



JOSH STEIN
Governor

D. REID WILSON
Secretary

KATHY B. RAWLS
Director

M-1-2026

PROCLAMATION

RE: HORSESHOE CRABS – COMMERCIAL

This proclamation supersedes proclamation M-14-2025, dated July 17, 2025. This proclamation opens the season to the commercial harvest of horseshoe crabs on 12:01 A.M. January 1, 2026, and establishes a daily harvest limit of 50 horseshoe crabs per commercial fishing operation. The fishery will close by proclamation once the commercial quota is projected to be reached or December 31, 2026, whichever occurs first.

Kathy B. Rawls, Director, Division of Marine Fisheries, hereby announces the commercial harvest of horseshoe crabs will open effective 12:01 A.M., January 1, 2026, and the following restrictions will apply

I. HARVEST RESTRICTIONS

- A. It shall be unlawful to take or possess more than 50 horseshoe crabs per commercial fishing operation per day, regardless of the number of persons or vessels involved.
- B. The fishery will close by proclamation once the commercial quota is projected to be reached or December 31, 2026, whichever occurs first.

II. GENERAL INFORMATION

- A. This proclamation is issued under the authority of N.C. General Statutes 113-134; 113-134.1; 113-170.4; 113-170.5; 113-182; 113-221.1; 143B-289.52 and NC Marine Fisheries Commission Rules 15A NCAC 03H .0103 and 03L .0207.
- B. In accordance with N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission Rule 15A NCAC 03H .0103 it is unlawful to violate the provisions of any proclamation issued by the Fisheries Director under their delegated authority.
- C. In accordance with N.C. General Statute 113-221.1(c) all persons who may be affected by proclamations issued by the Fisheries Director are under a duty to keep themselves informed of current proclamations.
- D. The intent of this proclamation allows North Carolina to comply with the requirements of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Horseshoe Crab. North Carolina is operating under a state quota, and the trip limit is meant to constrain the harvest of horseshoe crabs to the quota.
- E. Contact N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries, P.O. Box 769, Morehead City, NC 28557 252-515-5500 or 800-682-2632 for more information or visit the division website at www.ncmarinefisheries.net.
- F. **This proclamation opens the season to the commercial harvest of horseshoe crabs on 12:01 A.M. January 1, 2026, and establishes a daily harvest limit of 50 horseshoe crabs per commercial fishing operation. The fishery will close by proclamation once the commercial quota is projected to be reached or December 31, 2026, whichever occurs first.**

By:

Kathy B. Rawls, Director
DIVISION OF MARINE FISHERIES

December 17, 2025
9:15 A.M.