

NC Marine Fisheries Commission

Preliminary Matters

May 2026 Quarterly Business Meeting

Documents

Meeting Agenda

Draft February 2026 Meeting Minutes

Marine Fisheries Commission Business Meeting

MEETING AGENDA

Doubletree by Hilton Hotel; New Bern, NC

May 13-14, 2026

N.C.G.S. 138A-15(e) mandates at the beginning of any meeting of a board, the chair shall remind all members of their duty to avoid conflicts of interest under Chapter 138. The chair also shall inquire as to whether there is any known conflict of interest with respect to any matters coming before the board at that time.

N.C.G.S. 143B-289.54.(g)(2) states a member of the Marine Fisheries Commission shall not vote on any issue before the Commission that would have a "significant and predictable effect" on the member's financial interest. For purposes of this subdivision, "significant and predictable effect" means there is or may be a close causal link between the decision of the Commission and an expected disproportionate financial benefit to the member that is shared only by a minority of persons within the same industry sector or gear group. A member of the Commission shall also abstain from voting on any petition submitted by an advocacy group of which the member is an officer or sits as a member of the advocacy group's board of directors. A member of the Commission shall not use the member's official position as a member of the Commission to secure any special privilege or exemption of substantial value for any person. No member of the Commission shall, by the member's conduct, create an appearance that any person could improperly influence the member in the performance of the member's official duties.

Commissioners having questions about a conflict of interest or appearance of conflict should consult with counsel to the Marine Fisheries Commission or the secretary's ethics liaison. Upon discovering a conflict, the commissioner should inform the chair of the commission in accordance with N.C.G.S. 138A-15(e).

Wednesday, May 13, 2026

- 1:00 p.m. Preliminary Matters
- Commission Call to Order* – *Sammy Corbett, Chairman*
 - Moment of Silence and Pledge of Allegiance
 - Conflict of Interest Reminder
 - Roll Call
 - **Approval of Meeting Minutes ****
- 1:15 p.m. Chairman's Report
- Letters and Online Comments
 - Ethics Training and Statement of Economic Interest Reminder
 - 2026 Proposed Meeting Schedule
- 1:30 p.m. Director's Report – *Kathy Rawls*
- Red Snapper EFP Update – *Trish Murphey*
 - Marine Patrol Update – *Colonel Chris Lee*
 - Incidental Take Permit Update – *Jason Rock*
- 2:00 p.m. Fishery Management Plan Updates – *Dan Zapf, Jeff Dobbs*
- Implementation of Adopted FMPs
 - Upcoming FMPs
 - Red Drum FMP Amendment 2
 - Southern Flounder FMP Amendment 5
- 2:30 p.m. Kingfishes Fishery Management Plan Amendment 1 – *Matthew Doster, Claire Pelletier*
- Background, Life History, and Fishery Characterization

** Times indicated are merely for guidance. The commission will proceed through the agenda until completed.*

***Probable Action Items*

Marine Fisheries Commission Business Meeting Agenda

- 3:00 p.m. Legislative Study of Coastal and Marine Fisheries Report – *Dr. Joel Fodrie*
- 4:00 p.m. Break
- 6:00 p.m. Return for Evening Public Comment Period

Thursday, May 14, 2026

- 9:00 a.m. Public Comment Period
- 9:30 a.m. Rulemaking – *Catherine Blum*
- 2024-2025 Rulemaking Cycle Update
 - 2025-2026 Rulemaking Cycle Update
 - 2026-2027 Rulemaking Cycle
 - **Vote on Notice of Text for Rulemaking for adoption of 15A NCAC 03M .0524 for Atlantic Bonito Management ****
- 10:15 a.m. 2025 Spotted Seatrout Cold Stun Update – *Lucas Pensinger*
- 10:45 a.m. Updates on the Blue Crab Benchmark Stock Assessment Process – *Dan Zapf, Matt Damiano, Matt Zink*
- 12:00 p.m. Lunch Break
- 1:30 p.m. Eastern Oyster Fishery Management Plan Amendment 5 – *Bennett Paradis, McLean Seward, Zach Harrison*
- Deepwater Oyster Recovery Areas Presentation
- 2:15 p.m. Red Drum Satellite Tagging Project – *Cara Kowalchyk, John Mohan*
- 3:00 p.m. Issues from Commissioners
- 3:30 p.m. Meeting Assignments and Preview of Agenda Items for Next Meeting – *Jesse Bisette*
- 3:45 p.m. Adjourn

** Times indicated are merely for guidance. The commission will proceed through the agenda until completed.*

***Probable Action Items*

Marine Fisheries Commission Business Meeting Minutes

DRAFT

Hilton Garden Inn

Kitty Hawk, North Carolina

February 18-19, 2026

The Marine Fisheries Commission (MFC) held a business meeting on February 18-19, 2026, at the Hilton Garden Inn in Kitty Hawk, North Carolina. In addition to the public comment sessions, members of the public submitted public comment online or via U.S. mail. The written comments, briefing materials, presentations, and full audio from this meeting are available [here](#).

Actions and motions from the business meeting are listed in **bold** type.

BUSINESS MEETING

Wednesday, February 18, 2026

Public Comment Period

Chairman Sammy Corbett held a public comment session that began at 6:00 p.m. The following members of the public provided comment to the commission: Charles Locke, Steve House, James Byrd, Duke Spencer, Reese Stecher, Ralph Craddock, Keith Tongier, Bobby Smith, Mary Ellon Balance, Terry Stuart, Bill Moore, Ervin Bateman. With no one else wishing to speak, Chairman Corbett ended the public comment period at 6:28 p.m.

[View the video recording of the February 18, 2026, 6:00 p.m. public comment session](#)

Thursday, February 19, 2026

Public Comment Period

Chairman Sammy Corbett held a public comment session that began at 9:00 a.m. The following members of the public provided comment to the commission: Bill Foster, Jake Griffin, Chris Hickman, Dewey Hemilright, Thomas Newman, Micah Daniels, Woody Joyner, Tara Foreman, Bob Woodard. With no one else wishing to speak, Chairman Corbett ended the public comment period at 9:24 a.m.

[View the video recording of the February 19, 2026, 9:00 a.m. public comment session](#)

Preliminary Matters

Chairman Corbett called the February 18-19, 2025, business meeting to order.

Chairman Corbett began the meeting with a moment of silence, followed by the pledge of allegiance.

Next, Chairman Corbett reminded all commissioners of N.C. General Statute § 138A-15(e), which mandates at the beginning of any meeting of a board, the Chair shall remind all members of their duty to avoid conflicts of interest under Chapter 138. The Chair also shall inquire as to whether there is any known conflict of interest with respect to any matters coming before the board at that time. There were no stated conflicts of interest from any commissioner.

The following MFC members were in attendance: Mike Blanton, Willie Closs, Sarah Gardner, Alfred Hobgood, John Mallette, Doug Rader, Tom Roller, William Service, and Sammy Corbett – Chairman.

Chairman Corbett asked for any corrections, additions or deletions that need to be made to the November 2025 MFC Quarterly Business Meeting minutes and then requested a motion to approve the minutes.

Motion by Commissioner Roller to approve the November 2025 business meeting minutes.

Second by Commissioner Service.

Motion passed unanimously.

Motion by Commissioner Roller to add a presentation on the Deepwater Oyster Recovery Areas adopted under the Amendment 5 of the Eastern Oyster FMP.

Second by Commissioner Rader.

ROLL CALL VOTE					
Member	Aye	Nay	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Blanton	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Closs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gardner	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hobgood	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mallette	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rader	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Roller	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Service	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Corbett	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Motion passed 8-0, with 1 abstention.

Motion by Commissioner Roller to add Blue Crab FMP Amendment 3 Adaptive Management to the MFC’s May 2026 business meeting agenda, including a possible vote to select Amendment 3 adaptive management options.

Second by Commissioner Rader.

ROLL CALL VOTE					
Member	Aye	Nay	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Blanton	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Closs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gardner	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hobgood	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Malette	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rader	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Roller	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Service	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Corbett	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Motion failed 4-4, with 1 abstention.

[View the recording of the motions and surrounding discussion](#)

Chairman’s Report

Letters and Online Comments

Chairman Corbett referred commissioners to letters and comments provided in the briefing materials.

Ethics Training and Statement of Economic Interest Reminder

Chairman Corbett reminded commissioners to work with MFC Liaison Jesse Bisette to stay up to date on their ethics training and Statement of Economic Interest.

Director’s Report

Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF) Policy Manager Barbie Byrd sat in place of Director Kathy Rawls. The sheepshead size limit change and a new recreational bad limit has been implemented. An update was also given on the Coastal Habitat Protection Plan (CHPP), noting that issue papers are currently being drafted, with Steering Committee meetings scheduled for May and July. Regarding the Incidental Take Permit (ITP), Director Rawls

closed management section A to use of gill nets on December 19. Division staff recently met with the NOAA to discuss the authorized take level, which was reached sooner than expected and operates on a rolling two-year cycle. An update was also provided on the CCA lawsuit, noting that the plaintiffs have finished presenting their case and the state is currently presenting evidence, although the timeline for a ruling from the judge remains uncertain. Staff updates included the retirement of field technician David Skinner, Marine Patrol officer Michael Long, and Marine Patrol Major Jason Walker. Additionally, Chris Lee has been appointed as the new Colonel and Eddie Mann as the new Major of Marine Patrol.

[View the video recording of the Director's Report and surrounding discussion.](#)

Red Snapper Exempted Fishing Permit Update

DMF Assistant to South Atlantic Fisheries Management Council (SAFMC) Trish Murphey gave a presentation of the status of the South Atlantic Exempted Fishing Permit Application for Atlantic red snapper.

After the presentation, Chairman Corbett opened the floor to commissioners for comments and questions.

[View the video recording of the presentation and surrounding discussion.](#)

Rulemaking

DMF Rulemaking Coordinator Catherine Blum provided updates on the 2024-2025 rulemaking cycle, 2025-2026 rulemaking cycle, and 2026-2027 rulemaking cycle.

After the presentation, Chairman Corbett opened the floor to commissioners for comments and questions.

Motion by Commissioner Roller to select Option 4 as the MFC's preferred management option, including the associated proposed language for rulemaking, for the Atlantic Bonito Management issue paper.

Second by Commissioner Hobgood.

ROLL CALL VOTE					
Member	Aye	Nay	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Blanton	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Closs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gardner	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hobgood	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Malette	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rader	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Roller	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Service	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Corbett	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Motion passed 5-2, with 2 abstentions.

[View the video recording of the presentation and surrounding discussion.](#)

Fishery Management Plan Updates

DMF Biologists Dan Zapf and Jeff Dobbs gave a presentation providing updates and recent activity related to the recently reviewed and upcoming Fishery Management Plans.

After the presentation, Chairman Corbett opened the floor to commissioners for comments and questions.

[View the video recording of the presentation and surrounding discussion.](#)

Spotted Seatrout Cold Stun Update

DMF Biologist Lucas Pensinger gave a presentation on the 2025 and 2026 Spotted Seatrout cold stun events.

After the presentation, Chairman Corbett opened the floor to commissioners for comments and questions.

[View the video recording of the presentation and surrounding discussion.](#)

Periodic Review and Expiration of Existing Rules

Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF) Rulemaking Coordinator Catherine Blum gave a presentation on the Periodic Review and Expiration of Existing Rules.

After the presentation, Chairman Corbett opened the floor to commissioners for comments and questions.

Motion by Commissioner Roller to approve the initial determination of rules and proceed to public notice, per N.C.G.S. 150B-21.3A for the following:

- **15A NCAC 03Q .0100;**
- **All other rules in 15A NCAC 03;**
- **15A NCAC 10C .0100; and**
- **15A NCAC 18A .0100, .0300-.0900, .3400.**

Second by Commissioner Gardner.

ROLL CALL VOTE					
Member	Aye	Nay	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Blanton	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Closs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gardner	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hobgood	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Malette	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rader	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Roller	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Service	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Corbett	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Motion passed unanimously.

[View the video recording of the presentation and surrounding discussion.](#)

Mandatory Harvest Reporting Update

MFC Liaison Jesse Bisette gave a verbal update following the December 1, 2025 effective date of the Mandatory Harvest Reporting regulations.

After the presentation, Chairman Corbett opened the floor to commissioners for comments and questions.

[View the video recording of the presentation and surrounding discussion.](#)

Issues from Commissioners

Chairman Corbett opened the floor to commissioners for comments, questions, and other discussion.

Commissioner Gardner requested a presentation at an upcoming meeting about tagging programs happening within the state.

[View the video recording of the Issues from Commissioners.](#)

Meeting Assignments and Preview of Agenda Items for Next Meeting

The DMF's MFC Liaison Jesse Bisette reviewed meeting assignments and provided an overview of the May 2026 meeting items.

Having no further business to conduct, Chairman Corbett adjourned the meeting at 2:13 p.m.

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