

Note from the Codifier: The OAH website includes notices and the text of proposed temporary rules as required by G.S. 150B-21.1(a1). Prior to the agency adopting the temporary rule, the agency must hold a public hearing no less than five days after the rule and notice have been published and must accept comments for at least 15 business days.
For questions, you may contact the Office of Administrative Hearings at 984-236-1850 or email oah.postmaster@oah.nc.gov.

TITLE 15A – DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

Notice is hereby given in accordance with G.S. 150B-21.1(a3) that the Wildlife Resources Commission intends to amend the rule cited as 15A NCAC 10C .0314.

Codifier of Rules received for publication the following notice and proposed temporary rule(s) on: December 5, 2025.

Public Hearing:

Date: January 6, 2026

Time: 2:00 P.M.

Location: Virtual public hearing via Zoom, pre-registration is required: https://ncwildlife-org.zoomgov.com/webinar/register/WN_2Clk5cUcRN-8ItQ9Fw3q_w or join by telephone toll free: (833) 568-8864, Webinar ID: 161 480 5948

Reason for Proposed Temporary Action: G.S. 150B-21.1(a)(7) b. and c. The proposed temporary amendments establish a Striped Bass harvest season April 1 to April 30, in the inland waters of the Tar-Pamlico River and its tributaries upstream of a line shore to shore between Gum Point and Fork Point and the Neuse River and its tributaries upstream of a line shore to shore between Cooper Point and Fisher Landing Point. The proposed daily creel limit for striped bass and striped bass hybrids is one fish in aggregate. A slot limit is proposed where the minimum size limit is 18 inches, and no fish may be possessed between 22 and 27 inches in length.

The NC Division of Marine Fisheries is also changing their regulations to provide regulatory consistency in coastal waters. This regulatory change is part of the cooperative Striped Bass management between the two agencies.

Comment Procedures: Comments from the public shall be directed to: Rulemaking Coordinator, 1701 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699; email regulations@ncwildlife.gov. The comment period begins December 15, 2025 and ends January 31, 2026.

CHAPTER 10 - WILDLIFE RESOURCES AND WATER SAFETY

SUBCHAPTER 10C - INLAND FISHING REGULATIONS

SECTION .0300 – GAME FISH IN INLAND FISHING WATERS

15A NCAC 10C .0314 STRIPED BASS

- (a) The daily creel limit for striped bass and its hybrids is four fish in an aggregate, except in waters identified in Paragraphs (d) and (g) through ~~(h)~~(m) of this Rule.
- (b) The minimum size limit for these fish is 20 inches, except in waters identified in Paragraphs (d) through ~~(h)~~(m) of this Rule.
- (c) There is no closed season, except for waters identified in Paragraphs (i) through ~~(h)~~(m) of this Rule.
- (d) In the Dan River upstream from its confluence with Bannister River to the dam at Union Street in Danville, VA and in John H. Kerr Reservoir, the daily creel limit on striped bass and its hybrids is two in aggregate and the minimum size limit is 20 inches. No fish greater than 26 inches may be possessed from October 1 through May 31. From June 1 through September 30, the daily creel limit for striped bass and its hybrids is four in aggregate with no minimum size limit.
- (e) In Lake Gaston and Roanoke Rapids Reservoir, the minimum size limit for striped bass and its hybrids is 20 inches from October 1 through May 31. There is no minimum size limit for these fish from June 1 through September 30.
- (f) In Farmer Lake, Hyco Lake, Moss Lake, Oak Hollow Lake, Lake Townsend, and Salem Lake the minimum size limit for striped bass and its hybrids is 16 inches.
- (g) In Lake Chatuge in Clay County, the daily creel limit is 15 in the aggregate. There is no minimum size limit, and two may be greater than 22 inches.
- (h) In Lake Mattamuskeet, and in the Pee Dee River and its tributaries downstream from the Blewett Falls Dam to the South Carolina state line, the daily creel limit for striped bass and its hybrids is three fish in aggregate, and the minimum size limit is 18 inches.
- (i) In the inland waters of the Tar-Pamlico River and its tributaries upstream of a line shore to shore beginning at a point at Gum Point 35.419448 N 76.758752 W running southwesterly to a point at Fork Point at 35.390755 N 76.77391 W and the Neuse River and its tributaries upstream of a line shore to shore beginning at a point at Cooper Point 35.035722 N 76.933275 W running southwesterly to a point at Fisher Landing Point 35.002583 N 76.97623 W, the following restrictions shall apply:
- (1) the season for taking and possessing striped bass and striped bass hybrids is April 1 through April 30.
 - (2) the daily creel limit for striped bass and striped bass hybrids is one fish in aggregate.
 - (3) it is unlawful to possess a striped bass or striped bass hybrid less than 18 inches or between 22 and 27 inches in length.

In the inland waters tributary to the Tar-Pamlico River and Neuse River downstream of these lines, the season for taking and possessing striped bass and striped bass hybrids is closed year-round.

~~(h)(i)~~ In the inland fishing waters of the ~~Tar, Pungo, Neuse, Pungo~~ and Cape Fear rivers and their tributaries extending upstream to the first impoundment of the main course on the river or its tributaries, in other inland fishing waters east of Interstate 95 not specified in

Paragraphs (h), (j), and (k) of this Rule, and in the ponds associated with Martin Marietta Park in Craven County, the season for taking and possessing striped bass is closed year-round.

~~(j)~~(k) In the inland and joint fishing waters of the Roanoke River Striped Bass Management Area, as established in 15A NCAC 03R .0201 and identified in 15A NCAC 10C .0110 which includes the Roanoke, Cashie, Middle, and Eastmost rivers and their tributaries, the open season for taking and possessing striped bass and its hybrids is March 1 through April 30 from the joint-coastal fishing waters boundary at Albemarle Sound upstream to Roanoke Rapids Lake Dam. During the open season, the daily creel limit for striped bass and its hybrids is one fish in aggregate, and the minimum size limit is 18 inches. No fish over 22 inches in length shall be possessed.

~~(k)~~(l) In designated inland and joint fishing waters of Roanoke Sound, Croatan Sound, Albemarle Sound, Chowan River, Currituck Sound, Alligator River, Scuppernong River, and their tributaries, excluding the Roanoke River and Cashie River and their tributaries, the striped bass fishing season, size limits, and creel limits are the same as those established by rules or proclamations of the Marine Fisheries Commission in adjacent coastal fishing waters.

~~(l)~~(m) In accordance with G.S. 113-292, the Executive Director may, by proclamation, suspend or extend the hook-and-line season for striped bass in the inland and joint waters of coastal rivers and their tributaries. It is unlawful to violate the provisions of a proclamation issued pursuant to this authority.

Authority G.S. 113-134; 113-292; 113-304; 113-305.