

## NCWU Board of Directors

Britton Shackelford,  
President  
Ernie Foster  
Tilman Gray  
Tanner Hardin  
Tom Harper  
Glen Hopkins

Matt Huth  
Greg Mayer  
Elsin Myers  
Jamie Reibel  
Leonard Rigsbee  
Duke Spencer  
Rom Whitaker

### June 2008 Newsletter

Since its beginnings in 2005, the NCWU has –

1. Changed the saltwater license fee (Coastal Recreational Fishing License – CRFL) from one that every angler would have to buy individually, to one that a charter/headboat could buy to cover its passengers.
2. Changed the blanket license fees that cover charter/headboat passengers from fees of \$1500.00 - \$5000.00 to the more reasonable fees of \$250.00 - \$350.00.
3. Had a NCWU board member appointed to the State Travel and Tourism Board as a dedicated seat.
4. Weighed in heavily on issues concerning our commercial harvesters and target species of Large Coastal Sharks, Dogfish, Drum, Rock and the Snapper/Grouper complex.
5. Instituted the first state-wide study dealing with the economic impact of the charter/headboat industry. Sea Grant, the University of North Carolina, East Carolina University and North Carolina State are in charge of this comprehensive study.
6. Brought the importance of our fishing industry to the attention of our local, state and federally elected officials.
7. Worked to convene a task force (Commission for Working Watermen – CWW) to answer directly to our elected Dare County Board of Commissioners on fishery related items.

The North Carolina Watermen United is an organization I am extremely proud of, and I am flattered that our Board would consider me for the position of president. On the heels of Ernie Foster and Rom Whitaker, the office has very big shoes to fill, but with your help, I am up to the task. This year will see a re-organization that will better suit you, our members. The hiring of an Executive Secretary, Melba Milak, and a Marketing Director, Robbi Viveiros, was a move to keep you – our support – in better touch with the organization and better informed on issues that will ultimately impact our future. Our future is NOW, ladies and gentlemen, and it is up to us to seize the moment. Without your support, we can accomplish nothing, and I ask you, even in the face of the difficult economic times, to send in your dues. We are proud to represent such a hard-working group of professional watermen, and we all know you will lend your support. Please feel free to contact any one of us about any problems or issues. Have a great summer. Keep 'er tight!

Britt Shackelford (Shack), President  
Phone 252-473-8078  
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I would like to thank everyone for the continued support for NCWU. We have made some changes that I feel will give our members much better communication about current events. In this day of more and more government regulations, it is critical that we stay up-to-date on what is coming next. We have and still are making a difference for the working watermen of North Carolina, and we need all of your support.

Rom Whitaker, Past President

As the owner/operator of a charter fishing operation that began in 1937, and as an individual who grew up in Hatteras when fishing was the only way to make a living, I have a long-standing and deeply-rooted connection to those who make their living on the water – be they charter or commercial. Our coast is a changed place compared to when I grew up in the 1950's. Watermen of today face obstacles and competing forces that did not exist - nor could be imagined - 50 years ago. If you make your living on the water today, many different factors make it more difficult and threaten your very survival. For independent watermen to survive, we must stick together! For watermen to survive, we must present a united front! Together we can successfully deal with whatever challenges come our way; as individuals, it is another story. One of the great joys of being a NC waterman is that out on the water – though we operate as individuals – we know that in times of trouble, we can and do depend on one another. When you are in trouble at sea, it is another waterman who will help. NCWU provides a means to do the same thing on land – as we deal with storms of legislation and the never-ending breakdown of regulations.

Ernie Foster, Past President

I am delighted to be working for such a prestigious organization. I live in Hatteras village where fishing and the industry are daily concerns. I am a writer; my background is in education and the arts, but I love best being out on the water to catch fish!

Melba Milak  
Executive Secretary

I look forward to working with NCWU to help them meet their goals. I have a background in administration and marketing and have worked for several non-profit organizations. I live with my husband, Mike, at Pirate's Cove where I have volunteered for eleven years with the Big Game Tournaments.

Robbi Viveiros  
Marketing Director