



# TEMPORARY RULE-MAKING FINDINGS OF NEED

[Authority G.S. 150B-21.1]

OAH USE ONLY

VOLUME:

ISSUE:

1. Rule-Making Agency: NC Wildlife Resources Commission
2. Rule citation & name: 15A NCAC 10C .0325 SEATROUT
3. Action: <input type="checkbox"/> Adoption <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Amendment <input type="checkbox"/> Repeal
4. Was this an Emergency Rule: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Effective date:
5. Provide dates for the following actions as applicable: a. Proposed Temporary Rule submitted to OAH: 2/9/2026 b. Proposed Temporary Rule published on the OAH website: 2/9/2026 c. Public Hearing date: 2/25/2026 & 3/10/2026 d. Comment Period: 2/9/2026 – 3/13/2026 e. Notice pursuant to G.S. 150B-21.1(a3)(2): 2/9/2026 f. Adoption by agency on: 3/24/2026 g. Proposed effective date of temporary rule if other than effective date established by G.S. 150B- 21.1(b) and G.S. 150B-21.3:
6. Reason for Temporary Action. Attach a copy of any cited law, regulation, or document necessary for the review.  <input type="checkbox"/> A serious and unforeseen threat to the public health, safety or welfare. <input type="checkbox"/> The effective date of a recent act of the General Assembly or of the U.S. Congress. Cite: Effective date: <input type="checkbox"/> A recent change in federal or state budgetary policy. Effective date of change: <input type="checkbox"/> A recent federal regulation. Cite: Effective date: <input type="checkbox"/> A recent court order. Cite order: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other: G.S. 150B-21.1(a)(7) b. and c.  Explain: As a result of a cold stun event and in accordance with the North Carolina Spotted Seatrout Fishery Management Plan, the N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries (NCDMF) issued a proclamation closing the recreational and commercial harvest of Spotted Seatrout in joint and coastal fishing waters. To alleviate angler confusion, the proposed amendment will close Spotted Seatrout harvest through June 30, 2026 in waters within NCWRC's jurisdiction (Inland Fishing Waters and Joint Fishing Waters by hook-and-line) to be consistent with the NCDMF closure.

7. Why is adherence to notice and hearing requirements contrary to the public interest and the immediate adoption of the rule is required?

The expedited timeline provides for regulatory consistency across fishing waters to alleviate angler confusion and violations.

8. Rule establishes or increases a fee? (See G.S. 12-3.1)

Yes

Agency submitted request for consultation on:  
Consultation not required. Cite authority:

No

9. Rule-making Coordinator: Carrie Ruhlman

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10. Signature of Agency Head\*:



\* If this function has been delegated (reassigned) pursuant to G.S. 143B-10(a), submit a copy of the delegation with this form.

Typed Name: Mark Craig

Title: Chairman

E-Mail: mcraig@rhbarringer.com

**RULES REVIEW COMMISSION USE ONLY**

Action taken:

Submitted for RRC Review:

Date returned to agency:

1 15A NCAC 10C .0325 is amended under temporary procedures as follows:

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3 **15A NCAC 10C .0325 SEATROUT**

4 ~~(a) The daily creel limit for seatrout (spotted or speckled) is three fish.~~

5 ~~(b) The minimum size limit is 14 inches, but no fish between 20 and 26 inches in length may be possessed and only~~  
6 ~~one seatrout greater than 26 inches may be possessed.~~

7 ~~(c) There is no closed season.~~

8 (a) Seatrout (spotted or speckled) shall not be taken or possessed.

9 (b) The temporary amendment shall expire on June 30, 2026.

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11 *History Note: Authority G.S. 113-134; 113-292; 113-304; 113-305;*

12 *Temporary Adoption Eff. September 1, 2022;*

13 *Eff. March 15, 2023;*

14 *Temporary Amendment Eff. July 7, 2025; May 2, 2025;*

15 *Amended Eff. January 1, ~~2026; 2026.~~*

16 *Temporary Amendment Eff. April 6, 2026.*

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