

N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission
March 2025 Meeting
Written Public Comment

Name	State/Province	Comments
Thomas Coltrain	North Carolina	<p>Please vote down the sea trout amendment as this not fair to the fish or recreational fishermen. Until you lower the limit on the commercial limit on number of fish by the same percentage you are going to cut recreational how is this fair. Cutting the number of days may or may not lower their take on number of fish. Most do not net on weekends to many eyes and cameras on water. For one time in the history of NCMF do the right thing to save this last fish. As long as this fish has a bounty money its head it will go the way of flounder ,striped bass,spots,croaker and on and on. You know what you need to do have you got the NERVE to do the right thing one time. No sale of trout period. No trout over 20 inches .Season closed from April 15 to July 15 every year. Limit of 4 . They will come back stronger. Make the trout,striped bass, and red drum gamefish with NO By-Catch and fishing will return to NC.</p>
David O'Neal III	North Carolina	<p>My name is David O'Neal III. I am a crabber from Wanchese, NC. I have commercial fished and crabbed all my life.</p> <p>The proposed regulations for Amendment 3 of the blue crab fishery will have an extremely significant impact on myself and other crabbers in this area. To be honest, I'm not certain how many of us will be able to continue crabbing if these regulations are implemented.</p> <p>This report claims that the average landings of hard crabs is between 1 and 15 bushels. I'm not sure how the trip ticket data would show that when for most of the crabbers in this area and the Albemarle, 15 bushels is a bad day. There has got to be some way that these numbers are getting skewed. When we are fishing peeler pots, targeting peelers, we catch a few hard crabs, usually less than two bushels a day, and sell them. Are these landings being considered a hard crab trip? How many crab trawl trips are being reported as crab pot landings? Table 3 on page 16 shows single trips landing over 200 bushels in March and April that are supposedly from pots. No one is catching 200+ bushels a day with pots that time of year.</p>

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		<p>I just don't understand how anyone that knows anything about NC hard crabbing can think or believe that the average trip lands less than 15 bushels and that this fishery can survive with the proposed bushel limits.</p> <p>Another issue I have with these proposed regulations is that they are based on data that is from years ago and not current. The last two years have been great years hard crabbing with 2024 being better than 2023 was.</p> <p>Since the construction of the new bridge at Oregon Inlet and the Miss Katie maintaining deeper water in the inlet, we are seeing ocean water push further into the sounds on flood tides than we have in 15-20 years. For years the sponge crabs have stayed in the ocean and right inside the inlet, not even making it west or north of the sanctuary line at Oregon Inlet. Now we are seeing them come further into the sound like they used to do. The numbers of sponge crabs along the beaches in the ocean have been unreal. Is DMF doing crab sampling in the ocean? These are the sooks that make it to the inlet. I could go on and on about how much Oregon Inlet changing the past few years has affected crabbing here.</p> <p>Your report talks about commercial landings being down. In the past everyone in this area crabbed all summer in the northern Pamlico and Croatan Sounds. Now that whole area has basically become a crab sanctuary because of sea turtles flipping and destroying pots. You literally can not work there in the summer because of sea turtles.</p> <p>Another consideration when discussing a decline in commercial landings is the decline in participants in the fishery. Also the fact that participants are aging out of the fishery with very few new people getting into it.</p> <p>This is a quote from the NCDMF 2024 landings report that is posted on the division website. "Hard Blue Crab remains the top landed species in the state. Though not at 2019 or 2020 levels, hard Blue Crab landings are experiencing a bounce back in 2024, with a 14.5% increase compared to the previous 5-year average."</p>

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		<p>The report also discussed protecting mature females prior to spawning. NDMF is constantly planting oyster shell and other hard materials in muddy areas that these crabs migrate to for the winter. Y'all destroyed one of the most productive muddy bottom sloughs on the north side of Oregon Inlet by planting material there.</p> <p>In my opinion, these proposed regulations are absurd and unwarranted. The data used is flawed. DMF staff knows this and just doesn't care or is doing this intentionally to shut down the crab fishery.</p> <p>I believe there are lot more things that need to be taken into consideration before you destroy the most valuable fishery in this state.</p> <p>Thanks for your time.</p> <p>David O'Neal III</p>
Chris McCaffity	North Carolina	<p>It is so disappointing to see this commission relentlessly attacking our freedom to fish and eat North Carolina wild-caught seafood. It is time to start focusing more on enhancing our fisheries and food supply than restricting our freedom to access our Public Resources. Wise use of hatcheries and habitat enhancements would help flounder, trout, herring, crabs, oysters, and many other species overcome the habitat related spawning obstacles negatively impacting them. Using regional hatcheries to incubate fertilized eggs from local specimens and releasing hatchlings to live wild and free would help most stocks thrive at historically high levels even as we sustainably harvest more. This positive solution would benefit everyone and the resource by increasing recreational opportunity and promoting food security for the public by allowing independent commercial fishermen to keep working. Please allow River Herring to be harvested as by-catch this spring. I still have the petitions signed by over 10,000 North Carolinians supporting the ancient tradition of harvesting herring. Please limit new Public Water aquaculture to</p>

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		stocking native seafood that can naturally reproduce. I am happy to answer any questions and/or provide more detail. Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration of these Public Comments.
David gallop	North Carolina	<p>I have been crabbing in the lower Albemarle sound area for 50 years .My family has worked this same area crabbing for over 100 years.If your proposal for 10 or even 20 bushels of females were to be put into effect, it will destroy the last remaining inshore fishery the state has from top to bottom. In the late 1970s, landings in Pamlico dropped and the majority of full time crabbers in that area started coming to the Albemarle area. Several of us asked our representative , Marc Basnight to petition the legislature for funds, for a full time crab biologist. Not long after ,The position was funded and Lynn Henry filled that position, but was immediately given the job of writing the first management plan for crabs, with very little data or example to go by. He would admit there were a lot of holes in this plan, but even after 30 years, other than a couple of tweaks it remains the same, with the same 120 and 195 data being used. It is basically a fishery management plan using data from nets designed to catch fish. Common sense would tell you that if you want to sample crabs you would use a crab net. Several of us toured the Chesapeake bay sampling program, employing a dredge survey sampling of 1500 sites in the bay through VIM.We tried to get same system in NC to no avail.I know DMF response, is we have to use the best available science but ncdmf data on this management plan for use of a better word sucks. The management plan stinks as well, it should be rewritten top to bottom and should more closely resemble the shrimp management plan. It seems that you want to pattern the reductions on crabbing after the bays program, yet another thing you haven't done is seal the participants. Therefore, there is no fair way to enact amendment 3. Some areas will be devastated others untouched. A one man operation untouched larger operation destroyed. Legally put, it is capricious and arbitrary. We have no way of estimating our spawning stock biomass, but to look at the bay on this one spawning stock is where they want it the last several years, Yet it makes no difference on recruitment and they don't have a clue why. I could continue on but my point is this, for myself and all others, amendment 3 is not an option. Case in point, I am 2 man, 600 pot operation.It takes 20 bushels to cover my expenses every day . I urge the commission to at least table this decision instead of trying to shove it through to meet a deadline. Otherwise, not only will the industry take a mortal wound but any credibility the commission has, is going to take a big hit as well. Crab landings are up several million pounds this year. When you figure out why, please let me know.</p>

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Wesley Potter	North Carolina	I` m disappointed the Marine Fisheries is still pushing for the huge closure of the DORA in western Pamlico Sound. Oystermen still depend on this area. Oysters are plentiful out there this year. Fishermen getting their limit in a few hours. Let us hope commonsense can prevail and the state would be satisfied taking a few acres instead of hundreds. Wes Potter
Susan Kogel	New Jersey	We love NC fish!! Cutting the fisheries will only allow more imports and continuing to dilute the USA fishing industry. I hate imports and don't want them hurting our fishing industry. We need to keep NC fish on our tables. Keep NC fishermen employed.
Paul Beals	North Carolina	<p>My name is Paul Beals, I am a full time commercial fisherman from the Northern region of the state. I work the Alligator River and Eastern end of the Albemarle Sound.</p> <p>My concern is with the proposed regulations for the Blue Crab fishery.</p> <p>Any of the proposed 8 guidelines, and especially the preferred management option submitted by NCDMF are completely untenable.</p> <p>The crabbing industry has zero confidence in the data obtained by the trawl survey in particular. Apparently this is the case for Data Scientists and other Marine Biologists as the 2023 stock assessment failed peer review. This being the case, it would logically lead to the conclusion that the 2018 stock assessment for Blue Crab is flawed also, as it used same methodology and models.</p> <p>Even if we used the 2018 stock assessment, the minimum recommended reduction in landings would have been .4% the preferred option with 10 bushel limit of mature females June-December and no female harvest January- May would, by NCDMF own figures, represent a 25 percent reduction in landings. This is over SIXTY TIMES THE MINIMUM REQUIRED REDUCTION TO END OVERFISHING!</p> <p>If such measures are passed this would be the death blow to our industry.</p> <p>I suggest a stay on new regulations in Blue Crab fishery. Let the measures already implemented in the Adaptive Management Plan work through. On the water we are seeing an increase in crabs as well as landings.</p> <p>There is no proven status of the spawning stock, which throws all modeled data in disarray.</p> <p>We need a dedicated advisory committee for Blue Crab only, consisting of managers, scientists and</p>

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		<p>crabbers. We need no further restrictions until a new and accurate stock status has been completed.</p>
David O'Neal III	North Carolina	<p>My name is David O'Neal III. I am a crabber/commercial fisherman from Wanchese, NC.</p> <p>I submitted written public comment a couple days ago. This is additional public comment on Amendment 3 Blue Crab FMP. I hope you took the time to read the previous comments and will read this as well. There is no way I can say everything I want to in 3 minutes at a meeting.</p> <p>It's February 12, 2025. When I go on the NCDMF website Fishery Management Plans page and click on blue crab, this is the first thing that pops up..... "Results of the 2018 benchmark stock assessment indicate the blue crab stock is overfished and overfishing is occurring. The Amendment 3 adaptive management framework will be used to immediately address the continued declining trends in the blue crab stock. The division plans to develop recommendations that would have resulted in higher harvest reductions with a greater probability of achieving sustainable harvest based on 2018 assessment results and apply them to the current fishery in lieu of an updated stock assessment."</p> <p>The proposed regulations are based on the 2018 stock assessment because DMF decided that the 2023 stock assessment can't be used. The 2018 stock assessment is based on data from years 1995-2016. That is over 9 years old.</p> <p>The DMF's recommended regulations are based on the same stock assessment that 12 new regulations implemented under amendments 2 and 3 were based on and no new stock assessment is being used to determine if those regulations have had any impact on the current stock status.</p> <p>New regulations May of 2016</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Require additional cull ring in the upstairs within one mesh of the corner. -Eliminated harvest of v-apron hard crabs -Prohibited crab dredging -Prohibited harvest of dark sponge crabs in the month of April -Lowered the cull tolerance from 10% to 5%

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		<p>New regulations February 2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Extended pot and crab harvest closure period. -Implemented 5” minimum size for mature females. -Removed all cull ring exempted areas. -Revised/expanded crab spawning sanctuaries. -Prohibited crab trawling in areas closed to shrimp trawls. -Reduced crab bycatch allowance in the oyster dredge fishery. -Established Diamondback Terrapin Management Areas. <p>We have been fishing under these new regulations that were supposed to improve the stock status according to DMF data but we are going to have more regulations forced on this fishery while DMF has failed to follow the adaptive management framework and provide an updated stock assessment.</p> <p>DMF is telling you that the stock assessment is still showing that Blue Crabs are overfished overfishing is occurring. Why would anyone expect the 2018 stock assessment to show anything different than it did in 2018?</p> <p>Using a seven year old stock assessment based on nine year old data, that was done before any of the current regulations were implemented, to force more draconian regulations on us is preposterous.</p> <p>DMF constantly pats themselves on the back about how accurate and up to date their data is. Someone might want to let them know that it's 2025.</p> <p>Thanks, David O'Neal III</p>
Vaughny waterfield	North Carolina	My comment is for the blue crab topic. I would really like to know where yall get yalls data from its outrageous. These so called biologist yall have do not know nothing. You can't put college kids that don't

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		<p>know anything about commercial fishing into a boat and have them pull a little net behind them and are out there but for a hour tops and dont catch nothing and go off there data. Also the data yall are going off of are you even considering how many less crabbers it is. When I first started on my own i remember it being 12 of us at the ramp i use now we're down to 4.. also water quality, are water quality sucks badly in the albmarle sound I'm sure yall have heard of what we call dead water. Do yall count the crabs that die in the pots from the lack of oxygen i could go on and on but I wanted yall to hear my opinion iv always never said much but I'm ganna voice my opinion this is my living and yall are taking it away from me and this is all I know. Yall already took herring and rock which will never see again now crabs it's crazy</p>
Dennis Cox	North Carolina	<p>My name Dennis Cox commercial fishermen over 30 years,I'm so lost for what the DMF has become as an organization your data is outdated every fish crabs shrimp is overfished according to y'all's data,I'm trying to understand why it takes 250 employees to figure out how clueless DMF has become you don't hire college students to determine the fate of people livelihood.</p>
Robin Grossman	Rhode Island	<p>I support management of false albacore in North Carolina, and in every other coastal state, because we owe it to future generations to enjoy the wonderful adventure that they provide. There are few gamefish in the world, that pound for pound provide their fight. We are experiencing reduced catches of all of the Atlantic coastal species, stripers, blues, bonito and false albacore, WE MUST ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY TO PROVIDE FOR THE FUTURE OF OUR SPORT, AND THE FUTURE OF THE COASTAL ENVIRONMENT.</p>
Albert Mason	Massachusetts	<p>I would like to thank the N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission for considering regulation of the false albacore fishery with an eye towards insuring the maintenance of a healthy sustainable population of this wonderful fish. As a recreational fisherman in Massachusetts that targets this species in the waters of New England from shore and hiring a guide, I am encouraged by your consideration of reasonable regulation of this species.</p> <p>Thank you!</p>
Albert Daddario	Massachusetts	<p>Please do whatever you can to save and protect this valuable game fish!!</p> <p>Thank you</p>

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Todd Treonze	Rhode Island	<p>I am an avid east coast fisherman, residing in RI but I spend a week each fall fishing out of the beautiful Harkers / Beaufort area. NC has one of the best fisheries in the entire country. First of all I want to thank the state of North Carolina for taking the lead in albie management. Based on NC's leading edge position other Northern states are now utilizing their rule-making processes to establish albie regulations. I have personally see that commercial and bait fisheries exist for this species, and these fisheries may be expanding without functional guardrails and monitoring. The proposed regulations are not designed to limit anyone's usage of the resource but rather conserve this economically critical fish and provide long-term opportunities for all. False albacore are a tremendously important recreational fish species for anglers and fishing-related businesses from Massachusetts to Florida. Albies represent a unique opportunity for charter captains as they come in very tight to shore and provide the thrill of catching a pelagic species. Guides plan for and book up months in advance as an abundant Albie population has created an immense revenue opportunity not only for the charter captains but for the state and all the northern fisherman that are pulled down that way. I believe strongly that false albacore deserve guardrail management at a minimum. This species drives a large economy from Florida to New England. I believe strongly in the importance of this fish to anglers up and down the coast and that putting some guardrails in place to ensure the fishery's abundance moving forward is critical. While there is little scientific information on this species at this time, ASGA is thrilled to be conducting a false albacore acoustic tagging study in Massachusetts waters with several key partners—we hope that this information can be used by fishery managers to better understand the species and encourage precautionary management for this hugely important recreational species. Thank you for your consideration!</p>
David Nguyen	Connecticut	<p>Dear N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission,</p> <p>Thank you for considering my comment and taking the lead on false albacore management. As a recreational fly angler from CT, late summer and early fall is a very exciting time for me as this is when albies and bonito come to our waters. I believe that these species are worthy of our attention and management so that all coastal states can continue to fish for these amazing fish for generations to come. As a member of Connecticut Surfcasters Association, I take pride and targeting fish from the shore. Targeting fish from shore is only viable if there are an abundance of fish in the ocean and proper</p>

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		<p>management is the best way to achieve abundance in my opinion.</p> <p>Thank you, David Nguyen Connecticut Surfcasters Association Member</p>
Edmund brodie	Virginia	<p>As a biologist and sports fisher, I'm pleased to see NC lead on precautionary regulation before a stock crisis exists. From a biological perspective it is becoming clear the false albacore are a connected population throughout the Atlantic so every local action matters. From an economic perspective I am in of many sportsmen who come from out of state (including my partners from FL, TX, and Canada) to fish for albies 5-6 times every year. Please continue to protect this critical marine resource for the future</p>
Mike Holliday	Florida	<p>Please make every effort to protect the little tunny (false albacore) fishery. As a Florida fishing guide I make a lot of money off this resource and release all my fish. I travel with friends to Moorehead City and Martha's Vineyard every fall to fly fish albies, and see how important this resource is to those sate's economies. Thank you for your time and efforts.</p>
Dave Altrich	Massachusetts	<p>False Albacore are one of the best inshore game fish the northeast has. They deserve game fish catch and release status. That is the best solution for the long term survival of the species and local industries that rely on them.</p> <p>Best, Capt. Dave Altrich</p>
Bob Lewis	Massachusetts	<p>Although I live on Cape Cod, MA I have been traveling to NC for over a decade to fly fish for false albacore. I spend money on flights, hotels, restaurants, local fly shops, retail stores, fly fishing guides, rental cars, gas stations, etc I also traveled to West Palm, FL in the past and Captain Scott Hamilton is a fly fishing only guide that specializes in false albacore. He reports that fishery is getting wiped out by commercial fishing. I do not travel there anymore and therefore I don't spend money on flights, hotels, restaurants, local fly shops, retail stores, fly fishing guides, rental cars, gas stations, etc</p>

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Cameron Siegal	Massachusetts	I support bonito and false albacore management so that my children and their children will have access to this fishery.
Douglas Snow	Rhode Island	The small tuna are a major reason I fish along the New England coast. When commercial fishing operations use large nets to wipe out entire schools, it can take years for the population to recover, and sometimes they never return to our waters. Sport fishing contributes far more to the economy through equipment, charters, and services compared to the commercial sale of these tuna, which are often sold for pennies on the dollar—essentially becoming cat food or fertilizer. I've come across massive schools of dead tuna left behind when market prices drop so low that it's not even profitable to bring them in for processing.
Randolph Smith	Georgia	<p>having been a saltwater fishing guide in south Florida for over 54 years , I must tell you that the little tunny population there has already severely declined.</p> <p>That being said, I am now retired in north Georgia and fishing both North and South Carolina regularly. One of my favorite target species is little tunny.</p> <p>Please take action to protect this great gamefish and major forage of many major game fish</p>
Keith Goodman	Florida	<p>Dear Sirs,</p> <p>I will simply state that to the experienced eye, it is obvious our false albacore fishery is in serious decline. Please recognize the value of this critical link in the food chain as a “canary in our coal mine”. The time to change the direction of these stocks is now!</p> <p>Thank you for your consideration, do it for OUR grandkids,</p> <p>Keith Goodman</p>
Peter Bartley	New York	Yes it's about False Albacore here (and other species up and down the coast) but consider your are managing a resource (in a 500 channel, Instagram, Tick Toc world) that provides a reason/motivation for people (many of them young) to spend some time in nature. Proven to provide direct benefit their overall health well being. So if you add health and well being even for one person you are managing an important resource here. That often seems lost when managing/measuring things based on recreational spend, food, fuel, lodging, commercial quotas etc. It would be reasonable to say time spent in nature also plays

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		a role in how we look at the world and that to a degree shapes our character. That's what you have in your hands when you are making management decisions.
Arthur Romaine	New York	<p>The Proposed Rule (15A NCAC 03M .0523) would establish precautionary management for false albacore should the total harvest reach a concerning level. Those levels are now approaching.</p> <p>I live near Montauk NY and along with almost every recreational saltwater angler and responsible commercial fisherman I know we support this proposed regulations. The proposed regulations are not designed to limit anyone's usage of the resource but rather conserve this economically critical fish and provide long-term opportunities for all sectors.</p> <p>I applaud North Carolina for taking the lead in albie management as other states are now considering management for False Albacore and Bonito. The science shows this to be a connected coastal stock, which heightens the importance of management.</p> <p>Please vote in favor of the Proposed Rule 15A NCAC 03M .0523.</p> <p>Thank you</p>
Eric Spicer	Rhode Island	<p>This comment is in reference to 15A NCAC 03M.053 for False Albacore Management</p> <p>I support false albacore management.</p> <p>Thank you to North Carolina for leading the way in protecting a fish that I love and an important piece of the recreational economy here in RI.</p>
Christian Finn	North Carolina	<p>Commercial and bait fisheries exist for this species, and anecdotal reports indicate these fisheries may be expanding without functional guardrails and monitoring. The proposed regulations are not designed to limit anyone's usage of the resource but rather conserve this economically critical fish and provide long-term opportunities for all sectors. Please protect this valuable resource we are so lucky to have.</p>
Joseph Hamilton Evans	Maryland	<p>I'm writing in favor of establishing a false albacore management plan with the goal of sustaining and enhancing the stock. They are hardly edible, but a great sporting asset.</p>
Greg Koch	New Jersey	<p>I would like to thank the state of North Carolina for taking the lead on albie management. I understand the need for concurrent commercial and bait fisheries for albies but considering the recreational and</p>

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		<p>economic benefits that trickle through the whole economic landscape locally, management of this important fishery should be made with all of sectors that pursue false albacore in mind, not just commercial interests. It is after all one connected coast and we all have a right to enjoy this fishery. Again – thank you for your time, efforts, and I applaud your foresight in undertaking this endeavor. I will happily be coming down to spend my money in your fine state to pursue this wonderful fishery.</p> <p>Kind regards, Greg Koch</p>
Christopher T Chan	Massachusetts	<p>My name is Chris Chan. I am an avid saltwater recreational catch and release fly angler and moor a boat on the Westport River in southeastern Massachusetts. I am interested in False Albacore and other recreational fish management. Thank you for providing this opportunity to comment.</p> <p>I support false albacore management in North Carolina. We don't want has happened to Striped Bass happen to Albies. Pressure on Albies will be even greater as the Striped Bass stock continues to dwindle from over harvesting, habitat degradation and lack of competent management. We don't want that to happen to Albies too.</p> <p>Again, thank you for the opportunity to comment. I applaud the NCMFC for having the foresight to consider this step and urge you to act and take measures necessary to preserve healthy, abundant, future populations of False Albacore for everyone.</p>
Brian Donahue	Massachusetts	<p>NC Marine Fisheries is taking important and needed steps to monitor and manage the False Albacore fishery.</p> <p>The economic benefits of protecting False Albacore impacts anglers, guides, and related retail businesses from North Carolina to Massachusetts. I fully support your proposed regulatory actions on False Albacore.</p>
Edward A. Harrington	New York	<p>I fish 30+ days for albies and bonito in NY, RI and CT waters every year. This is an economic benefit to the region. I have noticed a decline in numbers in the last 3 years. Once abundant, their showings have become sporadic. I fully support bonit and false albacore management legislation in North Carolina. Both species are one migratory body (each) so that regulationin North Carolina will help all up and down the</p>

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		east coast! Science supports this via recent tracking. We need more data and harvest limits NOW! If y'all start it, other states will hopefully follow suit. Thank you very much!
Todd Kunst	North Carolina	I support false albacore management in North Carolina. Please protect this fishery from falling into the same category with others that have not been properly managed and have fallen to a critically low population sixh as flounder and redfish.
Leslie Miller	Virginia	I applaud the state of North Carolina for your efforts to make sure that the population of false albacore remain healthy and abundant. I have been traveling each fall with a group of fishing friends to the Cape Lookout area for the last dozen years or so. The only reason we make this trip is to fish for albies. We catch and release, only taking pictures and memories. I hope to introduce my 12 year old grandson to the thrill of Albie fishing this year. Thank you again for your efforts.
Thorne Sparkman	Rhode Island	<p>I support the Proposed Rule (15A NCAC 03M .0523) would establish precautionary management for albies should total harvest reach a concerning level.</p> <p>It is a precious resource we share.</p> <p>Thorne</p>
Bernard Hamill	Florida	Albies should have a catch limit of 10 person and 25 per charter boat. All should be catch and release as they are inedible. Stop the commercial industry catch 100's per boat every day here in FL.
James Browne	Maine	I'm a charter Captain from southern Maine. Although we don't get false albacore here, I spend the later part of my guide season (September/October) doing catch and release False Albacore charters in Massachusetts. This is an important part of my business, and a fishery that many of us in the northeast truly enjoy being a part of. Especially over the last few years we have seen more and more of these almost factory fishing operations to harvest albies (and everything else). Generally a 20-30' boat with some type of cabin followed by multiple skiffs and jet skis working with it. I've witnessed them destroying large schools of false albacore to good effect. It's the kind of operation that is entirely unsustainable, and we

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		need regulations to stop that. I hope that North Carolina can be a leader in managing this fishery for an abundant future, and set a good example for the other states to follow.
Michael Ozkaya	New York	I support false albacore management in North Carolina.
Jared Tausig	Massachusetts	<p>I support False Albacore management in North Carolina, and in fact, along the entire East Coast of the US.</p> <p>Thank you for your consideration.</p>
Kelly E Maxwell	North Carolina	<p>Why are you closing mechanical harvest for clams with only 2-3 participants left in the state? I worked on clam dredges for years and every year the clamming was good in the 2 year rotation areas. This is a proven fact, from those with experience and from the catches. Anyone who has worked on dredges and kick boats knows the clams come back. Every time, barring a disastrous rainfall in the brackish rivers and creeks, which has nothing to do with the harvest methods.</p> <p>If you would observe the way a dredge churns up the dead bottom and shell you will see how it helps the bottom by giving spats something to adhere to and bury up for protection from predators, some of which, from overprotection, i.e. red drum, black drum, crabs, etc. take a tremendous toll on clams. Your reasoning makes no sense.</p> <p>When are you going to make the catch/release joke for trout known? I have seen dead spike trout by the hundreds in the heavily fished areas , that being the hook and line fisheries, from the catch and release fiasco you have the public believing. More crap.</p> <p>There cannot be any science behind the mullet closures. There are as many or more mullet than there were 30+ years ago. There are nowhere near the participants in the mullet fishery as there were, and yet you still scream for reductions. Same with flounder and shrimp.</p> <p>You need to clean out your CCA buddies from the commission, get rid of the bs and use the science gained by years of study , years of observation by fishermen and paid observers , number of trips , number of participants, the other controlling factors for different fisheries such as prices, weather, etc. Ncdmf is a sad joke and the shame of the country.</p> <p>The CCA and special interest groups control your decisions, it is sickening.</p>

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		<p>Get rid of the political influences and special interest groups and make North Carolina a top producer of real, quality seafood for the consumers again.</p> <p>If not, I hope you all enjoy your imported, drugged up , diseased, and stinking overpriced, farm raised,so called seafood.</p> <p>Quit worrying about what the governor and the CCA brainwashed public think and do what is right.</p>
Steven Hess	North Carolina	I strongly urge the Commission to endorse and approve full and proper fishery management programs for False Albacore and Bonito, owing to their critical ecologic and economic value. It is the right thing to do!
Woodrow Albin	Rhode Island	We applaud North Carolina for taking the lead in Albie management as other states are now considering management for False Albacore and Bonito. The science shows this to be a connected coastal stock, which heightens the importance of management. The proposed regulations are not designed to limit anyone's usage of the resource but rather conserve this economically critical fish and provide long-term opportunities for all sectors.
Jeff Salzman	Massachusetts	Here in MA we have an amazing fishery for a variety of species and Albies are one of the most fun and most anticipated run of the season. It gives us added length to our seasons and really seal the deal on an amazing fall run. Please, we need to protect all of these amazing fish.
Will Anders	North Carolina	I am grateful that the MFC has approved a guardrail management plan for false albacore, which I think is a great step but also a very small baby step towards what the rules should be. This is the perfect species to conserve - they are very fun to catch, don't require long trips or big boats, and they have basically zero value as table fare, so why would we let folks take them? We've seen so many stocks decline due to poor management, but at least with most of those there was a reason to take the fish (they taste good whereas false albacore are notoriously inedible) and relatively less recreational excitement (would you rather catch a spot or a false albacore?) which also translates to guided trip activity. I am grateful that we've agreed to have some level of management for false albacore, but I also think we should meaningfully enhance the rules in the future to conserve this critical species. I support false albacore management in North Carolina!

Name	State/Province	Comments
Darryl Forrester	Rhode Island	<p>As a former resident and recreational fisherman, I support false albacore management in North Carolina, as well as in every coastal state. These fish are migratory, so it affects very coastal community from Florida to Massachusetts.</p> <p>Please pass the following: 15A NCAC 03M.053 for False Albacore Management”.</p> <p>Thank you, Darryl Forrester</p>
Stephen Barone	Massachusetts	<p>I support false albacore management in North Carolina, and elsewhere along the Atlantic coast. Data shows that false albacore (aka albies) can travel incredible distances within a year, which means the fish we have here in Massachusetts in the Fall are likely the same fish that frequent NC waters. I see the immense economical and recreational impact that these fish have on Cape Cod in Massachusetts, and I know of the important impact they have on Harker's Island and other areas in NC. I fully support all of the science based management we can get in NC.</p>
Anthony Sawyer	North Carolina	<p>I'm a commercial fisherman originally from Hyde County. Currently live in Beaufort County. I've been in the business since 1992. I've seen many changes good and bad. To say the DMF has ruined the oyster industry in North Carolina is an understatement. Also there is no viable data to say the blue crab stocks are being overfished.</p>
William Conrad	Pennsylvania	<p>Dear Commissioners,</p> <p>I am writing today in support of Option 3 for the False Albacore harvest. It is imperative that we establish harvest guidelines that assure the health of the False Albacore population before they experience excessive declines. The commercial harvest is growing rapidly and we need to put reasonable guidelines in place to protect this valuable natural resource.</p> <p>Thank you for your consideration, William Conrad</p>
Joe Tunstall	North Carolina	<p>These fish have become a top, across the board accessible key component to our fall fishery. They are a top recreational small, challenging game fish. They are key to fall season guiding/charter</p>

Name	State/Province	Comments
		<p>species. I'd say a good 1/3 of my yearly income comes from these fish. With many of the clients and rec anglers coming in from out of state.</p> <p>Please don't wait till this fishery becomes a critical management species requiring overly restrictive and drastic measures to manage them effectively and efficiently. Take some recommend steps now please to protect the species.</p>
Jeff Minderlein	Maryland	I support the Albie and you should too! Whatever Tony and the ASGS crew are for is the right thing to do to protect this fishery.
David Prockop	Rhode Island	<p>As a recreational fisherman living in Rhode Island, I spend all year looking forward to our albie season, which is brief and inconsistent. As the time approaches, guides are booked and tackle shops in Rhode Island sell out of albie lures as our anticipation builds. This is a focal point of the year for many of us. We also know that your albie season in North Carolina is much heavier and more reliable than ours. I greatly enjoy traveling to your state to chase albies in November. The huge convergence of fishermen is an obvious boon to the local economy in the area around Morehead City.</p> <p>I therefore thank you for taking the lead to preserve the abundance of false albacore. We have all learned through bitter experience with other species such as striped bass that a population can take a long time to rebuild if it becomes depleted. I urge you to take the longest-term view possible and pass measures that will keep the albie population strong, despite its enormous popularity with recreational fishermen.</p>
George McAuliffe	New York	<p>Hi -</p> <p>Regarding -- 15A NCAC 03M.053 for False Albacore Management</p> <p>False albacore are an economically important sport fishery, and science has shown they are highly migratory along the whole Atlantic coast. What happens in one State affects all. I believe this species is worthy of at least some sort of precautionary management at this point in time.</p> <p>Thank you for the opportunity to comment.</p>
Samuel Kilpatrick	New York	I support false albacore management in North Carolina. I have spent many years vacationing at my families cottage in Topsail Beach. I am appalled by the amount of development along the NC coast

Name	State/Province	Comments
		further straining the fragile coastal ecosystem. Regulations for commercial fishing have been exceptionally important for the environment, and local economies.
Thomas Fuda	Connecticut	I support the adoption of precautionary management measures for false albacore in North Carolina. Tagging studies have shown these fish migrate up and down the east coast. This is an extremely important and valuable species for the recreational angler, especially given the fact that many other recreationally targeted species that share the same inshore waters are currently overfished and / or experiencing overfishing. The primary value of the false albacore is as a sport fish, rather than a food fish. Like tarpon or bonefish, are worth far more alive than dead. North Carolina should lead the way in establishing at least some precautionary management of this species to ensure that harvest of this species doesn't increase significantly.
Tony Rhodes	North Carolina	This sounds like another typical mess by DMF. Why not take away all the oyster pots up in the bays that are changing the natural habitat?
Jay Foss	Rhode Island	I support false albacore management in North Carolina, it is a fish I look forward to seeing every year, my life is centered around this species
Abram Pearson	Maine	I strongly support implementing management rules for false albacore to make sure the species stays abundant. I know we need more research on how best to do that but it's good to start talking about it. Thank you for beginning this process. I hope that other Atlantic states will follow suit.
Robert Corrado	New Jersey	There has been a sharp decline in Albie population fishing the Jersey shore last several years
Philip Kinder	South Carolina	I support false albacore management in N.C.
Parker Corbin	Connecticut	15A NCAC 03M.053 for False Albacore Management Dear NCFMC, I support false albacore management in North Carolina. I am a life long angler of False Albacore in the

Name	State/Province	Comments
		<p>Northeast and applaud your leadership efforts to recognize the coast wide connectivity of this species with sound scientific backed management. The abundance of the this species is important for both the shear joy it brings anglers and the economic benefit down the coast.</p> <p>Thank you for being a leader to put in guardrail regulation to protect the species. I have loved chasing them with my father and I do it now with my three daughters (15, 13 and 10). All of us love feeling the power and speed of this ocean while fishing in shore. It is a great lesson of evolution and interconnectivity.</p> <p>-Parker Corbin</p> <p>ASGA member</p>
Charles Newton	Florida	<p>With the popularity of fishing and the coastal human population growing exponentially I would suggest fish commissions discuss size and length limits on every fish population (with Biologist input). Because as fishermen if we decimate one population we will just move onto the next until it is decimated, who would have thought that Barracuda and Bluefish would have ever have limits.</p> <p>Please be proactive, not reactive after the resource has collapsed.</p> <p>Thanks</p>
Val Kropiwnicki	Connecticut	<p>I would like to start by saying that I support false albacore management in North Carolina, and 15A NCAC 03M.053 for False Albacore Management. Being that the ocean I fish, and the migratory fish I target are directly connected to the North Carolina biomass and the harvesting regulations employed up and down the East Coast, I believe that it is ultimately important the at all states work together to make sure that these fish prosper and continue their seasonal migrations for future generations to enjoy.</p>
Bryan Kappenberg	New York	<p>Commissioners:</p> <p>Thank you for working in stewardship of our resources.</p>

Name	State/Province	Comments
		<p>I am a recreational fisherman, weekend warrior, out of Eastern Long Island, NY. My range includes Eastern Long Island Sound, Block Island Sound, and the Atlantic from Shinnecock to Montauk.</p> <p>I have much respect for False Albacore and love pursuing them.</p> <p>In 2025 I made six (6) specific Albie trips on my scout center console, ran approximately 40 hours total over eight (8) weeks. In +/-15 years this was the first year I was unsuccessful with zero catches and zero sightings.</p> <p>This year raised my curiosity on their status.</p> <p>I'm sure there are many interests to weigh in and your work is important to all of them.</p> <p>False Albacore are worthy of Management!!</p> <p>Appreciate your time,</p> <p>Bryan Kappenberg Laurel, NY [REDACTED]</p>
Jake Naso-Kushner	Rhode Island	<p>Dear Commission Members,</p> <p>I am an avid surfcaster from Rhode Island. False Albacore is an important gamefish to the surfcasting community and a species that needs further study and protection. I urge the commission to pass and implement Proposed Rule (15A NCAC 03M .0523).</p> <p>Regards, Jake A. Naso-Kushner</p>

Name	State/Province	Comments
Chris Arfsten	New York	<p>I commend you on your concerns regarding the little tunny fishery. Up and down the east coast recreational fishermen and women enjoy the experience of hooking up with one of these fish. With the striped bass and bluefish fishery being over-fished, little tunny provides a great alternative to our fall fishing on Long Island. While there's no evidence that the little tunny fishery is in trouble, It's a great idea to put some guide lines in place to protect this great resource if restrictions needed to be put in place.</p>
Joe Romano	North Carolina	<p>February 14, 2025</p> <p>Dear Marine Fisheries Commissioners,</p> <p>Introduction</p> <p>My name is Joe Romano—I am a commercial fisherman and co-owner of Seaview Crab Company in Wilmington. We employ over 70 people and engage in crabbing, gill netting, and shellfish farming while sourcing seafood from fishermen and fish houses up and down the coast.</p> <p>Concerns About Regulatory Overreach</p> <p>It is clear that many decisions are made before these meetings begin, reducing discussions to mere trade-offs. I urge you to reject the recommendations of an underfunded, reactionary bureaucracy reliant on flawed stock assessments that fail peer review. This scarcity-driven, data-poor mindset leads to excessive, knee-jerk regulations masquerading as “adaptive management.” From my perspective as a seafood consumer, commercial fishermen, and coastal business owner any new regulations that tighten down on seafood production or the recreational fishing economy should be voted down. The past 4 years of persistent new “emergency” regulations comes at a time when the NCDMF is being sued by one of the most well-funded, nefarious menaces to American seafood production: the CCA. This organization pits fisherman against fisherman in a zero-sum game that aims to put the CCA agenda over North Carolina seafood production and seafood consumers.</p> <p>Over the past 12 years, I have seen many fishermen disengage from this process due to a lack of advocacy and fair representation. The Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF) has gradually taken control of</p>

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		<p>stakeholder-driven debates, pushing proposals that require supermajority votes to overturn. This unchecked bureaucratic power is damaging the seafood economy and recreational fishing businesses.</p> <p>Flounder Quota Reallocation – Vote Against</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The stock assessment is incomplete, failed peer review, and contradicts first-hand experience. • Reducing commercial allocation will not resolve the issue of severe harvest reductions. • Increasing recreational harvest without overall quota expansion will further limit mobile gear use and increase recreational discards. Don't negotiate severely flawed regulation! • The quota system for a fast-growing, high-fecundity species has caused unintended consequences, including regulatory confusion, a bottom dollar flounder market, a closed recreational flounder season and increased stakeholder conflict. This is the real issue! <p>Speckled Trout Regulation – Vote Against</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No supporting data justifies additional regulation. • Increased restrictions will create unnecessary complexity and fuel conflicts between commercial and recreational fishermen. • Proposed slot limits will lead to more dead discards, harming the fishery overall. <p>Elimination of Hydraulic Clam Conveying – Vote Against</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This proposal was introduced without consulting affected fishermen. Pathetic! • It directly affects how we harvest clams in our deep-water clam garden. One of the affected fishermen works in our garden after the public area closes. He has told us he will sell his gear and quit the fishery if this is shut down. • This highly specialized fishery helps balance out clam harvest. Deep water clamming takes pressure off shallow water clamming. Same story, different fishery, regulation squeezes one fishery and puts pressure on another!

Name	State/Province	Comments
		<p>Eliminating Oyster Dredging – Vote Against</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bottom disturbance fosters new oyster growth, as observed by dredgers for decades. If the DMF had any curiosity and appreciation for science, seafood, and fisherman they would study this to learn what is the best way to maintain and bring back oyster reefs! • Virginia & Maryland have sustainable oyster dredging industries? Why is NC different? • Removing this fishery will shift pressure onto marsh-grown oysters. Same story! <p>Blue Crab Regulation Proposals – Vote Against</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The stock assessment failed peer review, making it unreliable for rulemaking. • Preliminary Research and consultation with NC Crabbers and Duke Graduate students indicate that increasing predator abundance (catfish, drum, flounder, striped bass, rays, etc.) is significantly affecting crab populations, yet these factors are ignored. As has been the case for decades: Fisherman are scape goated by the DMF because the DMF does not have the models or data to measure the true predictors of abundance in high fecundity species: Predators, Water Quality, and Climate Change. • The specifics of the DMF proposals are tone deaf and clearly not in line with the experience of crabbers and the crabbing industry in NC. I am sure you will hear this echoed from crabbers up and down the coast. <p>Call for Balanced Fisheries Management</p> <p>The DMF must focus on supporting fishing communities and coastal economies rather than merely dividing up perceived scarcity. Over-regulation gentrifies seafood access, intensifies stakeholder conflicts, and threatens our industry’s future. We must prioritize sustainable, data-driven policies that protect both fishermen and consumers.</p> <p>I urge you to scrutinize these regulatory proposals and stand against measures that harm North Carolina</p>

Name	State/Province	Comments
		<p>Seafood and coastal businesses of all stripes!</p> <p>Sincerely, Joe Romano Seaview Crab Company</p>
Darin Burbrink	Virginia	Please protect our amazing fisheries for all to enjoy.
Will Brown	North Carolina	I support false albacore management.
Brian Brazeau	North Carolina	I am writing in support of adopting the proposed rules for guard rail protection for False Albacore (15A NCAC 03M .0523 – False Albacore Management). False Albacore are important to me, and important to NC, and therefore protecting them is a smart move.
Kevin Fuller	Texas	For the last three years I've gone to Morehead City NC to go Albie fishing with a fly rod. After the first year I've been bringing my buddies from Texas with me to get in on the adventure of chasing Albie's with a fly rod. When we come we drop lots of cash in North Carolina. Please adopt the proposed rules for guard rail protection for False Albacore (15A NCAC 03M .0523 – False Albacore Management) and keep your Albies swimming and the cash flowing into NC from folks like me.
Eric Forslin	North Carolina	I am writing from Durham, NC to confirm my support for adopting the proposed rules for guard rail protection for False Albacore (15A NCAC 03M .0523 – False Albacore Management). Thank you for acting to protect this important species.
Jeff Aycock	North Carolina	Please enact this basic guardrail management! Too many fisheries across the US are in a status that can not biologically be supported long term. Please make sure that false albacore do not become one of them!
Ben Huey	North Carolina	I am in support of adopting the proposed rules for guard rail protection for False Albacore (15A NCAC 03M .0523 – False Albacore Management). False Albacore are important to you, and important to NC, and therefore protecting them is a smart move.

Name	State/Province	Comments
		<p>Thanks</p> <p>Ben Huey</p>
Allen Peterson	North Carolina	I am an avid Albacore fly fisherman. I am strongly in favor of regulations that will protect this species so that they thrive in the future.
Stephen Gillis	North Carolina	False Albacore are important to me, and important to NC, and deserve protection.
Scott W. Lisson	North Carolina	I am in support of adopting the proposed rules for guard rail protection for False Albacore (15A NCAC 03M .0523 – False Albacore Management). False Albacore are important to me, and important to NC, and therefore protecting them is a smart move.
Matthew Hamilton	Maryland	I am a recreational angler who has traveled to the Harker's Island area to fish for false albacore. I support false albacore management in North Carolina under "15A NCAC 03M.053 for False Albacore Management". North Carolina can enhance the sustainability of this fishery and provide leadership for other mid-Atlantic states to follow suit.
Randy Blakeman	New York	I have had the opportunity to fish for Albies a few times in the past years. This fish is nothing short of exciting. Albies deserve our care to insure it is around for future anglers to enjoy.
Mark Stempel	Ohio	I'm in support of Guard rail rules protecting false Albacore
Michael Ferraro	Pennsylvania	I believe that False Albacore should be a game fish with harvesting and possession limits. Thank you.
Greg Hurt	North Carolina	Please do the right thing and put the guard rail policies in place to protect Albies in NC. This is something that does not adversely affect any user group but protects a species that has tremendous value (pleasure and economic) to the state in the Fall season.

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Dan Benfield	North Carolina	I support the passage of the “guard rail “ regulations to protect the False albacore population. It is an important fishery that needs to have protection. Thank you.
John S. Taylor	North Carolina	I am a registered North Carolinian holding a Lifetime Unified Inland/Coastal Recreational Fishing License since 12/10/2005. I strongly support 15A NCAC 03M .0523 - False Albacore Management. This species is a magnificent creation of nature as much as it is an awesome light tackle sport fish. I urge you to protect their unwavering abundance along our North Carolina shores throughout their seasonal migrations. Thank you. Stafford Taylor
Brian Sittlow	Rhode Island	<p>I support false albacore management in North Carolina. Reference: 15A NCAC 03M.053 for False Albacore Management.</p> <p>-Thanks to North Carolina for taking the lead on albie management! Hopefully, this will inspire CT, RI and MA (my home waters) to invoke similar management practices.</p> <p>-Management for abundance will help conserve this economically critical fish and provide long-term opportunities for all sectors. False albacore are a tremendously important recreational fish species for anglers and fishing-related businesses from Massachusetts to Florida.</p> <p>-Putting management guardrails in place to ensure the fishery’s abundance moving forward is critical.</p> <p>All the best, Brian Sittlow Westerly, RI Captain, US Navy retired</p> <p>I support: American Saltwater Guides Association The Conservation Angler</p>

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		<p>Wild Steelhead Coalition Wild Salmon Center Skeena Wild</p>
Justin Cordonnier	Massachusetts	<p>Hi, I support false albacore management in North Carolina, and I appreciate North Carolina taking the lead in management of the species. The proposed regulations are not meant to limit anybody's usage of the resource, but instead conserve long-term opportunities for all. In light of declines to the striped bass stock, the false albacore fishery has become even more important to fishing guides up and down the Atlantic Coast, as well as recreational anglers (I'm a recreational angler). Overall, there is a need for guard rail management of false albacore. Thank you for your consideration.</p>
Adrián Farmer	Colorado	<p>As a graduate of NC State and a sports fisherman that visits and spends money in NC every year, I support sideboards on overfishing false albacore, a unique sport fishery.</p>
Bob Dean	North Carolina	<p>I support guard rail rules to help protect and manage false albacore.</p>
Christopher Aiken	New Hampshire	<p>I love fly fishing for False Albacore. Massachusetts in the fall has my wallet's full attention much to my wife's shagrin. Thank you for taking steps to help in their preservation.</p>
Dr. Michael J. Williams	Massachusetts	<p>I support false albacore management in North Carolina. It is a valuable sport fishery and deserves to be managed.</p>
Paul. Davis	Florida	<p>I support false albacore management in North Carolina. These fantastic sporting fish need your help, thank you for your consideration.</p>
Tom Houde	Rhode Island	<p>I would like to thank the fisheries managers of North Carolina for the opportunity to comment. I'm a recreational anglers in RI that shares a passion for catching and releasing False Albacore responsibly. I support False Albacore management in North Carolina, rule making reference number: 15A NCAC 03M.053.</p>

Name	State/Province	Comments
		<p>Thank you North Carolina for taking the lead with Albie management. Other states are now following the lead of NC using your rule making processes to establish Albie regulations.</p> <p>Lean in and press on!</p> <p>Respectfully, Tom Houde</p>
Edward Redman	North Carolina	<p>I support false albacore management in North Carolina. I started fly fishing for False Albacore in 2000 in at Cape Hatteras . I found out in 2018 I could find them at Holden Beach and have been fishing there. Please support this great fishery.</p> <p>Thank you, Ed Redman. Morganton, NC28655</p>
Mark Eustis	Maryland	<p>To the management team:</p> <p>I travel to North Carolina regularly to fish for false albacore. I rent lodging, hire guides, and spend money in the local economy. Careful management of the false albacore population is essential to the long-term abundance and healthy population of these excellent sportfish. I support the effort to establish precautionary measures to manage false albacore. This is for my own benefit, for future generations, and the local economy in North Carolina. Thank you for your consideration.</p>
Tom Prusak	Pennsylvania	<p>To: North Carolina DEQ From: Tom Prusak [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]</p> <p>I am writing to lend my full support to protect and conserve False Albacore recreational fishing in North Carolina. From my home in Pennsylvania I have made many fall trips to Harper’s Island, NC to fly fish for</p>

Name	State/Province	Comments
		<p>albies. My latest trip, October 2024, was once again an amazing trip to catch an incredible sport fish. I have fished for albies all along the eastern coast, catch and release only, and nothing in my experience matches the quality of the North Carolina fishery. Please ensure that the proper steps are taken to ensure current and future generations of False Albacore fisherman can pursue this fantastic inshore sport fish.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p>Tom Prusak</p>
William LeVeen	North Carolina	Re evaluation on the spotted sea trout. We the commercial fisherman need the trout to make a living.
Clint Belangia	North Carolina	I'm a commercial fisherman from Pamlico county, North Carolina. My income is 100 per cent derived from the harvest of oysters, blue crabs and fish. Spotted sea trout and flounder especially. I believe in conservation but this is just simply over regulating. It seems all y'all do is take and take some more. Let's get back to putting hard working, tax paying, American commercial fishermen first.
Morton Gaskill	North Carolina	<p>I would like to preface my public comment by saying that I am opposed to yet another attempt by the state to deny the public access to one fishery after another. I am also opposed to a management strategy that disproportionately impacts the commercial sector with a 38.3% reduction while the recreational reduction is on 26%. In the last half decade speckled trout have become both more plentiful and larger than lifelong fishermen had seen in many years. Of course, landings are up if there's more fish and bigger fish. I do not understand how more is not more in the context of fisheries management. Prior to 2019 there was very little in the way of a speckled trout fishery for several years. After the freeze of January 2018, it would appear as if the trout stock responded to the cold stun event by breeding like mad. The first year the trout came back to Ocracoke was the fall of 2019. In the ensuing five and half years I have seen the average weight of a commercial limit of trout increase from maybe 150-175 pounds to now we are regularly seeing a limit of trout reach 300 pounds.</p> <p>This fall when I heard about the possibility of a slot limit, I started measuring the trout I was seeing in my fishing to see how much this proposed change would affect me. Better than 40% of the trout I was catching were over 22 inches. Although I understand this is only one anecdote, a slot limit alone would</p>

Name	State/Province	Comments
		<p>have completely gutted the profitability of trout fishing, while overshooting the reduction goal on weight before you even factor in the days of the week closures being proposed as well. Additionally, a slot limit will only create an issue with dead discards that previously did not exist in the speckled trout fishery. The DMF's own position even states that a slot limit would not be an effective tool to managing this fishery. I am also opposed to a days of the week restriction due to the fact that it takes away the option of being able to wait for favorable weather conditions. We saw that repeatedly in the striped mullet fishery this fall, where seasonal weather conditions combined with the days of the week closure meant some weeks people only got one or two days to try to scrape together a week's work. I understand that the days of the week closure is being proposed for the trout fishery to avoid bycatch and discards of trout in the striped mullet fishery, but I would like to briefly explain why I feel that that logic is misguided. Although mullets and speckled trout are both caught in runaround nets, often in the same trip, I have found that they are not often caught in the same set in my experience. Due to the fact that runaround net trips often involve multiple sets, the data creates more of an impression that mullets and trout are caught together than is actually there. I feel like giving fishermen the option to catch trout on days they can't catch mullets and vice versa will help offset the economic impacts of the regulations on both these species.</p> <p>In summation on the speckled trout issue I would propose that instead of slot limits and a day of the week closure that the commercial fishery is managed on a quota of 400,000 pounds, while maintaining all previous regulations in regard to cold stun events. This represents a greater than 33% reduction based on average landings for 2020-22 and also the year 2022, which exceeds the statutory requirement of a 19.9% reduction. The quota and therefore trip limits can be adjusted to whatever is appropriate, much like how the state manages the red drum quota.</p> <p>As for the flounder issue, I am opposed to any more fish being take away from commercial fishermen to give to recreational fishermen, especially when said quota would amount to no appreciable change in recreational access. It seems that commercial fishermen are being punished for adhering to the painful sacrifices that a 72% reduction of landings of southern flounder, while the recreational sector is being rewarded for repeatedly overshooting their TAL. If we're so hard-pressed by the issue of "fairness" in regard to allocating southern flounder 50-50 between the two sectors; why is no one suggesting that this also be done with speckled trout or drum? Both of these species have better than an 80-20 split in</p>

Name	State/Province	Comments
		landings in favor of the recreational sector. This commission should instead move to TAL based on a 52% reduction which still exceeds the statutory requirement.
Kenneth VanGilder	Pennsylvania	I support false albacore management in North Carolina. Active management can help maintain a robust population and insure future recreational opportunities for this important recreational gamefish.
Lydia Beals	North Carolina	<p>I am Lydia Beals from Columbia, North Carolina. I hold a SCFL, a North Carolina Blue Crab dealers license, and a permit for a closed system crab shedding operation.</p> <p>My concern is with the NCDMF proposed bushel limits on Blue Crabs. The modeling, data, and stock assessment of Blue Crabs does not match what I am seeing in my business. 2023 landings increased, as did 2024 landings. This is after adaptive management measures were implemented such as seasonal closures and a minimum size limit on mature females. It has also been noted that the required 2023 stock status update failed peer review and is not being used for management.</p> <p>I ask for a hold on all new restrictions specifically for Blue Crabs until a new and accurate stock status has been approved.</p>
John Wolf	Michigan	I support proactive sustainable management of this cherished false albacore fishery. I come down from Michigan to fish for false albacore on light tackle, and I think the number of recreational anglers targeting these fish is only increasing. The economic impact of these fishermen coming to enjoy this resource cannot be understated. I think this is an important measure that should be adopted.
Wilson Greene IV	North Carolina	I support false albacore management in North Carolina. The proposed rule is sensible, moderate, straightforward. It protects the interests of a massive recreational industry while allowing reasonable harvests quantities. Respectfully, this shouldn't be controversial--it's a winner all-around.
Josie Jones	North Carolina	It seems like a conflict of interest for a person who has pending fisheries charges to be a Marine Fisheries Commissioner. Should Ryan Bethea recuse himself until his fisheries charges are resolved in court?
Gregory A Lewbart	North Carolina	I am in support of adopting the proposed rules for guard rail protection for False Albacore (15A NCAC 03M .0523 – False Albacore Management).

Name	State/Province	Comments
		<p>Thank you!</p> <p>Greg Lewbart</p>
John Mauser	North Carolina	<p>I am a full-time fishing guide in North Carolina, and I support the vote to put guard rail regulations on False Albacore to protect future stocks (15A NCAC 03M .0523 False Albacore Management). These fish are highly important to me, and to countless other anglers who live here, and those from out of state who travel here to fish for them. False Albacore are a huge help to local businesses along the coast once the summertime vacationers have gone home. Restaurants, hotels, tackle shops, guides, and more, benefit from the fall False Albacore run. This very important fish could be overfished in the near future if regulations are not established to protect them. I applaud the commission for voting yes, in favor of False Albacore management. Thank you for your hard work and dedication to our fisheries, it is very much appreciated.</p>
Larry White	North Carolina	<p>I would encourage you to support the rules that are proposed to protect our Albacore fishery. I have witnessed the wanton disregard of commercial fishermen who have taken without restrictions. The recreational value of this fish deserves your utmost attention to the need of limitations. Please use your voice to protect this valuable species for the people of North Carolina.</p>
Kyle Schaefer	Maine	<p>I am in support of management for false albacore for many reasons: The coastal stock is connected therefore management in each state shows leadership and support for our shared stock - these measures will serve all sectors, this is proactive which we majorly appreciate as many fisheries moves are reactive.</p> <p>NC is being a great leader here and we're incredibly appreciative for the effort.</p> <p>Best, Kyle</p>

Name	State/Province	Comments
Jeffrey S McBane	North Carolina	<p>I support the MFC and DMF adopting the proposed rules for guard rail protection for False Albacore (15A NCAC 03M .0523 – False Albacore Management) False Albacore are important to me, and important to NC, and therefore protecting them is a smart move.</p>
Jamie Lane	North Carolina	<p>I would like to see no changes to the speckled trout fishery at this meeting. I think it should be the recommendation of the commission to direct the DMF to complete another stock assessment and IF it is approved WITHOUT reservations in the peer review process, then the advisory committees and the MFC should start looking at changes (if warranted at that time) to the management process.</p> <p>I think it is important to note that with speckled trout, the primary force driving the population depends drastically on the the temperatures in the winter and not one person can manage that.</p> <p>When you review the current proposed measures that are on the table this meeting, there is no option that even attempts to address the recreational dead discards. Until we get these numbers under control (and get an accurate count of them and harvested fish in that sector), any adjustments you make will just sow further discord between the industries and do nothing to help with speckled trout populations.</p> <p>The commercial industry for speckled trout has been touted to be very clean (according to DMF) with little waste and few dead discards. Adding a slot limit to the commercial industry would likely increase our dead discards and mitigate the clean fishing goals that we take seriously. To take the burden of the reduction and place it on the commercial sector is outrageous and should be illegal.</p> <p>I understand that the FMP process is rooted in law but I think it is time for the DMF to make a change to the legislation on this topic and go back to our elected lawmakers and tell them we do not have the stock scientists or enough data at this time to make changes that have such great consequences and that no amendments should be made with the current stock assessments. When management decisions are made using data that is not statistically significant, the repercussions can be catastrophic. For example, the taking of the Neuse River from the commercial sector on the whim of the CCA - this was not rooted in scientific data, the promise that it would be given back in 2 years - a lie, and likely the population that it</p>

Name	State/Province	Comments
		<p>has tried to protect is not better and likely worse off all these years and lost revenue later.</p> <p>In summary, it is my position and I hope the position of the MFC to delay any changes to any species at this meeting for which the stock assessment has not been approved without reservations in the peer review process. I think the MFC should also direct the DMF to redo these stock assessments and include more comprehensive data from the recreational sector. The commercial sector has observer data, trip tickets, etc. The recreation sector is severely lacking in data. I frequent many ramps in NC and over the course of the entire summer and fall, I never saw one person interviewing recreation fishermen when they came into the ramps at Swan Quarter, Rose Bay, Oyster Creek, and several others. There was a significant number of flounder and speckled trout harvested there on those days, as all the days I am referring to the ramp parking lots were at full or nearly full capacity - if we are missing all of that data, how can we get any accurate data to base these management decisions? If the DMF needs a bigger budget to get better data then it should be provided, if the budget cannot be provided then the FMP laws need to be adjusted to reflect the data they can collect with the budget provided. It is unfair and detrimental to the state to hurt our livelihoods (any by proxy the public's access to fresh NC seafood) and the access of NC rec fishermen to harvest a healthy protein source without accurate data.</p>
Roman Dudus	Connecticut	We need to protect False Albacore so it doesn't follow in the same mismanaged state as fish like Striped Bass, Winter Flounder and Herring. Please do the right thing!!
Cameron Pappas	North Carolina	Please vote in favor of passing false albacore management. This species has become extremely popular in the recreational sector and brings in anglers from all over the country. The species needs some sort of management to protect them from being over harvested. It's one big stock that is migratory many other states rely on these same fish.
Steven Atanasio	Pennsylvania	100 years ago we missed a chance to save the Atlantic Salmon fishery in the NE. fifty years ago came a crises with the Striped Bass in the mid Atlantic states it took 20 years for the fishery to return once we realized it. Let's not make the same mistake with the False Albicore. A great game fish. An important part of the marine ecosystem.

Name	State/Province	Comments
Dominic Lemme	North Carolina	<p>It seems that your stock assessment results are flawed. Apparently you are using the wrong equipment to get your stock assessment samples, how can you make life-altering decisions affecting hundreds of people using Antiquated equipment and techniques.</p> <p>I object to the passing of any new regulations</p>
Rusty Hulgan	North Carolina	<p>I strongly support the adoption of the proposed rules for guardrail protection for False Albacore (15A NCAC 3M .0523 – False Albacore Management). The journey to protect these essential fish has been extensive, and we are now at a critical juncture. False Albacore are not only important to me personally but are also vital to North Carolina's marine biodiversity, tourism and recreational fishing industry. Multiple times every fall, i coordinate with friends and family from various states to meet in Morehead City areas for False Albacore, this requires guides, hotels, restaurants, etc.</p> <p>By protecting them, we ensure a sustainable future for our ecosystems and economy.</p>
Travis Whitener	North Carolina	<p>Hi. I'm a commercial crabber here on the outer banks. I've herd controversy in the sampling data for the stock assessments for our fishery. For one instance for the year of 2024 the landings could be skewed from what the actual population density of blue crabs were because the market simply couldn't handle the amount of crabs that were there. So the markets in our area put the fisherman on lay days which we could not fish. That would possibly show the landings not being as high for that year which could be perceived as a lack of population when in actuality it was a lack of market. My point is there are a tremendous amount of different variables that may not be taken into account. The proposal of no harvest of mature female crabs from January through May and a 10 bushel limit after that would be extremely detrimental and life altering to the industry and families that depend on it. Another negative factor of the said proposal would be it will force all of the fishermen that are trying to adapt to catch nothing but male crabs. This could possibly be detrimental to the male population which will take the brunt of this proposal and is an essential population for the reproductive health of the population as a whole. I believe the fisheries scientists and the fishermen need to try and work together and establish a trust where we can obtain accurate data to be able to make these decisions.</p>

Name	State/Province	Comments
Layla Beals	North Carolina	<p>I am Layla Beals from Columbia, North Carolina. I am attending East Carolina University. My family's entire income is derived from Blue Crabs. I have worked in the family business working our crab shedding operation while my parents were on the boat.</p> <p>I am against the proposed bushel limits on mature females. Blue crabs are currently being managed with restrictions such as seasonal closures that have been in place for only two years. Blue Crabs landings have increased for 2023 and 2024. The NCDMF has stated their own 2023 stock assessment of Blue Crab failed peer review. I ask that current regulatory measures be allowed time to continue to work, and no new regulations be implemented until a new, accurate Blue Crabs stock assessment is completed.</p>
Blane Chocklett	Virginia	<p>Hello</p> <p>My name is Blane Chocklett I live in Troutville Virginia and I am a professional angler , industry ambassador for some of the top outdoor brands such as Patagonia, Yeti Coolers, Costa sunglasses, Scientific Anglers and Temple Fork Outfitters and a field editor for Fly Fisherman magazine . I am writing today to share my feelings and beliefs on the action to regulate False Albacore in North Carolina. I've been traveling to the beautiful coastline of the Outer banks of North Carolina to chase these beautiful fish since the mid 90's, I've hosted trips there with clients hiring the local charter captains and staying in the local hotels . We eat at the local restaurants and support the local community all because of how much we care about these great fish the False Albacore. Their survival and abundance is directly related to the economic benefits of the local guides and business owners. By putting regulations on these great fish will help insure a bright future for local and traveling anglers to pursue these fish for future generations. I have an 8 year old son and his greatest passion is fishing and one of his favorite fish to catch is the False Albacore, I've been taking him down to the beautiful coastal community of Atlantic Beach and Morehead City since he was 5 years old. I want to protect these great fish for all anglers and for future generations like my son to enjoy. I ask the committee to please vote to put regulations in place to ensure a bright future for False Albacore, thank you for your time.</p> <p>Blane Chocklett</p>
Nick Jones	Minnesota	<p>Dear NCMFC,</p> <p>Thank you for the opportunity to provide public comment on Proposed Rule 15A NCAC 03M .0523. I am</p>

Name	State/Province	Comments
		<p>an out-of-state angler who chooses to spend my money on annual trips to North Carolina solely because of the False Albacore fishery. I would first like to say thank you so much for proposing this rule as it shows your commitment to conservation and how much you value the fishery. It also sets an example for other states up and down the coast to follow. THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR STANDING UP FOR OUR BELOVED LITTLE SPEEDSTERS!!!</p> <p>As you know, the false albacore fishery is critically important as it is a huge economic machine for NC (along with the rest of the Coast!). Keeping albies abundant benefits all sectors. The proposed rule is so great because it does not limit the use of the fishery for anyone (commercial or recreational) and instead just adds a layer of protection, ensuring that regulations can be put in place should total harvest reach a critical level. Let us keep them healthy and strong so they never reach a critical point--everyone wins!!</p> <p>Again, thank you so much for everything that you guys do. It's so amazing to see this rule proposal as it sets a precedent that others will start to follow--NC is a leader and I sincerely thank you for fighting to protect the fish we love!</p> <p>Best,</p> <p>Nick Jones</p>
Tom Baird	North Carolina	I am in favor for the precautionary management plan for false albacore. We have to be proactive to ensure this great fishery is here for the next generation. I want to be able to take my son fishing on lite tackle or fly, to enjoy this top fighting fish in the fall nearshore. North Carolina needs to be a leader in fishery management so we can continue to have one of the premier fisheries on the East Coast. The variety and type are second to none and one of the reasons I love the state, we have to keep it that way and proper and preventative management is the way.
Kenneth Amberson	Massachusetts	I would like to register my support for the management of false albacore. Albies are an important resource up and down the east coast. Rather than waiting until an issue develops, it would be prudent to begin documenting, evaluating, and managing the resource proactively. North Carolina can be a leader in


Name	State/Province	Comments
		<p>this effort.</p> <p>Please support managing false albacore</p> <p>Thank you</p>
Kendall Osborne	Virginia	I travel to NC every fall to fish for false albacore. Please preserve them. They are fantastic game fish for fly and light tackle. Thanks
Lynn Burkhead	Texas	You have a world class recreational fishery for false albacore in North Carolina. Please be bold in your management of this resource and protect the recreational anglers that live in and visit your state for this fishing opportunity. Please be proactive in managing this amazing fishery and serve the fly anglers, conventional anglers, guides, and support businesses who utilize this resource. Thank you!
David Sewell	South Carolina	I support False Albacore management in North Carolina!
Kevin ONeal	North Carolina	<p>I'm a commercial crabber working out of Wanchese and blessed to say I have been crabbing for 43 years. My comments are directed at blue crab amendment 3 options that will impact the highest ranked fishery in our state. While participants have declined , crabbing has become the highest economic contributing fishery. The landings in 2023 were on the rise and 2024 saw another 14.5 percent increase, the best years since 2019. For those of us on the water it is hard to see why more management of our fishery is needed. The DMF recommendation (option 8a) of 10 bushels of females and closures in the spring months would be devastating to the full-time crabber. Limiting our catch will not increase the value of North Carolina crabs on the market, as we compete with other states for price. The catch limits and life stage closures will impact the economic viability of the crab fishery. It is not encouraging to see the management options described as, (Catch limits) decrease in ex-vessel value,(Limiting early harvest) unlikely to result in reduction,(Life stage closures) immediate economic hardship,(Female bushel limits) likely to distribute the burden of catch reduction unevenly disproportionately impacting crabbers. The female bushel limit will greatly impact us working the waters of Dare county because we have a minimal population of male crabs.If more management tools are needed, we need options that would not be such a hardship for the</p>

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		crab fishery.Many of the options presented could reduce the viability of the crab fishery. Fewer crabbers equals less landings and less landings equals more management. Your decision on this matter is so important to the livelihood of so many families involved in the blue crab fishery.
Thomas J Wetherington	Tennessee	Each fall, I look forward to visiting the coastal Carolinas to witness the migration of false albacore and to fish for them. They are a species that needs to be studied more and are a valuable asset to this fishery. I support false albacore management in North Carolina - 15A NCAC 03M.053 for False Albacore Management.
David Sewell	South Carolina	I support Option 3 and false albacore management in NC.
Paul Lane	North Carolina	I am against any further cuts to the commercial industry - thereby further damaging my livelihood - using poor data and management rules that do not make any sense. None of the management decisions made over the last 2-3 decades have ever resulted in anything being given back. Look at herring. This has been closed for years and now they are not even mentioned. Have they fully recovered or was this another management failure where closing harvest was the recommended solution that solved nothing ? If all of these draconian measures that have been implemented to "save" these fisheries have not resulted in an increase in their population, obviously the nets and commercial fishermen are not the problem so we cannot always be the solution. Stop the ridiculous rules and start addressing root causes of issues...water quality and invasive species. Until these issues are fixed, cutting harvest and changing season dates is just punitive. Address recreational dead discards, address blue cats, address Neuse River fish kills, address increasing instances of "dead water" in the summertime, address the high levels of Bisphenyl A (BPA) - an endocrine disruptor in our water, and make an actual impact, but please stop cutting my ability to earn a living.
Kelly E Maxwell	North Carolina	Why not give the recreational fishermen a creel limit,with no size limit? A 10 fish bag limit with no size limit, if properly enforced, will do away with dead discards. That is, if there is no cull fishing or catch and release after the creel limit is reached, which would necessarily need to be strictly enforced .

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BRUCE A CALHOON	North Carolina	<p>I am in complete support of the new guardrails/rules designed to prevent overfishing of False Albacore. It would be both an environmental and commercial error not to put these guardrails in place.</p> <p>Very best regards, Bruce.</p>
Capt. Jot Owens	North Carolina	<p>I fully support False albacore management measures. I believe it is very important to be proactive with the species. I feel this is important now, so we do not have to have reactive management measures for False albacore down the road.</p>
Tyler Bowman	South Carolina	<p>I am writing to provide my input on the proposed rule 15A NCAC 03M .0523 concerning false albacore management in North Carolina. After reviewing comments from a range of stakeholders, I believe it is vital to approach this regulation with a balance of conservation, economic awareness, and science-based decision-making.</p> <p>The overwhelming support from recreational anglers, charter captains, and conservation organizations reflects the importance of false albacore to local economies and the sportfishing community. As noted by charter captains and conservation advocates, false albacore play a key role in sustaining businesses and tourism, particularly as other fisheries decline.</p> <p>The migratory nature of this species, as evidenced through tagging projects from Massachusetts to Florida, underscores the need for regional management strategies. Many recreational anglers support proactive measures to ensure sustainability, having seen other fisheries collapse from delayed action.</p> <p>However, concerns have been raised regarding the scope and timing of the proposed measures. There are calls to lower the harvest cap, which some argue is too high to prevent overfishing. Additionally, aligning regulations with peak migratory seasons could enhance their effectiveness. While the North Carolina Fisheries Association highlights the lack of biological data and the absence of similar rules in other states, I believe a precautionary approach is warranted while further research is conducted.</p>

Name	State/Province	Comments
		<p>I encourage the Commission to adopt a management plan that prioritizes sustainability while refining the proposed rule through lower harvest caps, seasonally aligned restrictions, regional cooperation, and continued investment in scientific research. This approach will balance conservation with economic interests and help secure the future of the false albacore fishery.</p> <p>Thank you for your consideration.</p> <p>Sincerely, Tyler Bowman</p>
Tyler Milam	New Hampshire	<p>North Carolina Marine Fisheries Commission 3441 Arendell Street Morehead City, NC 28557</p> <p>Subject: Support for False Albacore Management – 15A NCAC 03M.053</p> <p>Dear Members of the North Carolina Marine Fisheries Commission,</p> <p>I want to commend North Carolina for taking the lead in establishing management measures for false albacore. Your proactive approach through rule-making reference 15A NCAC 03M.053 sets an important precedent, as other states are now considering regulations for this vital species.</p> <p>False albacore support both commercial and bait fisheries, and anecdotal reports suggest these sectors may be expanding without adequate monitoring. The proposed regulations are not intended to restrict access but rather to ensure a sustainable future for all stakeholders who depend on this fishery.</p> <p>As a highly sought-after species, false albacore drive substantial economic activity from Massachusetts to Florida. In 2021 alone, anglers made over 500,000 directed trips targeting this species. With declines in other inshore species like striped bass, false albacore have become even more essential to guides, businesses, and coastal communities.</p>

Name	State/Province	Comments
		<p>At a minimum, precautionary management is necessary to protect this species and the economy it supports. While there is limited scientific data on false albacore, the American Saltwater Guides Association (ASGA) is actively conducting an acoustic tagging study in Massachusetts to enhance our understanding of their movements and behavior. This research will provide valuable insight for future management efforts.</p> <p>North Carolina's leadership on this issue is commendable, and I strongly encourage the Commission to implement reasonable guardrails to preserve the health of this important fishery. Taking action now will help ensure its abundance for generations to come.</p> <p>Thank you for your time and consideration.</p> <p>Sincerely, Tyler Milam</p>
r. elliot allen	South Carolina	<p>I booked it two full days of fly fishing for false albacore last fall with a wonderful and knowledgeable guide out of the wilmington area. having never fished for false albacore before, I found it to be an amazing experience. I will be back. you all are very fortunate that these migratory fish bless your coast, something that doesn't happen in my home waters of Charleston, South Carolina. I don't need to state the economic impact of having fisherman coming to nc to spend time on the water, dine out at restaurants and spend their money in hotels, etc. I'm sure you all know that. so please do whatever is necessary to protect these wonderful game fish. their appeal will only grow in the future, along with the pressure and demands of management. it's always wise to get ahead of any potential management issues rather than reacting AFTER negative impacts may have already happened. thank you for your time.</p>
Mack Hartwell	Ohio	<p>Given the importance of this fish to anglers up and down the coast, putting some guardrails in place to ensure the fishery's abundance moving forward is critical. Thank you for taking public comments from folks in other states who care about this fishery.</p>

Name	State/Province	Comments
Henry Hagan	Florida	<p>Thank you for being a pioneer state in this valuable initiative!</p> <p>I fish for Albies on the NC coast for at least one week each year, and bring ten friends with me. Our activities support the local economies of Davis and Harker's Island.</p> <p>Having guard rails to protect this species for all fishermen to enjoy would be a very smart start!</p> <p>With modern technologies commercial fishermen could easily decimate the Albie population if there are not significant studies and meaningful guardrails established while this fish is still abundant.</p> <p>Thank you for your efforts and this kickstart to hopefully, an atlantic coast initiative!</p> <p>Henry </p>
Germain Cloutier	Maine	<p>I support False Albacore management in North Carolina, these fish are facing a lot of challenges especially in the north east with a large percentage of them being taken by Seals. There needs to be a more conservation approach to managing this fish species.</p>
Lucas Hilker	Massachusetts	<p>I am an avid recreational angler in the Northeast who regularly travels to experience this fish in my state and along the east coast. Albies have an enormous economic impact on tourism and recreational fisheries businesses and are deserving of thoughtful management.</p>
Justin Wood	North Carolina	<p>Please do everything you can to protect our coastal fisheries. I have now been a North Carolina resident for 13+ years and want my children and their children to be able to fish our waters for False Albacore, Flounder, Redfish, Sea Trout, and other local species. Thank you!</p> <p>Please also ban gill nets.</p>
Wiley Van Pelt	North Carolina	<p>In am commenting on the upcoming amendments to the NC blue crab management plan. Evidently there is a huge disconnect between what we as crabbers are seeing, and what your sample are seeing. I have been crabbing since 1995, started out shaking pots for others, and now have my own operation. We have had good years and not so good years as long as I have been doing this, but I can honestly say the the past two years of 2023, and 2024 are the most crabs I have ever seen. The economics of crabbing has changed drastically since I began, we are now operating on a razor's edge at all times. I have seen the</p>

Name	State/Province	Comments
		graphs of less juvenile crabs, and less breeding stock, but there is no way this could be possible. The amount of crabs per pot we have seen the past couple of years would not have been possible without having juvenile crabs in the years prior, they did not just drop out of the sky. I fully understand the scientific method, and this is why I am sure that there is something wrong with the methodology of the sampling program. These changes that are proposed to the crabbing would be the death knell of the industry in this state,
Paul Danie	North Carolina	I support false albacore management in North Carolina.
Mark Seymour	Massachusetts	First, let me thank you for your efforts to study this very important species. The migratory habits of Albies makes it difficult for any one state to put regulations or suggestions in place for all of the other states to follow. However, NC seems to be the first state to really take an interest in studying False Albacore. Even though there's no evidence that the species is in trouble it makes sense to be proactive, make an effort to more thoroughly understand this important asset and make sure Albies don't get in trouble. Thank you.
Jarrett Miller	Oklahoma	<p>I support Albie Management in North Carolina!</p> <p>Thank you the state of North Carolina for taking the lead on albie management! You have been a leading example for other states are now utilizing your rule-making processes to establish albie regulations. Thank you!</p> <p>The proposed regulations are not designed to limit anyone's usage of the resource but rather conserve this economically critical fish and provide long-term opportunities for all sectors. Which in the end is what we all want as False Albacore are tremendously important for anglers and fishing-related businesses from Massachusetts to Florida. Guides and anglers rely on this species, especially in recent years when striped bass and other inshore species have been less abundant. This species is worthy of guardrail management at the least as they are a species that connects the entire East coast and drives a large economy from Florida to Boston.</p> <p>Protect Albies!</p>

Name	State/Province	Comments
		<p>Thank you,</p> <p>Jarrett Miller</p>
Jason Helterbride	Ohio	<p>Thank you for taking the lead in protecting false albacore! I support false albacore management in North Carolina. My families fondest vacation memories are vacationing in North Carolina and recreational fishing. For the first time this year I will be bringing my little grandchildren. I want false albacore protected so that they have the opportunity to experience these incredible fish when they are older.</p>
Captain Ben Whalley	Maine	<p>To whom it may concern-</p> <p>My name is Capt Ben Whalley and I am a full-time flyfishing guide in Maine but every fall/winter I target false albacore in Massachusetts, rhode island, North Carolina and Florida. It is especially important to preserve this fishery with the recent tagging studies shaping the understanding of the population. I fully support false albacore management in North Carolina.</p> <p>15A NCAC 03M.053 for False Albacore Management</p> <p>Thank you.</p> <p>Capt. Ben</p> <p>www.benwhalleyfishing.com</p> <p>██████████</p>
Sean McDermott	Connecticut	<p>I support conservation measures for False Albacore. I travel to NC to fish for them as well as target these highly migratory fish in my local waters. They are extremely valuable as a gamefish and should be protected.</p>
Clay Emerson	New Jersey	<p>I am an avid recreational fisherman and appreciate that the State of North Carolina is considering placing basic management on False albacore. Although I am a resident of New Jersey (and I don't usually admit that in public), North Carolina has unique recreational fisheries resources. I have generally made at least one visit annually to North Carolina for the sole purpose of fishing over the last 10-year period. I currently have plans for two trips in 2025, so I am glad that you have decided consider management of False</p>

Name	State/Province	Comments
		albacore which is a species with increasing recreational value to many; myself included. I regret that I am not able to attend this week's meeting in person and appreciate your time and thoughtful consideration.
ken maness	North Carolina	With recent far reaching events appearing to put funding and support programs for many worthy human and natural resource protection programs in jeopardy. Please do all you can to fund, support and protect our inshore and offshore fisheries for future generations.
Diogo Godoi	Massachusetts	As a light tackle guide here in Massachusetts I applaud NC for taking action towards conserving false albacore. From mid August through October albies become one of my primary target species and accounts for most of my trips during this timeframe. I've also been a part of the Albie project by the saltwater guide association since day one and have had several fish now recaptured up and down the coast which tells me we are all sharing the same Resource.
Ted Matera	New Jersey	I support false albacore management in North Carolina. I believe that helping NC will help all others states along the Atlantic coast. It is one big ocean, and we have seen what poor resource management has done to the striped bass, let's not let this happen to the false albacore.
Tom Hargrave	Massachusetts	Please do what ever it takes to protect the long term health of our albie population thank you!
Anna Winstead	Colorado	I'm from North Carolina and have family and friends that will never leave the beautiful state, and love our waters. I don't know much about this, but it's near and dear to my fishing and guiding friends, and if it has anything to do with protecting species and waters, this needs our help to come to fruition. We cannot afford to loose any more.
Michael Salomone	Colorado	Please do all you can to protect this fishery
Jim Jones	North Carolina	With recent far reaching events appearing to put funding and support programs for many worthy human and natural resource protection programs in jeopardy. Please do all you can to fund, support and protect

Name	State/Province	Comments
		our inshore and offshore fisheries for future generations. I'm especially concerned about the management of false albacore.
Stuart Creighton	North Carolina	<p>With the numerous topics up for debate/decisions at this upcoming meeting, I am addressing each one individually.</p> <p>ALBIES We continue to fully support the protective measures for albies that is up for final approval. Please get these needed guidelines across the finish line this week.</p> <p>BLUE CRAB I am not sure that the new suite of recommendations from the Division go far enough, but they are a good initial step. I support the recommendations from DMF, with some hesitancy.</p> <p>SOUTHERN FLOUNDER The previous vote to delay parity in the latest southern flounder amendment was a bad move by a previous MFC. A 50/50 allocation should have been approved three years ago. For the upcoming amendment 5, establishing an ocean season from June - September should be a priority. In addition, the latest emergent research that indicates southern flounder spawning sites much closer to the coast should be incorporated to establish protected, trawl free areas during the spawning season from approximately November - March.</p> <p>SPECKLED TROUT With the concern over the increased potential for commercial bycatch because of the pending slot, consideration should be given to either a commercial quota set between 300-350,000 pounds or appropriate additional closures in January - February to maintain the needed reduction. Though commercial discards of trout may be low, discards of sub legal drum and stripers is not. True effort remains unknown with a significant amount of effort for "personal consumption" remaining. Don't forget the original recommendations of the trout AC. The recreational slot of 16-20", 4 fish/day, with one over 24" combined with a commercial only closure from January - March May prove to be more</p>

Name	State/Province	Comments
		<p>palatable after all.</p> <p>OYSTERS/CLAMS</p> <p>Remove the mechanical harvest of clams in tree years WITHOUT the qualifying parameters as suggested by DMF.</p> <p>Adopt the two DORAS as proposed in Pamlico Sound.</p> <p>Naturally occurring oyster reefs are one of the most important estuarine habitats in North Carolina. They directly support dozens of species of fish, invertebrates, and algae. They are used as feeding and/or spawning sites by many other fish, birds, and mammals. They attenuate wave action during storms, and vastly improve water quality. Currently, only about 10% of intertidal oyster rock remains. Even worse, only about 5% of our deep oyster reefs remain. Decades of over exploitation by mechanical gear has mowed them down to such low relief that they are now repeatedly killed off by anoxic events. Because of the nature of these reefs, recovery will be a slow process, even if we stop harvesting from them now. It would be helpful if DMF would kick start the process by adding material to increase the relief of the struggling reefs.</p> <p>With the rapidly expanding oyster mariculture industry and with the state maintained cultch planting sites, consumer and industry access to oysters will remain strong.</p> <p>It is well past time for responsible management that will begin the long process of recovering the fisheries and habitats that we have lost in this state. That needed recovery will never happen unless we take the difficult steps necessary to conserve what remains.</p>
Aaron Gallop	North Carolina	<p>I am a 7th generation commercial fisherman and my only fishery is blue crab. I began crabbing with my father as a small child and started operating my own boat at the age of 16. I went to college and earned a degree in business, but decided that I wanted to be a fisherman like my father and grandfathers before me. At 42 years old I have never missed a season of crabbing, and it remains the only job I have ever had in my life. I have a ten year old son who occasionally works with me on the boat and he would also like to work on the water catching blue crabs as a future occupation. If anyone has a vested interest in this fishery it would be me and my family. I along with every other commercial crabber desires a thriving sustainable fishery; it's how we provide for our families year after year.</p>

Name	State/Province	Comments
		<p>After the adoption of Amendment 3 by the North Carolina Marine Fisheries, measures were put in place to reduce harvest by 2.4%. These management measures began in January of 2021 and since then, blue crab landings for 2023 and 2024 have increased significantly. Before these measures, blue crab landings for 2020 totaled 13.1 million pounds, while 2023 had 15.3 million pounds. Preliminary landings for 2024 show significant improvement from 2023 landings, however the 2024 data is not being used to evaluate the health of the fishery. It would seem the management measures put in place by Amendment 3 have worked and landings show a rebound.</p> <p>Currently, accurate stock assessment data for blue crabs in the state of North Carolina does not exist. As you know the 2023 updated stock assessment of blue crab in North Carolina failed peer review due to "(1)the strong residual patterns in the model fit to survey indices, especially Program 100 indices, statistical issues with the trawl surveys, (2) the extremely high estimates of fishing mortality over the entire assessment period, and (3) the constantly overfishing/overfished stock status over the entire assessment period." While the Division of Marine Fisheries recommended against using results from the 2023 stock assessment to make management decisions, the historical data gathered using program 100, flawed survey methods, and flaws in the statistical analysis are still being used. An integrated seasonal size-structured assessment model needs to be adopted to measure crab stock status. The blue crab is the state's most economically valuable species and the industry deserves accurate sampling methods, data collection, and data analysis. The stakeholders of this fishery and the people of North Carolina deserve better. Until an accurate stock assessment is complete, any new regulations to the blue crab fishery would be premature.</p> <p>In addition to the management measures currently in place, the division's recommendation of a 10 bushel limit for mature female blue crabs from June-Dec as well as no harvest of mature female blue crabs from Jan-May has a high probability of shutting down the fishery. If a 10 bushel limit on females were imposed, crabbers will not be able to pay their daily fixed expenses and they will not go to work, which will reduce harvest by numbers higher than the 21.7 percent. The second and third order consequences of such management measures are hard to predict, but with limited quantities the dealers</p>

Name	State/Province	Comments
		<p>and processors may be forced to close. If blue crab stock numbers rebound and management measures are relaxed then where are the future harvested crabs sold with no infrastructure remaining? The current division recommendation is excessive due to using bad data and bad science which if passed could result in a collapse of the entire industry.</p> <p>The people of North Carolina deserve better data collection and data analysis to manage their resources. The resources belong to the people of North Carolina and I'm a citizen and stakeholder in this fishery. My livelihood is at stake, my family's legacy as fishermen is at stake, and I want to see the resource properly managed so my children can continue on with these traditions in a sustainable fishery.</p>
Eddie Nickens	North Carolina	<p>I support the guardrail management regulations for false albacore in NC.</p> <p>I am a native North Carolinian, an editor with Garden & Gun, Ducks Unlimited, Bonefish & Tarpon Trust, and Tail magazine, the only saltwater flyfishing magazine left on the planet. I have fished for false albacore for more than 30 years, and seen the remarkable increase in angler effort.</p> <p>I support a conservative approach now, so that DMF can:</p> <p>Get in front of this issue so that the state won't one day be in the position of doubling down on regulations to make up for lost time.</p> <p>Get behind the growing numbers of recreational anglers who want to see North Carolina lead in this effort.</p> <p>Get this done so that North Carolina can lead the way in a new era of managing for increasingly popular fish species by looking forward.</p> <p>Thank you.</p>

Name	State/Province	Comments
Joseph Cirillo	North Carolina	I support false albacore management in North Carolina. It is my understanding that while not endangered, they are heavily fished and I know I have gone a few times fishing for them and they are a fun recreational fish to go after. I would hate to see them become so over fished that they are heavily restricted like flounder for recreational fishing and thus support the management of false albacore now, before it's too late.
Brooke Gallop	North Carolina	<p data-bbox="562 444 1990 656">My name is Brooke Gallop and I work alongside my husband in his commercial fishing business by operating our soft crab shedders. I recently became a dealer and I hope to grow our operation now that our children are old enough to have an active role in the business. I am aware that the current recommendations are not directed at peeler crabs, however I know that it could have an effect on my business.</p> <p data-bbox="562 714 1990 792">The blue crab fishery as a whole appears healthy and until updated and accurate stock assessments are completed, any new regulations are unnecessary.</p>
Michael Mixon	North Carolina	<p data-bbox="562 841 1999 1321">Hello, my name is Michael Mixon and this is my 40th year being a commercial crabber. I have seen good years and I have seen bad years but I have never seen two consecutive years with the amount of crabs we had in 2023 and 2024. We had lay days this past year and could only work 3 days a week most of the late summer/early fall due to amount of crabs and the markets not being able to handle them. There has to be a problem with the way the samples are taken. Salinity has been a big factor on where the crabs go for the last couple of years. As far as biologist /scientist understanding and towing nets properly could have a lot to due with the sample issues. There are many commercial fishermen that would help set these nets to make sure they are pulling properly, they have been successfully supporting their family for years because they understand how the set up works. It's not just a simple thing to get nets to catch properly. We all need to start working together to figure out the problems with the inadequate data we are all scratching our heads about. Thank you for your time.</p>
Mark Mullen	Virginia	I love fishing for albies. I always catch and release. They and the water the live in needs to be protected

Name	State/Province	Comments
Colin Temple	Massachusetts	Thank you to the commission for taking this conservation first approach to false albacore management. It is a great first step in protecting this valuable biomass and I. Hope other states are willing to follow your lead. Abundance serves all fishing communities in this fishery, as a rec angler I can assure you I am more likely to take personal trips and book guided trips if the species is abundant. As a Massachusetts resident I stand to indirectly benefit from North Carolina's leadership in managing this species.
HUNG NGUYEN	North Carolina	THERE SHOULD BE NO MANAGEMENT DECISIONS MADE UNTIL A THE ISSUES RASIED IN THE FAILED PEER REVIEW ARE ADDRESSED.
CHUNG VAN TROUNG	North Carolina	I DISAGREE WITH THE RECOMMENDATION OF A 10 BUSHEL MATURE FEMALE LIMIT WHEN YOUR STOCK ASSESSMENT HAS FAILED. THERE SHOULD BE NO REGULATION IMPLEMENTED UNTIL THE FAILED ISSUES ARE FIXED.
Mark Philippe	Connecticut	<p>Dear NCMFC,</p> <p>First let me congratulate you on taking the first step in considering some guardrails on false albacore catches. I am writing this out of my love for this incredible fish. I have been fishing for them since the 1980's. I spend lots of money for my boat, boat-slip, gasoline, and on gear for catching them. While I live out of state, I'm sure many in yours contribute money to your economy. I am not necessarily in favor of laws that restrict table fare for individual fishermen or restricting catching them for bait, just protecting the fish from excessive harvest and monitoring the population and making changes if it's deemed necessary.</p> <p>Again, thank you this and I hope you can initiate some protections for false albacore.</p>
DUNG NGUYEN	North Carolina	NO MANAGEMENT REGULATIONS SHOULD BE IMPLEMENTED DUE TO THE FAILED PEER REVIEW AND THE NCMF NOT ADDRESSING THE ISSUES POINTED OUT IN THE PEER REVIEW.
HA T VO	North Carolina	I DISAGREE WITH THE SUGGESTION OF THE NCMF. THIS ON REGULATION WOULD END THE BLUE CRAB INDUSTRY FOR NORTH CAROLINA WITHIN LESS THAN A YEAR.

Name	State/Province	Comments
HUYNH HUYNH	North Carolina	THERE SHOULD BE NO REGULATION IMPOSED IN THE BLUE CRAB FISHERIES DUE TO INACCURATE DATA
MINH HO	North Carolina	NO MANAGEMENT DECISIONS SHOULD BE IMPLEMENTED ON THE NC BLUE CRAB DUE TO THE REBOUND OF THE BLUE CRAB AND THE HARVEST NUMBERS FOR 2024
MY VAN LEE	North Carolina	2024 HARVEST NUMBERS SHOW THAT THE NC BLUE CRAB IS ON THE REBOUND AND IMPLEMENTING A 10 BUSHEL LIMIT WOULD DESTROY THE BLUE CRAB FISHERY
TUYET THACH	North Carolina	THERE SHOULD NOT BE ANY REGULATION IMPOSED ON THE NC BLUE CRAB - THE COMMERCIAL FISHERMAN ARE LANDING MORE CRABS IN 2024 THAN THEY HAVE IN YEARS - THE STOCK IS ON A REBOUND
MICHAEL NGUYEN	North Carolina	THE NC BLUE CRAB IS NOT OVERFISHED IT IS ON A REBOUND - I CRAB EVERYDAY AND THE DATA DOES NOT SUPPORT WHAT IS BEING SEEN IN THE WATER OR WITH HARVEST
DONG TRAN	North Carolina	THE 2024 BLUE CRAB HARVEST IS HIGHER THAN 2022 BY 154% - NO REGULAITON SHOULD BE IMPOSED UNTIL 2024 HARVEST IS ACCOUNTED FOR WITH AN ACCURATE STOCK ASSESSMENT.
Matt Bauer	Rhode Island	I support false albacore management in North Carolina.
Bill Fiora	Massachusetts	I support false albacore management in North Carolina. I pursue these same fish in Massachusetts and Rhode Island, and hope to travel to North Carolina someday to pursue them there.
LUONG LAM	North Carolina	NO MANAGMENT REGULATIONS SHOULD BE IMPLEMENTED ON THE BLUE CRAB AS HARVEST NUMBERS HAVE RISEN THE PAST 2 YEARS. A 10 BUSHEL LIMIT WOULD END THE BLUE CRAB INDUSTRY.
Ellen T. White	New York	I support false albacore management in North Carolina: "15A NCAC 03M.053 for False Albacore Management".
Doug Schantz	New York	I support false albacore management in North Carolina

Name	State/Province	Comments
Paul Dixon	New York	As a light tackle fly fishing guide, I support false albacore management in North Carolina: "15A NCAC 03M.053 for False Albacore Management".
Joe Alicino	Massachusetts	This is a perfect time to set a precedent to ensure responsible management of one of our most captivating sport fish. This species is extremely valuable to both the commercial and recreational industries, and provide us with some of the most exciting angling opportunities of the year. For this reason, I support false albacore management in North Carolina.
James Carson	North Carolina	I support false albacore management in North Carolina and have contributed to this initiative by tagging albies with guides now for two years. It's a great fun fishery that needs to endure!
Ronald Contrelli	New York	I believe False Albacore should be managed for abundance. I will go as far as make it a game fish. Catch and release only. Please keep the commercial boats from turning this fish into cat food.
Capt. Ray Jarvis	Massachusetts	<p>I'm a for hire charter captain. I rely on these fish for about a third of my annual business. These fish travel the entire coast and need to be treated as such. I have tagged fish here in Massachusetts that have been recaptured off of the coast of Florida.</p> <p>I hope the right decision is made in an effort to ensure these fish are not abused in the future.</p> <p>Thank you for your time,</p> <p>Capt. Ray Jarvis Owner-Salt of The Earth Sportfishing</p>
Guy Million	Virginia	I fully support the false albacore management plan. This great fish needs to be conserved for the future.
Charles Bowman	Pennsylvania	I support false albacore management in North Carolina!
Carl Witt	Maryland	We need to protect our fisheries on limits and size for the future.

Name	State/Province	Comments
Justin Wilson	Florida	<p>Any fish that is pursued recreational and or commercially should have a management plan. These fish and the recreational trips surrounding false albacore positively impact economies from the NE US to the Gulf Coast.</p> <p>And a scientific based approach guiding a specific management plan os the right thing to do for this species and the associated fishery.</p>
Sam Barnard	Massachusetts	<p>Been a fly fishing guide for 20 years, used to own a fly shop in Boston and now am retired on the Southcoast of Ma. FA's have always been the highlight of the year and myself and my fishing friends have always respected this amazing speedster and have always returned these fish to swim another day. There is a huge economy, especially in your home state of NC for having a robust population of this great RECREATIONAL inshore fish.</p>
Michael Hogan	Massachusetts	<p>As the owner of Hoky Lure company with a meaningful revenue stream dependent on albies and as an angler who fishes for albies with my kids, I very much applaud North Carolina for taking the lead in Albie management as other states are now considering management for False Albacore and Bonito. The science shows this to be a connected coastal stock, which heightens the importance of management. Thank you.</p>
Jordan sexton	North Carolina	<p>The blue crab proposal for NC is outrageous and the data does not show that anything needs to be done. Over fishing is not occurring! If these new rules are put in place it will bankrupt thousands of people in NC and will have a huge effect on the economy's of the surrounding county's.</p>
Taylor Vavra	New York	<p>Thank you to North Carolina for taking the lead and initiating precautionary management for False Albacore. As with all species, we must proceed with caution and use sound science to manage with the goal of maintaining a healthy and abundant stock. False Albacore are an economically important fish from North Carolina to Massachusetts. We all must do our part as we now are learning how the stock migrates between state waters. The work that North Carolina is doing now will hopefully reverberate throughout the region. Thanks again for these efforts and for accepting comments from the public on this issue.</p>

Name	State/Province	Comments
Thomas Brightman	New Hampshire	<p>Thank you for the opportunity to comment on: 15A NCAC 03M.053 for False Albacore Management. I would like to start off by saying that I support false albacore management in North Carolina, and that I am grateful that North Carolina has taken the lead on false albacore management. As a resident of New Hampshire who fishes for albies in New England (and hopefully at some point in North Carolina, where I have friends who fish for them), I am hoping that North Carolina will become a model for management all along the False albacore's migratory corridor. I am concerned that there are currently no functional guardrails and monitoring for False albacore in the commercial and bait fisheries, not to mention the recreational fishery, which is important to many states and businesses all along the East Coast, especially as the species is being targeted more heavily due to the decline in striped bass populations. I support ASGA's position that False albacore are worthy of precautionary management measures NOW. I also support ASGA's acoustic tagging studies which should help bring some much needed data to support the conservation of such an iconic species as the False albacore. I am encouraging North Carolina to adopt a precautionary management stance for this species as this data set becomes more robust. Thank you!</p>
Capt. Joe Gugino	Massachusetts	<p>I support management of False Albacore. As a coast wide population, is important to protect them, and recognize the importance and value of having MORE fish in the water.</p>
Matt Williams	South Carolina	<p>Hello NC Marine Fisheries Commission, I'm a NC native currently living in SC but a lifetime unified sportsman license holder for NC. I pray you consider and institute proactive measures to protect recreational fisheries. I have experienced the pains of being unable to fish for a favorite inshore fish (Flounder). And hope you do all that you can to protect a recreational fishery for Flounder, Sea Trout, Redfish and False Albacore. The recreational fishing economy is vital for NC and must be valued in line with commercial fishing. Which (commercial) seems to operate with impunity and with techniques that produce unacceptably high levels of by catch. Better regulations placed on commercial will preserve opportunities for both recreational and commercial to operate and thrive in NC</p>
DENNIS FOREMAN	North Carolina	<p>THE ECONOMIC IMPACT THAT ADDITIONAL REGULATIONS IN THE BLUE CRAB INDUSTRY WOULD BE CATASTROPHIC. ALSO, WITH A FAILED PEER REVIEW STOCK ASSESSMENT AND THE INCREASE IN 2024</p>

Name	State/Province	Comments
		HARVEST LANDINGS ANY RESTRICTIONS SHOULD BE PAUSED UNTIL A STOCK ASSESSMENT THAT IS ACCURATE AND PASSED PEER REVIEW IS AVAILABLE.
TARA FOREMAN	North Carolina	THE ECONOMIC IMPACT THAT ADDITIONAL REGULATIONS IN THE BLUE CRAB INDUSTRY WOULD BE CATASTROPHIC. ALSO, WITH A FAILED PEER REVIEW STOCK ASSESSMENT AND THE INCREASE IN 2024 HARVEST LANDINGS ANY RESTRICTIONS SHOULD BE PAUSED UNTIL A STOCK ASSESSMENT THAT IS ACCURATE AND PASSED PEER REVIEW IS AVAILABLE.
Arthur Martin	Massachusetts	Being that this species is also off the coast of Massachusetts during the summer and fall and fished heavily by fishing and charter boats. I am for protecting them by whatever means is necessary, so that they will be albies around for now and future fishermen to enjoy.
Captain Seth Vernon	North Carolina	<p>I support conservation management of False albacore to safeguard the future availability of all anglers to experience the thrill of catching these fish. As a Full Time guide out of Wilmington I have anglers traveling from all over the country to catch these amazing sportfish through catch and release practices.</p> <p>The economic impact on my small coastal community is great and benefits the families and children of guides as well as all of our service and hospitality staff in our restaurants, hotels and small businesses from a sustainable tourism through sport fishing</p>
Floyd Diefendorf	New York	Please protect this wonderful resource. I agree with what N Carolina is trying to accomplish.
Cory Sodikoff	Virginia	I've been going to Atlantic Beach NC and fishing in the Albacore tournament hosted by Project Healing Waters for veterans for years. Also come down to fish on my own recreationally. I'm from Virginia and I have spent thousands of dollars on hotels, boat slips, restaurants, tackle shops, fuel stations. We need to protect this fish so my kids can enjoy catching them!!!! Please HELP!!!!

Name	State/Province	Comments
Reece McDowell	Massachusetts	I support false albacore management in North Carolina as it will be the start, hopefully, of coast wide management for this valuable game fish. Knowing now that the false albacore I travel to NC to fish for, are the same population I have here at home in southern New England only strengthens my passion for conservation of these fish.
Kevin Howley	Maine	Dear NCMFC Members: Please help protect the future of our albies by passing the act to establish precautionary management for them (15A-NVAC 03M .0523). In doing so, you will take the lead. Your actions will not only help directly with necessary albie protection but set an example for the rest of the east coast, making many many thousands grateful to you for generations.
Curt Nadeau	Connecticut	<p>I support false albacore management in North Carolina, and everywhere for that matter. They are a very special sportfish that need to be preserved for all to enjoy via catch and release.</p> <p>Please protect our Albies!</p> <p>Thank you</p>
Jared DiVincent	Georgia	<p>Thank the state of North Carolina for taking the lead on albie management! False albacore are a tremendously important recreational fish species for anglers and fishing-related businesses from Massachusetts to Florida. The false albacore deserve guardrail management at a minimum. This species drives a large economy from Florida to the Vineyard. We are not saying that false albacore are in a crisis, but given the importance of this fish to anglers up and down the coast, putting some guardrails in place to ensure the fishery's abundance moving forward is critical.</p> <p>Thank you for your consideration to better understand the species and encourage precautionary management for this hugely important recreational species! Tight lines, Jared DiVincent</p>
Andrew Holt	Massachusetts	Save our fish! These are beloved game fish, we must do all we can to help them thrive!

Name	State/Province	Comments
GREGORY JUDY	North Carolina	<p>SPECKLED TROUT: I OPPOSE THE 38% REDUCTION OF THE COMMERCIAL HARVEST. COMMERCIAL CATCH IS 20% OF THE TOTAL HARVEST. RECREATIONAL CATCH IS 80% OF THE TOTAL HARVEST AND REC WOULD ONLY BE REDUCED BY 27%. THE COMMERCIAL WILL LOSE TWO DAYS FISHING (JAN-SEPT), AND THREE DAYS FISHING (OCT-DEC). THOSE LOST DAYS WILL PROBABLY CAUSE THE COMMERCIAL REDUCTION TO BE MORE THAN 38%. THE REC FISHERMEN WILL LOSE NO DAYS ON THE WATER AND AS USUAL THEY WILL PROBABLY NOT MEET THE TARGET REDUCTION. THE ONLY WAY TO CONTROL THE REC SECTOR IS TO KEEP THEM OFF OF THE WATER. ANY REDUCTION IN HARVEST MUST BE THE SAME FOR BOTH COMMERCIAL AND RECREATIONAL! FLOUNDER: DO NOT CHANGE ALLOCATION IN THE MIDDLE OF THE REBUILD. MFC WOULD NEVER GIVE COMMERCIAL AN INCREASE DURING A REBUILD. NEUSE AND PAMLICO GILLNET CLOSED AREAS: MARCH 2019. IT'S BEEN 5 YEARS. IT'S PAST TIME TO RESTORE ACCESS TO THESE WATERS TO THE COMMERCIAL GILLNET FISHERMEN. THIS IS ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF THE MFC GIVING PREFERENTIAL TREATMENT TO THE REC SECTOR. RECS HAVE HAD SOLE ACCESS TO THESE WATERS, MUCH TO THE DETRIMENT OF STRIPED BASS, THAT WERE SUPPOSED TO BENEFIT FROM THE CLOSURE. IF THE MFC HAD TRULY WANTED TO AID STRIPED BASS, THE CLOSURE WOULD HAVE BEEN EQUAL FOR BOTH SECTORS. BUT FAIR AND EQUAL IS ONLY ALLOWED WHEN IT BENEFITS THE REC SECTOR. IN SUMMARY: ANY REDUCTION IN SPECKLED TROUT HARVEST MUST BE BORNE EQUALLY BY COMMERCIAL AND RECREATIONAL FISHERS. DO NOT "MOVE UP" THE REALLOCATION OF SOUTHERN FLOUNDER. LET THE PLAN STAND AS ORIGINALLY CONFIGURED. RE-OPEN TO COMMERCIAL GILLNET FISHERMEN, THE CLOSED AREAS OF THE NEUSE AND PAMLICO RIVERS THAT WERE CLOSED IN MARCH 2019. BIOLOGISTS AND COMMERCIAL FISHERMEN CAN FINE-TUNE ANY NEW GILLNET FISHING TECHNIQUES TO ASSURE PROTECTION OF STRIPED BASS GOING FORWARD.</p>
Chase freiman	Rhode Island	<p>False albacore is a sought after light tackle game fish that migrates all along the east coast. Anglers spend hundreds of thousands of dollars targeting these fish. These fish do not get enough attention in regards to management. I fully support all conservation regulations to protect false albacore</p>
Brendon Reynolds	North Carolina	<p>Members of the Marine Fisheries Commission I appreciate you taking the time to read this. I live in Columbia and am employed in the commercial fishing industry. I make a large majority of my income from crabbing. I would ask of all of you to really deeply consider new proposals being brought forth</p>

Name	State/Province	Comments
		<p>concerning blue crab regulation. If passed the recommended regulations will put more than a few crabbers out of business. They do not affect all members of our commercial fishing industry equally but beyond that most people in the field would tell you they don't believe they are necessary. I believe these recommendations are based on inconsistent and unreliable data. There is no stock report that can be used to determine the population. Even if there was a stock report the DMF does not have a dedicated blue crab program to run surveys. They obtain their data through trawling while over 95% of crabs caught and sold in the state of North Carolina are caught by crab pot. These trawl surveys are not conducted with the intent to find crabs and assess the crab population. Part of the information that the DMF is using is historic landing numbers for blue crabs. They claim that the crab population is overfished due to lower landing numbers and dismiss the fact that we also have a historically low number of participants and trips being taken. I am not advocating for no regulation in the industry. As I have said I make the large majority of my income from it. I would love to have a sustainable industry to continue to participate in. I do not believe that the data the DMF has collected is sufficient for the amount of new proposed regulation. I think they are trying to take drastic steps without enough evidence to prove they are necessary. I do not believe that they can prove unequivocally that their new recommendations are worth ruining some people's livelihoods. Thank you for your time.</p>
Josh Halsey	North Carolina	<p>If your data is wrong and admitting to it how you can you suggest that any of your data is correct. How can the Chesapeake bay still have issues and over fishing isn't occurring? Why aren't we using 2024 data? If it comes out at the end May. A 10 bushel limit of females in the fall will shut down the fishery. How can we over fish something that lays 2 million eggs on average and also eggs multiple times a year. Sounds to me like we should stop the harvest of sponge crabs.</p>
Adam Keever	Tennessee	<p>Huge thanks to North Carolina for leading the charge on false albacore management! Other states are now following suit, recognizing the need for responsible regulations to protect this vital fishery.</p> <p>False albacore aren't just a key species for recreational anglers—they also support commercial and bait fisheries. Without proper monitoring and guardrails, these fisheries may expand unchecked, putting long-term sustainability at risk. The proposed regulations aren't about restricting access but ensuring that all sectors—commercial, recreational, and bait—can continue benefiting from a healthy population.</p>

Name	State/Province	Comments
		<p>The numbers speak for themselves: In 2021 alone, there were over 500,000 directed trips targeting false albacore along the Atlantic coast. This species supports fishing businesses from Massachusetts to Florida, especially as other inshore species like striped bass have declined in recent years. Simply put, false albacore fuel a massive economy and deserve thoughtful management.</p> <p>We're not saying they're in crisis, but precautionary management is the smart move. ASGA and its partners are already conducting an acoustic tagging study to fill the scientific gaps, helping fishery managers make informed decisions.</p> <p>This is a connected coast, and what happens in North Carolina affects the entire Atlantic fishery. Let's ensure that false albacore remain abundant for generations to come. Thoughtful management today means thriving fisheries tomorrow!</p> <p>These comments are in connection to: 15A NCAC 03M.053 for False Albacore Management</p>
Kirk Port	North Carolina	I support Option 3 for the proposed false albacore fisheries management.
Jacob Lishen	North Carolina	I support Option 3 for False Albacore Management
Justin Sexton	North Carolina	<p>I am a commercial fisherman, my father and grandfather also commercial fished and crabbed as well. For many years there has been more and more laws implemented on fisherman to the point the industry is nearly depleted. In the recent months a proposal by the NCDF to reduce the harvest of female blue crab to a 10 bushel (400lb) limit from June through December and closed from January to June would be detrimental to the crab industry and frankly the entire economy of eastern North Carolina. These closures are based on crab surveys done by NCDMF biologists, when the data was peer reviewed by Colleges in our state there were findings that the data was inaccurate. I would like to simple ask for you to postpone your proposal until the data is successfully peer reviewed. Thank you! Sincerely Justin D. Sexton</p>

Name	State/Province	Comments
Gabby Sexton	North Carolina	<p>The “studies” showing overfishing is occurring are inaccurate. There needs to be other ways to obtain accurate data in order to get the information needed. There needs to be NO changes to the rules and regulations that are currently in place. Don’t you think that the people who make their living off of this would be concerned about the depletion of the blue crab population? Shutting down and over regulating crabbing will affect not only the economy of the coastal counties but the livelihoods of these fishermen and their families.</p>
Tony Friedrich	Maryland	<p>The American Saltwater Guides Association would like to thank the state of North Carolina for the opportunity to comment on potential regulations for False Albacore management in the state. False Albacore are a critical driver to the coastal economy, and as other species decline, more effort is being placed on albies. Proactive management is needed in this situation. Anglers can’t afford to lose another species. The proposed regulations are appreciated and not very restrictive. One has to wonder why some are opposed to even the most basic guardrail management. It is usually the ones screaming the loudest that have the most to hide. Science shows that false albacore are one connected coast stock and other states are taking notice. Massachusetts is currently scoping a 5-fish aggregate limit for False Albacore and Atlantic bonito for both recreational and commercial fisheries. North Carolina is not standing alone for regulations. Many states along the Atlantic coast are beginning the process of state management. ASGA thanks North Carolina and looks forward to celebrating the first state on the coast to manage albies with many more to follow in the upcoming months.</p>
Joe DeCesare	Florida	<p>All for it, this type of management will ensure survival for generations to come. All hands on deck!!!</p>
Jack Sine	Massachusetts	<p>As a young angler, the hope of seeing my children one day catch a false albacore on Fly or light tackle seems to be more grim with each decision being made up and down the Atlantic seaboard. It is time for proper management and tactical planning for the years ahead. My town in Massachusetts would not flourish with out fish like albies, striped bass, and bluefish. We have seen more and more anglers on the water, and in most cases, less fish. I am eager to see those in charge make the correct decision and rewrite the course to ensure future generations of anglers, and businesses that depend on the recreational anglers who travel from near and far for these fish, are around for the long haul.</p>

Name	State/Province	Comments
Shannon Richards	New York	<p>Thank you, state of North Carolina for taking the lead on albie management! Other states are now utilizing your rule-making processes to establish albie regulations; because of your leadership.</p> <p>Commercial and bait fisheries exist for false albacore, and anecdotal reports indicate these fisheries may be expanding without functional guardrails and monitoring. The proposed regulations are not designed to limit anyone's usage of the resource but rather conserve this economically critical fish and provide long-term opportunities for all sectors.</p> <p>False albacore are a tremendously important recreational fish species for anglers and fishing-related businesses from Massachusetts to Florida. In 2021, there were over 500,000 directed trips on the Atlantic coast where false albacore were the primary or secondary target species. From 2011-2021, the average number of directed false albacore trips was more than half a million trips. Among others, recreational anglers like myself rely on this species, especially in recent years when striped bass and other inshore species have been less abundant.</p> <p>I am a supporter of the ASGA. We believe that false albacore deserve guardrail management at a minimum. This species drives a large economy from Florida to the Vineyard. We are not saying that false albacore are in a crisis, but given the importance of this fish to anglers up and down the coast, putting some guardrails in place to ensure the fishery's abundance moving forward is critical.</p> <p>While a resident of New York State, I appreciate the leadership North Carolina is exploring in protecting this migratory species. As your actions benefit us in New York, I will work to support New York following suit in their protections affecting the anglers of the great state of North Carolina. One fishery!</p>
Patrick Cassidy	Massachusetts	<p>Please take whatever steps are necessary to protect false albacore and lead by example in doing so. I am a saltwater fly fishing guide in Massachusetts who also operates a maritime training school. When the topic of albies comes up around here, everyone's ears perk up. Albie anglers are a passionate bunch and tend to put their money where their mouth is, helping drive the economy in their pursuit of these fish. Many anglers I know from Maine to Rhode Island literally follow albies down the coast and land in your</p>

Name	State/Province	Comments
		<p>state for the late season albie run, spending money and supporting local businesses all along the way. This is a coastwise species with an effect on all of the Atlantic states. The establishment of guardrails to safeguard the shared benefits that result will reverberate across sectors and jurisdictional lines. Massachusetts is already moving to join you in this effort and other states are sure to follow. Please take action now so that we can enjoy these fish for many years to come. For once, let's all avoid putting off hard decisions for another time. Doing so is all but assured to reduce the need for more drastic measures in the future. Thank you for your efforts and attention.</p> <p>Tight lines, Patrick Cassidy [REDACTED] [REDACTED] capecodonthefly.com capecodschoolorsaltwaterflyfishing.com</p>
Capt. Cody Rubner	Florida	<p>My name is Captain Cody Rubner. I own and operate High Roller Guide Service located in Stuart, FL. I support false albacore management in North Carolina. These fish are undervalued and critical to angling communities and economies from MA to NC and FL. Please continue moving this management effort down the line and enact these precautionary measures into law! This rulemaking not only represents conservation for a worthy species but also marks a shift in the mindset of managing false albacore. With all of the variables that impact our rapidly changing marine resources, we can no longer utilize the "drain it to the bottom then shut it off" management strategy. We must enact proactive measures that ensure we never reach rock bottom to begin with. This strategy protects independent commercial markets and a robust recreational industry. You may not realize it but NC has the opportunity to set a monumental example for the rest of the coast for ALL species, not just albies.</p>
Tyler waitt	Massachusetts	
Sarah Machesko	Florida	<p>False albacore are an important species that support our family's business in Florida. They make up a substantial percentage of our income during the late spring and summer months. Our community is discussing how pressure on albies is increasing and their abundance is dropping. On days that I get to</p>

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		participate in the fishery, I have noticed less and less each of the last three summers. Please approve these measures! I hope to see Florida do the same, too.
Carle Hildreth	Maine	<p>Thank you for taking the steps to consider precautionary management of false albacore. As a guide and recreational angler based out of Southern Maine this fish provides tremendous excitement to myself and the anglers and clients I travel with to pursue this fishery. From Cape Cod to North Carolina we spend our vacation time and PTO chasing this fish all fall. Having economic information and gathering as much data as possible is crucial to the long term understanding of this fishery and its future management. Please continue to move forward with precautionary management steps of Proposed Rule 15A NCAC 03M .0523 and let's keep this fishery healthy and sustainable for the years to come.</p> <p>Regards, E. Carle Hildreth, III No Slack! Sportfishing Charters Portland, ME</p>
Presley Sexton	North Carolina	I believe the preservation of our nature and wildlife are a serious issue that should be taken very seriously, however, I also believe that our peoples livelihood should be taken into account as well. The ramifications of putting such harsh restrictions on blue crabs could result in shutting down businesses and putting a large number of people out of jobs. And In such a small community, such as the one I live in, that is a big deal that could have a serious negative impact. Fishermans jobs are at stake and putting them out of business is not the solution. Especially when further, much more thorough research has yet to be taken.
William M. Henley	Virginia	<p>Hi,</p> <p>I visit coastal NC, specifically Hyde County multiple times a year as an avid recreational fisherman. I would like to express my support for Southern Flounder FMP Amendment 4 and its role in the broader plan to reduce overfishing of Southern Flounder. Ensuring measures to protect the sustainability of this fishery for the long term is critical. I support the proposal of Amendment 4 "to expedite the sector (commercial/recreational) allocation transition to 50/50 in 2025 rather than 2026", because it would increase allowed recreational harvest without increasing total harvest. This is a good idea! Thanks for</p>

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		<p>giving strong consideration to the recreational crowd.</p> <p>Next, I would like to express my strong support for the proposed changes to Speckled Trout regulations in FMP Amendment 1, specifically the slot limit, allowance for only one fish over 26", low bag limit, and statewide season closure window. I believe that the slot limit will ultimately allow for more larger, breeding age fish to survive, and therefore allow more recruitment. It would also hopefully allow for more trophy size fish in the long run. I believe these measures are absolutely necessary to ensure the long term sustainability of Speckled Trout in NC, especially given the recent cold stun. These proposed changes should be, at the very least, no less strict than they already are, if any change is made I believe they should become more strict. Let's not let what has happened to Southern Flounder happen to Speckled Trout too. According to the 2022 trout stock assessment, "the stock is not overfished however overfishing is occurring." If I am correct, this means that if overfishing continues the stock will eventually be overfished. We have a real chance to get ahead on this and change this trajectory.</p> <p>I think it comes down to the public being willing to sacrifice and eat a little less trout and flounder now for the sake of the future fishery.</p> <p>Thank you all for what you do! God bless!</p>
Jerry James	North Carolina	<p>What is the purpose of scoping meetings on the flounder amendment. You never listen to the public anyway. You have already made up your mind on what you are going to do. This division needs a house cleaning starting at the top</p>
Tiffany Dunbar	North Carolina	<p>My name is Tiffany. I hold a dealers license at this time to market soft crabs. I am married to Blake Dunbar from Oriental. He is both a commercial and recreational fisherman, who has been working the waters of Neuse River and Pamlico Sound since he could walk. He makes the majority of his income crabbing in the Spring and Summer, then recreational guide fishing in the Fall. The proposed changes to 6 major fisheries are alarming.</p> <p>A bushel daily crab limit with no evidence to support this decision is asinine. If you want a reduction in crab harvests and a potential for increasing immature crabs, then a full restriction on sponge crabs we</p>

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		<p>believe is the best solution. A sponge crab can lay over a million crabs. The majority feed other marine life, but 1-3 will become mature females.</p> <p>Regarding southern flounder, 30 years of fishing and we have never seen a decline like the marine fisheries report. In many cases, they are a nuisance since they can't be kept. Blake can right now, go catch more than a commercial limit with a rod and reel. The only shortage is a lack of proper studying within the population.</p> <p>The trout situation regarding commercial fishing is a slap in the face. Slot size limit for commercial will generate a large amount of unintended waste. Also, why should commercial fisherman be limited to a certain number of days per week when recreational numbers of caught trout are just as high, if not higher. If commercial fishing gets limited to Tuesday-Friday, then recreational should be limited to Friday through Monday.</p> <p>Lastly, I will speak about oysters which is his favorite fishery. It is known that oyster reefs grow upward and outward. However, they grow at a rate of about 3 inches every 18-24 months. The proposed amendments for increasing oysters' reefs would mean a growth of about 5-6 feet, that would take 20-25 years. Wild oysters have never been completely wiped out. The only close call was about 10-15 years ago when the Marine Fisheries allowed any lay person to get a \$25 license and harvest 20 bushels a day. Since that debacle, oysterman have been properly rotating rocks and harvesting their limits. The problem as we see it is the survey size used are the same 30 rocks every year, with over 4000 natural and artificial rocks available to choose from. Blake personally watched this past winter, the surveyors went to the same four rocks, four separate times. Even after he had told them that the oyster rock had already been harvested on. This is not an accurate way to survey or gather data. We all know that the largest threat to oysters is pollution. They will die regardless of harvesting when the water quality is poor. The dying of oysters will destabilize the rocks, taking longer for then to reach the intended height indicated. We should be able to harvest these oysters when the water quality is good. The Marine Fisheries should push harder for improvement of water quality in our rivers and sounds, instead of blaming fisherman for declining populations.</p> <p>Watermen who actually fish for these populations know what is going on, not the surveyors and bureaucrats. They don't make it a habit of asking for help or input of what the real situation is. More collaboration would be a better use of taxpayer dollars and result in more accurate reporting. Every year,</p>

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		there are more fisherman on the water. Yet, you still call for reductions with no tangible evidence of what will work and what won't. More sincere effort and thought need to be involved, before adopting any of these proposed changes.
Ronald martin	North Carolina	Please do not extend the closer date for spotted sea trout to June 30th so it can reopen on the 15th. Please extend out the distance that a commercial fishing boat can come to the shore.
Kendell Guthrie	North Carolina	As a part time commercial crab fisherman, working in down east Carteret county the closure on female crab harvesting will be devastating to crabbers working in Core and Southern Pamlico sounds in late winter and early spring (February thru June). The water temperature in these areas warm up quicker than the rivers and northern sounds in the State and produce good numbers of female crabs when water temperatures are often to cold in other areas. Closure for harvest of female crabs during this time period would be devastating to families who depend on a paycheck during this time. I beg you to reconsider closing the female crab harvest January- June
Woody Joyner	North Carolina	<p>Monday, March 10, 2025</p> <p>I am a full-time resident of Hatteras Village and forwarding this Public Comment as a member of the North Carolina Watermen United (NCWU). I would like to thank Chairman Corbett and members of the Commission for scheduling the 2025 Marine Fisheries Commission (MFC) Winter Business Meeting in Dare County. This is not just for our county but for all residing in northeastern North Carolina.</p> <p>After reviewing all the critical issues on the Q1 agenda, I find myself in a dilemma on which item to concentrate. Instead, I decided on taking a different tack from the dozen or so public comments I have made in the past on behalf our hard-working men & women who earn a living on the water. The NCWU and all fishermen recognize the Commission's difficult task to thoughtfully and sensibly protect the biomass of our fish, oysters, crabs, and shrimp. As a group, we would also hope the Commission would embrace the same consideration to maintain the viability of our commercial and charter-for-hire sectors. I would encourage our state's MFC to take into consideration the broad goals of the federal Magnuson Stevens Act and subsequent amendments. To quote two statements from the Federal Register:</p> <p>"The federal law is also required to boost the health of many U.S. fisheries, while growing jobs and the economy in the process".</p>

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		<p>What is in fact a “fishery”?</p> <p>“Any activity that involves the economics of harvesting fish, encompassing the area where fishing occurs, the people involved, and the species being caught, all considered as a single unit for management purposes.”</p> <p>In the almost daily conversations, I have with local watermen, most believe “the people involved” have not been given their fair share in the decision-making process. These include not just those on the water but the many family-owned, multi-generational, small businesses that support and benefit from the fishing sector.</p> <p>In conclusion, in the eyes of our dedicated fishermen, fishing to keep food on the table and a roof over the heads of their families is not just an occupation. It is at the core of their collective history for well over a century and most importantly, fishing is the basis of a waterman’s culture.</p> <p>Again, my thanks to the Commission for the opportunity to offer this Public Comment and most importantly, I would like to recognize all the committed women and men for making the concerted effort to show their solidarity. We believe it is paramount for us to be able to continue to harvest this public trust in our waters to provide fresh, locally caught seafood to the citizens of NC and the many guests who visit our coastal communities.</p> <p>Woody Joyner</p>
Charles Locke	North Carolina	<p>I am very opposed to this “guardrails” approach at false albacore management being pushed by one recreational member of the marine fisheries commission! Albacore management didn't even meet the criteria to be managed at the south Atlantic Council, as well as the Atlantic states marine fisheries commission. That is reason enough for the state to not waste any time or effort on someone's personal agenda. Secondly, and very importantly, there is not a species of fish that is properly managed by having a combined commercial/recreational trigger point. This management measure will kick in once the combined recreational and commercial harvest exceeds 200% of the average. No other species is managed like this! That's why we have stock assessments and quotas and quota allocation, just like every other species of fish managed. Commercial has their quota recreational has their own separate quota. They are not combined. This is so far from normal fisheries management, and so far from the</p>

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		<p>normal fisheries management process that I find it hard to believe it has gotten this far in this commission. Why would either the recreational or the commercial fisherman anywhere want there access potentially denied because of either user groups increasing harvest??? as many of you know the trend in most fisheries in the last five years the harvest increases have been on the recreational side! I am all for a proactive approach to false albacore. I have said that from the beginning, I have voiced that to Tom Roller, as well as the saltwater guides association, who is the big pusher of this management scheme. But the way that this is going about is setting a very dangerous precedent for fisheries management in the future on stocks that have no proper stock assessment. There is tagging data that will be available on false albacore soon as well as landings data that can be quantified to find trends. You could use a stoplight approach similar to what we use with spot and croakers at the ASMFC. But without true proper data collection on the species, we are putting the cart before the horse! I ask this question how would you like the commercial industry to take the same approach with say ribbonfish (Atlantic Cutlassfish) a primarily commercial harvest, with almost 80 to 90% commercial landings that now is seeing a huge trend of recreational landings especially through charter boats out of North Carolina. There's pictures of dock shots of 100 to 200 Ribbonfish lined up behind half day boats all summer long! To the recreational fishermen on this commission would you want one commercial representative with a personal agenda screaming we need to put guard rails in place on ribbonfish! I ask you is that the kind of precedent you want to set on false albacore???? This commission is playing with fire by not following the proper fisheries management measures that every council in the United States uses to enact regulations. As a commercial fisherman, we live and die by the sword of best available science and we have to go with it, which is why I'm so involved in research and the fisheries management process. This "guard rails" approach has nothing to do with science, data or any other proper metric when it comes to fisheries management, but has simply been pushed by one persons agenda, and that my friends is no guard rail!</p>

I started attending MFC meetings in 2014. I have made public and written comments in support of the resource . My comments have been ignored along with most all comments that speak to resource conservation. The 1997 Fisheries Reform Act clearly states that you are responsible for saltwater resource and habitat conservation. You have failed miserably! Your own data tells the story of a saltwater resource in dramatic decline. The 1997 FRA gives you the authority to make your agenda an agenda for resource conservation not resource consumption. Your agenda drowns in five year fishery management plan updates rather than addressing the real fundamental reasons that are destroying our saltwater resource.

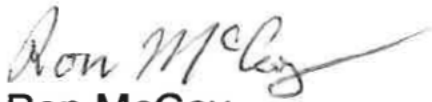
Fundamental Reason 1: Large mesh gill nets are used throughout our saltwater ecosystem. Every state on a USA ocean has removed or severely restricted this indescrement killer from their inshore waters except this North Carolina Marine Fisheries Commission.

Fundamental Reason 2 : Recreational fishermen are allowed to use commercial gear throughout our saltwater ecosystem. Every state on a USA ocean restricts the use of commercial gear to true commercial fishermen that report all their catches on trip tickets except this North Carolina Marine Fisheries Commission.

Fundamental Reason 3 : Large ocean shrimp trawlers fish in our rivers and sounds destroying the ecosystem where our fish spawn and begin life. Every state on a USA ocean has completely removed large ocean shrimp trawlers from their rivers and sounds except this North Carolina Marine Fisheries Commission.

Fishery Management Plans divide what's left of the resource between user groups. FMP's are just a way to hide from your sworn oath to protect the resource. Recently I heard our state government say that we don't have a saltwater resource problem because there are plenty of fish to catch. There are plenty of pinfish and lizzard fish.

Do I really think that you listen to public comments? NO!



Ron McCoy

