

Fisheries Approves 18 Coastal Recreational Fishing License Grants

MOREHEAD CITY – Revenues from the N.C. Coastal Recreational Fishing License will pay \$1.5 million in the coming year toward projects to help provide coastal fishing access and fisheries and habitat research.

The N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission approved 18 grants, totaling \$1,551,623, for the 2015 cycle. The grants are funded from the N.C. Marine Resources Fund, which receives revenues from the sale of the Coastal Recreational Fishing Licenses.

The grants are sorted into three focus areas. Grants that fall under the People Focus area include public education and public water access projects. Grants that fall under the Fish Focus area are fisheries research projects. Grants that fall under the Habitat Focus area include projects that enhance, protect or research fisheries habitat.

People Focus area has seven grants totaling \$661,026. They include:

- **Wildlife Resources Commission Wright's Creek Boating Access Area - \$400,000**
One year grant that provides much needed boating and fishing access in Beaufort County.
- **Take a Kid Fishing Foundation - \$25,000**
Three year grant to provide disabled and disadvantaged youth an opportunity to go saltwater fishing while teaching them about ethical fishing practices, conservation and the ocean environment.
- **N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries Marine Patrol Education Team - \$28,650**
One year grant to provide educational equipment and resources to the Marine Patrol.
- **N.C. Aquarium Step by Step: Encouraging Ethical Angling - \$11,682**
One year grant to provide ethical angling programs at the Aquarium on Roanoke Island and Jennette's Pier.
- **N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries Saltwater Fishing Tournament - \$21,500**
Four year grant to continue and improve this program which recognizes recreational anglers for exceptional catches of marine finfish.
- **N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries Fishing Digest - \$36,750**
Two year grant to continue the annual publication for the Recreational Fishing Digest.
- **University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Improving the Fish Production of Artificial Reefs by Testing the Most Widely Recognized and Pressing Questions About Reef Design and Function - \$137,434**
Two year grant to assess how artificial reefs function to help the Division of Marine Fisheries continue to enhance, restore, manage, protect, and develop these reefs.

Fish Focus area has six grants totaling \$462,461. They include:

- **N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries Full Time Law Enforcement Officer - \$204,600**
Two year grant to fund salary and purchase equipment for a law enforcement officer.
- **N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries Improving Water Temperature Data Recording for Monitoring Spotted Seatrout Cold Stun Events - \$17,675**
Three year grant to begin a statewide water temperature logging program.
- **N.C. State University Marine Fisheries Fellowship Program - \$50,822**
Five year grant which pairs M.S., Ph.D. students or recent graduates with biologists at N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries.
- **N.C. State University Evaluation of Changes in Available Spawning and Nursery Habitats for River Herring- \$42,947**
Two year grant to track population growth of river herring.
- **N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries Temporary Tele-Communication Position - \$40,499**
Two year grant to fund temporary tele-communication employee.
- **East Carolina University Cooperative Winter Tagging Cruise - \$105,918**
One year grant to continue tagging program.

Habitat Focus area has five grants totaling \$428,136. They include:

- **East Carolina University Submerged Aquatic Vegetation SONAR Mapping Surveys in Low-Salinity Habitats - \$51,432**
One year grant to use long-shore rapid assessment survey techniques to obtain maps in areas of SAV.
- **University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Understanding and Predicting Salinity Variability and Hypoxic Exposure in Fish Habitats in the Lower Neuse River Estuary- \$98,488**
Two year grant to quantify and develop predictive models for salinity variability and the frequency and duration of hypoxic conditions.
- **East Carolina University Linking Water Quality, Food Quality, and Larval Fish Condition to Determine Strategic Habitat Area Quality - \$81,371**
Four year grant to determine strategic habitat area contribution to increased fish production.
- **University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Quantifying Fish Enhancement and Erosion Protection Provided by Marsh Sills: A Living Shoreline Alternative to Bulkheads and Revetments - \$89,908**
Two year grant to provide a comprehensive evaluation of the recreational fish habitat services and erosion protection provided by marsh sills in comparison to revetments, bulkheads, and naturally occurring marshes

- **University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Enhancing the Quality of Fish Habitat and Quantity of Oysters by Refining Reef-Restoration Techniques - \$106,937**
Three year grant to provide important guidelines for intertidal and subtidal reef restoration that will maximize the quality of the fish habitat.

For more information on these grants or the Coastal Recreational Fishing License grant program, contact Beth Govoni, Coastal Recreational Fishing License grants coordinator, at 252-808-8004 or Wayne.Johannessen@ncdenr.gov.