

**Marine Fisheries Commission Proposals
for
Draft Supplement A to Amendment 1 of the
N.C. Southern Flounder Fishery Management Plan**

Proposal 1

Pound Net Set Permits:

- 15-inch minimum size for southern flounder
- Escape panels shall be a minimum mesh size of
 - Option 1: 5 ¾ inch
 - Option 2: 6 inch(all other escape panel requirements remain)
- Immediately initiate a Total Allowable Catch that represents a 25 percent reduction of the 2013 landings (highest landings on record since 2005). The 2013 landings represent a 79 percent jump in landings from the 2005 Fishery Management Plan landings level of concern.
- Total Allowable Catch = 625,626 pounds (higher than all but one year between 2005-2012)
- Active pound net set permits may be renewed, but no new permit applications will be processed after June 1, 2015, until the completion of the next amendment.
- No pound net set permit transfers will occur until the completion of the next amendment, except upon death of the permittee pursuant to 15NCAC O3J .0504.
- Daily reporting as a condition of the permit for flounder pound nets.

Commercial Gig:

- Commercial gigging will only be allowed four days per week, beginning Monday at sunrise and ending on Friday at sunrise.
- 15-inch size limit
- Trip limit of 36 flounder per valid Standard Commercial Fishing License with maximum of one limit per operation, regardless of the number of valid Standard Commercial Fishing Licenses present.
 - Option 1: A maximum of one limit per operation regardless of the number of valid Standard Commercial Fishing Licenses present.
 - Option 2: A maximum of two limits per operation regardless of the number of valid Standard Commercial Fishing Licenses present.

Anchored Large Mesh Gill Nets (commercial and recreational):

- 2015 season will remain status quo.
- Effective Jan. 1, 2016, anchored large mesh gill nets will be a prohibited gear in the taking and possession of flounder in internal waters.

Commercial harvest by other gear:

- 15-inch size limit

Proposal 2

- All commercial fishing will observe a 15-inch size limit.
- N.C. large mesh gill nets in the southern flounder fishery will close Sept. 16 north of Cape Hatteras and will not open until Jan. 16. South of Cape Hatteras the closure would be Oct. 16 to Jan. 1.
- Pound nets will be subject to the 15-inch size limit and to a 5¾-inch or 6-inch escape panel.
- Commercial giggers will be subject to a 15-inch size limit and a 35-fish trip limit per boat.
- Recreational hook-and-line and giggers will have no reductions unless a closure from Nov. 1 to Dec. 31 is considered necessary to meet appropriate reductions.
- There will be a moratorium on pound net sets and permits based on the past five years of activity, until the next amendment is adopted, unless death or disability of the owner is an issue.

Proposal 3

- Retain the 15-inch size limit and 6-fish bag limit for recreational.
- Increase the size limit to 15 inches for commercial, with a 6-inch stretched mesh for large mesh gill nets, and escape panels in pound nets.
- Close all southern flounder fisheries from Nov. 16 –Dec. 31.

Proposal 4

- Maintain status quo for commercial.
- Decrease recreational size limit to 14 inches.
- Observe 60-day comment period, with stakeholder input.

Proposal 5

- Retain 15-inch size limit and 6-fish bag limit for recreational.
- Increase the size limit to 15 inches for commercial with a 5¾-inch stretched mesh for large mesh gill nets and escape panels in pound nets.
- Close commercial and recreational fisheries from Dec. 1 – 31.

Proposal 6

- Minimum mesh size limit of 5¾ inch stretch mesh for large mesh gill nets and escape panels in pound nets.
- Dec. 1 – 31 closure for all gear types, both commercial and recreational.