

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 rules cited as 15A NCAC 10C .0218, and .0414.

Codifier of Rules received for publication the following notice and proposed temporary rule(s) on: December 16, 2025.

Public Hearing:

Date: January 22, 2026

Time: 2:00PM

Location: Virtual public hearing via Zoom, pre-registration is required: https://ncwildlife-org.zoomgov.com/webinar/register/WN_azbakUDQRR-qYxyvowS5eA or join by telephone toll free: (833) 568-8864, Webinar ID: 160 938 1499

Reason for Proposed Temporary Action: G.S. 150B-21.1(a)(7) b. and c. The proposed temporary amendments to 15A NCAC 10C .0218 add additional detail for locations where harvest reporting requirements are mandatory. The amendments add clarity and will better ensure the regulated community understands where this rule applies.

The proposed temporary amendments to 15A NCAC 10C .0414 increase the daily creel limit for Bluefish from three fish to five fish.

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 17, 2025 and ends January 31, 2026.

CHAPTER 10 - WILDLIFE RESOURCES AND WATER SAFETY

SUBCHAPTER 10C - INLAND FISHING REGULATIONS

SECTION .0200 - GENERAL REGULATIONS

15A NCAC 10C .0218 HARVEST REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

(a) For the purpose of this Rule, the following definitions shall apply:

- (1) "Division" means the North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries.
- (2) "inland fishing waters adjacent to joint or coastal fishing waters" means inland fishing waters upstream of joint or coastal fishing waters of the Roanoke River downstream of Roanoke Rapids Dam, the Tar River downstream of Rocky Mount Mill Dam, the Neuse River downstream of Falls Lake Dam and the Cape Fear River downstream of Buckhorn Dam, and their tributaries extending upstream to the first impoundment, Roanoke, Tar, Neuse, and Cape Fear rivers and their tributaries extending upstream to the first impoundment of the main course on the river or its tributaries, and in all other inland fishing waters east of Interstate 95 except in the Lumber and Waccamaw rivers ~~River and their its~~ tributaries.
- (3) "harvest" means catching or taking a fish and reducing it to permanent possession by not returning it to the water.

(b) An individual who harvests the following species, from joint fishing waters or inland fishing waters adjacent to joint or coastal fishing waters, shall report the information required in Rule 15A NCAC 03I .0124(b) to the Division at <https://www.ncmarinefisheries.net> or record the harvest on a Division-issued report card when harvest is complete:

- (1) flounder;
- (2) red drum;
- (3) spotted seatrout;
- (4) striped bass; and
- (5) weakfish.

(c) Individuals using a Division-issued report card shall report the information electronically at <https://www.ncmarinefisheries.net> in a manner consistent with requirements of Rule 15A NCAC 03I .0124(b).

(d) An individual shall not remove the head or tail or otherwise change the appearance of the fish to render it impractical to identify, count, or measure while fishing or afield and until harvest has been recorded or reported.

(e) The requirements of this Rule shall be effective in accordance with the schedule in S.L. 2023-137, s. 6(f).

Authority G.S. 113-134; 113-170.3.

SECTION .0400 – NONGAME FISH IN INLAND FISHING WATERS

15A NCAC 10C .0414 BLUEFISH

- (a) The daily creel limit for bluefish is five, ~~three~~.
- (b) There is no size limit.
- (c) There is no closed season.
- (d) Bluefish shall not be sold.

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