

**Online Public Comments # 1-18**

**Final**


**February 15, 2023 Carteret County Shellfish Lease Hearing**

Created	First Name	Last Name	State/Province	Please type your comments in the box below:
2023-01-23 08:37:58	Chris	McCaffity	North Carolina	<p>These people have applied for public water leases in good faith based on existing laws. My public comments are not intended to deny their lease applications. They are intended to get people thinking and promote a moratorium on any new public water leases that include water columns and/or growing genetically sterilized species. All but one of these lease requests include water columns. Water column cages restrict the public's freedom to access navigable waters while negatively impacting natural water flow and sedimentation patterns. There is a HUGE difference between growing native clams and oysters that can naturally reproduce on the bottom and clogging our waterways with cages full of genetically sterilized species. Genetically sterilized shellfish should be listed as such so consumers know what they are eating. Public Shellfish Gardens equal to existing public water leases should be stocked with native shellfish that can naturally reproduce and be available to all recreational and commercial license holders. Please do not further restrict our freedom to access public waters and resources by continuing to allow and even promote water column leases. Please label all genetically sterilized species being sold to the public. If you are one of the lease applicants, please do not grow genetically sterilized species and keep your operation on the bottom. Thank you.</p>
2023-02-07 10:05:50	Sue	Hamann	North Carolina	<p>We at Hamann Clammin' are pleased to support the applications of James A. Morris, Sr., and James A. Morris, Jr., for shellfish leases in Long Bay. Jimmy Morris, Sr., is a mentor to us and many shellfish farmers. His farming practices are exemplary and a guide to us all.</p> <p>As shellfish farmers in the Newport River, we also support the lease applications of Linda S. Jolly and James T. Chadwick and James K Frey. We hope to get to know you soon.</p> <p>Sue Hamann &amp; Phil Hamann, Hamann Clammin'</p>
2023-02-07 14:50:05	John	Haroldson	North Carolina	<p>The proposed Changing Tide Renovations, LLC lease on South River would have a seriously detrimental impact on property that I own with a group of other individuals. Lukens Island has owned the property adjacent to the proposed lease since approximately 1991. We have been hunting this shoreline for approximately 30 years, using retriever dogs from fixed and mobile pontoon blinds as well as floating layout boats. We also fish , shrimp, kayak and water ski along this shoreline. Any commercial oyster operation would destroy our ability to enjoy these activities. Also, we have recently developed a master plan to subdivide the property into</p>



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				individual developable waterfront lots that would be installing docks and, potentially, a community marina. Any new or proposed leases would be more appropriate adjacent to state owned property on the Neuse River, Turnagain Bay, Abraham Bay, Broad Creek, etc...
2023-02-07 16:04:02	Matt	Godwin	North Carolina	<p>I am writing in opposition to the proposed Changing Tide Renovations, LLC. ( Charles Allen, agent), 3.72 acres bottom lease and water column lease in South River. This proposed lease just feet off of Lukens Island Timber Enterprises property of which I am a member. This lease poses a significant interference with the use and future development of the South River shoreline that Lukens Island Timber owns.</p> <p>I have hunted the shoreline where this proposed lease is since I was in college with my now deceased father in law George Sutton, a founding member of Lukens Island in 1993. We would hunt in blinds along the shores of South River or park four wheelers on the bank of the river and hunt from the rivershore. This type of oyster lease would eliminate the opportunity to hunt from our own shorelines. Furthermore, we would not be able to set decoys or use dogs to retrieve with an oyster lease off the shore line. In the summer and fall, I have fished the shore line of South River at the Lukens Island property dozens of times with family and friends. Allowing a large scale oyster lease in this area would essentially deprive fisherman to fish along this shore line. Not to mention the boating hazard this type of lease would create, both at day and night. Fisherman use this area at night for fishing, gigging and shrimping. Lukens Island Timber Company hired a consulting group approximately 3 years ago to draft a development plan for our land along South River. This development accounts for 146 individual lots to be sold and developed in this exact area. The long term plan includes waterfront homes with docks, a new clubhouse and a marina. This proposed lease would be detrimental to this future plan . Certain shoreline further up South River may more easily accommodate such shellfish leases. Any benefit of placing this type of lease off the shore line owned by Lukens Island Timber Company in South River would be significantly outweighed by both the negative and potentially dangerous consequences of allowing it . Thank you , Matthew H. Godwin, Attorney at Law</p>
2023-02-08 10:28:52	Ed	Burton	North Carolina	<p>I am Dr. Ed Burton, President of Lukens Island Timber Enterprises, LLC., the owners of the majority of the Lukens Island shoreline on the east side of the South River. We strongly oppose any further shellfish leases along our shoreline from slightly north of Eastmans Creek to the Neuse River. We have gone to considerable expense to have lot plans drawn up to develop this area for waterfront houses or RV's, seawall, piers, boat ramps, etc. Any shellfish areas would greatly interfere with this plan. It, otherwise, presents problems and potential hazards for boating, fishing, hunting, skiing, dogs, etc. I hope other suitable areas can be found. Thank you for your help. Ed Burton</p>



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2023-02-08 10:29:45	John	Ward	North Carolina	<p>Re: Application of Changing Tide Renovations, LLC 's Application for oyster bed permits in South River, Carteret County, NC.</p> <p>As an equity owner of Lukens Island Timber Enterprises, LLC, I strongly oppose the granting of the referenced permits for the reasons submitted by the other owners of Lukens. In addition, Lukens has been approached by at least two potential purchasers, who have indicated similar uses referenced today by other owners. The granting of these permits would seriously jeopardize a sale. Respectfully submitted, John A.J. ward</p>
2023-02-08 13:38:48	Aaron	Baker	North Carolina	<p>I am one of the owners of Lukens Island and am opposed to shellfish beds and especially the gear above water along our waterfront. We duck hunt the waters along our shoreline and access our duck blinds by boat and from the shore in addition to float boats. We use dogs for hunting, the beds and gear are dangerous for the dogs as well as the hunters.</p> <p>We, as do many of our South River and Oriental neighbors, use these waters for shrimping, fishing, setting nets, crab pots, water skiing, kayaking and other water recreational activities. Additionally there are many transient boaters that use this water for overnight stays. The beds not only interfere with these activities but create a dangerous environment while navigating the waters.</p> <p>We are also in the process of residential development of the property along our waterfront. We have been working on this for over six years and have spent tens of thousands of dollars on this project. The beds and gear will greatly devalue our property and certainly will jeopardize this on-going development project.</p> 
2023-02-08 14:49:54	Don	Batten	North Carolina	<p>As a part owner of Lukens Island Land and Timber LLC, I would be strongly opposed to the bottom lease of the 3.72 acres applied for by Changing tide Renovations LLC (Charles Allen agent) in South River. Or any other Lease that would be adjacent to the Lukens shore line in that area. As one of 14 owners we have discussed future plans to develop this water front property and many of us have an interest in actually building personal homes there as well. The view is spectacular and I feel that a shellfish type farm just offshore would take away from the natural beauty of the place. Not to mention be a hazard to water skiers, boating in the area and to dogs</p>



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				swimming to retrieve ducks which is a common practice among our membership. There are other areas farther up the river towards Eastmans Creek that would be better suited for this type of operation. Please consider this and I urge you to deny this lease. Don Batten.
2023-02-14 12:13:11	Alison	Willis	North Carolina	My concerns revolve around only the proposed leases in North River (Carteret County) & Wards Creek (Carteret County). Both rivers are used for crab pots & peeler pots (soft crab operations) & bottom leases would prevent fishermen from utilizing those areas for crabbing (hard crabs & peelers). As it stands, commercial fishermens options for diversification among different fisheries are becoming fewer & fewer, therefore putting more and more pressure on our natural resources. Please do not continue to allow (particularity North River) to be consumed by bottom leases. At the least, please become aware of how specific areas in these two rivers are utilized by fishermen & please don't allow bottom leases in areas that are utilized by other fisheries. Best Regards, Alison Willis
2023-02-14 19:21:33	Katelyn	Kidd	North Carolina	My concerns revolve around only the proposed leases in North River (Carteret County) & Wards Creek (Carteret County). Both rivers are used for crab pots & peeler pots (soft crab operations) & bottom leases would prevent fishermen from utilizing those areas for crabbing (hard crabs & peelers). As it stands, commercial fishermens options for diversification among different fisheries are becoming fewer & fewer, therefore putting more and more pressure on our natural resources. Please do not continue to allow (particularity North River) to be consumed by bottom leases. At the least, please become aware of how specific areas in these two rivers are utilized by fishermen & please don't allow bottom leases in areas that are utilized by other fisheries. Best Regards, Katelyn Kidd
2023-02-15 11:30:45	marie	frey	North Carolina	<a href="https://youtu.be/hOZTuAKuyxg">https://youtu.be/hOZTuAKuyxg</a> Please watch this video made by Fork2Farmer:Carteret County. It will support your decision to grant Kyle Frey the lease he is asking for. As his mother, I am so proud of his accomplishments and feel he is a great asset to our community and will only bring great things our way. He is a hard worker, with a wonderful personality that is making a great name for the quality of the oysters coming out of our waters. Thank you for you time. Marie Frey
2023-02-15 14:37:45	Kenneth	Brennan	North Carolina	I, Ken Brennan, am a resident of Carteret County and oppose these proposed leases in the Lower North River. Lease ID 22-063BL Lease ID 22-061BL Lease ID 22-039BL



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				<p>Reasons for opposing these proposed leases are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. These areas if leased would impact traditional navigation. By traditional navigation I am referring to using existing channels and deeper water in areas that are extremely shallow and limited for safe boating.</li> <li>2. The spatial map shows how these proposed leases overlay and infringe on either all or portions of existing channels and areas of deeper water. If these proposed leases are granted it would require altering popular navigation routes in waters that are already very limited for boating. I don't see this same problem with other proposed leases being reviewed.</li> <li>3. Another reason I oppose these proposed leases; they would have a high impact on both recreational and commercial fishing. There is a great deal of fishing effort all around North River Marsh and the marshes adjacent to Goose Bay throughout the year. Just by the nature of where these proposed leases are located, on the edge or in the channel, they would hinder drifting for, or gigging flounder; gill netting for mullet, spot, croaker and hogfish; and rod and reel fishing for red drum and speckled trout.</li> <li>4. I'll close by saying, I am not opposed to leasing bottom for raising shellfish. I raised shellfish for 15 years and leased bottom myself. What I am opposed to is granting leases that impact safe navigation for boating, while also limiting opportunities for the public to fully utilize historically important fishing locations. The sheer number of leases that are being granted now in NC will all have some level of impact on public use, but these three proposed leases in particular exceed what should be allowed.</li> </ol>
2023-02-15 22:32:33	Chris	Matteo	North Carolina	<p>This comment is submitted in support of proposed shellfish lease 22-019BL and its associated water column 22-020WC on South River in Carteret County.</p> <p>First, the riparian owners (hunt club / timber company) have over 26,000 linear feet of shoreline on the east side of South River. Surely a 850' long shellfish lease situated at the proper distance from that east shore would have little to no impact on the riparian owners' right to duck hunt for a few months a year (if ducks are even present). They cannot control the use of five miles of a state resource just because their land borders the river. Duck hunters and shellfish farmers can coexist (especially at that scale) in this very remote corner of Carteret County.</p> <p>Speaking of remote, the idea that the east side of South River will be developed anytime during the ten-year term (or ever) of the proposed shellfish lease is an extremely remote probability. First, the tiny community that once existed on the land situated on the east side of South River began to disband ninety years ago. There is no current development and no inhabitants on the land in question, and no sign of proposed development. In fact, there are no public roads that</p>



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				<p>access this land, and no utilities. Nearby developments with nicely paved roads, utilities, and other infrastructure have struggled to sell plots and build homes over the last 20 or so years. So while the owners may have a "development plan", it should be viewed with great skepticism.</p> <p>Transient boaters that drop anchor in South River will have to navigate through or around the proposed shellfish lease in order to trespass on nearby land. No one can guarantee the safety of passengers on a small craft in NC waters, especially at night. Transient boaters who trespass in the dark are pretty low on the list of reasons to strike down a shellfish lease designed to produce sustainable seafood to feed North Carolina's citizens.</p> <p>No recreational or commercial fisherman have spoken out against the proposed lease. Only a nearby riparian owner that doesn't live on the land and wants to control 5 miles of state resource in a remote area.</p> <p>While "throwing the kitchen sink" of hypothetical conflicts at a proposed lease is an interesting approach, only actual conflicts should really carry any weight.</p> <p>Chris Matteo North Carolina Shellfish Growers Association</p>
2023-02-16 09:52:34	Christian	Tucker	North Carolina	As a lifelong duck hunter of south river, oyster farms never get in my way, nor do I think they will
2023-02-16 09:56:37	Doug	Brady	North Carolina	<p>My name is Doug Brady. I am a lifelong resident of Carteret County and reside in Beaufort. I was involved in the Seafood and Mariculture business for over 30 years until around 2005. I have served on many boards including the former NC Legislature Seafood and Aquaculture Study Commission. Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, advisory boards to South Atlantic Fishery Management Council. I am a former Carteret County Commissioner and have served on multiple local boards and regional planning commissions. Presently, I am a trustee at Carteret Community College. I was chairman of the County Commissioners when we funded the aquaculture program at CCC. I also am owner in Lukens Island Land and Timber which owns the property along the shoreline of this proposed lease.</p> <p>I state the above only to give some background on me and subsequent comments below.</p> <p>I am in opposition to granting Changing Tide Renovations LLC a 3.72 acre bottom lease and accompanying 3.72 Water Column lease (22-019 BL, 22-020 WC) in South River.</p> <p>As stated in their review of the proposed lease, The NC Division of Water Resources has</p>

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				<p>concerns regarding commercial and recreational use with this lease location. The NC Marine Patrol also voiced concern relative to user conflicts in this location. Recreational hunting and fishing is very prevalent in this area. In addition this is a heavily used anchorage area for transient as well as local vessels. Many boats come over from the Oriental area to overnight.</p> <p>Of primary concern is the impact on the Riparian Rights of Lukens Island Land and Timber. This proposed lease is located in the riparian corridor of Lukens Island Land and Timber. Under the statutes of the State, the adjacent land owner is entitled to reasonable use of the water in front of their property.</p> <p>A lease and especially a water column lease takes that right away and gives it to another entity. The Commission recognized this and have rules that push leases at least 250 ft off developed shorelines.</p> <p>The fact that our shoreline is not developed does not negate our riparian rights. I think the same provision should be for all shorelines and this is a matter I intend to take up with the legislature and legal counsel.</p> <p>In talking with CAMA in the last week, leases do impact the adjacent land owners process in getting docks and can make the process much more complicated....possibly causing the property owner to apply for a major CAMA permit just to get a dock over a lease. The user conflict issue only gets exacerbated. Leases should be sited to avoid future user conflicts.</p> <p>We do have a development plan for our property that has individual water front lots along the South River. This lease impacts those plans.</p> <p>In closing, I support the growth of the mariculture industry in our State but that growth can't come at the expense of all users of our waterways and the riparian rights of adjacent landowners.</p> <p>I encourage the Division to deny this lease application to avoid further user conflicts.</p> <p>Doug Brady</p>
2023-02-16 16:12:40	Cody	Horn	North Carolina	As a longtime duck hunter and fisherman I haven't had any trouble hunting around any other lease, and I don't see why people would have a problem around this proposed farm.
2023-02-16 16:39:19	Patricia	Tester	North Carolina	While I understand the potential economic value of shellfish leases in public waters of NC, my concerns centers on two topics. One is the lack of information about the effects of concentrations of shellfish on water quality and the effects of water quality on the shellfish in



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				<p>our shallow, poorly flushed NC creeks and rivers. Not only do high concentrations of shellfish contribute nitrogen to the system but the floating shellfish bags are frequently visited by gulls and they contribute as well. In shallow, poorly flushed waters, this could be a problem. The absence of data on flushing rates and circulation in shellfish growing areas combined with a dearth of water quality (chemical) data suggests more careful consideration of shellfish leasing criteria. The concept of carry capacity of a water body to support healthy shellfish and sustain water quality should be considered. Areas like Wards Creek appear to be such a productive growing area that it could easily surpass a healthy state and suffer from low oxygen and other harmful effects.</p>
2023-02-16 16:55:32	Jet	Matthews	North Carolina	<p>I represent Lukens Island hunting Club I attended the hearing and spoke regarding the long established history of South River anchorages off Lukens Island. I have been in the Marian Buisness (wet slip storage) of sailing and power boats on the Neuse River and Moreheadcity N,C. Since 1987. I would like to call attention to several well known cruising guides The Water way Guide and the Salty Southeast cruisers net . These are two off many that are established and well known and are carried by all transit intercostal boaters on board that travels and down the intercostal waterway.They have been sending boats to anchorages off our shores in South River for 30 plus years . On any given night in the spring through Late Fall there are routinely 8 to 10 vessels anchored there. It has been long established that there is a 3 acre grave yard there open to the public with a nice dingy dock to off load pets for a walk. Sometimes large sailing clubs or cruising groups raft up in this area. Many of these folks come there often 10 or 15 times a season. It is busy. they have a public right to get off their boat there. A gentleman spoke last night and said that people anchoring there didn't go ashore because it was private. He simply didn't know what he was talking about .I would be surprised if he had ever been there. He further made statements about everyone leaving Lukens 100 years ago. He tried to paint a picture of Lukens as if it was abandoned, simply not true! We have Had 16 families living and recreating on Lukens since 1991. We have a 16 bedroom 7 bath lodge with 3 to four full time employees. We have been developing Lukens for well over 30 years and have built nearly 47 miles of all weather roads around and to all of our waterfront property . we finally finished having our formal engineered plans finished by the Culliper Group ( Our engineering consultants 5 years ago and are moving forward with our power infrastructure as we speak. We have furnished our plans to the dept.This same individual stated that we had access problems etc, It is amazing that some one could state just absolute nonsense founded in fiction . I wanted to set the facts strait so that there would not be any further confusion of the facts. Thanks so much for your time I can be reached by phone at [REDACTED]</p>