

**NORTH CAROLINA DIVISION OF MARINE FISHERIES
EDITORIAL GUIDELINES**

By
North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries
Editorial Committee

December 2016

North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality

Division of Marine Fisheries
3441 Arendell Street
P.O. Box 769
Morehead City, NC 28557

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	ii
1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Purpose.....	1
1.2 Review	1
1.3 Document Tracking and Archiving	1
2 CONTENT & ORGANIZATION	1
2.1 Title Page	1
2.2 Document Citation Format	2
2.3 Abstract	2
2.4 Executive Summary	2
2.5 Acknowledgements	2
2.6 Table of Contents.....	2
2.7 Lists of Tables and Figures	2
2.8 Introduction.....	3
2.9 Methods.....	3
2.10 Results.....	3
2.11 Discussion	3
2.12 Conclusions and Recommendations (optional)	3
2.13 Literature Cited (or References)	3
2.14 Tables.....	4
2.15 Figures.....	5
2.16 Appendix (optional).....	5
3 FORMAT	5
3.1 Layout	5
3.2 Headings	5
3.3 Text	6
3.4 Page Numbers	6
3.5 Literature Cited	6
3.6 Footnotes.....	6
3.7 Tables.....	6
3.8 Figures.....	6
4 STYLE	7
5 STATUS	7

6 TEMPLATES	8
-------------------	---

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide standard guidelines for written material prepared by staff of the North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries (NCDMF). Examples of written material include federal grant reports, Coastal Recreational Fishing License (CRFL) reports, fishery management plans (FMPs), and issue papers (FMP and rules review). The guidelines include standards for content, format, and style and, while allowing for flexibility among documents, stress the need for consistency within documents. These guidelines generally defer to those of the American Fisheries Society (AFS), especially in terms of style. Where differences occur, the author should follow the NCDMF guidelines. The guidelines also emphasize the use of standard templates so as to facilitate the use of the standard guidelines.

1.2 Review

The NCDMF editorial guidelines will be reviewed annually by the Editorial Committee of the Biological Review Team (hereafter referred to as the Editorial Committee) to ensure standards are current and appropriate. The chair of the Editorial Committee will be responsible for coordinating reviews and making the appropriate revisions to the guidelines.

1.3 Document Tracking and Archiving

The chair of the Editorial Committee will be responsible for overseeing the maintenance and availability of the most current editorial guidelines as well as archiving previous versions. The most current version of the NCDMF editorial guidelines can be found on the shared network DMF drive at DMF:\BRT\Editorial Guidelines\DMF_EditorialGuidelines.docx. The current version of the AFS style guide can also be found here. Archived versions of the NCDMF editorial guidelines and the AFS style guide can also be found on the shared network DMF drive at DMF:\BRT\Editorial Guidelines\archiveEditorialGuidelines.zip. Archived versions of the NCDMF editorial guidelines will be named using the following naming convention “EditorialGuidelines_YYYYMMDD.docx” where YYYYMMDD represents the year, month, and day on which the outdated version was added to the archive.

2 CONTENT & ORGANIZATION

The content of documents produced by the NCDMF will vary depending on the type of document. For those documents for which a template is available, the content will be dictated by the outline within the template (see section 6). All other documents should contain the elements described within this section, in the order presented.

2.1 Title Page

All documents should include a title page at the beginning. At a minimum, the title page should include the title of the document, authors or preparers, date (month and year), name of the division, and the address. Other information that may be included in the title page include project number and federal, state, contract, or CRFL grant award number. There is no standard convention for the font size on the title page (as long as it is legible). Inclusion of graphics on the title page is optional.

Note that the authors list should include only those individuals who actively contributed to the design and execution of the methods. Each author should have made an important contribution to the information being reported.

2.2 Document Citation Format

Following the title page will be a page that provides the citation format for the document. The page should only contain “This document may be cited as:” followed by the reference for the document. This information should be contained in the lower half of the page (top half blank).

2.3 Abstract

The abstract should follow the document citation format page and should not be included if there is an executive summary. The abstract should provide a summary of the document’s contents and should not exceed one page. The abstract should not contain footnotes or references to tables, figures, or literature.

2.4 Executive Summary

The executive summary should follow the document citation format page and should not be included if there is an abstract. The executive summary is a two- to four-page synopsis of the document’s content. It provides more detail than an abstract but is still considered a summary.

In writing the executive summary, it is extremely important to make it complete in itself, as this may be the only part of the document read by some individuals. It should not refer to figures or tables found elsewhere in the report or cite references without providing full bibliographic information.

2.5 Acknowledgements

Acknowledgements enable the authors of a report to thank those that have made a contribution, though not significant enough for authorship. Careful thought is needed regarding those whose help should be acknowledged and in what order. Appreciation should be expressed in a concise manner and avoid strong emotive language.

Note that personal pronouns are nearly always used in the acknowledgements while in the rest of the document personal pronouns are generally avoided.

2.6 Table of Contents

The table of contents lists the major contents of the document along with the associated page number. The table of contents must contain level 1 and level 2 headings; inclusion of level 3 headings is optional. Preparers of NCDMF documents are strongly encouraged to use the custom Table of Contents tool within Microsoft Word to build the table of contents. Please refer to Microsoft Word help for additional information.

2.7 Lists of Tables and Figures

If the report contains ten or more tables or figures, a separate list of these must follow the table of contents. Each list appears on a separate page. The list of tables comes first. The captions in these lists should match the captions associated with the tables and figures in the document. Preparers of NCDMF documents are strongly encouraged to use the custom Table of Contents tool within Microsoft Word to build the list of tables and the list of figures. Please refer to Microsoft Word help for additional information.

2.8 Introduction

The introduction should be a clear write up on the background of the problem and purpose of the study. Information in this section should include a historical perspective, continuity from previous work, literature review of previous related research, hypotheses (if relevant), and study objectives.

2.9 Methods

The methods section should describe any experimental procedures, including controls, in such a way that your work could be repeated. This section should include any statistical tests, mathematical equations (if applicable), variables measured, equipment used, description of study area (include map if applicable), and the time over which the data were collected.

2.10 Results

The results section should summarize data and present results of any statistical analyses. The results need to be clearly and simply stated. Only relevant data should be included. The text should reflect and refer to data presented in tables and figures.

2.11 Discussion

The discussion section should:

- Relate the results to the original purpose of the work
- Evaluate your results and relate them to other studies
- Determine if your hypothesis was met (if you had one)
- Address how your results relate to your study objectives
- Discuss possible explanations for unexpected results
- Point out the limitations of the work
- Answer questions such as:
 - What has this work contributed?
 - What are the implications of the results?
 - Has the problem been resolved?
 - Is further study warranted?

2.12 Conclusions and Recommendations (optional)

The conclusions section should be short (a paragraph or two), highlighting any principal conclusions that you want the reader to remember. The recommendations section may be part of, or separate from, the conclusion section and include any relevant research and/or management recommendations resulting from the work described in the document.

2.13 Literature Cited (or References)

Citations to relevant literature are an important part of documents produced by the NCDMF. References should be cited within the first sentence they are relevant (not the last). Guidance for the arrangement of citations in text can be found in chapter eight of the AFS Style Guide. Note that citations are separated by semi-colons, unless there are multiple citations from the same

author; in this case, the author's name is given followed by the publication years separated by a comma:

(Adams 1979, 1980; Hesselman 1992)

The format of references for the literature cited section can also be found in chapter eight of the AFS Style Guide. Note that the names of publications (journal titles) and agencies/organizations should be spelled out.

References to personal communication or unpublished material should be cited in text but not listed in the literature cited section. For personal communication citations, the first reference to a particular person should include the person's name and affiliation:

(D. Hesselman, NCDMF, personal communication)

Subsequent citations to the same individual within the same document do not require inclusion of the affiliation:

(D. Hesselman, personal communication)

Similarly, when citing unpublished material, the author should cite the person's first and middle initials and last name for the first citation:

(D. Hesselman, unpublished)

Subsequent citations within the same document do not require the first and middle initials:

(Hesselman, unpublished)

Tables and figures should be cited before literature within text:

(Table 2.1; Figure 2.2; Hesselman 1992)

Tables should be cited before figures.

The arrangement of references within the reference list is described in detail in chapter eight of the AFS Style Guide. Reference information should be verified by tracking down the original paper and not by simply copying and pasting a reference list from another document. This is an easy way to propagate mistakes.

Please refer to chapter eight of the AFS Style Guide for further guidance.

2.14 Tables

Any tables should follow the literature cited section. All tables should be associated with a number and a brief caption. Tables should be numbered sequentially based on the number of the section (using level 1 heading only) from which they are first referred. For example, if two tables are first referred to within section 2 of a report, they should be numbered Table 2.1 and 2.2, based on the order they appear in the report. This numbering convention should be followed regardless of whether a table is referred to from within a level 2 heading (i.e., do not number as 2.1.1).

Table captions should be brief but contain enough detail to explain the table without having to refer back to the main text. Table captions should be consistently worded to the extent possible.

Please refer to chapter twelve of the AFS Style Guide for further guidance.

2.15 Figures

Any figures should follow the tables section. All figures should be associated with a number and a brief caption. Figures should be numbered sequentially based on the number of the section (using level 1 heading only) from which they are first referred. For example, if two figures are first referred to within section 2 of a report, they should be numbered Figure 2.1 and 2.2, based on the order they appear in the report. This numbering convention should be followed regardless of whether a figure is referred to from within a level 2 heading (i.e., do not number as 2.1.1).

Figure captions should be brief but contain enough detail to explain the figure without having to refer back to the main text. Figure captions should be consistently worded to the extent possible.

Please refer to chapter twelve of the AFS Style Guide for further guidance.

2.16 Appendix (optional)

One or more appendices may be included if necessary. An appendix contains supplemental information that is beyond the scope of the main text of the document but contains relevant material for interpreting and understanding the main text. Appendices should be numbered using letters (e.g., Appendix A, Appendix B). An appendix may contain its own literature cited section and its own tables and figures. Tables and figures within each appendix should use the appendices' letter in its number (e.g., Table A.1, Figure B.2).

3 FORMAT

Document templates (see section 6) are already formatted and *should not* be modified. Exceptions can be made where noted.

When pasting text from another document into an existing template, it is important to maintain the formatting of the document template. To do this, one must “Paste Special” and select “Unformatted Text” to ensure the formatting of the document one is pasting into is preserved.

3.1 Layout

There should be a minimum of one inch for the margin on the top, left, bottom, and right of each page. The default page orientation is portrait style but the pages containing tables and figures that require landscape style may be formatted as such. The document templates will provide automatic spacing between paragraphs; extra spaces should not be added.

3.2 Headings

Documents are organized based on headings that are numbered sequentially. The first, or top level, heading is a level 1 heading. Headings within a level 1 heading are level 2 headings and so on. A document may use headings as far down as level 5. If further organization is needed, one may use subsections or subtitles—styles provided in the style section of the document templates provided by the Editorial Committee (see Styles on Home ribbon within Microsoft Word). Those who prepare NCDMF documents are encouraged to learn about applying styles within Microsoft Word help.

The titles of level 1 headings will be formatted in all capital letters. Level 2 headings and lower should just have the first letter of each major word capitalized.

3.3 Text

The standard font is Times New Roman and the standard size is 12 point. This also applies to tables and figures, though font size may be reduced to 10 point in tables and figures, if necessary. It is preferred, but not required, to justify text on the right side; whether or not the text is justified must be consistent throughout each document.

The first sentence of paragraphs need not be indented (tabbed). It is preferable to use one space after all punctuation; however, if two spaces are used, it must be consistent throughout the document.

3.4 Page Numbers

All pages should be numbered in the bottom right corner. The exception is the title page and the page where the introduction starts (page following list of figures). The first pages through the list of figures should be numbered using small case Roman numerals (e.g., ii, iii). The pages after the list of figures should be numbered using Arabic numerals starting with 1 (page 1 not numbered).

3.5 Literature Cited

Text in the literature cited section will be formatted as Body Text style but should have a hanging indent (0.5 inches).

3.6 Footnotes

Footnotes are numbered sequentially using Arabic numerals. Footnote numbers and text should be formatted using size 10 point font.

3.7 Tables

The names of tables should be formatted in bold font. The standard font for tables is Times New Roman. A font smaller than the standard size of 12 point can be used if necessary (smaller than 10 point not recommended). Use of gridlines is preferred and should be used in a consistent format for all tables within a document. Column and row headings can be formatted in bold font as long as this is consistent throughout all tables in the document.

If a particular cell within a table has no value, leave as a blank (do not enter a dash). Enter a zero where appropriate. For values less than one, zeros should precede all decimal points. Values in tables should share the same number of significant digits when possible. For example, the values 0.020 and 2.1 have the same number of significant digits. This does not apply to values that do not have numbers to the right of the decimal point.

Tables should not be copied as pictures into documents. This prevents readers from easily extracting information presented in the tables.

Please refer to chapter twelve of the AFS Style Guide for further guidance.

3.8 Figures

Figures should be clear and of high quality. Figures should rarely repeat data already presented in tables. The names of figures should be formatted in bold font. The standard font for figures is Times New Roman. The font size can, and often will need to be, reduced to size 10 point. Figure borders are preferred, but not required; if used, they must be used consistently throughout the document. For line, bar, and column graphs with multiple series, a legend should be overlaid on the graph. In some cases, multiple graphs may be included in the same figure. In these cases, the

individual graphs should be identified with a lower-case letter, starting with “a”, and the letter should be enclosed by parentheses. Tick marks should cross the axes.

Figures may be generated using color; however, ensure that they are “gray-scale friendly” as some readers may not have access to color printers. In longer documents, it may be more prudent to copy figures in as pictures, rather than embed as graphs, so as to reduce the overall size of the document.

Please refer to chapter twelve of the AFS Style Guide for further guidance.

4 STYLE

In terms of style, the NCDMF editorial guidelines largely defer to the current AFS Style Guide, which provides guidelines on abbreviations and acronyms (chapter one), capitalization (chapter two), italics (chapter three), mathematics and statistics (chapter four), numbers and measurements (chapter five), punctuation (chapter six), quotations (chapter seven), references (chapter 8), species names (chapter nine), spelling and compound words (chapter ten), symbols (chapter eleven), tables and figures (chapter twelve), vendors and commercial products (chapter thirteen), and word usage (chapter fourteen). There are also appendices that include a spelling list (Appendix A), symbols, abbreviations, and acronyms (Appendix B), plurals of fish names (Appendix C), and geographic and geological terms (Appendix D).

Note that the latest AFS Style Guide now calls for the capitalization of the common names of fishes (see chapter two in the AFS Style Guide). The NCDMF guidelines endorse this convention.

Now some common errors are noted. First is the use of parentheses. It is not uncommon to see multiple parenthetical expressions at the end of a sentence. For example, an author may both refer to a table and a literature reference in the same sentence using two parenthetical expressions. This is incorrect. Instead, they should be cited within the same parenthetical expression and separated by a semicolon:

(Table 2.1; Hesselman 1992)

not (Table 2.1) (Hesselman 1992)

Another common mistake relates to the use of the serial comma. When listing more than two items in a series, a comma should go before the conjunction (e.g., and, or). A different mistake related to the comma is the use before coordinating conjunctions (and, but, or, nor, for, so, yet) when not listing a series of items. A comma should only be used if the coordinating conjunction is being used to join two independent clauses. An independent clause contains a subject and a verb and can stand alone as its own sentence.

Pay special attention to word usage (chapter fourteen in the AFS Style Guide) and spelling (Appendix A in the AFS Style Guide). Note that the spelling of some words changes depending on the word’s parts of speech. For example, the word gill net is spelled differently depending on whether it is a noun (gill net), adjective (gill-net), or verb (gillnet). Authors are strongly encouraged to refer to the AFS Style Guide when questions arise.

5 STATUS

Documents that are not considered final should have a watermark added that reads “DRAFT”. This watermark should not be removed until the absolute final version of the document. Optionally, authors may also add the following to the footer of each page of the draft document: “Do not cite,

quote, or circulate”. This statement should be centered in the footer and should be removed when the document is considered final.

6 TEMPLATES

For some documents created by the NCDMF, templates are available that automatically format and provide the content outline for the specific document. A list of these templates and their associated file names is provided in Table 6.1. These templates can be found on the shared network DMF drive at DMF:\BRT\Editorial Guidelines\Templates. Templates prepared by the Rules Advisory Team can be found at DMF:\Rules Advisory Team\Rules Development\Issue-Info Paper Templates. A generic template has also been created that provides the formatting and content outline given in these editorial guidelines and should be used if a template for the particular document does not already exist (tplStandardReport.dotx). Templates not listed here but provided by others should be used when possible as these guidelines are not intended to override guidelines provided in other standard operating procedure (SOP) manuals or guidance documents. For example, the stock assessment program provides a number of templates related to the development of stock assessments that are not listed here but are described in the Stock Assessment Process SOP Manual. Staff who would like to create a template and add it to the editorial guidelines should contact the chair of the Editorial Committee.

Table 6.1. List of available document templates for preparing NCDMF documents.

Document Type	File Name
NOAA Fisheries Performance Report	tplNOAAFisheriesReport.dotx
CRFL Performance Report	tplCRFLSemiAnnualReport.dotx
CRFL Final Report Summary	tplCRFLFinalReportSummary.dotx
CRFL TM Progress Report Review Sheet	tplCRFL_TMProgressReportReviewSheet.dotx
Sport Fish Restoration Annual Report	tplSportFishAnnualReport.dotx
Sport Fish Restoration Final Project Summary	tplSportFishFinalSummary.dotx
FMP Issue Paper	tplFMPIssuePaper.dotx
Fishery Management Plan	<i>In development</i>
Stock Assessment Report	tplSAR_StandardOutline.dotx
Standard NCDMF Document	tplStandardReport.dotx
Stock Status Reports	tplStockStatusReport.dotx
FMP Updates	