

## PRESS RELEASE

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### NCWU Joins NCFA in Supporting Close of Coastal Waters to Gill Nets

Wanchese, NC - The North Carolina Watermen United (NCWU) has joined the request by the North Carolina Fisheries Association (NCFA) for an action proposed by two affiliate groups, the Ocracoke Working Watermen's Association and the Carteret County Fishermen's Association to issue a proclamation with the following provisions that would apply to the use of large mesh anchored gill nets and the bycatch of red drum -

- Effective May 1, 2014, all internal coastal waters will be closed to the use of large mesh anchored gill nets; i.e., gill nets with a mesh length of four (4) inches or greater,
- Beginning June 1, 2014, the following limited areas will open for the use of large mesh anchored gill nets with four (4) red drum per day allowed as bycatch, described below
  - 1. Albemarle Sound - West of the Intracoastal Waterway
  - 2. Pamlico River - A line beginning at a point at 35 degrees, 24.5920'N - 76 degrees, 32.3810'W near Currituck Point; running southwesterly to a point at 35 degrees, 19.6960'N - 76 degrees, 36.5360'W near Fulford Point
  - 3. Bay River - A line beginning at a point 35 degrees, 11.0760'N - 76 degrees, 31.6200'W near Bay Point; running southerly to a point at 35 degrees, 08.9290'N - 76 degrees, 32.2680'W near Maw Point
  - 4. Neuse River - A line beginning at a point 35 degrees, 08.9290'N - 76 degrees, 32.2680'W near Maw Point; running southerly to a point at 34 degrees, 59.2940'N - 76 degrees, 34.8230'W on the east shore of the mouth of South River
  - 5. New River - North of the Highway 172 Bridge
- Effective August 1, 2014, these restrictions will not apply and all areas opened to large mesh gill nets by proclamation M-15-2014 will reopen for large mesh anchored gill nets with seven (7) red drum per day allowed as bycatch.
- A run around, strike or drop net that is used to surround a school of fish and then is immediately retrieved is exempted from the restrictions above set forth in bullet points one and two.

- Drift gill nets that are used to capture fish while being moved along by water currents are exempt from provisions of this proclamation provided the net is being actively fished and attended from deployment through retrieval.
- The Division will implement weekly dealer reporting of red drum catches to ensure proper red drum management.

NCWU president, Britton Shackelford, sent the letter of support to North Carolina Marine Fisheries Director Louis Daniels with the provisions stated above. The NCWU and the NCFA represent an overwhelming number of commercial fishermen in the state.

NCWU is an organization that protects the rights of fishermen to earn a living on the coastal waters of North Carolina.