

I think it's pretty sad, though no surprise, that the marines think they need even more bombing range room, just to hit targets that are already the size of Rhode Island. The bombing ranges and their exclusion zones are already way too big and cause a significant impediment to the safe navigation of The Neuse River and Pamlico Sound by small craft. Additionally, the expansion of these ranges will further deprive NC citizens of their rightful use of these amazing waterways.

In a time when the accuracy of ordinance can be measured in tenths of meters, why would our wonderfully financed military need to carve off more and more space for their target practice? And even if they feel they can't hit the broad side of say North Carolina, there is still the Atlantic Ocean, only, like three miles away, where they can practice at their leisure. If they master hitting the ocean, then maybe we can come back and talk about expanding what is already a huge bombing range.

I sincerely hope you make the right choice, which might involve getting the Marines to see an eye doctor before sending them into harms way over the dreaded airspace of the Pamlico Sound.

Best regards:
Theodore Arndt

From: Timothy Gillikin
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Tuesday, September 29, 2026 9:39:13 PM

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Hello,

This in in response to the NC Department of Environmental Quality's Division of Coastal Management (DCM)'s opening for public comments on the proposed update to training activities and operations with the Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Cherry Point Range Complex. This comment is directly concerned with proposed changes to the areas around and including BT-9 and BT-11.

Firstly, I want to say that I have lived in Carteret and Craven counties my whole life and the area near the proposed change(s) hold a special place in my heart. My family and friends have been hunting, fishing, and shellfishing in this area for decades, and myself for nearly 20 years, both recreationally and commercially. Turnagain Bay, Long Bay, West Bay, Raccoon Island, and adjacent land and bodies of water are some of the most pristine ecosystems I have found in all of Eastern North Carolina and provide livelihoods for countless activities. Many local Guide/charter businesses and commercial fishermen use these waters for their livelihood in addition to the countless locals who pursue recreational opportunities. We have co-existed with the federal government in this special part of North Carolina for decades; this proposal serves to destroy this relationship and affect the lives of thousands of North Carolinians.

In particular, the proposed "permanent 500-foot restricted area safety buffer" will effectively eliminate nearly 25 miles of currently fishable and huntable shoreline and water bodies contained within that boundary. With hunting and fishing opportunities in ENC already extremely competitive, this specific proposal will drive more competition for the remaining resources, resulting in fewer opportunities for recreation and commercial/charter operations. But most importantly to me, this proposal, if passed, will shut down duck blinds and fishing holes used by my family for three generations. I am appalled to think access may be taken away by the government and prevent me from sharing these once public resources with my kids and grandkids. National Security is an issue important to me, but I am not willing to give up rights to currently public waters without better justification.

I am also concerned with enforcement and stewardship. I have personally experienced and heard stories of military personnel/aviation assets harassing/chasing members of the public, seemingly to clear them from the BT-11 range even if they were not violating the restricted area. I have legitimate concerns that an expansion to the effective restricted area boundary will only result in more of these encounters, which could have serious safety implications. If range control is actually concerned with overall security and safety, simply expanding the restricted area will not fix either of these issues. The military needs to take a hard look regarding its current SOPs for BT-9 and BT-11, not just propose a blanket increase in size, if effective use of the land/surrounding waterways and public interests is to be ensured.

These are just a few of my concerns with the subject proposal. I urge the NC Division of Coastal Management to push back on this proposal and, at a bare minimum, urge the government to provide justification for proposing the repossession of public water access from the residents of North Carolina. Thank you for your attention to this matter, and I look forward to a favorable outcome for both parties.

Respectfully,
Timothy Gillikin
Craven Country Resident, Hunter and Fisherman

Member of Blue Bill Hunting Club, Turnagain Bay, NC

From: Josiah Wise
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Tuesday, September 29, 2026 8:22:33 PM

[You don't often get email from josiahwise1997@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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I oppose the expanded use of BT-11 and in particular the proposed Exclusion Zone that would link BT-9 and BT-11. 4.1.1 on page 11, 4.2.9 on page 13 and 4.3.1 on page 15 of the CCD document acknowledges that this would erode public use of a public trust resource and while there are steps listed that could mitigate impact it does not address the actual issue of the public being blocked from their own resources. This exclusion zone blocks all access through the mouth of the Nuese River which is highly utilized by commercial and recreational anglers, waterfowl hunters, as well as human and goods transport vessels that are traveling inland from the Outer Banks or vice versa.

This is an area that is used regularly by tourists and less experienced boaters, who will not be familiar with a Notice to Mariners or how to find it. This will not only lead to inconvenience but also major safety issues and potential legal consequences for a simple mistake. This HAS to be reconsidered as it is impractical for the public to completely reroute navigation by many miles to the Pamlico or Newport River, and will erode the local communities trust and support of USMC operations.

From: Carlie Guthrie
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Tuesday, September 29, 2026 8:02:38 PM

You don't often get email from carlieguthrie12@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Dear Federal Consistency Coordinator:

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed expansion of military training activities and restricted water areas associated with the BT-9 and BT-11 bombing ranges at Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point.

I understand and respect the importance of MCAS Cherry Point and the need for military training and readiness. However, I strongly disagree with permanently restricting additional coastal waters that have long been enjoyed by the people who live here.

My family has spent years on these waters fishing, boating, hunting, and spending time together. These places are part of our traditions and our connection to this area, just as they are for many families throughout Carteret County. To us, this is not simply a change to a boundary on a map. It means losing access to places that have been part of our lives for generations.

The proposed expansion, particularly the permanent 500-foot safety buffer around BT-11, is upsetting. I understand that temporary restrictions may sometimes be necessary for safety during active military training. A permanent restriction is different. Once that access is gone, it may never be returned.

I am also troubled by the direction this could continue to take. Each new restriction may seem relatively small when considered on its own, but over time they add up. How much more of these waters will the public be expected to give up as training operations continue to expand? There has to be a point where the impact on the local community carries real weight.

There are also practical consequences. Expanding these boundaries affects where people can boat, fish, and hunt and how they can navigate the surrounding waters. Those effects should be considered as a whole, not simply based on the size of the proposed restricted area.

I believe alternatives should be considered before permanently closing additional waters to the public, including temporary restrictions when training is actually taking place, changes to the size or location of the proposed boundaries, and advance notice when closures are necessary.

There should be a reasonable balance between the needs of military training and preserving access for the people who call this area home. I do not believe continuing to permanently expand restricted areas achieves that balance.

For these reasons, I oppose the proposed expansion of the restricted water areas associated with BT-9 and BT-11. I ask DCM to fully consider what these changes will mean for local families today and what continued loss of access could mean for future generations.

Thank you for considering my comments as part of the federal consistency review.

Sincerely,
Carlie Guthrie

From: bpate@nc.rr.com
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Tuesday, September 29, 2026 7:41:14 PM

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Rebuttal to the CZMA Consistency Determination

Rebuttal to the CZMA Consistency Determination Range Operations Update at MCAS Cherry Point Range Complex Proposed Expansion of BT-9 and BT-11 Restricted Areas in Pamlico Sound Submitted regarding the August 2026 Final Coastal Zone Management Act Consistency Determination Introduction I respectfully oppose the Marine Corps' determination that the proposed expansion of bombing range operations and associated restricted areas at BT-9 and BT-11 is consistent, to the maximum extent practicable, with North Carolina's Coastal Management Program (CMP). The proposed action would significantly increase military activity within Pamlico Sound, including substantial increases in munitions use, unmanned aircraft operations, debris removal activities, and expansion of restricted waters available for public use. The determination understates direct and cumulative effects on public trust resources, commercial and recreational fishing, navigation, local economies, wildlife habitat, and public access rights protected under North Carolina law. The proposal therefore fails to demonstrate consistency with multiple enforceable policies contained in the Coastal Area Management Act (CAMA), NC Administrative Code provisions governing public trust waters, and county Land Use Plans. 1. Failure to Adequately Protect Public Trust Rights The determination explicitly acknowledges that: "The Proposed Action would infringe on public trust rights." This admission alone raises serious concerns regarding consistency with North Carolina coastal policies. The Marine Corps attempts to justify the expansion by noting that mariners would be notified when closures occur. However, issuance of Notices to Mariners does not eliminate or mitigate the actual loss of access to public trust waters. North Carolina's Coastal Management Program recognizes that public trust waters belong to all citizens for navigation, fishing, recreation, and commerce. Expanding the danger zone northward to connect BT-9 and BT-11 and establishing a permanent 500-foot exclusion zone creates: •Reduced access for recreational fishermen. •Reduced access for commercial fishing vessels. •Increased displacement of boating traffic. •Concentration of fishing pressure into remaining open waters. •Loss of traditional fishing grounds. The determination does not quantify: •Number of affected fishermen. •Number of recreational users displaced. •Economic value of affected fisheries. •Cumulative acreage of waters effectively removed from public use. Without such analysis, the finding of consistency is unsupported. 2. Inadequate Analysis of Economic Impacts Pamlico Sound supports: •Commercial fishing •Charter fishing •Recreational boating •Tourism •Waterfowl hunting The expansion creates direct restrictions on access to publicly usable coastal waters. The document repeatedly states the proposal benefits the economy by supporting Marine Corps operations. However, it fails to evaluate economic losses to: •Local fishing communities. •Charter operators. •Marina operators. •Bait and tackle businesses. •Tourism-related businesses. The determination considers economic benefits to military operations while ignoring losses to existing coastal industries. This represents an incomplete consistency analysis. 3. Significant Increase in Munitions Activity at BT-11 The proposal includes: •An 87% increase in munitions expenditures at BT-11. •A fivefold increase in UAS operations. •Expanded use of danger zones. An 87% increase in

munitions usage is not a minor operational adjustment. The determination repeatedly concludes that water quality impacts would be insignificant without presenting sufficient supporting data demonstrating that: •Heavy metals will not accumulate. •Explosive residues will not increase. •Sediment contamination will not occur. •Aquatic organisms will not be exposed to increased contaminants. Given the magnitude of the increase, reliance on existing environmental conditions is insufficient. A detailed cumulative contamination study should be required before consistency can be determined. 4. Insufficient Consideration of Fisheries Resources Pamlico Sound is one of the most productive estuarine ecosystems on the Atlantic Coast. The CZMA and North Carolina CMP require protection of: •Spawning areas. •Nursery habitat. •Fishery resources. •Biological productivity. The determination concludes: "The Proposed Action would not affect the life cycles of estuarine or ocean resources." This conclusion is unsupported by evidence of long-term monitoring addressing: •Increased aircraft activity. •Increased munitions deployment. •Increased debris removal operations. •Increased vessel operations. •Noise impacts on fish behavior. •Disturbance to spawning and nursery habitat. The burden should be on the applicant to demonstrate no adverse impacts rather than simply asserting impacts will not occur. 5. Inadequate Analysis of Wildlife Effects The proposed training areas are located within ecologically significant coastal waters used by: •Migratory birds. •Waterfowl. •Shorebirds. •Marine mammals. •Sea turtles. Although the determination claims no significant effects on sensitive resources, little discussion is provided regarding: •Increased aircraft activity. •Expanded UAS operations. •Increased military vessel activity. •Increased training frequency. Repeated disturbance can alter feeding, nesting, migration, and wintering behavior. The absence of a demonstrated impact is not proof that no impact exists. 6. Inconsistency With County Land Use Plan Public Access Goals The Carteret, Craven, and Pamlico County Land Use Plans each emphasize: •Maintaining public access. •Protecting public trust waters. •Preserving recreational opportunities. The determination argues that closures are acceptable because mariners will receive notice. However, notification does not preserve access. The practical result of the proposal is: •More closures. •Larger restricted areas. •Greater uncertainty for users. •Reduced public access to coastal waters. This directly conflicts with local public access objectives. 7. Cumulative Effects Were Not Adequately Addressed The proposal includes numerous simultaneous increases: •Increased UAS operations. •Increased F-35 operations. •Increased KC-130 operations. •Increased munitions use. •Expanded danger zones. •New amphibious operations. •Increased debris removal activities. •New unmanned vessel operations. Individually, each action is characterized as insignificant. Collectively, however, they represent a substantial intensification of military activity throughout the range complex. The consistency determination lacks a meaningful cumulative-effects analysis evaluating: •Combined ecological impacts. •Combined fisheries impacts. •Combined public-access impacts. •Combined water quality impacts. 8. Safety Buffer Expansion Is Not Adequately Justified The Marine Corps proposes a permanent 500-foot restricted safety buffer around BT-11. The determination provides no quantitative analysis demonstrating: •Existing safety measures are inadequate. •Historical incidents justify expansion. •Alternative measures were evaluated. Under coastal management policies, restrictions on public waters should be narrowly tailored and supported by necessity. The record does not demonstrate that the proposed exclusion zone represents the least restrictive alternative. Conclusion The Marine Corps has not adequately demonstrated that the proposed expansion of military operations and restricted waters surrounding BT-9 and BT-11 is consistent with North Carolina's Coastal Management Program. The proposal: •Infringes upon public trust rights. •Reduces access to public waters. •Increases military use intensity substantially. •Fails to fully evaluate fisheries impacts. •Fails to fully evaluate economic losses. •Fails to adequately address cumulative environmental effects. •Provides insufficient justification for expanded exclusion zones. For these reasons,

North Carolina should reject the Consistency Determination as submitted and require additional analysis, mitigation measures, and alternatives before finding the proposal consistent with the enforceable policies of the Coastal Area Management Act and the North Carolina Coastal Management Program. Respectfully submitted, Bryan C. Pate Pamlico county NC resident and citizen

Range Operations Update at MCAS Cherry Point Range Complex

Proposed Expansion of BT-9 and BT-11 Restricted Areas in Pamlico Sound

Submitted regarding the August 2026 Final Coastal Zone Management Act Consistency Determination

Introduction

I respectfully oppose the Marine Corps' determination that the proposed expansion of bombing range operations and associated restricted areas at BT-9 and BT-11 is consistent, to the maximum extent practicable, with North Carolina's Coastal Management Program (CMP).

The proposed action would significantly increase military activity within Pamlico Sound, including substantial increases in munitions use, unmanned aircraft operations, debris removal activities, and expansion of restricted waters available for public use. The determination understates direct and cumulative effects on public trust resources, commercial and recreational fishing, navigation, local economies, wildlife habitat, and public access rights protected under North Carolina law.

The proposal therefore fails to demonstrate consistency with multiple enforceable policies contained in the Coastal Area Management Act (CAMA), NC Administrative Code provisions governing public trust waters, and county Land Use Plans.

1. Failure to Adequately Protect Public Trust Rights

The determination explicitly acknowledges that:

"The Proposed Action would infringe on public trust rights."

This admission alone raises serious concerns regarding consistency with North Carolina coastal policies.

The Marine Corps attempts to justify the expansion by noting that mariners would be notified when closures occur. However, issuance of Notices to Mariners does not eliminate or mitigate the actual loss of access to public trust waters.

North Carolina's Coastal Management Program recognizes that public trust waters belong to all citizens for navigation, fishing, recreation, and commerce.

Expanding the danger zone northward to connect BT-9 and BT-11 and establishing a permanent 500-foot exclusion zone creates:

•Reduced access for recreational fishermen.

•Reduced access for commercial fishing vessels.

•Increased displacement of boating traffic.

•Concentration of fishing pressure into remaining open waters.

•Loss of traditional fishing grounds.
The determination does not quantify:
•Number of affected fishermen.
•Number of recreational users displaced.
•Economic value of affected fisheries.
•Cumulative acreage of waters effectively removed from public use.
Without such analysis, the finding of consistency is unsupported.
2. Inadequate Analysis of Economic Impacts
Pamlico Sound supports:
•Commercial fishing
•Charter fishing
•Recreational boating
•Tourism
•Waterfowl hunting
The expansion creates direct restrictions on access to publicly usable coastal waters.
The document repeatedly states the proposal benefits the economy by supporting Marine Corps operations. However, it fails to evaluate economic losses to:
•Local fishing communities.
•Charter operators.
•Marina operators.
•Bait and tackle businesses.
•Tourism-related businesses.
The determination considers economic benefits to military operations while ignoring losses to existing coastal industries.
This represents an incomplete consistency analysis.
3. Significant Increase in Munitions Activity at BT-11
The proposal includes:
•An 87% increase in munitions expenditures at BT-11.
•A fivefold increase in UAS operations.
•Expanded use of danger zones.
An 87% increase in munitions usage is not a minor operational adjustment.
The determination repeatedly concludes that water quality impacts would be insignificant without presenting sufficient supporting data demonstrating that:
•Heavy metals will not accumulate.
•Explosive residues will not increase.
•Sediment contamination will not occur.
•Aquatic organisms will not be exposed to increased contaminants.
Given the magnitude of the increase, reliance on existing environmental conditions is insufficient.

A detailed cumulative contamination study should be required before consistency can be determined.

4. Insufficient Consideration of Fisheries Resources

Pamlico Sound is one of the most productive estuarine ecosystems on the Atlantic Coast.

The CZMA and North Carolina CMP require protection of:

•Spawning areas.
•Nursery habitat.
•Fishery resources.
•Biological productivity.

The determination concludes:

"The Proposed Action would not affect the life cycles of estuarine or ocean resources."

This conclusion is unsupported by evidence of long-term monitoring addressing:

•Increased aircraft activity.
•Increased munitions deployment.
•Increased debris removal operations.
•Increased vessel operations.
•Noise impacts on fish behavior.
•Disturbance to spawning and nursery habitat.

The burden should be on the applicant to demonstrate no adverse impacts rather than simply asserting impacts will not occur.

5. Inadequate Analysis of Wildlife Effects

The proposed training areas are located within ecologically significant coastal waters used by:

•Migratory birds.
•Waterfowl.
•Shorebirds.
•Marine mammals.
•Sea turtles.

Although the determination claims no significant effects on sensitive resources, little discussion is provided regarding:

•Increased aircraft activity.
•Expanded UAS operations.
•Increased military vessel activity.
•Increased training frequency.

Repeated disturbance can alter feeding, nesting, migration, and wintering behavior.

The absence of a demonstrated impact is not proof that no impact exists.

6. Inconsistency With County Land Use Plan Public Access Goals

The Carteret, Craven, and Pamlico County Land Use Plans each emphasize:

•Maintaining public access.
•Protecting public trust waters.
•Preserving recreational opportunities.
The determination argues that closures are acceptable because mariners will receive notice.
However, notification does not preserve access.
The practical result of the proposal is:
•More closures.
•Larger restricted areas.
•Greater uncertainty for users.
•Reduced public access to coastal waters.
This directly conflicts with local public access objectives.
7. Cumulative Effects Were Not Adequately Addressed
The proposal includes numerous simultaneous increases:
•Increased UAS operations.
•Increased F-35 operations.
•Increased KC-130 operations.
•Increased munitions use.
•Expanded danger zones.
•New amphibious operations.
•Increased debris removal activities.
•New unmanned vessel operations.
Individually, each action is characterized as insignificant.
Collectively, however, they represent a substantial intensification of military activity throughout the range complex.
The consistency determination lacks a meaningful cumulative-effects analysis evaluating:
•Combined ecological impacts.
•Combined fisheries impacts.
•Combined public-access impacts.
•Combined water quality impacts.
8. Safety Buffer Expansion Is Not Adequately Justified
The Marine Corps proposes a permanent 500-foot restricted safety buffer around BT-11.
The determination provides no quantitative analysis demonstrating:
•Existing safety measures are inadequate.
•Historical incidents justify expansion.
•Alternative measures were evaluated.
Under coastal management policies, restrictions on public waters should be narrowly tailored and supported by necessity.

The record does not demonstrate that the proposed exclusion zone represents the least restrictive alternative.

Conclusion

The Marine Corps has not adequately demonstrated that the proposed expansion of military operations and restricted waters surrounding BT-9 and BT-11 is consistent with North Carolina's Coastal Management Program.

The proposal:

•Infringes upon public trust rights.
•Reduces access to public waters.
•Increases military use intensity substantially.
•Fails to fully evaluate fisheries impacts.
•Fails to fully evaluate economic losses.
•Fails to adequately address cumulative environmental effects.
•Provides insufficient justification for expanded exclusion zones.

For these reasons, North Carolina should reject the Consistency Determination as submitted and require additional analysis, mitigation measures, and alternatives before finding the proposal consistent with the enforceable policies of the Coastal Area Management Act and the North Carolina Coastal Management Program.

Respectfully submitted,

Bryan C. Pate
Pamlico county NC resident and citizen

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From: Dean Hutchins
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Tuesday, September 29, 2026 5:16:55 PM

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To whom it may concern,

I am writing to formally submit my objections regarding the proposed expansion of military training operations and restricted water zones at the MCAS Cherry Point Range Complex, specifically concerning Bombing Targets 9 (BT-9) and 11 (BT-11).

As a user of these waters, I am deeply concerned that this proposal compromises maritime safety, severely restricts public trust waters, and fails to provide viable navigational alternatives for the diverse vessels navigating between the Neuse River and the Pamlico Sound. Further limiting recreation fishing by expanding current boundaries is very concerning and likely harmful to the delicate ecosystem making up the nursery and the larger fishery.

My primary objections center on the following critical points:

- **Inadequacy and Danger of the Alternative Route (Indian Ditch):** The proposal relies heavily on the assumption that vessels can simply detour around intermittent closures. However, Indian Ditch (Thoroughfare) is a narrow, notoriously shallow channel that cannot physically accommodate the draft, beam, or sheer volume of traffic that routinely transits these waters. Forcing heavy commercial shrimp boats, deep-draft transient vessels, and recreational watercraft into a restricted bottleneck introduces an immediate, severe hazard of vessel groundings and collisions. Even two small center console boats risk collision in this narrow waterway and risk running aground even if they successfully navigate the canal.
- **Safety Hazards of "Intermittent" Closures:** Channeling a massive, unpredictable mix of vessels into tight spaces while restricting access to open water is dangerous. The waters connecting the Neuse River and Pamlico Sound are subject to sudden, violent weather shifts. Denying boaters the ability to take a direct line across open water to seek shelter—forcing them instead to navigate a restrictive bottleneck during active training windows—will leave vessels trapped in treacherous conditions.
- **Severe Impacts on Public Trust Fishing Grounds:** The proposed permanent 500-foot buffer around all land north of the Indian Ditch up to the Point of Marsh directly encompasses Raccoon Island. This completely cuts off access to traditional, highly utilized public trust fishing grounds. Furthermore, the sweeping safety corridor connecting BT-9 and BT-11 effectively eliminates

predictable access for both recreational anglers and commercial fishermen, placing an unfair economic and operational strain on our working waterfronts.

- **Destruction of property value and quality of life:** This proposal will destroy the property value I have worked a lifetime to acquire and will negatively influence my quality of life and the lives of many of my neighbors. Fishing and free navigation of the public waters of the state of NC is both a responsibility I hold in high regard and is a trust relationship I share with NC through my lifetime fishing license and my commitment to rules and regulations. I remain hopeful NC will protect the many recreational and commercial fisherman who have devoted their lives to protecting the marine environment for themselves and future generations.

The military's expansion plans, as currently proposed, represent an irresponsible disruption to navigational safety and traditional public trust uses of North Carolina's coastal waters. I urge the N.C. Division of Coastal Management to find this proposal inconsistent with the state's Coastal Management Program policies unless the open-water transit corridors between the Neuse River and Pamlico Sound are fully and permanently protected and existing boundaries are held.

Thank you for your time and consideration of these critical safety and economic concerns.

Sincerely,

Dean Hutchins
Oriental, NC

From: David Rouse
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Tuesday, September 29, 2026 4:13:49 PM

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To whom it may concern,

I am writing to you today to voice my disagreement in expanding the BT-11 Piney Island Bombing Range. While I am extremely supportive of our military and all of the efforts (training included) in keeping us safe I am opposed to expanding the bombing range on account of the additional waters that would become off limits to North Carolina fishermen. The general state of NC fisheries right now is already in a bad way and this would simply add fuel to the fire. If the existing range has been sufficient enough through so many years why is it not sufficient enough now?

--
Sincerely,
David Rouse

From: Bill Tarplee
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Thursday, September 24, 2026 11:50:46 AM

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I oppose the proposal as a user of the waters of the state and the marshlands that are restricted. There are plenty of areas available to the military for training that are not in prime fishing and hunting areas for civilian citizens. I fully support the need for military training but areas offshore or such as abandoned landing fields such as in Holly Ridge or Jones county. This is overreach by the military that is not needed or appropriate.
William Tarplee


Virus-free.www.avast.com

From: Guthrie, David C CIV USN COMFLTREADCEN (USA)
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consist:ency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Wednesday, October 14, 2026 2:47:04 PM

Dear Federal Consistency Coordinator:

I am writing to provide comments regarding the proposed expansion of military training activities and restricted water areas associated with the BT-9 and BT-11 bombing ranges at Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point.

I fully recognize the importance of MCAS Cherry Point and the vital role that military training plays in our national defense. I also recognize that the men and women who train in this area need safe and effective training opportunities. My concerns are not with the military mission itself, but with the potential impact that the proposed changes could have on public access to and recreational use of our coastal waters.

I have personally used and observed the area around these ranges for approximately 30 years, primarily as a recreational waterfowl hunter with a small group of friends. Over that period, I have developed a firsthand understanding of how people use these waters and surrounding areas for hunting, fishing, boating, wildlife observation, and other recreational activities.

The proposed changes are concerning because they would not simply affect the footprint of a military target. Expanding restricted water areas and establishing a permanent 500-foot safety buffer around BT-11 could substantially limit access to surrounding waters and alter how recreational users can safely and practically navigate and use the area.

For those of us who have used these waters for decades, these are not insignificant changes. Restrictions in one location can have a much greater practical effect because they may force recreational users to travel farther, relocate to less suitable areas, or abandon activities that they have participated in for generations. This is particularly significant for waterfowl hunters, whose use of the area is dependent upon access to specific coastal habitats and seasonal conditions.

I respectfully ask the Division of Coastal Management to give careful consideration to the following issues as part of its federal consistency review:

1. **Public recreational access.**Please evaluate the actual effect that expanded and permanent restricted areas will have on recreational access to coastal waters, including hunting, fishing, boating, and wildlife-related activities.

2. **Cumulative impacts.** Please consider the cumulative effect of additional training activities, increased watercraft and aircraft operations, and expanded restrictions rather than evaluating each restriction in isolation.
3. **Traditional recreational uses.** The area has long been used by local residents for hunting, fishing, boating, and other outdoor activities. These longstanding uses should be meaningfully considered when evaluating the proposal's effect on coastal resources and coastal-dependent recreation.
4. **Alternatives and mitigation.**Please consider whether there are ways to accomplish the military's training objectives while reducing the permanent loss of public access. This could include examining the size and location of restricted areas, the timing and duration of restrictions, advance notification of closures, and other measures that could reduce impacts on recreational users.
5. **Long-term effects.** I encourage DCM to consider not only the immediate effect of this proposal but also the precedent and cumulative consequences of continuing to expand restrictions on public use of Carteret County's coastal waters.

I understand that military readiness and public access must sometimes be balanced. My request is simply that the impact on the public's longstanding use of these coastal resources receive serious and thorough consideration before the proposed changes are approved.

After approximately 30 years of personally using this area, I can say that the waters surrounding BT-9 and BT-11 are much more than lines on a map. They are an important part of the recreational and outdoor heritage of our community. Changes that permanently restrict access deserve careful consideration of their full impact on the people who live here and have responsibly used these waters for decades.

Thank you for considering my comments as part of the federal consistency review. I respectfully request that my concerns, along with the concerns of other recreational users of these waters, be fully considered in DCM's review of the proposed MCAS Cherry Point range training and operations expansion.

Sincerely,

Chris Rose

From: Garrett Baker
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point Complaint
Date: Friday, October 16, 2026 9:32:50 AM

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Dear Federal Consistency Coordinator,

I don't support the expansion of closures at BT-11 and BT-9. Particularly the addition of a 500 ft safety buffer which removes public access from 21 miles of shore line. The irregular shaped shoreline has large twists and turns and adding a 500' buffer cannot effectively improve safety and should not be labelled as such. How many acres of water will be removed from public access at BT-9?
Quantitative information should be shared with the public and not concealed. Also, the federal take of public resources requires environmental and economical impact review, which has not been presented in this case. The access among these water bodies and waterways have local, commercial, economic, and historical significance and should not be taken from the public. Additionally, if there is a change in closure then we should assume there is a change in bombing activities and materials, thus further reinforcing the protocol for an environmental impact assessment.

Thank you for your time, Garrett Baker

From: Jonathan Blanco
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Proposed BT-9 and BT-11 Bombing Range Expansions
Date: Thursday, October 15, 2026 4:00:26 PM

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To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed Range Operations Update at Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point and, in particular, the proposed expansion of the intermittent water-restricted area and the addition of a permanent 500-foot restricted-area safety buffer around BT-11.

I recognize the importance of military readiness and the role that MCAS Cherry Point plays in eastern North Carolina. However, the proposed changes would substantially increase military activity in and around the coastal waters and natural resources that are also relied upon by local residents, recreational users, fishermen, and the broader coastal community. The Coastal Consistency Determination does not adequately demonstrate that these increased impacts can be reconciled with North Carolina's stated policies protecting public-trust waters, coastal resources, water quality, and public access.

Most importantly, the document itself acknowledges that the proposed expansion of the intermittent water-restricted area would infringe upon public-trust rights. The Marine Corps states that the expanded danger zone would restrict access to portions of Pamlico Sound and that local users would be excluded from those waters when the restricted area is activated. The document similarly acknowledges that the proposal has the potential to restrict public access to public-trust waters.

This is not a minor change in activity. The proposal would increase the frequency and intensity of operations at multiple locations. Among other changes, the proposal calls for a fivefold increase in UAS operations at MCOLF Atlantic, a fivefold increase at BT-11, increased munitions expenditures, new watercraft access points, new amphibious operations, and recurring unmanned surface and underwater vessel operations in public-trust waters.
The proposal also raises particular concerns regarding coastal and wetland resources. The document acknowledges that establishing the proposed watercraft access points could temporarily increase turbidity and could result in damage to wetland vegetation or alteration of the natural wetland environment. It further acknowledges the possibility of minor wetland loss and loss of floodplain water-storage capacity. These potential effects deserve careful consideration rather than being dismissed primarily on the basis of the anticipated infrequency of use.

There are also concerns regarding water quality and existing conditions in the area. The document acknowledges that waters surrounding MCALF Bogue are already impaired for shellfish harvesting and fish and shellfish consumption because of bacteria and other microbes. In an environment already subject to water-quality concerns, additional amphibious and watercraft activity should be approached with particular caution and supported by

comprehensive monitoring and mitigation measures.

The proposal would also increase the frequency of range-clearance activities and expand the restricted area associated with BT-9 and BT-11. At BT-11, for example, annual munitions expenditures are projected to increase by approximately 87 percent, while UAS operations would increase fivefold. These are substantial increases that warrant more than an assumption that impacts will remain insignificant.

I am particularly concerned that the determination relies heavily on the assertion that impacts will be temporary, minor, negligible, or otherwise manageable while simultaneously acknowledging that the proposed action would restrict public access and infringe upon public-trust rights. North Carolina's coastal-management policies recognize that these waters have important public, recreational, economic, biological, and aesthetic values. The applicable policy specifically calls for water- and wetland-based military training activities, to the maximum extent practicable, not to infringe upon public-trust rights or damage public-trust resources.

For these reasons, I respectfully request that the proposed Range Operations Update not be approved in its current form. At a minimum, the Marine Corps and the reviewing agencies should require a more thorough evaluation of:

1. The cumulative effects of the proposed increases in aircraft, UAS, watercraft, munitions, and training activity;
2. The loss or restriction of public access to public-trust waters;
3. Potential effects on wetlands, shellfish habitat, fisheries, wildlife, and water quality;
4. The consequences of increased munitions use and range-clearance activity;
5. The effects of the permanent 500-foot restriction around BT-11;
6. Whether alternatives exist that would meet military training requirements while producing fewer impacts to coastal resources and public-trust waters; and
7. Specific, enforceable measures for monitoring, mitigation, and restoration if the proposal proceeds.

Military readiness and coastal-resource protection do not have to be mutually exclusive. The goal should be to ensure that necessary training can occur while preserving the public's ability to use North Carolina's coastal waters and protecting the natural resources upon which coastal communities depend.

I therefore respectfully ask the reviewing authorities to reject the proposed changes as currently presented, or at minimum require additional analysis, public participation, and meaningful mitigation before allowing the proposed expansion of activities and restrictions to proceed.

Thank you for considering my comments and for protecting North Carolina's coastal resources and public-trust waters.

Respectfully,

Jonathan Blanco
Pamlico County/ Oriental, NC

blanco.jonathan.730@gmail.com

336-413-1476

From: Dana Gillikin
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Range
Date: Thursday, October 15, 2026 1:30:08 PM

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To whom it may concern,

As a citizen of carteret country the decision to expand the safety boundary at BT 11 would seriously affect the way I navigate the water ways around the island. As a commercial fishermen me and my family would no longer be able to fish the waters in and around the southern bays.
Please reconsider this new law and consider leaving it as it currently stands.

Thanks so much,
Citizen of Carteret County

From: chris chadwickcreek.com
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Cc: chris chadwickcreek.com
Subject: [External] NC DCM: Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Tuesday, October 13, 2026 1:30:36 PM
Attachments: image002.png
NCSGA_Comment_BombingRangeBuffer.pdf

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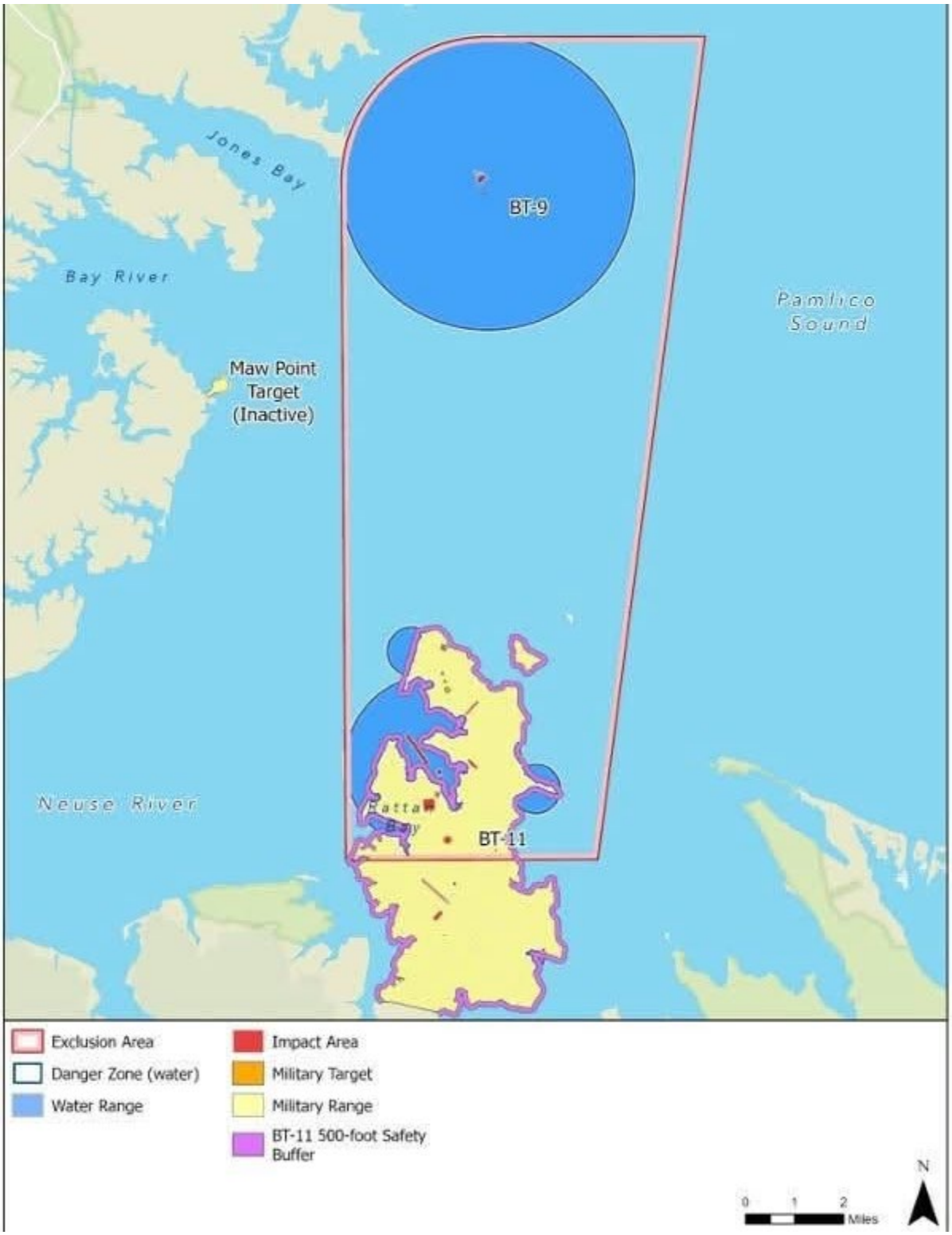
October 13, 2026

Federal Consistency Coordinator
North Carolina Division of Coastal Management
400 Commerce Avenue
Morehead City, NC 28557
federalconsistencycomments@deq.nc.gov

Re: Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point

Dear Federal Consistency Coordinator:

I am writing to formally oppose the proposed expansion of the intermittent water restricted area between Bombing Targets 9 and 11 (BT-9 and BT-11), as well as the proposed permanent 500-foot restricted buffer around BT-11, as described in the Marine Corps' August 2026 Coastal Consistency Determination (CCD) for the MCAS Cherry Point Range Operations Update.



I serve as President of the North Carolina Shellfish Growers Association, Vice President of the East Coast Shellfish Growers Association, and am a commercial oyster farmer operating in Pamlico, Carteret, and Hyde counties. My primary operation is on the Bay River. I also have a home on Ocracoke Island, and traveling there by boat takes me directly through the proposed closure area. I know these waters firsthand because I work on them and travel them regularly.

I strongly support the United States Marine Corps and MCAS Cherry Point, and I recognize that live-fire training requires reasonable safety restrictions. My objection is not to military training or the existing ranges. It is to this particular expansion of restricted public waters, which has not been adequately justified and which the Marine Corps' own analysis acknowledges would interfere with navigation and public trust rights protected by North Carolina's coastal management policies.

1. The Marine Corps' Own Determination Acknowledges Interference With Public Trust Uses

In Section 4.1.1, the CCD states that expanding the restricted area at BT-9 and BT-11 “would impede navigation or interfere with access or use of public trust areas or estuarine waters.” In Section 4.2.9, addressing 15A NCAC 07M .1000, the State's policies governing military water targets, the CCD states that the expansion “would infringe on public trust rights.” Section 4.3.1 further acknowledges that the proposed water-based activities could restrict public access to public trust waters.

These admissions are significant. North Carolina's standards for estuarine and public trust waters, including 15A NCAC 07H .0208, provide that development shall not impede navigation or create undue interference with access to, or use of, public trust areas or estuarine waters.

I also request that DEQ clarify whether 15A NCAC 07M .1002 remains an enforceable policy for purposes of this review and, if so, explain how the proposed expansion would accommodate its provisions on commercial fishing access.

In the relevant portions of the CCD, the primary measure offered to address interference with public access is issuance of a U.S. Notice to Mariners before closures occur.

A Notice to Mariners tells the public when it will be excluded. It does not reduce the interference, restore lost fishing opportunities, offset added transit costs, or preserve access to fixed aquaculture operations.

Advance notice is useful, but it is not a substitute for avoiding or minimizing the underlying impacts.

Under 15 CFR 930.32, federal activities must be consistent with the enforceable policies of a state's coastal management program to the maximum extent practicable. Generally, this requires full consistency unless existing federal law prohibits it. If the Marine Corps maintains that full consistency cannot be achieved, it should identify the applicable constraints and explain why less restrictive alternatives cannot satisfy its training and safety requirements.

2. The Proposed Closure Area Would Sever a Major Public Navigation Corridor
As shown in Figure 2 of the CCD, the expanded restricted area would extend northward from BT-11 to connect with BT-9, effectively interrupting direct north–south navigation between the Bay River, Neuse River, and Pamlico Sound during closures.

The Intracoastal Waterway would remain the principal alternative route, but a substantial detour is not equivalent to preserving customary access. Depending on vessel size, draft, fuel range, and weather conditions, a detour can add significant time, expense, and navigational risk. On some days, the alternative may simply be impractical.

Commercial fishermen and shellfish growers frequently work within narrow weather windows. Losing several hours to a closure or detour can mean losing an entire working day.

The impact of a restricted area should not be measured only by the acreage closed. It must also be measured by the navigation routes and connections it interrupts.

People who never fish or farm inside the restricted area would still be affected because the routes they depend upon pass through it.

North Carolina General Statute § 113-131 recognizes that the State's marine and estuarine resources belong to the people of North Carolina and establishes responsibilities for their stewardship. Those responsibilities deserve meaningful consideration when evaluating restrictions affecting established public uses.

I request that DEQ obtain a navigational impact assessment identifying the alternative routes available during closures and quantifying the additional travel distances, transit times, operating costs, and safety implications for commercial fishing vessels, oyster-farming workboats, and recreational vessels.

3. Impacts on Shellfish Aquaculture, Commercial Fishing, and Recreational Fishing Have Not Been Evaluated
The CCD does not address the proposed expansion's impacts on shellfish aquaculture, shellfish leases, or commercial fishing and recreational fishing.
In Section 4.3.6, the CCD concludes that the proposal would not affect resource-based industries in Pamlico County. I strongly disagree. It will negatively impact commercial fishing, recreational fishing, shellfish aquaculture, and recreational boating.

The CCD's own summary of Pamlico County's land-use plan identifies public trust water access and the encouragement of resource-based industries as county objectives. Its conclusion that the proposed restrictions would not affect those industries is difficult to reconcile with the proposed interruption of customary vessel access to a massive portion of North Carolina’s

estuarine waters.

The Pamlico Sound holds major potential for shellfish aquaculture. Periodically cutting off access to the Pamlico Sound and a vast amount of potential shellfish “farmland” is unacceptable. Oysters require regular maintenance, grading, and harvesting on schedules that customer orders depend upon. Most shellfish farmers work their crops 270-365 days a year. Even a farm outside the restricted area can be affected when a closure blocks the route needed to reach it, move equipment, transport workers, or deliver product.

Commercial fishermen face similar challenges with seasonal fisheries, while recreational fishing supports local charter captains, marinas, tackle shops, restaurants, lodging establishments, and numerous other coastal businesses.

These impacts should not be dismissed simply because the proposed closures are temporary. A temporary closure can have lasting economic consequences when it causes a fisherman to miss a productive opportunity, prevents a grower from harvesting or maintaining his crop on schedule, or forces a costly detour.

4. Closure Frequency and Duration Remain Undefined Despite Substantial Increases in Proposed Training Activity

According to Table 1 of the CCD, annual munitions expenditures at BT-11 would increase approximately 87 percent, from 1,229,863 to 2,294,912, while unmanned aircraft operations would increase fivefold, from 55 to 275 annually. Although these increases do not necessarily translate directly into increased closure hours, they make the absence of a projected closure schedule particularly concerning.

The CCD does not disclose how often the expanded area would be closed, how long closures would last, whether closures would occur during weekends or peak fishing seasons, or whether the entire expanded area would be restricted simultaneously.

DEQ's October 9 announcement confirms that the Marine Corps requested a pause in the federal consistency review to develop additional documentation regarding the timing and duration of the proposed intermittent closures, as well as the justification for the permanent 500-foot buffer around BT-11. I appreciate DEQ's decision to pause the review.

However, **the absence of defined closure limits is not a minor administrative omission. It prevents the State and the public from distinguishing between a narrowly tailored safety measure and an open-ended authorization to restrict access to a major public navigation corridor.** A handful of brief closures annually is fundamentally different from repeated closures lasting hours or days during peak commercial and recreational activity.

The proposed expansion would also require amendments to the federal danger zone regulations at 33 CFR 334.420. The existing rule shows that meaningful safeguards are

workable. Under 33 CFR 334.420(b)(2)(iii), the existing strafing area around BT-11 may be used only five consecutive weekdays per month, February through November, from 4 to 11 p.m., with training blocks scheduled two weeks in advance and a public call-in number for range status. The smaller practice areas under 334.420(b)(2)(ii) are used only in daylight and remain open to navigation at night. The Marine Corps should explain why comparable limits cannot be incorporated into the proposed expansion.

Under 15 CFR 930.39 and 930.43, the adequacy of information supporting a federal consistency determination is an important and independent basis for the State's review.

The State should not be asked to determine whether these restrictions are consistent with its coastal management policies before the Marine Corps has disclosed the basic operating parameters of the proposed closure regime.

5. Less Restrictive Alternatives Must Be Meaningfully Evaluated
The Marine Corps has trained in these waters for decades while fishermen, shellfish growers, and recreational fisherman and boaters have continued to use the surrounding waterways. That longstanding coexistence should be preserved.

Before expanding the restricted area, the Marine Corps should demonstrate why existing safety zones are insufficient and whether its objectives could be achieved through smaller or independently activated zones, shorter closure periods, modified training schedules, or a preserved transit corridor between the Bay River, Neuse River, and Pamlico Sound.

I am not suggesting that public vessels should enter an active live-fire area. **I am asking that the restricted area be no larger, and remain closed no longer, than reasonably necessary to carry out the training mission safely.**

6. Requested Action by the Division of Coastal Management
I respectfully request that the North Carolina Division of Coastal Management:

1. Object to the consistency determination as submitted. Under 15 CFR 930.43, the State should object based on the conflicts with the enforceable policies governing estuarine and public trust waters, including 15A NCAC 07H .0208, and military water targets under 15A NCAC 07M .1000. Independently, the State should identify the information that has not been adequately provided and explain why it is necessary to determine consistency.

2. Obtain the information necessary for a meaningful consistency determination, including:

- The operational necessity for the expanded restricted area and an evaluation of less restrictive alternatives.
- Anticipated and maximum annual closure days and hours, seasonal timing, activation

criteria, and geographic extent.

- A navigation and economic impact assessment identifying affected routes, quantifying detour distances and transit times, and evaluating impacts on shellfish aquaculture, commercial fishing, recreational fishing, and other water-dependent businesses.
- A specific explanation of how commercial fishing access will be accommodated under any applicable state policies.
- A separate operational and safety justification for the proposed permanent 500-foot restricted buffer around BT-11.

3. If the State considers a conditional concurrence under 15 CFR 930.4, condition it on, at a minimum:

- A navigable north–south transit corridor whenever operational safety permits.
- Defined limits on closure frequency and duration, with scheduling that avoids weekends, holidays, and peak fishing periods to the greatest extent practicable.
- Prompt reopening when training concludes.
- Notification beyond a Notice to Mariners, including VHF broadcasts, current range-status information, and direct alerts to commercial fishing license holders and shellfish lease holders through coordination with the Division of Marine Fisheries.
- Annual public reporting of actual closure dates, times, durations, and affected areas, with periodic review of demonstrated operational necessity.
- A five-year sunset or reauthorization mechanism through the applicable federal regulatory process.

4. Reopen public comment after the supplemental documentation is released. I request that DEQ make the Marine Corps' additional documentation publicly available and provide a renewed written comment period and an opportunity for a public hearing before issuing its final consistency response. The public should be able to evaluate the actual proposed closure schedule, operating limitations, and justification for the permanent buffer rather than being asked to comment on an incomplete description of the restrictions.

Conclusion

Supporting the Marine Corps and protecting public access to Pamlico Sound are not competing goals. The military and the people who work, fish, and navigate these waters have shared them for decades. That balance deserves to be preserved.

The proposed expansion would place substantial additional restrictions on public waters without disclosing how frequently or for how long those restrictions would be imposed. The Marine Corps' own determination acknowledges interference with navigation and public trust rights, yet the mitigation identified for those impacts relies primarily on notifying the public when access will be denied.

That is not a sufficient basis for the State to concur.

As someone who makes his living on these waters and regularly travels them, I believe we can support the Marine Corps' mission without unnecessarily restricting the public's ability to work, fish, and navigate Pamlico Sound.
North Carolina should not agree to restrict more of its public waters without first establishing why those restrictions are necessary, what they will cost the people who depend upon these waters, and whether the same military objectives can be accomplished with less disruption.

I respectfully urge the Division of Coastal Management to object to the determination as submitted, obtain the missing operational and economic information, and insist upon meaningful consideration of alternatives that preserve public navigation and existing water-dependent uses.

Please notify me of the State's consistency decision on this matter.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,



Chris Matteo
President, North Carolina Shellfish Growers Association
Vice President, East Coast Shellfish Growers Association
Commercial Oyster Farmer, Bay River, Pamlico County
Chris@ChadwickCreek.com
(919) 360-2278

From: Thomas Padgett
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Increase to Military Training Operations in the Pamlico Sound, Cherry Point Complex.
Date: Tuesday, October 13, 2026 10:48:05 AM

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This is an additional comment in regard to an increase in Military Training and Range Complex operations at BT-11.

The proposal as submitted states that the area east of Hwy 24 along the southern shore of Barry's Bay will be occasionally utilized by air-cushioned boats traveling through and over the marsh. This entire marsh complex, owned both by The USFWS as well as the US Marine Corps, provides significant habitat for the federally listed Threatened Black Rail, Laterallus jamaicensis jamaicensis.

Whether these activities will have any impacts on this species was not addressed in the proposal.

Sincerely yours,

Thomas Padgett
Sealevel, NC

From: Thomas Padgett
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Increase to Military Training Operations in the Pamlico Sound, Cherry Point Complex
Date: Tuesday, October 13, 2026 10:35:03 AM

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I am Thomas Padgett and I own property in Sealevel, NC. My involvement in the BT-11 area is based on fishing and waterfowl hunting the shorelines of the range complex since 2005. The creation of a 500 foot (152 meter) exclusion buffer along the BT-11 shorelines of Long and West Bay will seriously and negatively impact my recreational activities to use these public trust waters.

In reviewing the documents available in the public domain, the range complex has been in operation since the 1940's. Since that time the range has been developed and overall use has increased. However, the ranges are fixed and there is no expected expansion of the range complex that I am aware of, only increased use. I'm not sure how the 152 meter expansion of the proposed buffer zone justifies additional safety for the public? Perhaps the point that could be argued to support this proposal are permanent structures such as duck blinds and pound nets where individuals are utilizing the shorelines in violation of present regulations, i.e., anchoring boats on or near the shore. Persons fishing from a boat 5-10 meters from the shoreline pose no serious safety concerns. Thus, may I suggest that access be granted to recreational boaters within the exclusion zone.

Therefore, unless there are valid and justifiable reasons, with supporting data, I oppose this proposal in its present form.

However, in the event that this proposal is approved by the regulatory agencies and the US Marine Corps, I would like to add some simple recommendations to the proposal.

- Prohibit the establishment of permanent structures, such as pilings or pipes, within the 152 meter exclusion zone of BT-11. This would include pound nets, waterfowl blinds, private markers and buoys, etc.
- Review the exclusion zone between Raccoon Island and the range complex (The Narrows) proper. There is a significant amount of private and commercial boating traffic using this waterway.
-
- Review the exclusion zone along the shoreline to the east of Indian Ditch to Corn Sage Point, south of Jacks Bay, as Indian Ditch is a primary, and somewhat protected, waterway to and from Turnagain Bay and the Neuse River.
- The 152 meter proposed exclusion zone, if approved, should be adequately and permanently marked along the perimeter of the range complex with signage utilizing pilings or buoys to prevent accidental incursions by the public.

Sincerely yours,
Thomas Padgett
Sealevel, NC

From: Philip Nichols
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] "Federal Consistency USMC MCAS Cherry Point"
Date: Tuesday, October 13, 2026 10:00:32 AM

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I oppose expansion of the Neuse restrictions for UAS Operations and training.
Will you answer a question? What alternatives have you considered for these activities that would lessen the negative effects on stakeholders of this area?

From: Rusty Dunnavant
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Monday, October 12, 2026 5:13:26 PM

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To whom it may concern,
As an avid angler who fishes recreationally and commercially in and around the area you are proposing to close, I strongly object to these new closure's. If MCAS Cherry Point feels that these changes are necessary, then additional questions must be answered before I can concur.
.

1. Has the Marine Corps done an economic impact study for what losing access to these public trust waters will do to the fishermen in the surrounding counties?
2. Have you done an environmental impact study on what firing increased ordinance will do to the wildlife that calls Piney Island home? That area is prime nesting habitat for many different species of shorebird, some of which have populations that are endangered. Will the increased number of sorties adversely affect their nesting habits?
3. Have you adequately considered what the temporary closures will do to navigating the Neuse River? The proposed connection between BT-9 and BT-11 will, at times, block access to the river. How frequently will the proposed closures occur? How long will such closures be in effect? Hours? Days?
4. In the MCAS proposal, rule 4.1.1 G states: Development shall not impede navigation or create undue interference with access to, or use of, public trust areas or estuarine waters. If this update is approved by DCM, the public's access to the public trust areas and estuarine waters of the Pamlico Sound and around Piney Island will undoubtedly be unduly interfered with and severely restricted.

In its 2015 submission to NOAA (80 FR 21212, Document 2015-08841), MCAS Cherry Point stated that "The Marine Corps conducts all inert and live-fire exercises so that all ammunition and other ordinances strike and/or fall on the land or water-based targets or within in the existing danger zone or water restricted areas." On that record, the existing danger zones and restricted areas were sufficient to contain range operations. Nothing in the current proposal explains why an additional permanent closure around the full perimeter is now necessary
.
If the Marine Corps now believes the current zones cannot contain its operations, then the scale, type, or trajectory of the proposed activities must differ significantly from what was analyzed in 2015. A change of that kind cannot be handled as a routine boundary adjustment. The public is entitled to know what changed and why

I would like to know if the permanent 500-foot shoreline closure be withdrawn or, at minimum, not finalized until the Marine Corps (a) explains how its current operations differ from those described in 2015, (b) publishes the data and safety analysis supporting the buffer, including its own calculation of the shoreline and acreage affected, (c) completes updated environmental, economic, and Marine Mammal Protection Act reviews, and (d) evaluates less restrictive alternatives.

Thank you
William Dunnavant
129 Sound Drive
Atlantic Beach, NC 28512
919-345-8553

From: TIM BAYLISS
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Expansion of BT-9 & BT-11
Date: Wednesday, October 14, 2026 2:58:20 PM

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Dear Federal Consistency Coordinator:

I am writing to provide comments regarding the proposed expansion of military training activities and restricted water areas associated with the BT-9 and BT-11 bombing ranges at Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point.

I fully recognize the importance of MCAS Cherry Point and the vital role that military training plays in our national defense. I also recognize that the men and women who train in this area need safe and effective training opportunities. My concerns are not with the military mission itself, but with the potential impact that the proposed changes could have on public access to and recreational use of our coastal waters.

I have personally used and observed the area around these ranges for approximately 30 years, primarily as a recreational waterfowl hunter with a small group of friends. Over that period, I have developed a firsthand understanding of how people use these waters and surrounding areas for hunting, fishing, boating, wildlife observation, and other recreational activities.

The proposed changes are concerning because they would not simply affect the footprint of a military target. Expanding restricted water areas and establishing a permanent 500-foot safety buffer around BT-11 could substantially limit access to surrounding waters and alter how recreational users can safely and practically navigate and use the area.

For those of us who have used these waters for decades, these are not insignificant changes. Restrictions in one location can have a much greater practical effect because they may force recreational users to travel farther, relocate to less suitable areas, or abandon activities that they have participated in for generations. This is particularly significant for waterfowl hunters, whose use of the area is dependent upon access to specific coastal habitats and seasonal conditions.

I respectfully ask the Division of Coastal Management to give careful consideration to the following issues as part of its federal consistency review:

1. **Public recreational access.** Please evaluate the actual effect that expanded and permanent restricted areas will have on recreational access to coastal waters, including hunting, fishing, boating, and wildlife-related activities.
2. **Cumulative impacts.** Please consider the cumulative effect of additional training activities, increased watercraft and aircraft operations, and expanded restrictions rather than evaluating each restriction in isolation.

3. **Traditional recreational uses.** The area has long been used by local residents for hunting, fishing, boating, and other outdoor activities. These longstanding uses should be meaningfully considered when evaluating the proposal's effect on coastal resources and coastal-dependent recreation.
4. **Alternatives and mitigation.** Please consider whether there are ways to accomplish the military's training objectives while reducing the permanent loss of public access. This could include examining the size and location of restricted areas, the timing and duration of restrictions, advance notification of closures, and other measures that could reduce impacts on recreational users.
5. **Long-term effects.** I encourage DCM to consider not only the immediate effect of this proposal but also the precedent and cumulative consequences of continuing to expand restrictions on public use of Carteret County's coastal waters.

I understand that military readiness and public access must sometimes be balanced. My request is simply that the impact on the public's longstanding use of these coastal resources receive serious and thorough consideration before the proposed changes are approved.

After approximately 30 years of personally using this area, I can say that the waters surrounding BT-9 and BT-11 are much more than lines on a map. They are an important part of the recreational and outdoor heritage of our community. Changes that permanently restrict access deserve careful consideration of their full impact on the people who live here and have responsibly used these waters for decades.

Thank you for considering my comments as part of the federal consistency review. I respectfully request that my concerns, along with the concerns of other recreational users of these waters, be fully considered in DCM's review of the proposed MCAS Cherry Point range training and operations expansion.

Sincerely,

Timothy W. Bayliss

From: Martha Scott
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] "Federal Consistency: USMC Cherry Point"
Date: Wednesday, October 14, 2026 3:03:27 PM
Attachments: Petition.pdf

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Please find the attached signed petition for the proposed changes to MCAS Cherry Point Range Complex.

Regards,

Bay River MSD employees - Bayboro, NC

Martha Scott
Finance Officer
Bay River MSD
252-745-4812

From: Preston Davenport
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Re: Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point. Comment on the proposed permanent 500-foot restricted area around BT-11 (Piney Island)
Date: Wednesday, October 14, 2026 5:38:03 PM

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Dear Federal Consistency Coordinator:

This letter is in response to the Marine Corps' Range Operations Update for the MCAS Cherry Point Range Complex, and specifically the proposed permanent 500-foot restricted area around BT-11 at Piney Island.

Please do not move forward with these unnecessary restrictions on public use of public waters.

We respect and appreciate the Marines and sailors who train at Cherry Point, and we understand that realistic training keeps our nation safe and service members alive. We are not asking the Marine Corps to train less. We are simply asking that it not permanently close some of the most important fishing waters in this part of Pamlico Sound when a narrower measure would keep the public just as safe.

Cedar Island is a community of roughly 300 people, and fishing is its heritage and its economy. Its fishermen tend pound nets and crab pots and sell flounder, shrimp and blue crabs to family-run fish houses. These families and their way of life depend on easy access to Pamlico Sound. Carteret County ranked second in the state in commercial landings in 2021, at $17.7 million in dockside value, yet fish houses across Core Sound have been closing, and communities like Cedar Island have little margin left to absorb the loss of productive water close to home.

These waters are also at the center of North Carolina's trophy red drum fishery. Pamlico Sound and the lower Neuse River are where adult red drum gather and spawn each summer, and red drum was the state's most targeted species in 2021, at 3.1 million trips. The Sarah James Fulcher Redfish Tournament began at Cedar Island in 2018 with 65 boats and now registers close to 200. By its fifth year, it had drawn 4,500 attendees and raised more than $300,000 for causes such as accessible playgrounds at local volunteer fire departments. Those visitors buy fuel, bait, lodging and meals in a community with few other sources of income.

The buffer would close the Piney Island shorelines of West Bay, Long Bay, Turnagain Bay and the Neuse River, the principal protected fishing grounds reachable from North Bay. A 500-foot strip looks small on a chart, but the marsh edge, points and creek mouths are where much of the fishing takes place. Closing the bank closes the fishery.

The Consistency Determination says the buffer is needed "to increase public safety during training events," yet the closure would apply at all hours, every day of the year. The existing federal rule at 33 CFR 334.420 already closes other areas at BT-11 only in daylight or during scheduled training. The determination contains no analysis of fishing and considers no alternative, even though the Marine Corps acknowledges the proposal "would infringe on public trust rights." State policy provides that military target areas should not infringe on those rights to the maximum extent practicable (15A NCAC 07M .1000). For a fishing community of this size, a permanent closure is an undue burden.

Just as importantly, there have been no public safety issues with the current system. So this is a solution in search of a problem.

We respectfully ask the Division to object to the permanent restricted area as proposed, or to condition its concurrence on the following:

1. **Tie the buffer to training.** Leave the shoreline open to fishing whenever the range is not active.

2. **Limit its reach.** Apply it only to the shoreline near the targets.
3. **Give reliable notice.** Publish closure schedules in advance.
4. **Show the analysis.** Release the Environmental Assessment, the exact boundaries and the effect on fishing before the State responds.

Thank you for considering our comments. Please send us notice of the Division's decision.

Respectfully,

Pres Davenport

From:	Paul Fitzgerald
To:	DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments; Kendall Smith; Ray Jr; Travis Brown; Dave Schulte; Corey Payne; Blake Harrington; Bryce Pike; Gary Mitchell; wade davenport
Subject:	[External] BT-11 expanded restricted area Citizen comment submitted for the record
Date:	Wednesday, October 14, 2026 6:44:36 PM

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Dear Sir or Madam,

My name is Paul Fitzgerald. I own property adjacent to east side base of Monroe Gaskill bridge across the thorofare to cedar island.

My property 12 acre strip of water and land south of bridge on east side of Highway 12.
Address is: 740 Hwy 12 Atlantic NC 28511.

My neighbor to west is USMC launch point for USG boat traffic to Piney Island. I am closest civilian neighbor to east side of Piney island. On the South, East and Northern borders of my property the closest adjacent landowner is also Federal Government being the US Fish and Wildlife Refuge.

Cc for awareness of my input is:
Mr. Kendall Smith employee of USG as the superintendent of Mattamuskeet NWR which includes Cedar Island NWR under his domain.

I am opposed to expansion of BT-11 live fire range without further details on implementation of restricting areas owned by Cedar Island NWR and Salter Creek Game Lands, Indian Ditch, Long Bay, Point of Narrows, Turnigan Bay and Raccoon Island.

The Indian ditch connecting Long bay to Turnigan bay at South end of Piney Island is heavily travelled especially in cold winter months and is much safer and drier boat ride in strong North wind compared to runs in open waters in Pamlico Sound North of Piney island. A 500ft buffer completely encircling Piney Island would effectively close this corridor to non-USG owned boat traffic.

These areas both North and South of current restricted zones are using daily during fishing seasons and duck seasons for open unrestricted civilian boat traffic. Embarking on a 500ft buffer encircling Piney Island would effectively eliminate a safe route of travel especially in winter N winds for small boats to traverse the refuge and waterfowl hunting areas. Many duck blinds are also established inside that proposed buffer of 500 ft. Point of Narrows and access to Raccoon Island would also be restricted.

Red drum sport fishing guides rely on safe travel for their livelihoods as do duck hunting guides. Taking these waters away will negatively impact many families down east in both Carteret and in Pamlico counties. Many commercial fishing pound net stakes are also set up within this buffer as well.

I am in favor of training our Marine Aviators with open access to safely fire their weapon systems including drones, rockets and guns. If USMC can notify public of closures at least 24 hours ahead of live fire training and enforce the buffer at only those active shooting timeframes that would be much more acceptable to joint water user concerns.

The USMC aviators frequently train live fire between sunset and sunrise and I think impact to fisherman and duck hunters would be manageable if we had reliable and proper timely closure notification for short term closures during live fire only. Maybe a solution could include Institution of visible aerial flare launches or helicopter fly by with

flashing yellow strobes and visible non-covert exterior lighting prior to live fire if boats are seen inside a hazardous area.

365 day 24 hour continuous closure of a 500ft buffer zone around BT-11 is completely unacceptable from both a wildlife resource and way of life perspective to this landowner.

My contact information is below. I do not receive US Mail at Atlantic address. Please send all written correspondence to :

Paul M Fitzgerald
209 Trailwood Dr
Newport, NC 28570

252-504-8195 (cell) or email at:

Paul.fitzgerald3164@gmail.com

Thank you for taking time to review my input and I anxiously await any further details that the USMC can share at this time. I worked as a civilian Aerospace Engineer stationed at Cherry Point MCAS for over 35 years and in no way do I want to limit aviators from perfecting their war fighting aviation and surface warfare skills. Just asking for cooperation, coordination and timely notification of implementation of closures.

The Community will add support to this proposed expansion of live fire training at BT-11 if local input is considered prior to just mandatory closures. Please take this input as genuine cooperation and feedback not as any way a negative complaint. We want Marine Aviators to hone their skills here at home before going on deployment. I spent over three decades of professional life helping put USMC aviation put ordnance on top of enemy positions. I know how important live fire training can be for young pilots and new weapon system training, targeting and perfecting aircraft modifications with new technology.

Respectfully submitted 10/14/2026.
Please respond to all on this email cc line above if you are so pleased to kindly accept my input.

Thank you,
V/r,
Paul

From:	Ray Massengill
To:	Paul Fitzgerald; DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments; Kendall Smith; Travis Brown; Dave Schulte; Corey Payne; Blake Harrington; Bryce Pike; Gary Mitchell; wade davenport
Subject:	[External] Re: BT-11 expanded restricted area Citizen comment submitted for the record
Date:	Wednesday, October 14, 2026 8:13:37 PM

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From: Colton Wilburn
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point" in the subject line
Date: Thursday, October 15, 2026 5:05:07 AM

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Dear Federal Consistency Coordinator,

I am writing to formally express my concerns regarding the proposed updates to training activities and operations within the MCAS Cherry Point Range Complex, particularly the proposed expansion of restricted-water areas around BT-9 and BT-11 and the proposed permanent 500-foot safety buffer around BT-11.

I am a North Carolina resident, recreational fisherman, waterfowl hunter and outdoorsman who regularly uses the Neuse River, Pamlico Sound, and surrounding coastal waters. These waters are not simply recreational areas to me; they are an important part of our coastal way of life and provide access to natural resources that have been used by North Carolina residents and coastal communities for generations.

I want to make clear that I support our military and recognize the Marine Corps' need to conduct realistic, effective, and safe training. My concerns are not with military readiness or the Marine Corps' mission. Rather, I respectfully ask that the impacts of expanded and permanent water restrictions be carefully evaluated to ensure that military training can be accomplished while preserving reasonable public access to North Carolina's coastal waters and the natural resources they provide.

North Carolina's coastal waters are public trust waters, and they provide important opportunities for navigation, fishing, hunting, boating, and other recreational activities. These resources belong to the people of North Carolina and play an especially important role in the lives and livelihoods of coastal communities.

The potential loss of access to these waters should therefore be considered as more than simply an adjustment to a training map. Every additional restricted area represents a portion of our state's natural resources that becomes less accessible to the public. For fishermen and hunters, these restrictions can mean losing access to traditional fishing grounds, hunting areas, navigation routes, and productive waters that have been relied upon for generations.

The impact also extends far beyond recreational use.

Many North Carolina families depend directly or indirectly on these waters for their income. Commercial fishermen, charter captains, fishing guides, hunting guides, marina operators, bait and tackle businesses, boat dealers, boat mechanics, fuel providers, seafood businesses, and numerous other small businesses rely upon continued access to our coastal waters. When access to productive fishing and hunting areas is reduced, the economic consequences can reach entire families and communities.

For some individuals, these waters are a place to spend a weekend outdoors. For others, they

are part of their livelihood. The cumulative loss of access can affect the ability of working fishermen and outdoor-related businesses to earn a living and can place additional pressure on families who have depended on these resources for generations.

As someone who personally uses these waters, I also understand that a restriction that may appear relatively small on a map can have a much greater impact in practice. Closing one area can force fishermen and hunters to make substantial detours, increase fuel costs and travel time, eliminate access to traditional locations, concentrate users into smaller areas, or make an otherwise safe and routine trip impractical. The cumulative effect of multiple restrictions can be significantly greater than the size of any individual restricted area suggests.

I am particularly concerned about the potential permanence of the proposed 500-foot buffer around BT-11. A permanent restriction is fundamentally different from a temporary safety closure associated with active training. Permanent restrictions remove public access regardless of whether training is occurring and therefore warrant especially careful consideration of their long-term effects on public-trust uses and the communities that depend upon these waters.

I respectfully request that NC DEQ and the Marine Corps carefully consider the following:

1. Protect reasonable public access to North Carolina's public trust waters whenever military training and public safety do not require a closure.
2. Limit the size, duration, and frequency of restricted-water areas to what is reasonably necessary to accomplish the training mission and protect public safety.
3. Carefully evaluate the cumulative impact of all existing and proposed restrictions, rather than considering each restricted area independently.
4. Provide clear and detailed maps comparing existing restricted-water areas with all proposed additional restricted areas, including the permanent 500-foot BT-11 buffer.
5. Clearly explain when intermittent restrictions will be activated, how long they are expected to remain in effect, and how fishermen, hunters, commercial operators, and recreational boaters will be notified.
6. Clarify whether fishermen, hunters, and other boaters will be permitted to safely transit affected waters when military training is not taking place.
7. Consider the economic impact of reduced access on families and businesses that depend upon fishing, hunting, boating, guiding, and other activities associated with these waters.
8. Maintain reasonable access through these waters whenever it can be done safely without interfering with active military training.

I also respectfully ask that the state consider the cultural and historical importance of these waters. Generations of North Carolinians have learned to fish, hunt, navigate, and make a living on the Neuse River, Pamlico Sound, and surrounding coastal waters. These are not simply open spaces on a military training map. They are working waters, public resources, wildlife habitat, recreational areas, and sources of income for families throughout eastern North Carolina.

Protecting access to these resources does not have to conflict with supporting our military. I believe there is an opportunity to balance the Marine Corps' legitimate training and safety requirements with the longstanding public use of North Carolina's coastal waters. Temporary restrictions may be necessary when active training requires them, but permanent or unnecessarily broad restrictions should be carefully evaluated against their long-term impact on the public and the coastal economy.

I respectfully request that NC DEQ thoroughly evaluate the proposed changes and, if the project is approved, include appropriate conditions to minimize unnecessary restrictions on public access and reduce the economic and recreational impacts on affected communities.

Finally, I request that the state provide the public with a clear comparison of the existing restricted-water areas and the proposed restricted-water areas, including the permanent BT-11 500-foot buffer. I also request clarification regarding whether fishermen and hunters will be permitted to transit through the affected areas when military training is not taking place, what circumstances will trigger temporary closures, how long those closures will last, and what notification system will be used to inform the public.

The people of North Carolina should not have to choose between supporting our military and protecting the natural resources upon which our coastal communities depend. With thoughtful planning and reasonable conditions, I believe both objectives can be respected.

Thank you for considering my comments and for including them in the official record.

Colton Wilburn

From: joseph mcCulloch
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] USMC MCAS Cherry Point"
Date: Thursday, October 15, 2026 8:13:52 AM

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To Whom it may concern,

Please do not move forward with this proposal.

Kindly,
J.M.MCculloch

From: Branch
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency:USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Thursday, October 15, 2026 10:04:59 AM

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Federal control of our sounds has gone far enough. No more

From: harvey d
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency:USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Thursday, October 15, 2026 5:47:22 AM

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CAUTION: External email. Do not click links or open attachments unless verified. Report suspicious emails with the Report Message button located on your Outlook menu bar on the Home tab.

Dear Federal Consistency Coordinator:

I am writing to provide comments regarding the proposed expansion of military training activities and restricted water areas associated with the BT-9 and BT-11 bombing ranges at Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point.

I fully recognize the importance of MCAS Cherry Point and the vital role that military training plays in our national defense. I also recognize that the men and women who train in this area need safe and effective training opportunities. My concerns are not with the military mission itself, but with the potential impact that the proposed changes could have on public access to and recreational use of our coastal waters.

I have personally used and observed the area around these ranges for approximately 30 years, primarily as a recreational waterfowl hunter with a small group of friends. Over that period, I have developed a firsthand understanding of how people use these waters and surrounding areas for hunting, fishing, boating, wildlife observation, and other recreational activities.

The proposed changes are concerning because they would not simply affect the footprint of a military target. Expanding restricted water areas and establishing a permanent 500-foot safety buffer around BT-11 could substantially limit access to surrounding waters and alter how recreational users can safely and practically navigate and use the area.

For those of us who have used these waters for decades, these are not insignificant changes. Restrictions in one location can have a much greater practical effect because they may force recreational users to travel farther, relocate to less suitable areas, or abandon activities that they have participated in for generations. This is particularly significant for waterfowl hunters, whose use of the area is dependent upon access to specific coastal habitats and seasonal conditions.

I respectfully ask the Division of Coastal Management to give careful consideration to the following issues as part of its federal consistency review:

1. **Public recreational access.**Please evaluate the actual effect that expanded and permanent restricted areas will have on recreational access to coastal waters, including hunting, fishing, boating, and wildlife-related activities.
2. **Cumulative impacts.** Please consider the cumulative effect of additional

training activities, increased watercraft and aircraft operations, and expanded restrictions rather than evaluating each restriction in isolation.

3. **Traditional recreational uses.** The area has long been used by local residents for hunting, fishing, boating, and other outdoor activities. These longstanding uses should be meaningfully considered when evaluating the proposal's effect on coastal resources and coastal-dependent recreation.
4. **Alternatives and mitigation.**Please consider whether there are ways to accomplish the military's training objectives while reducing the permanent loss of public access. This could include examining the size and location of restricted areas, the timing and duration of restrictions, advance notification of closures, and other measures that could reduce impacts on recreational users.
5. **Long-term effects.** I encourage DCM to consider not only the immediate effect of this proposal but also the precedent and cumulative consequences of continuing to expand restrictions on public use of Carteret County's coastal waters.

I understand that military readiness and public access must sometimes be balanced. My request is simply that the impact on the public's longstanding use of these coastal resources receive serious and thorough consideration before the proposed changes are approved.

After approximately 30 years of personally using this area, I can say that the waters surrounding BT-9 and BT-11 are much more than lines on a map. They are an important part of the recreational and outdoor heritage of our community. Changes that permanently restrict access deserve careful consideration of their full impact on the people who live here and have responsibly used these waters for decades.

Thank you for considering my comments as part of the federal consistency review. I respectfully request that my concerns, along with the concerns of other recreational users of these waters, be fully considered in DCM's review of the proposed MCAS Cherry Point range training and operations expansion.

Sincerely,

Harvey Daniels Jr.

From: Thomas Newman
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Cc: Glen Skinner
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency:USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Tuesday, October 13, 2026 9:01:48 PM
Attachments: NCFA Comment MCAS Cherry Point Proposal.docx

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North Carolina Fisheries Association (NCFA) comments regarding the proposed action to modify and increase current training activities and operations and add new training activities and operations within the MCAS Cherry Point range complex's land-and water-based training areas.

The NCFA believes that the actions proposed by MCAS Cherry Point would significantly impede navigation and interfere with public access to estuarine waters and resources of the State that are of great importance to our members and the general public and are therefore inconsistent with the general use standards which apply to the proposed actions.

The waters, which would be impacted by this proposal, include critical navigation routes and highly productive fishing grounds, utilized by both recreational and commercial fishers. "Intermittent" and/or permanent closures of these areas would significantly impact public trust use of these waters, causing social and economic impacts to our citizens and coastal communities and should be avoided at all costs.

The proposed “500-foot Safety Buffer” around the entirety of BT-11 would permanently prohibit public access to the near shore areas around BT-11 traditionally utilized by commercial fishers, for-hire fishing and hunting guides, recreational fishers, and waterfowl hunters. This area includes multiple State planted oyster reefs, funded by NC tax dollars, that would no longer be accessible if the buffer were approved.

From the maps provided, it's unclear if the 500-foot buffer would prevent navigation through the Indian Ditch, a heavily used navigation channel. If so, this would create an unnecessary cost to vessel operators, in both time and fuel, as they would be forced to navigate around BT-11, when allowed, which could also be a safety concern in times of rough weather.

All considered, the proposed 500-foot buffer poses a significant risk to navigation and public access yet, any potential benefits to the State are unclear and justification for a

permanent buffer is sorely lacking in the documents provided to the public.

The only justification provided by MCAS Cherry Point simply States that "the additional stand-off restrictions would provide an added level of safety since the areas of armed over flight pose an added risk to interlopers".

Interlopers?

To label the citizens of this State as “interlopers” implies that we are not welcome or are unwanted visitors in the waters that we in fact own.

We can only hope that the leadership at MCAS Cherry Point does not feel this way, and that the needs and concerns of the people will be strongly considered before permanently prohibiting access to our public trust waters.

Likewise, the proposed expansion of the existing intermittent use water restricted area danger zone, to connect BT-9 and BT-11, would have for reaching impacts.

This proposed expansion of the "danger zone” would result in “intermittent” closures of the entire junction between the Neuse River and Pamlico Sound, two of the most heavily traveled and fished waterbodies in the State.

The exact timing, frequency, and duration of these “intermittent" closures is unclear, making the actual impacts to navigation impossible to fully assess and this alone should prevent the proposal from moving forward.

In addition to the navigational impacts, the area identified as the proposed “danger zone" between BT-9 and BT-11 is heavily fished and very productive, especially for the inshore shrimp trawl fishery, one of the States most valuable fisheries.

Again, the economic impacts are impossible to predict, given the limited information

provided, but considering the economic contributions of fishing to North Carolina's coastal economy, the impacts could be significant.

For these reasons, we recommend that the NC Division of Coastal Management find that the "Range Operations Update At Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point Range Complex, North Carolina" is inconsistent with North Carolina's Coastal Management Program and would unnecessarily impede navigation and create undue interference with access to estuarine waters and the resources within those waters.

Glenn Skinner

Executive Director, North Carolina Fisheries Association

glennskinner@ncfish.org

From: Larry Deglandon
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency:USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Saturday, October 10, 2026 6:09:27 PM

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I don't know what the NC Coastal Management Program says, but I doubt it allows for the impediment of marine navigation from the Neuse River . With your proposed restricted area, if I was to sail from New Bern to Ocracoke I would have to go offshore at Fort Macon and working my way back up. This extends my voyage and creates a possible hazard by restricting my options of staying inland. Don't you guys have enough control over public lands and water now???
Thanks for your consideration.

Larry Deglandon
336-259-5536
New Bern
Tax paying citizen and boat owner

From: Phillip Ambler
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal consistency:USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Wednesday, October 7, 2026 3:40:16 PM
Attachments: Bombing range closures.docx

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Sir,
I want you to know that I wholeheartedly agree with the attached document.
Phillip Ambler
Arapahoe, NC

From: Phillip Ambler
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency:USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Friday, October 2, 2026 12:52:38 PM

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Sir,
As a military veteran I am objecting to your take over of one of my very best fishing areas, namely the area around Racoon Island. It was bad enough when you took the shoreline near there some 20 years ago, but at least you left us a little area to fish near the Point of Marsh. I would appreciate you looking elsewhere for your military needs. The fishing in our state has degraded badly over the past 30 years and the area around Racoon Island is one of the very few "good fishing areas" left for us.

I might add that I was a cryptanalyst working for the National Security Agency for over 35 years supplying intelligence for the organization now denying this old man a bit of enjoyment in his final years. Shame on you!!!!
Phillip Ambler
Arapahoe, NC

From: Jess Hawkins
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Cc: Glen Skinner; Rep. Celeste Cairns; Norman.Sanderson@ncleg.gov; Noble, Kristen C
Subject: [External] "Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point"
Date: Monday, October 12, 2026 3:18:01 PM
Attachments: Coastal Consistency Determination of Range Operations Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point.docx

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Please see attached. Thank you for the opportunity to comment

Jess Hawkins

Coastal Consistency Determination of Range Operations Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point

I recommend that the North Carolina Division of Coastal Management (DCM) find that the US Marine Corps review of range operations at Air Station Cherry Point Range, NC is inconsistent with the North Carolina's Coastal Management Program (CMP) and with North Carolina's citizens' uses of public resources in North Carolina's coastal zone.

The proposed actions conflict with the use of public trust resources managed by the North Carolina Coastal Resources Commission (CRC) and the North Carolina Marine Fisheries Commission (MFC), specifically with the proposed restrictions involving BT-9 and BT-11 in and near Pamlico Sound. The proposed actions involving these areas are beyond those specified by federal legislation and result in a federal prohibition of uses allowed by NC state law, plus rules enacted by the CRC and MFC. There has been no public consultation prior to the federal consistency review provided by DCM, even though current uses of the impacted waters will be significant.

The proposed actions also conflict with Article I, Section 38 of the North Carolina Constitution which state that the right of the State's people to fish and hunt shall be forever preserved for the public good. The actions also conflict with Article XIV, Section 5 of the Constitution which provides that it is the policy of North Carolina to conserve and protect its lands and waters for the benefit of all its citizenry. The proposals involving BT-9 and BT-11, if approved, result in a "taking" of sovereign North Carolina public trust waters and its uses by the federal government during the times designated by the federal government.

The Marine Corps proposes expanding the intermittent use water restricted area danger zone to encompass the entire mouth of the Neuse River. The area would be closed to nonmilitary uses through a U.S. Notice to Mariners. The Notice could be issues at any time for any length of time dependent on the Marine Corp's training objectives. That area is heavily used by commercial and recreational fishermen in search of many species of fish. North Carolina's most valuable commercial fishery, the shrimp trawl fishery, frequently uses the proposed area during spring-fall, as does the important blue crab pot fishery. Gill net fishermen often transverse that area in search of fish. Oyster harvesters use the proposed area during fall-winter.

The Marine Corp also proposes creating a new 500ft restricted around BT-11 which would significantly uses of the waters in the area. North Carolina has expended many resources to enhance oyster production by planting cultch material in the proposed area. The proposed expansion would deny oyster fishermen and seafood consumers access to those public trust resources. Recreational and commercial gill net fishermen also use the proposed expanded area around BT-11.

I strongly encourage the DCM find the proposed actions involving BT-9 and BT-11 inconsistent with our CMP. These proposals also conflict with the NC Constitution and restrict/prohibit uses of North Carolina public trust resources allowed by State statutes and rules.

From: Cherylle Hird
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] "Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point"
Date: Thursday, October 15, 2026 1:12:33 PM

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We would like express our objection to the increase in the size and scope of the restricted areas that involves BT-11 and BT-9. It would be far too restrictive of an area that has long been used by recreational boaters and fisherman. Thank you for your consideration of this matter.
Cordially,
Walter H Hird and
Cherylle Hird
5416 Trade Winds Rd
New Bern NC 28560

From: Brian Stone
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Friday, October 16, 2026 9:55:53 AM

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Hello,

My spouse and I recently purchased property in New Bern, NC. As long-time boaters, the access to the Neuse River and larger waters beyond are a major appeal to us and influenced our purchase of waterfront property in this area.

While we appreciate the need for a well trained and equipped military, it is completely unacceptable to allow said military to essentially control all access to a public waterway, even on a temporary basis, as is currently being propped by MCAS Cherry Point. This imposes an unreasonable burden on all users of the river, whether for recreational or commercial purposes. Further, it creates hazards to mariners by preventing access to refuge in the river during inclement weather. There are considerable open waters in Pamlico Sound that could be used for the militaty's purposes that would be far less impactful on the public's right to use and enjoy the river.

As a registered civil engineer with over 20 years practicing throughout the US, I have never seen nor heard of such a proposal. I trust the North Carolina DEQ would agree and will oppose the MCAS proposal to the fullest extent possible.

Brian M. Stone, PE (NY)
New Bern, NC

From: Tom Brown
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Friday, October 16, 2026 8:39:22 AM

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Pamlico Sound is a treasure of Eastern North Carolina, and restricting its access to commercial and recreational boating would be awful. There needs to be more information released on how these closures will occur and how they will be announced. The communities of the Outer Banks rely on the economic sources that transit this proposed closure area. Hundreds of boats transit this area each year.

Tom Brown
Oriental, NC
M/V Key 2 Cay

From: Todd Leggett
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Thursday, October 15, 2026 5:32:38 PM
Attachments: image001.png

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As anglers, concerned citizens for our natural resources, and a company devoted to conservation and boating access, we oppose the proposed increased restrictions near BT-9 and the permanent 500-foot shoreline closure around BT-11.
First, we would like to express our appreciation for the men and women of the United States Marine Corps and their willingness to serve and sacrifice in defense of our nation. We recognize the importance of military training and understand the need for training activities that ensure the United States maintains a highly capable and effective military force. However, based on the information currently available, the necessity of the proposed restrictions has not been adequately demonstrated.

The temporary restrictions connecting BT-9 and BT-11 effectively block travel to the Neuse River watershed from the sound and vice-versa. How long will these be, what will their effect be? The 500 ft shoreline closure will be a loss of access of 21 miles of some of the most productive fishing grounds in the area. Closure of this area will concentrate effort to other areas and increase pressure on already struggling fish populations, increase conflicts between commercial and recreational gear and have a negative economic impact due to loss of access.
We are also concerned by the proposed 87% increase in ordnance expenditure. The area is populated by many marine resources including finfish, shellfish, and crabs. The area is also populated with many types of shorebirds, and it is common to observe large numbers of marine mammals as well as endangered and threatened species of sea turtles. Is the environmental impact of this substantial increase known and understood?
We considerately ask that these proposed restrictions be withdrawn or at a minimum not finalized until the Marine Corps explains how their operations make them necessary, publishes the data and safety analysis supporting the buffer, completes environmental and economic impact studies, and evaluates less restrictive alternatives.

Respectfully,

Todd Leggett
Director of Sales
and Customer Relations
Grady-White Boats

GRADY-WHITE BOATS
Exceptional attention to detail.

From: Corbitt Norris
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Thursday, October 15, 2026 4:49:08 PM

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Dear Sir/Madam,

I'm sorry to write from a position of lack of understanding of how/if the public comment can have any impact on the BT-11 expansion, but I will express my concerns regardless of whether this is the right agency/department. I've grown up on the lower Neuse, spent my whole life on the water around here, attended Havelock schools, have family and friends employed at Cherry Point, and understand the importance of USMC Air Station Cherry Point to our community, economy, and country. While I would never want to remove access for our military training, I am opposed to the expansion of BT-9 & BT-11's proposed intermittent closures and the permanent 500' shoreline closure.

I am a supporter of the commercial fishing industry, though I am only a recreational fisherman. As a recreational fisherman, I fish the shorelines that are proposed to be closed many times every year. I do not understand for example what a 500' buffer around Racoon Island has to do with the active parts of BT-11, are they proposing to start using these marshlands and it's freshwater pond as additional targeted areas? Then there are the southern ends of the western and eastern shorelines - why would there need to be a buffer there, especially near the maintenance shop and facilities, to be sure there can be no danger there amongst their own infrastructure and employees.

The intermittent closure of the entire mouth of the Neuse River of course poses undue hardships on the commercial fishing industry, but how about the recreational boaters traversing this area, and the safety concerns of having to lay in the Pamlico Sound awaiting clear passage with storms, winds, and seas building up? We're not talking about waiting in the comfort of the ICW along Camp Lejeune; this is large, open, and possibly dangerous body of water. I am not saying that well scheduled and announced intermittent closures could not be successful, but it should involve the USCG and also non-government interest groups (i.e. NC Fisheries Assoc. & CCA - that would be quite the pair, LOL) to find a solution.

I'm not an environmentalist, but I am a conservationist. The closure of all the shoreline out 500' has the look of allowing additional ammunitions and degradation of shorelines, while removing them from use of the public. I hope that the NCDEQ can find common ground with USMC Cherry Point to allow for continued, successful training without stripping the public of all this accessible water.

Respectfully,

Corbitt Norris
corbittnorris@yahoo.com
Beaufort, NC

From:	Kris Noble
To:	DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Cc:	Amy McCullagh
Subject:	[External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date:	Thursday, October 15, 2026 2:22:19 PM
Attachments:	image.png image.png Letter Opposing MCAS Action.docx.pdf

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WWW.NCCATCH.ORG

PO Box 2066 • Elizabeth City, NC 27909

northcarolinacatch@gmail.com

October 15, 2026

Federal Consistency Coordinator

400 Commerce Avenue

Morehead City, N.C. 28557

RE: Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point

NC Catch is a non-profit, volunteer organization that connects commercial fishers, consumers, seafood dealers, and scientists to promote and support local North Carolina seafood from the coast to the mountains. Our core purpose and mission is to educate consumers on buying local seafood, celebrate fishing heritage, promote sustainable fishing, and support the state's seafood economy.

NC Catch opposes proposed changes to training activities and operations within the Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Cherry Point Range Complex including the proposal to expand water-based restricted boundaries and training activities, including aircraft, unmanned systems, and watercraft operations, near BT-9 at Brant Island Shoals and BT-11 at Piney Island, including establishing a permanent 500-foot safety buffer around BT-11.

The NC Catch Board is particularly concerned with the proposed restricted water area between BT-9 and BT-11, as restricting this intervening area would close the mouth of the Neuse River, interfering with a vital corridor within North Carolina's public trust waters used by commercial and recreational fishermen, local and interstate boaters, commercial traffic, NCDOT ferry traffic and other mariners traveling through the Pamlico Sound and accessing

the Neuse River, Intracoastal Waterway, inlets and State Port in Morehead City.

The NC Catch Board is gravely concerned that restricting the waters between BT-9 and BT-11 and expanding restrictions surrounding those ranges would reduce access to valuable fishing grounds, displace local mariners from customary channels onto more exposed and potentially hazardous alternative navigation routes, interfere with traditional uses of coastal waters, and adversely affect the residents and the local economy. Expanding federally restricted areas within historic marine corridors could expose local water users to enforcement actions and applicable penalties for entering waters previously available for customary navigation and fishing.

Our coastal communities are deeply rooted in maritime heritage and recognize the importance of MCAS Cherry Point to national defense and the regional economy, while depending upon access to public waterways for livelihoods, commercial and recreational fishing, shrimping, crabbing, oystering, transportation, and coastal commerce.

Our Board recommends that the North Carolina Division of Coastal Management (DCM) find that the US Marine Corps review of range operations at Air Station Cherry Point Range, NC is inconsistent with the North Carolina's Coastal Management Program (CMP) and with North Carolina's citizens' uses of public resources in North Carolina's coastal zone.

The proposed actions conflict with the use of public trust resources managed by the North Carolina Coastal Resources Commission (CRC) and the North Carolina Marine Fisheries Commission (MFC), specifically with the proposed restrictions involving BT-9 and BT-11 in and near Pamlico Sound. The proposed actions involving these areas are beyond those specified by federal legislation and result in a federal prohibition of uses allowed by NC state law, plus rules enacted by the CRC and MFC. There has been no public consultation prior to the federal consistency review provided by DCM, even though current uses of the impacted waters will be significant.

The proposed actions also conflict with Article I, Section 38 of the North Carolina Constitution which states that the right of the State's people to fish and hunt shall be forever preserved for the public good. The actions also conflict with Article XIV, Section 5 of the Constitution which provides that it is the policy of North Carolina to conserve and protect its lands and waters for the benefit of all its citizenry. The proposals involving BT-9 and BT-11, if approved, result in a "taking" of sovereign North Carolina public trust waters and its uses by the federal government during the times designated by the federal government.

The Marine Corp proposal to create a new 500ft restriction around BT-11 which would significantly use the waters in the area. North Carolina has expended many resources to enhance oyster production by planting clutch material in the proposed area. The proposed expansion would deny oyster fishermen and seafood consumers access to those public trust resources. Recreational and commercial gill net fishermen also use the proposed expanded area around BT-11.

We strongly encourage the DCM to find the proposed actions involving BT-9 and BT-11 inconsistent with our CMP. These proposals also conflict with the NC Constitution and restrict/prohibit uses of North Carolina public trust resources allowed by State statutes and rules.

The NC Catch Board requests that the Division of Coastal Management fully evaluate the proposal's effects on public access, navigation, commercial and recreational fishing,

coastal resources, public safety, and the economies of surrounding communities, with particular attention to the proposed restricted water area between BT-9 and BT-11, and object to the Federal Consistency Determination to the extent the proposal is inconsistent with the enforceable policies of North Carolina's Coastal Management Program.

The NC Catch Board further suggests that the United States Marine Corps preserve public access through the waters between BT-9 and BT-11, protect safe navigation within these traditional coastal waters, refrain from implementing the proposed restrictions as submitted, and pursue alternatives that minimize additional water restrictions, limit closures to periods reasonably necessary for safety, avoid disproportionate economic impacts on local fisheries, address navigational hazards, and provide clear and timely notice to affected water users.

We thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Kris Cahoon Noble

President, NC Catch

Kris Cahoon Noble
Hyde County Manager
PO Box 188
30 Oyster Creek Road
Swan Quarter, NC 27885
(cell) 252.542.0802
www.hydecountync.gov
"One of the truest tests of integrity is its blunt refusal to be compromised." - Chinua Achebe



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From: Kerri Allen
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Cc: Braxton Davis
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Thursday, October 15, 2026 9:25:12 AM
Attachments: MCAS Cherry Point CCD - NCCF Comments 10.15.26.pdf

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Dear Federal Consistency Coordinator,

On behalf of the North Carolina Coastal Federation, please accept the attached comments on the U.S. Marine Corps' Coastal Consistency Determination for the proposed Range Operations Update at the Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point Range Complex.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment and would welcome the opportunity to provide more information on affected projects and potential solutions.

Thank you,
Kerri

Kerri Allen, Coastal Management Program Director
309 W. Salisbury St. Wrightsville Beach, NC 28480
910.509.2838 x203 (Office) 910.619.8469 (Mobile)
Visit www.nccoast.org to join or learn more
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From: Mark Clardy
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Thursday, October 15, 2026 7:38:41 AM

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This proposal should not be allowed to proceed without extensive justification and needs research in the environmental and social impact to the local communities.
I do not support this.
Sent from my iPad

From: digitaldp@me.com
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Cc: William Mills
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Thursday, October 15, 2026 7:20:38 AM

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To Whom it May Concern:

As a Merchant Marine, sailing instructor, and recreational boater I have transited through the Pamlico Sound from Little Washington to Oriental to Ocracoke on many occasions. As a property owner and slip owner in Chocowinity/Cypress Landing this restriction of navigation would ruin what is one of the nicest cruising areas on the east coast.

Thousands of cruising boats use this route transiting from the Chesapeake to Florida in both spring and fall. I have sailed extensively in the Chesapeake Bay and understand the need for areas that can be used as a range, but the Pamlico Sound is not a good choice. Not only would this destroy the economy of Ocracoke as a destination, but it would seriously impact the marine industry in and around Oriental, Washington, Belhaven, and New Bern.

Please reconsider this choice of location. Why not offshore? Leave Pamlico Sound alone.

Sincerely,
Captain Bill Mills

From: Evan Knight
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Wednesday, October 14, 2026 9:29:24 PM

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To whom it may concern,

I oppose the proposed restrictions for the BT-11, BT-9, and open navigational waters in between both targets. The Marine Corps needs to utilize the massive amount of land they already own in the area for training. Furthermore, the restrictions to the open navigational waters in between BT-9 and BT-11 would cause an undue burden and financial harm to the numerous local fishing and hunting guides in the area that use the areas in the proposed restrictions. These waters are world class fishing and hunting grounds and need to stay North Carolina public trust waters. These excessive restrictions would likely result in lawsuits brought by numerous groups. I oppose this proposal.

V/r,

Evan Knight

From: C Burnell
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Wednesday, October 14, 2026 9:06:56 PM

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Dear Federal Consistency Coordinator,

I am writing to express my concerns regarding the proposed update to training activities and operations within the MCAS Cherry Point Range Complex.
I am a North Carolina resident and a recreational fisherman, waterfowl hunter and commercial fisherman who regularly uses the Neuse River and Pamlico Sound and the surrounding coastal waters. The potential expansion of restricted-water areas directly affects my ability to use these waters.
I want to make clear that I support our military and the Marine Corps' need for realistic and effective training. My concern is not with military readiness. My concern is making sure that military training can be accomplished while also protecting the public's longstanding rights in North Carolina's coastal waters.
North Carolina's coastal waters are public trust waters. The state recognizes public-trust rights that include the rights to navigate, fish, hunt and enjoy recreational activities in the waters of the state. These waters and their resources are held for the benefit of the people of North Carolina.
The proposed increase in restricted-water areas around BT-9 and BT-11, along with the proposed permanent 500-foot safety buffer around BT-11, therefore, deserves particularly careful consideration. NC DEQ confirms that the proposal would increase restricted-water areas while adding or expanding aircraft, unmanned-system, and watercraft training activities.
As someone who uses these waters, I know that a restriction that may look relatively small on a map can have a much larger practical impact. Closing or restricting access to one area can force fishermen and hunters to make substantial detours, eliminate access to traditional fishing and hunting locations, or make an otherwise safe and routine trip impractical.
I respectfully ask NC DEQ and the Marine Corps to carefully consider the following:
1. Protect reasonable access to North Carolina's public trust waters.
2. Minimize the size of training area for public safety.
3. Provide the public with clear maps showing the existing restrictions and every proposed additional restricted-water area.
4. Clearly explain when intermittent restrictions will be activated, how long they will last, and how Fishermen, Hunters, Commercial Fishermen, Commercial and recreational boaters would be notified.
5. Consider the cumulative effect of these restrictions on public-trust uses, including fishing, hunting, navigation, and recreation.
6. Maintain access through these waters whenever it can be done safely without interfering with active military training.
7. Consider the potential life safety issue and perils to mariners if access and transit through closed

areas has not been dually expressed and safe harbour is not reasonably available.
I ask that the state consider the fact that these waters are used by people who have worked, fished and hunted them for generations. How access for intrastate commerce and other commercial marine trades will be affected. Public-trust waters should not be viewed simply as empty space on a military training map. They are working waters that support recreational fishermen, hunters, commercial fishermen, guides, boaters, and coastal communities.
I believe it is possible to support the Marine Corps' training mission while also protecting the public's ability to exercise its longstanding rights in North Carolina's public trust waters.
I respectfully request that NC DEQ carefully evaluate the proposed changes and site the reasons against NCDEQ's responsibilities for protecting the citizens' rights.
Finally, I request that the state provide a clear comparison of the existing restricted-water areas versus the proposed restricted-water areas, including the permanent BT-11 500-foot buffer. I would also like clarification regarding whether fishermen and hunters would be permitted to transit through the affected areas when military training is not taking place and what system will be used to notify the public when temporary restrictions are active.
Thank you for considering my comments and for including them in the official record.

Sincerely,

--
Craig Burnell
Buccaneer Building Co.

From: Abbey Wolf
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Wednesday, October 14, 2026 6:45:18 PM

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Dear Federal Consistency Coordinator,

I am writing to express my concerns regarding the proposed update to training activities and operations within the MCAS Cherry Point Range Complex.
I am a North Carolina resident and a recreational fisherman and waterfowl hunter who regularly uses the Neuse River and Pamlico Sound and the surrounding coastal waters. The potential expansion of restricted-water areas directly affects my ability to use these waters.
I want to make clear that I support our military and the Marine Corps' need for realistic and effective training. My concern is not with military readiness. My concern is making sure that military training can be accomplished while also protecting the public's longstanding rights in North Carolina's coastal waters.
North Carolina's coastal waters are public trust waters. The state recognizes public-trust rights that include the rights to navigate, fish, hunt and enjoy recreational activities in the waters of the state. These waters and their resources are held for the benefit of the people of North Carolina.
The proposed increase in restricted-water areas around BT-9 and BT-11, along with the proposed permanent 500-foot safety buffer around BT-11, therefore, deserves particularly careful consideration. NC DEQ confirms that the proposal would increase restricted-water areas while adding or expanding aircraft, unmanned-system, and watercraft training activities.
As someone who uses these waters, I know that a restriction that may look relatively small on a map can have a much larger practical impact. Closing or restricting access to one area can force fishermen and hunters to make substantial detours, eliminate access to traditional fishing and hunting locations, or make an otherwise safe and routine trip impractical.
I respectfully ask NC DEQ and the Marine Corps to carefully consider the following:
1. Protect reasonable access to North Carolina's public trust waters.
2. Minimize the size of training area for public safety.
3. Provide the public with clear maps showing the existing restrictions and every proposed additional restricted-water area.
4. Clearly explain when intermittent restrictions will be activated, how long they will last, and how fishermen, hunters and recreational boaters would be notified.
5. Consider the cumulative effect of these restrictions on public-trust uses, including fishing, hunting, navigation, and recreation.
6. Maintain access through these waters whenever it can be done safely without interfering with active military training.
I ask that the state consider the fact that these waters are used by people who have fished and hunted them for generations. Public-trust waters should not be viewed simply as empty space on a military training map. They are working waters that support recreational fishermen, hunters,

commercial fishermen, guides, boaters, and coastal communities.
I believe it is possible to support the Marine Corps' training mission while also protecting the public's ability to exercise its longstanding rights in North Carolina's public trust waters.
I respectfully request that NC DEQ carefully evaluate the proposed changes and site the reasons against NCDEQ's responsibilities for protecting the citizens' rights.
Finally, I request that the state provide a clear comparison of the existing restricted-water areas versus the proposed restricted-water areas, including the permanent BT-11 500-foot buffer. I would also like clarification regarding whether fishermen and hunters would be permitted to transit through the affected areas when military training is not taking place and what system will be used to notify the public when temporary restrictions are active.
Thank you for considering my comments and for including them in the official record.

Sincerely,

Abbey Wolf

From: Laurie Murphy
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Wednesday, October 14, 2026 4:32:24 PM

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Public comment

I opposed the expansion which would impact the mouths of the Nuese and Bay rivers which I use. There is no way that a nine mile barrier would not ruin traffic on the river and the Pamlico sound.

We live symbiotically with Cherry Point. They fly over us day and night. They blow stuff up and set things on fire or conduct swarms in the river.

We recognize how important their work is and have respect for their needs. However, if the national security of this country causes us to lose access to the river we live on-well, what's the point?

Intermittent closure and intermittent notice is too speculative and dangerous plus the need for a permanent protective barrier. It won't work. Do something else.

Thank you for asking for comments,

Laurie Stahlmann
408 Water Street
Oriental, NC
336-960-3322

From: Rich Righter
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Wednesday, October 14, 2026 7:57:13 AM

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My wife and I moved to Oriental to enjoy a longer boating season. I am concerned regarding the expansion of the bombing lrange in particular, the frequency and duration of which it will be closed. We have taken our boat to Southport via the intercoastal and have had to passed through Camp Lejeune and their live fire exercises. It has not been a problem for us because we can schedule around such exercises. When we travel in Pamco sound our destinations are Manteo, Ocracoke and West Bay. We would be passing directly through the extended area. Therefore, I need to find out the frequency and the duration of military exercises in the new area. Without this information , I cannot support this expansion.
Richard Righter

Sent from my iPhone

From: Mike Moody
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Tuesday, October 13, 2026 4:24:36 PM

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To whom it may concern. Please abandon any proposal to restrict more waters of the Pamlico Sound in an effort to expand the federal governments footprint within the State of NC. These waters are very important to working watermen and recreational fishermen. The military and the public have coexisting in the Pamlico Sound for 75+ yrs. One would think that with the technology available to the military today, the expansion of buffers would be extremely unnecessary. Once these areas are lost to the military, they will not be given back.

This proposal is unnecessary federal government overreach at its worst.

Thank you.

Mike Moody, MAI
Eastern Valuation & Consulting, Inc.
PO Box 12014
New Bern, NC 28561
valueeast.com
252-670-2657

From: Taylor Lilly
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Tuesday, October 13, 2026 11:18:52 AM

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To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of Don Lee Camp & Retreat Center, I am writing regarding the proposed changes to training operations and restricted-water areas associated with Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point, particularly the areas surrounding BT-9 and BT-11.

Don Lee center has a long history in eastern North Carolina, and we value the Marine Corps and the military families who are part of our local community. We appreciate the important role MCAS Cherry Point plays in our region and understand the need for the Marine Corps to maintain effective training opportunities.

At the same time, we are concerned that the proposed expansion of restricted-water areas and increased training activity could negatively affect our programs and the campers we serve.

Don Lee Center is located directly on the Neuse River, and access to the river and Pamlico Sound is central to our mission and programming. Each year, children and youth participate in sailing, boating, environmental education, and other water-based experiences through our summer camp, retreat, and educational programs. For many of these young people, their time at Don Lee is their first opportunity to sail, experience the Neuse River, or develop confidence and leadership skills on the water.

Our concern is especially focused on the proposed intermittent exclusion areas near the mouth of the Neuse River and Pamlico Sound. Even if these areas are not permanently closed, an increase in temporary closures could limit where our programs can safely travel, require significant changes to sailing routes and trip plans, and potentially cause programs to be shortened, relocated, or canceled. Because our programs operate on carefully planned schedules and involve groups of children and youth, short-notice changes to navigable waters can have a much greater impact on us than they may have on an individual recreational boater.

We are also concerned about how frequently these expanded areas may be closed, how long closures may last, and how much advance notice organizations like ours would receive. Clear and timely communication would be essential for us to safely plan programs and avoid placing campers and staff in a situation where they must unexpectedly change course (which affects many other people beyond the camper groups out on the water.)

We respectfully ask that the Marine Corps and the State of North Carolina carefully consider the impact these proposed restrictions may have on youth camps, educational organizations, recreational boaters, commercial watermen and other users of these public waters. We encourage efforts to minimize the size and frequency of temporary water closures whenever possible, provide significant advance notice of planned closures, establish a reliable notification system for organizations that regularly operate youth and educational programs on the Neuse River and Pamlico Sound and work directly with local stakeholders to better

understand how proposed restrictions may affect existing programs and water access.

Don Lee Center supports our local military community, and we believe that military readiness and continued public access to these important waters can coexist. We hope that, as these plans move forward, there will be meaningful consideration of the organizations and families who rely on the Neuse River and Pamlico Sound for education, recreation, and connection to our coastal environment.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments and for considering the potential impact on Don Lee Camp & Retreat Center and the children and families we serve.

--
Taylor Lilly
Director
252-249-1106 Ext 23
www.donleecenter.org
My working hours may be different than yours, often including weekends and many days away from my desk due to guest presence at camp. Please allow up to 48 hours for a response. Thank you.

From: gallisonjr60@netscape.net
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point
Date: Tuesday, October 13, 2026 1:49:23 AM

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CAUTION: External email. Do not click links or open attachments unless verified. Report suspicious emails with the Report Message button located on your Outlook menu bar on the Home tab.

Coordinator,
I am writing concerning the expansion of the bombing range on the Neuse River. Eastern North Carolina has had a continuing battle to protect the rights of fishermen both commercial and recreational to have access to the Neuse River and Pamlico Sound. It would seen the unlimited hours of the range being "HOT" would completely stop all the fishing in the area which is currently available.

This proposal came out of no where with a short fuse for consideration. I therefore conclude this change has not been completely examined. The NC voters approved a state constitutional amendment to protect the rights of North Carolinians to have water access.

Why couldn't some non-useful ships be placed a couple miles off shore leaving access to the "Big Rock" for the annual tournament, summer/winter fishing charters and recreational fishermen? If electronic scoring is required, perhaps small offshore platforms could be use so power generation can be accommodated. Or a small steel ship could be anchored off shore with all superstructure removed so radar equipment could be installed along with a platform for helicopter or other vertical moving aircraft could bring personnel to it.

In any case, it would seem prudent to have a meeting of CAMA and MCAS Cherry Point personnel with the citizens of Pamlico and/or Beaufort county in Pamlico county. PCC would have large enough facilities to handle the crowd.

Respectfully submitted,

Gordon Allison, Arapahoe, NC

North Carolina Coastal Federation
Working Together for a Healthy Coast

October 15, 2026

Federal Consistency Coordinator
N.C. Division of Coastal Management
400 Commerce Avenue
Morehead City, NC 28557

Via email: federalconsistencycomments@deq.nc.gov

Re: Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point

Dear Federal Consistency Coordinator:

The North Carolina Coastal Federation (Federation) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the U.S. Marine Corps' Coastal Consistency Determination (CCD) for the proposed Range Operations Update at the Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point Range Complex.

The Department of Defense (DoD) has been an important conservation ally to the Federation over the years. We regularly partner on conservation initiatives, including receiving Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration funds to acquire conservation easements that protect sensitive coastal environments while helping prevent urban encroachment around military installations.

We seek to build on that partnership by addressing potential impacts of the proposed expansion of the intermittent water restricted area danger zone connecting BT-11 and BT-9 and the permanent 500-foot restricted area safety buffer around BT-11 on public trust uses and existing oyster restoration projects.

We encourage the Division of Coastal Management (DCM), Marine Corps and Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF) to work together to identify affected oyster reefs, preserve compatible uses and resource management access, and address unavoidable losses before implementing the proposed restrictions.

Impacts to existing oyster restoration projects
The Federation has worked with DMF and other partners for many years to restore oyster habitat in Pamlico Sound. One of these projects is the Swan Island Oyster Sanctuary, located near the mouth of the Neuse River and a part of the Senator Jean Preston Oyster Sanctuary Network.

North Carolina Coastal Federation
Working Together for a Healthy Coast

Significant public and private investments were made in coastal habitat restoration when the Swan Island Oyster project was constructed. The Swan Island project used approximately 80,600 tons of limestone marl and granite from a North Carolina quarry to construct 40 acres of protected oyster reef through a partnership involving the Federation, DMF, contractors, researchers, and others.

As a part of this project, 154 acres of harvestable cultch reefs were also planted throughout North Carolina. Funding for the entire initiative included nearly $3 million in state appropriations and approximately $3 million from NOAA's Community-based Restoration Program, in addition to private funding and donor support.

Monitoring has shown that the Swan Island reefs support more than 100 million oysters. The Swan Island sanctuary also serves an important ecological function beyond the footprint of the sanctuary itself by providing oyster larvae that help repopulate nearby harvestable cultch reefs. The sanctuary also creates essential habitat for marine fish and invertebrates.

Oyster sanctuaries and harvestable cultch reefs serve distinct purposes. Sanctuary reefs are open to recreational hook-and-line fishing, but commercial and recreational harvest of oysters and other shellfish is prohibited. Cultch reefs, by contrast, are created to support oyster harvest, and are subject to applicable harvest rules and closures. Potential impacts therefore include loss of recreational fishing and management access at sanctuaries and loss of the intended harvest use of cultch reefs.

Given the financial investment and ecological benefits of the Swan Island Oyster Sanctuary, we are concerned that the proposed expanded restricted area could limit the ability of DMF, the Federation and other partners to monitor, maintain and manage affected restoration projects. Figure 2 of the CCD does not identify oyster sanctuaries or cultch reefs, so the extent of any overlap remains to be confirmed.

We ask that DCM and the Marine Corps:

- Work with DMF to map existing cultch reefs and oyster sanctuary boundaries against the existing danger zones, proposed intermittent exclusion area, and permanent 500-foot buffer
- Evaluate the potential effects of the proposed restrictions on ongoing monitoring, maintenance, restoration and management access, recreational hook-and-line fishing, and oyster harvest at cultch reefs; clarify which uses would be prohibited permanently and which only during activated closures
- Consider the substantial public and private investment in these projects and the distinct ecological and economic benefits of sanctuary and cultch reefs

If harvestable cultch reefs become permanently unavailable for harvest, we request that the Marine Corps work with DCM and DMF to develop mitigation that, at a minimum, formally converts those reefs to oyster sanctuaries and provides funding to DMF to establish replacement harvestable cultch reefs at suitable, accessible locations elsewhere.

Conversion alone would not replace the lost harvest opportunity. Replacement planning should address reef acreage, productivity, siting and continued management access. For intermittent restrictions, the evaluation should determine whether the frequency and duration of closures materially impair the reefs' intended harvest use and identify appropriate measures to address any such loss.

Public trust waters and access

The CCD acknowledges that the proposed expansion of the intermittent water restricted area would impede navigation and interfere with access to and use of public trust areas and estuarine waters (Section 4.1.1, page 11). It also acknowledges interference with public trust rights under the state policy specifically addressing water- and wetland-based military target areas (Section 4.2.9, page 13).

We recognize that military safety and security requirements may require temporary restrictions on public access. The CCD explains that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers would amend the applicable federal danger-zone regulations and that a Notice to Mariners would precede activation of the expanded intermittent area. These steps provide a regulatory and notification process, but the CCD does not explain how the size, location, frequency and duration of restrictions have been minimized while meeting safety and training needs, or how the permanent buffer would affect existing uses.

As described in the CCD, North Carolina's Coastal Management Program (CMP) specifically identifies protection of public rights for navigation and recreation, as well as conservation of public trust areas, as management objectives for estuarine and ocean systems. The CCD also cites standards addressing interference with navigation and access, and the military-target-area policy calling for avoidance of infringement on public trust rights to the maximum extent practicable. We ask DCM to evaluate the proposed restrictions against these policies using site-specific information.

We therefore encourage DCM to seek additional information about:

- How often the restricted areas are expected to be activated, and whether the entire area or only portions would be closed
- The expected duration of individual closures, total annual closure time, advance-notice procedures and how users would learn when an area reopens
- Whether the alternatives could reduce the extent, frequency or duration of closures while meeting training and safety requirements

- If essential resource-management activities such as fishing and lawful cultch-reef harvest could continue outside active closures, and whether authorized management access could be accommodated within the permanent buffer

Basis for the 500-foot buffer
The CCD states that the permanent 500-foot restricted area safety buffer is intended to increase public safety and would align with MCAS Cherry Point installation security boundaries.

We support reasonable measures to protect public safety. However, we would like to better understand the basis for the specific 500-foot distance and whether the buffer could be shifted, reduced or otherwise configured to avoid existing oyster restoration sites while still meeting the Marine Corps' safety objectives.

The CMP calls for the location, design and need for development to be consistent with the management objectives for estuarine and ocean systems and for impacts to shellfish beds and other important coastal resources to be minimized.

We encourage DCM and the Marine Corps to evaluate whether the proposed buffer can be designed to avoid or minimize impacts to existing restoration investments.

Resource-management access and coordination
The CCD focuses primarily on general public access; however, the proposed restrictions could also affect access needed by state agencies and restoration partners to manage and monitor coastal resources.

This distinction is important for the Swan Island Oyster Sanctuary and nearby cultch reefs. These sites are not simply areas of public recreation; they represent long-term investments in restoring and managing North Carolina's oyster resources.

We therefore encourage the Marine Corps and DCM to establish a clear coordination and notification process with DMF and other restoration partners. At a minimum, this process should provide a mechanism for coordinating essential monitoring, maintenance and restoration activities when those activities can safely occur outside of active military operations.

Need for additional evaluation
The Federation is concerned that the potential effects on existing oyster restoration projects are not sufficiently addressed.

The determination discusses the applicable state policies concerning shellfish beds, public trust waters and mitigation, but provides little specific analysis of how the proposed

expanded restricted areas would affect existing oyster sanctuary and cultch reef investments. The determination states that impacts to coastal lands and waters would be minimized through proper planning and site selection, but the discussion does not appear to address whether the proposed restrictions could interfere with existing restoration and resource-management activities.

We ask that DCM ensure these increased activities and associated access restrictions are evaluated in the context of existing coastal resource investments and uses.

Conclusion

The Federation supports the continued protection and restoration of North Carolina's coastal resources while recognizing the importance of military readiness and public safety.

Our longstanding conservation partnership with DoD demonstrates that military readiness and coastal resource protection can advance together. We encourage DCM, the Marine Corps and DMF to identify practical ways to preserve compatible public trust uses and restoration investments while meeting military safety and security needs.

Specifically, we request that DCM and the Marine Corps:

1. Map existing oyster sanctuaries and cultch reefs against existing and proposed restricted areas and identify affected acreage
2. Evaluate effects of the proposed restrictions on management access, recreational hook-and-line fishing and lawful harvest at cultch reefs, distinguishing temporary closures from permanent restrictions
3. Explain the need and access rules for the permanent 500-foot safety buffer and evaluate whether it can be reduced, shifted or otherwise configured to avoid existing restoration sites
4. Establish a coordination and notification process with DMF and restoration partners to facilitate essential resource management access when safely feasible
5. If cultch reefs become permanently unavailable for harvest, develop mitigation that includes formal sanctuary designation and funding to DMF for replacement harvestable cultch reefs elsewhere; address material harvest losses from intermittent closures as appropriate
6. Consider the significant public and private investment already made in Swan Island and associated oyster restoration projects when evaluating alternatives and measures to minimize impacts
7. Ensure that the proposed action is designed to minimize unnecessary interference with public trust rights and the continued management of North Carolina's coastal resources

North Carolina
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Working Together for a Healthy Coast

Thank you for considering these comments. We appreciate DCM's review of this proposal and would welcome the opportunity to provide additional information about the Swan Island Oyster Sanctuary and other oyster restoration projects that may be affected.

Sincerely,

Kerri Allen

Kerri Allen
Coastal Management Program Director

WWW.NCCATCH.ORG

PO Box 2066 • Elizabeth City, NC 27909

northcarolinacatch@gmail.com

October 15, 2026

Federal Consistency Coordinator

400 Commerce Avenue

Morehead City, N.C. 28557

RE: Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point

NC Catch is a non-profit, volunteer organization that connects commercial fishers, consumers, seafood dealers, and scientists to promote and support local North Carolina seafood from the coast to the mountains. Our core purpose and mission is to educate consumers on buying local seafood, celebrate fishing heritage, promote sustainable fishing, and support the state's seafood economy.

NC Catch opposes proposed changes to training activities and operations within the Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Cherry Point Range Complex including the proposal to expand water-based restricted boundaries and training activities, including aircraft, unmanned systems, and watercraft operations, near BT-9 at Brant Island Shoals and BT-11 at Piney Island, including establishing a permanent 500-foot safety buffer around BT-11.

The NC Catch Board is particularly concerned with the proposed restricted water area between BT-9 and BT-11, as restricting this intervening area would close the mouth of the Neuse River, interfering with a vital corridor within North Carolina's public trust waters used by commercial and recreational fishermen, local and interstate boaters, commercial traffic, NCDOT ferry traffic and other mariners traveling through the Pamlico Sound and accessing the Neuse River, Intracoastal Waterway, inlets and State Port in Morehead City.

The NC Catch Board is gravely concerned that restricting the waters between BT-9 and BT-11 and expanding restrictions surrounding those ranges would reduce access to valuable fishing grounds, displace local mariners from customary channels onto more exposed and potentially hazardous alternative navigation routes, interfere with traditional uses of coastal waters, and adversely affect the residents and the local economy. Expanding federally restricted areas within historic marine corridors could

expose local water users to enforcement actions and applicable penalties for entering waters previously available for customary navigation and fishing.

Our coastal communities are deeply rooted in maritime heritage and recognize the importance of MCAS Cherry Point to national defense and the regional economy, while depending upon access to public waterways for livelihoods, commercial and recreational fishing, shrimping, crabbing, oystering, transportation, and coastal commerce.

Our Board recommends that the North Carolina Division of Coastal Management (DCM) find that the US Marine Corps review of range operations at Air Station Cherry Point Range, NC is inconsistent with the North Carolina's Coastal Management Program (CMP) and with North Carolina's citizens' uses of public resources in North Carolina's coastal zone.

The proposed actions conflict with the use of public trust resources managed by the North Carolina Coastal Resources Commission (CRC) and the North Carolina Marine Fisheries Commission (MFC), specifically with the proposed restrictions involving BT-9 and BT-11 in and near Pamlico Sound. The proposed actions involving these areas are beyond those specified by federal legislation and result in a federal prohibition of uses allowed by NC state law, plus rules enacted by the CRC and MFC. There has been no public consultation prior to the federal consistency review provided by DCM, even though current uses of the impacted waters will be significant.

The proposed actions also conflict with Article I, Section 38 of the North Carolina Constitution which states that the right of the State's people to fish and hunt shall be forever preserved for the public good. The actions also conflict with Article XIV, Section 5 of the Constitution which provides that it is the policy of North Carolina to conserve and protect its lands and waters for the benefit of all its citizenry. The proposals involving BT-9 and BT-11, if approved, result in a "taking" of sovereign North Carolina public trust waters and its uses by the federal government during the times designated by the federal government.

The Marine Corp proposal to create a new 500ft restriction around BT-11 which would significantly use the waters in the area. North Carolina has expended many resources to enhance oyster production by planting clutch material in the proposed area. The proposed expansion would deny oyster fishermen and seafood consumers access to those public trust resources. Recreational and commercial gill net fishermen also use the proposed expanded area around BT-11.

We strongly encourage the DCM to find the proposed actions involving BT-9 and BT-11 inconsistent with our CMP. These proposals also conflict with the NC Constitution and restrict/prohibit uses of North Carolina public trust resources allowed by State statutes and rules.

The NC Catch Board requests that the Division of Coastal Management fully evaluate the proposal's effects on public access, navigation, commercial and recreational fishing, coastal resources, public safety, and the economies of surrounding communities, with particular attention to the proposed restricted water area between BT-9 and BT-11, and object to the Federal Consistency Determination to the extent the proposal is inconsistent with the enforceable policies of North Carolina's

Coastal Management Program.

The NC Catch Board further suggests that the United States Marine Corps preserve public access through the waters between BT-9 and BT-11, protect safe navigation within these traditional coastal waters, refrain from implementing the proposed restrictions as submitted, and pursue alternatives that minimize additional water restrictions, limit closures to periods reasonably necessary for safety, avoid disproportionate economic impacts on local fisheries, address navigational hazards, and provide clear and timely notice to affected water users.

We thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,



Kris Cahoon Noble

President, NC Catch

October 13, 2026

Federal Consistency Coordinator
North Carolina Division of Coastal Management
400 Commerce Avenue
Morehead City, NC 28557
federalconsistencycomments@deq.nc.gov

Re: Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point

Dear Federal Consistency Coordinator:

I am writing to formally oppose the proposed expansion of the intermittent water restricted area between Bombing Targets 9 and 11 (BT-9 and BT-11), as well as the proposed permanent 500-foot restricted buffer around BT-11, as described in the Marine Corps' August 2026 Coastal Consistency Determination (CCD) for the MCAS Cherry Point Range Operations Update.

I serve as President of the North Carolina Shellfish Growers Association, Vice President of the East Coast Shellfish Growers Association, and am a commercial oyster farmer operating in Pamlico, Carteret, and Hyde counties. My primary operation is on the Bay River. I also have a home on Ocracoke Island, and traveling there by boat takes me directly through the proposed closure area. I know these waters firsthand because I work on them and travel them regularly.

I strongly support the United States Marine Corps and MCAS Cherry Point, and I recognize that live-fire training requires reasonable safety restrictions. My objection is not to military training or the existing ranges. It is to this particular expansion of restricted public waters, which has not been adequately justified and which the Marine Corps' own analysis acknowledges would interfere with navigation and public trust rights protected by North Carolina's coastal management policies.

1. The Marine Corps' Own Determination Acknowledges Interference With Public Trust Uses

In Section 4.1.1, the CCD states that expanding the restricted area at BT-9 and BT-11 “would impede navigation or interfere with access or use of public trust areas or estuarine waters.” In Section 4.2.9, addressing 15A NCAC 07M .1000, the State's policies governing military water targets, the CCD states that the expansion “would infringe on public trust rights.” Section 4.3.1 further acknowledges that the proposed water-based activities could restrict public access to public trust waters.

These admissions are significant. North Carolina's standards for estuarine and public trust waters, including 15A NCAC 07H .0208, provide that development shall not impede navigation or create undue interference with access to, or use of, public trust areas or estuarine waters.

I also request that DEQ clarify whether 15A NCAC 07M .1002 remains an enforceable policy for purposes of this review and, if so, explain how the proposed expansion would accommodate its provisions on commercial fishing access.

In the relevant portions of the CCD, the primary measure offered to address interference with public access is issuance of a U.S. Notice to Mariners before closures occur.

A Notice to Mariners tells the public when it will be excluded. It does not reduce the interference, restore lost fishing opportunities, offset added transit costs, or preserve access to fixed aquaculture operations.

Advance notice is useful, but it is not a substitute for avoiding or minimizing the underlying impacts.

Under 15 CFR 930.32, federal activities must be consistent with the enforceable policies of a state's coastal management program to the maximum extent practicable. Generally, this requires full consistency unless existing federal law prohibits it. If the Marine Corps maintains that full consistency cannot be achieved, it should identify the applicable constraints and explain why less restrictive alternatives cannot satisfy its training and safety requirements.

2. The Proposed Closure Area Would Sever a Major Public Navigation Corridor

As shown in Figure 2 of the CCD, the expanded restricted area would extend northward from BT-11 to connect with BT-9, effectively interrupting direct north–south navigation between the Bay River, Neuse River, and Pamlico Sound during closures.

The Intracoastal Waterway would remain the principal alternative route, but a substantial detour is not equivalent to preserving customary access. Depending on vessel size, draft, fuel range, and weather conditions, a detour can add significant time, expense, and navigational risk. On some days, the alternative may simply be impractical.

Commercial fishermen and shellfish growers frequently work within narrow weather windows. Losing several hours to a closure or detour can mean losing an entire working day.

The impact of a restricted area should not be measured only by the acreage closed. It must also be measured by the navigation routes and connections it interrupts.

People who never fish or farm inside the restricted area would still be affected because the routes they depend upon pass through it.

North Carolina General Statute § 113-131 recognizes that the State's marine and estuarine resources belong to the people of North Carolina and establishes responsibilities for their stewardship. Those responsibilities deserve meaningful consideration when evaluating restrictions affecting established public uses.

I request that DEQ obtain a navigational impact assessment identifying the alternative routes available during closures and quantifying the additional travel distances, transit times, operating costs, and safety implications for commercial fishing vessels, oyster-farming workboats, and recreational vessels.

3. Impacts on Shellfish Aquaculture, Commercial Fishing, and Recreational Fishing Have Not Been Evaluated

The CCD does not address the proposed expansion's impacts on shellfish aquaculture, shellfish leases, or commercial fishing and recreational fishing.

In Section 4.3.6, the CCD concludes that the proposal would not affect resource-based industries in Pamlico County. I strongly disagree. It will negatively impact commercial fishing, recreational fishing, shellfish aquaculture, and recreational boating.

The CCD's own summary of Pamlico County's land-use plan identifies public trust water access and the encouragement of resource-based industries as county objectives. Its conclusion that the proposed restrictions would not affect those industries is difficult to reconcile with the proposed interruption of customary vessel access to a massive portion of North Carolina's estuarine waters.

The Pamlico Sound holds major potential for shellfish aquaculture. Periodically cutting off access to the Pamlico Sound and a vast amount of potential shellfish "farmland" is unacceptable. Oysters require regular maintenance, grading, and harvesting on schedules that customer orders depend upon. Most shellfish farmers work their crops 270-365 days a year. Even a farm outside the restricted area can be affected when a closure blocks the route needed to reach it, move equipment, transport workers, or deliver product.

Commercial fishermen face similar challenges with seasonal fisheries, while recreational fishing supports local charter captains, marinas, tackle shops, restaurants, lodging establishments, and numerous other coastal businesses.

These impacts should not be dismissed simply because the proposed closures are temporary. A temporary closure can have lasting economic consequences when it causes a fisherman to miss a productive opportunity, prevents a grower from harvesting or maintaining his crop on schedule, or forces a costly detour.

4. Closure Frequency and Duration Remain Undefined Despite Substantial Increases in Proposed Training Activity

According to Table 1 of the CCD, annual munitions expenditures at BT-11 would increase approximately 87 percent, from 1,229,863 to 2,294,912, while unmanned aircraft operations would increase fivefold, from 55 to 275 annually. Although these increases do not necessarily translate directly into increased closure hours, they make the absence of a projected closure schedule particularly concerning.

The CCD does not disclose how often the expanded area would be closed, how long closures would last, whether closures would occur during weekends or peak fishing seasons, or whether the entire expanded area would be restricted simultaneously.

DEQ's October 9 announcement confirms that the Marine Corps requested a pause in the federal consistency review to develop additional documentation regarding the timing and duration of the proposed intermittent closures, as well as the justification for the permanent 500-foot buffer around BT-11. I appreciate DEQ's decision to pause the review.

However, **the absence of defined closure limits is not a minor administrative omission. It prevents the State and the public from distinguishing between a narrowly tailored safety measure and an open-ended authorization to restrict access to a major public navigation corridor.** A handful of brief closures annually is fundamentally different from repeated closures lasting hours or days during peak commercial and recreational activity.

The proposed expansion would also require amendments to the federal danger zone regulations at 33 CFR 334.420. The existing rule shows that meaningful safeguards are workable. Under 33 CFR 334.420(b)(2)(iii), the existing strafing area around BT-11 may be used only five consecutive weekdays per month, February through November, from 4 to 11 p.m., with training blocks scheduled two weeks in advance and a public call-in number for range status. The smaller practice areas under 334.420(b)(2)(ii) are used only in daylight and remain open to navigation at night. The Marine Corps should explain why comparable limits cannot be incorporated into the proposed expansion.

Under 15 CFR 930.39 and 930.43, the adequacy of information supporting a federal consistency determination is an important and independent basis for the State's review.

The State should not be asked to determine whether these restrictions are consistent with its coastal management policies before the Marine Corps has disclosed the basic operating parameters of the proposed closure regime.

5. Less Restrictive Alternatives Must Be Meaningfully Evaluated

The Marine Corps has trained in these waters for decades while fishermen, shellfish growers, and recreational fisherman and boaters have continued to use the surrounding waterways. That longstanding coexistence should be preserved.

Before expanding the restricted area, the Marine Corps should demonstrate why existing safety zones are insufficient and whether its objectives could be achieved through smaller or independently activated zones, shorter closure periods, modified training schedules, or a preserved transit corridor between the Bay River, Neuse River, and Pamlico Sound.

I am not suggesting that public vessels should enter an active live-fire area. **I am asking that the restricted area be no larger, and remain closed no longer, than reasonably necessary to carry out the training mission safely.**

6. Requested Action by the Division of Coastal Management

I respectfully request that the North Carolina Division of Coastal Management:

1. Object to the consistency determination as submitted. Under 15 CFR 930.43, the State should object based on the conflicts with the enforceable policies governing estuarine and public trust waters, including 15A NCAC 07H .0208, and military water targets under 15A NCAC 07M .1000. Independently, the State should identify the information that has not been adequately provided and explain why it is necessary to determine consistency.

2. Obtain the information necessary for a meaningful consistency determination, including:

- The operational necessity for the expanded restricted area and an evaluation of less restrictive alternatives.
- Anticipated and maximum annual closure days and hours, seasonal timing, activation criteria, and geographic extent.
- A navigation and economic impact assessment identifying affected routes, quantifying detour distances and transit times, and evaluating impacts on shellfish aquaculture, commercial fishing, recreational fishing, and other water-dependent businesses.
- A specific explanation of how commercial fishing access will be accommodated under any applicable state policies.
- A separate operational and safety justification for the proposed permanent 500-foot restricted buffer around BT-11.

3. If the State considers a conditional concurrence under 15 CFR 930.4, condition it on, at a minimum:

- A navigable north–south transit corridor whenever operational safety permits.
- Defined limits on closure frequency and duration, with scheduling that avoids weekends, holidays, and peak fishing periods to the greatest extent practicable.
- Prompt reopening when training concludes.
- Notification beyond a Notice to Mariners, including VHF broadcasts, current range-status information, and direct alerts to commercial fishing license holders and shellfish lease holders through coordination with the Division of Marine Fisheries.
- Annual public reporting of actual closure dates, times, durations, and affected areas, with periodic review of demonstrated operational necessity.

- A five-year sunset or reauthorization mechanism through the applicable federal regulatory process.

4. Reopen public comment after the supplemental documentation is released. I request that DEQ make the Marine Corps' additional documentation publicly available and provide a renewed written comment period and an opportunity for a public hearing before issuing its final consistency response. The public should be able to evaluate the actual proposed closure schedule, operating limitations, and justification for the permanent buffer rather than being asked to comment on an incomplete description of the restrictions.

Conclusion

Supporting the Marine Corps and protecting public access to Pamlico Sound are not competing goals. The military and the people who work, fish, and navigate these waters have shared them for decades. That balance deserves to be preserved.

The proposed expansion would place substantial additional restrictions on public waters without disclosing how frequently or for how long those restrictions would be imposed. The Marine Corps' own determination acknowledges interference with navigation and public trust rights, yet the mitigation identified for those impacts relies primarily on notifying the public when access will be denied.

That is not a sufficient basis for the State to concur.

As someone who makes his living on these waters and regularly travels them, I believe we can support the Marine Corps' mission without unnecessarily restricting the public's ability to work, fish, and navigate Pamlico Sound.

North Carolina should not agree to restrict more of its public waters without first establishing why those restrictions are necessary, what they will cost the people who depend upon these waters, and whether the same military objectives can be accomplished with less disruption.

I respectfully urge the Division of Coastal Management to object to the determination as submitted, obtain the missing operational and economic information, and insist upon meaningful consideration of alternatives that preserve public navigation and existing water-dependent uses.

Please notify me of the State's consistency decision on this matter.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,



Chris Matteo
President, North Carolina Shellfish Growers Association
Vice President, East Coast Shellfish Growers Association
Commercial Oyster Farmer, Bay River, Pamlico County
Chris@ChadwickCreek.com
(919) 360-2278

From: Sharon Griffin <Sharon.Griffin@carteretcountync.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, October 13, 2026 3:12 PM
To: Willis, Angela <angela.willis@deq.nc.gov>
Cc: Grayson_Overholt@tillis.senate.gov; Sam Shumate <sam_shumate@budd.senate.gov>; Lindy.Robinson@mail.house.gov; Diane Cook <Diane.Cook@ncleg.gov>; Jan Cope <Jan.Cope@ncleg.gov>; Commissioners <Commissioners@carteretcountync.gov>; Reynal, Matt <Matt.Reynal@carteretcountync.gov>; Meshaw, Dee <deem@carteretcountync.gov>; Nick Wilson <nick.wilson@carteretcountync.gov>
Subject: [External] Military Expansion

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Good afternoon Ms. Willis,

I am writing on behalf of the Carteret County Board of Commissioners regarding the proposed expansion by MCAS Cherry Point to expand the Bombing Range on BT-9 and BT-11, impacting the mouth of the Neuse River and Pamlico Sound. The Carteret County Commissioners strongly support local fishermen, and also strongly support our national defense and MCAS Cherry Point. We all just want to understand the plan more fully so we can answer questions about potential impacts on local fishing families.

Recently, a hearing was held at Carteret Community College, but we were not aware of it, unfortunately. Many Carteret County residents did not hear about this or have a chance to attend. The area that may be most significantly impacted by the plan is Down East Carteret. I am writing to respectfully request that you consider having a second hearing, or a simple question and answer session, at a Down East Carteret location, such as in Atlantic, Smryna, or Sea Level. We would be happy to help you coordinate a location that would allow the people most impacted to attend and learn about the plan. If feasible, we also respectfully request that the comment period be extended past October 15, 2026, so that citizens can learn more and have a little more time to ask questions.

We sincerely appreciate your consideration of this. Please let me know if I can assist in scheduling this session, and we will also help publicize it.

Thank you so much,

Sharon

Sharon D. Griffin
County Manager
Carteret County Government
210 Turner Street
Beaufort, NC 28516

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From: Steven Hart
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] "Federal Consistency: USMC MCAS Cherry Point"
Date: Monday, October 19, 2026 3:04:28 PM

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Please reject this move to occasionally shut down access to the Pamlico sound from the Neuse river. This move is too restrictive. We travel through this area often on our sailboatThank you,
Steven M. Hart DMD
919 801-2617
5414 Trade Winds Rd.
New Bern, NC

From: Diane Miller
To: DEQ-SVC_DCM.federalconsistencycomments
Subject: [External] Opposition to Restricting marine space around bombing ranges
Date: Friday, October 16, 2026 11:25:16 AM
Attachments: Resolution 2026-13 Town of Oriental opposition.pdf

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Good Morning,
Please see attached resolution opposing the expansion of the no-go zones in the Pamlico Sound from the Town of Oriental Mayor and Board of Commissioners. Please feel free to contact me directly with any questions.
Thank you for your consideration.

Diane H. Miller, MPA, ICMA-CM
Town Manager
Town of Oriental, NC
507 Church St PO Box 472
Oriental, NC 28571
Ph: 252.249.0555
Pursuant to NC General Statutes Chapter 132, Public Records, this electronic mail message and any attachments hereto, as well as electronic mail message(s) that may be sent in response to it may be considered a public record and as such are subject to request and review by anyone at any time. The Town of Oriental is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

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RESOLUTION 2026-13

RESOLUTION OPPOSING THE PROPOSED EXPANSION OF TRAINING ACTIVITIES AND RESTRICTED WATER AREAS WITHIN THE MCAS CHERRY POINT RANGE COMPLEX

WHEREAS, the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality, Division of Coastal Management (DCM), has received a Federal Consistency Determination concerning proposed changes to training activities and operations within the Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Cherry Point Range Complex; and

WHEREAS, the United States Marine Corps has proposed expanding water-based restricted boundaries and training activities, including aircraft, unmanned systems, and watercraft operations, near BT-9 at Brant Jsland Shoals and BT-11 at Piney Island, including establishing a permanent 500-foot safety buffer around BT-11; and

WHEREAS, the Board is particularly concerned with the proposed restricted water area between BT-9 and BT-11, as restricting this intervening area would close the mouth of the Neuse River, interfering with a vital corridor within North Carolina's public trust waters used by commercial and recreational fishermen, local and interstate boaters, commercial traffic, NCDOT feny traffic and other mariners traveling through the Pamlico Sound and accessing the Neuse River, Jntracoastal Waterway, inlets and State Port in Morehead City; and

WHEREAS, the proposed expansion of the intermittent Use Water Restricted A rea does not include any information on the frequency of activation and waterway closures, and such restriction of public trust waters is counter to CAMA's stated goal to protect public rights for navigation and recreation and

WHEREAS, the proposed expansion of the intermittent Use Water Restricted A rea does not include any information on the frequency of activation and waterway closures, and such restriction of public trust waters is counter to CAMA's stated goal to protect public rights for navigation and recreation and

WHEREAS, Town Of Oriental and its coastal communities are deeply rooted in maritime heritage and recognize the importance of MCAS Cherry Point to national defense and the regional economy, while depending upon access to public waterways for livelihoods, commercial and recreational fishing, shrimping, crabbing, oystering, transportation, and coastal commerce; and

WHEREAS, the Board is gravely concerned that restricting the waters between BT-9 and BT-11 and expanding restrictions surrounding those ranges would reduce access to valuable fishing grounds, displace local mariners from customary channels onto more exposed and potentially hazardous alternative navigation routes, interfere with traditional uses ofcoastal waters, and adversely affect the County's residents and local economy; and

WHEREAS, expanding federally restricted areas within historic marine corridors could expose local water users to enforcement actions and applicable penalties for entering waters previously available for customary navigation and fishing; and

WHEREAS, a permanent restriction around BT-11 would limit public access even during periods when training activities are not occurring, warranting careful consideration of less restrictive alternatives; and

WHEREAS, given the substantial economic, navigational, and public safety implications of this proposal, affected residents must have a transparent and accessible opportunity to present

their concerns directly to state regulatory authorities through a public hearing within Town Of Oriental and

WHEREAS, the Board believes that military training needs should be addressed through meaningful consultation with affected local governments and water users and through measures that protect public safety while preserving the greatest practicable public access;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Of Oriental Mayor and Board of Commissioners unequivocally opposes the proposed expansion of training activities and restricted water areas within the MCAS Cherry Point Range Complex as submitted, with particular opposition to the proposed restriction of waters between BT-9 and BT-11, the expansion of restricted boundaries surrounding those ranges, and the permanent 500-foot safety buffer around BT-11, because of their potential effects on public access, customary navigation routes, fishing activities, and the livelihoods of Oriental residents.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board formally requests that the North Carolina Division of Coastal Management conduct a public hearing within Pamlico County before finalizing its federal consistency review, ensuring that local mariners, commercial and recreational fishermen, business owners, and residents have a full opportunity to provide public testimony, and extend the written comment period as necessary to accommodate that hearing and meaningful public participation.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board requests that the Division of Coastal Management fully evaluate the proposal's effects on public access, navigation, commercial and recreational fishing, coastal resources, public safety, and the economies of surrounding communities, with particular attention to the proposed restricted water area between BT-9 and BT-11, and object to the Federal Consistency Determination to the extent the proposal is inconsistent with the enforceable policies of North Carolina's Coastal Management Program.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board demands that the United States Marine Corps preserve public access through the waters between BT-9 and BT-11, protect safe navigation within these traditional coastal waters, refrain from implementing the proposed restrictions as submitted, and pursue alternatives that minimize additional water restrictions, limit closures to periods reasonably necessary for safety, avoid disproportionate economic impacts on local fisheries, address navigational hazards, and provide clear and timely notice to affected water users.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town Manager is authorized to submit this resolution as the County's formal public comment and official objection and hearing request to the North Carolina Division of Coastal Management before the October 15, 2026, deadline, and transmit copies to MCAS Cherry Point, the County's state legislative delegation, and its congressional representatives.

ADOPTED this 13th day of October, 2026, by the Town Of Oriental Mayor and Board.

Sally T. Belangia
Mayor

Attest:

Diane H. Miller
Town Manager