



Fiscal Note for Proposed Inland Fisheries Division Rule Amendments for the Wildlife Resources Commission

Rule Amendments: 15A NCAC 10C .0205 Public Mountain Trout Waters
15A NCAC 10C .0206 Trotlines, Jug Hooks, and Set Hooks
15A NCAC 10C .0302 Manner of Taking Inland Game Fishes
15A NCAC 10C .0306 Crappie
15A NCAC 10C .0314 Striped Bass
15A NCAC 10C .0401 Manner of Taking Nongame Fishes
15A NCAC 10D .0104 Fishing on Game Lands

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Impact:

State Government:	Yes
Local Government:	No
Private Impact:	Yes
Substantial Economic Impact:	No

Authority: G.S. 113-134

BACKGROUND

The wildlife resources of the State belong to the people of the State as a whole, including the enjoyment of these resources (G.S. 113-131(a)). The Wildlife Resources Commission (WRC) is tasked with the conservation of wildlife resources of the State (G.S. 143-239). This responsibility includes managing as equitably as possible the various competing interests regarding these resources, including the use and take of such resources (G.S. 113-131.1(a)). The statutes governing wildlife resources are found in Chapter 113, Subchapter IV of the General Statutes, and WRC has been granted rulemaking authority to implement the provisions of these statutes (G.S. 113-134).

As part of its mission, the WRC conducts an annual review of its fish, wildlife, boating safety, and other regulations to determine whether such rules need to be adjusted in order to accomplish the objectives of: managing wildlife resources through a biologically sustainable harvest of such resources by hunters, trappers and anglers consistent with sound conservation objectives;

ensuring the safety of the boating public; managing WRC-owned land for the conservation of wildlife resources and the enjoyment of the public; and implementing legislative directives.

Included in these rules are minor proposed changes to 10C .0302, .0306, .0314, and .0401. A fiscal note on these changes were approved by OSBM on December 1, 2021 and can be found [here](#).

A summary of the proposed rule amendments is shown below, with the full text included in Appendix A. Many of the proposed amendments change what anglers may harvest in specific waters, where anglers may harvest certain species, and how they may harvest them. Several of the proposed amendments seek to increase angling opportunity while others may prove to be more restrictive. All the proposed changes are intended to expand future angling opportunity. In the end, despite the changes, no impact to overall angling participation is expected.

15A NCAC 10C .0205 PUBLIC MOUNTAIN TROUT WATERS

The WRC manages approximately 5,300 miles and 2,100 acres of the State's coldwater resources within its Public Mountain Trout Waters (PMTW) program, and in 2014, an estimated 148,991 anglers fished for trout in PMTW and contributed approximately \$383 million to the State's economy.¹ As noted within the WRC's Trout Management Plan, the purpose of PMTW is to use science-based decision making and biologically sound management principles to enhance the quality and quantity of trout populations for continued and varied angling opportunities. By designating waters as PMTW, the WRC is able to enact biologically sound management that ensures the conservation and wise use of trout resources (including efforts focused on the State's only native salmonid: Brook Trout), increase awareness of angling opportunities, invest in infrastructure that provides angling access to all anglers regardless of physical ability, produce and stock approximately 1 million trout annually to provide fisheries, and partner with local (municipalities and counties), state (North Carolina State Parks and North Carolina Forest Service), and federal entities (United States Forest Service) to manage important ecological, cultural, and economic resources.

The proposed amendment will modify the list of waters designated as PMTW and further classified as Hatchery Supported, Wild Trout, or Wild Trout Natural Bait. To reflect changes in partnerships with landowners and angler access, approximately 1.3 miles of Hatchery Supported trout Waters will be reclassified to Wild Trout Waters, and 4.0 miles Hatchery Supported Trout Waters will be removed from PMTW. Approximately 76.5 miles of Wild Trout Natural Bait Waters will be reclassified to Wild Trout Waters. Changes to PMTW boundaries are necessary to clarify designations based upon partnerships with landowners, angler access, and overall trout management.

Fiscal Impact

State Impact

Proposed rule amendments that modify the classification of PMTWs will not change on-the-ground management activities. Conservation biologists will change signage as part of their

¹ Mountain Trout Fishing: Economic Impacts on and Contributions to North Carolina's Economy, 2015.

regular duties. The change in signage will not require more than one day, at an estimated one-time cost to the agency of approximately \$248 ($\$31/\text{hr} \times 8 \text{ hrs} = \248).

New signage will cost the agency approximately \$45 ($\$0.90/\text{sign} \times 50 \text{ signs}$).

The total one-time cost to the agency is estimated to be around \$293 ($\$248 + \$45 = \293).

Local Impact

This rule amendment has no anticipated local government impact.

Private Impact

Changes to PMTW boundaries will result in a net loss of approximately 4 miles of PMTW from public access. While this is a loss of angling opportunity to the public in specific areas, it represents less than 0.075% of the PMTW. Additionally, there is minimal change to angler access and limited angler use in some of these areas.

The WRC does not have a mechanism to determine the specific fiscal impact of the proposed changes to private individuals. The reclassification of Wild Trout/Natural Bait Waters changes an angler's ability to use natural bait. However, in general, fewer people use natural bait compared to artificial in these specific streams. Reclassifying the waters simplifies the rules for anglers, and not allowing the use of natural bait is expected to reduce catch and release mortality, leaving more fish in the water and improving angler experience.

15A NCAC 10C .0206 TROTLINES, JUG HOOKS AND SET HOOKS

The proposed amendment to the rule will prohibit the use of trotlines, jug hooks, and set hooks in inland fishing waters of the Roanoke River from April 1 to June 30, which is spawning season for striped bass. Although this rule applies to all fish species found in the Roanoke River, the majority of fish caught between April – June are striped bass. As such, the purpose for the proposed amendment is to prevent catch and release mortality of striped bass during their spawning season.

The 2020 stock assessment for Roanoke River Striped Bass showed that the population is overfished, and that overfishing is continuing to occur. In coordination with Division of Marine Fisheries and as part of the development of Amendment 2 to the NC Estuarine Striped Bass Fishery Management Plan, fisheries staff has identified the reduction of catch and release mortality as management measure for the rebuilding of the striped bass stock. The use of only single barbless hooks or a lure with a single barbless hook in the inland fishing waters of the Roanoke River from April 1 – June 30 is already required to reduce catch and release mortality. The prohibition of trotlines, set hooks, and jug hooks during this time will also help reduce mortality and will be consistent with the single barbless hook restrictions.

This rule amendment is anticipated to further reduce Striped Bass catch and release mortality in the inland fishing waters of the Roanoke River. By restricting the use of gear which has the potential to kill fish when caught, more fish will survive, helping the population of Striped Bass in the river recover to a more sustainable level.

Fiscal Impact

State Impact

The proposed change will not require any additional staff time as we will continue routine enforcement and fisheries management activities.

Local Impact

This rule has no anticipated local government impact.

Private Impact

This proposal limits angling opportunity to rod and reel. However, the use of trotlines, set hooks, and jug hooks is currently minimal during the spring. As such, private impact is expected to be minimal.

15A NCAC 10C .0302 MANNER OF TAKING INLAND GAME FISHES

15A NCAC 10C .0401 MANNER OF TAKING NONGAME FISHES

The proposed amendments to these rules will require the use of barbless circle hooks when using live or natural bait in the inland fishing waters of the Roanoke River upstream of U.S. 258 bridge from April 1 to June 30. With all other tackle, only a single barbless hook may be used. Although this rule applies to all game and nongame fish species found in this segment of the Roanoke River, the majority of fish caught between April – June are striped bass. As such, the purpose for the proposed amendment is to prevent catch and release mortality of striped bass during their spawning season.

The 2020 stock assessment for Roanoke River Striped Bass showed that the population is overfished, and overfishing is continuing to occur. In coordination with Division of Marine Fisheries and as part of the development of Amendment 2 to the NC Estuarine Stiped Bass Fishery Management Plan, fisheries staff has identified the reduction of catch and release mortality as management measure for the rebuilding of the stock. The additional requirement on the use of barbless circle hooks when anglers are fishing with live or natural bait is expected to reduce the number of dead discards. An increased survival rate will help the population of Striped Bass in the river recover to a more sustainable level.

Fiscal Impact

State Impact

The proposed changes will not require any additional staff time as we will continue to sample the population, creel anglers during the harvest season, and engage in fisheries management planning.

Local Impact

This rule has no anticipated local government impact.

Private Impact

Fiscal effects for anglers will be limited to those not already using barbless circle hooks with live or natural bait. Anglers may encounter a minimal cost to purchase the hooks between \$0.30-\$0.50. The WRC has distributed free circle hooks in the past to promote their use. This change is expected to allow anglers a longer season to fish and in the long term allow more fish to be caught if the population increases. Because the agency does not have data on the number of anglers fishing these areas or the percentage of anglers who already use circle hooks we are unable to quantify the potential, albeit minimal, private impact.

15A NCAC 10C .0306 CRAPPIE

The proposed amendment to the rule will reduce the minimum size limit for crappie on B. Everett Jordan Reservoir from ten inches to eight inches.

A stock assessment in 2003 indicated that the crappie population in B. Everett Jordan Reservoir lacked older fish; therefore, a 10-inch minimum size limit was implemented to increase the number of older, mature fish in the population. Recent surveys have indicated that older, mature fish have reestablished in the population. These data indicate that the 10-inch minimum size limit is no longer warranted for the population. The reduction of the size limit will allow anglers to harvest fish at a smaller size which may slightly increase harvest, though the daily creel limit of 20 fish per angler will remain for ongoing fisheries management purposes.

Fiscal Impact

State Impact

This rule amendment is anticipated to have no impact as the change is part of routine fisheries management and will not require additional staff time or resources for implementation and enforcement.

Local Impact

This rule has no anticipated local government impact.

Private Impact

Biological data indicates that the fishery can sustain a decrease in the minimum size limit. As a result, this proposed size limit is intended to provide more harvest opportunity as more fish will meet the minimum size requirement. While the proposed rule change will alter what anglers may harvest, it is not expected to impact overall participation in fishing. Although the WRC does not have a mechanism to determine the specific fiscal impact of the proposed change, Jordan Lake is a popular crappie fishery, so some benefit to the fishing community is likely

15A NCAC 10C .0314 STRIPED BASS

Establish Size and Creel Limit in Cape Fear River and its Tributaries:

This proposed amendment will establish an 18-inch minimum size limit and a 2-fish daily creel limit for striped bass in the Cape Fear River and its tributaries upstream of Lock and Dam 1 to Buckhorn Dam. The harvest season will be March 1 to April 30, which is consistent with existing harvest season requirements.

Despite a harvest moratorium since 2008, the Cape Fear River striped bass population remains completely hatchery supported with limited natural reproduction. The WRC recommended as part of the development of Amendment 2 to the NC Estuarine Striped Bass Fishery Management Plan² to allow limited harvest throughout the Cape Fear River. The intention behind doing so was to increase angling opportunity.

The Division of Marine Fisheries and Marine Fisheries Commission have recommended maintaining the harvest moratorium in joint or coastal fishing waters. Due to the river having limited natural reproduction since the moratorium placed 14 years ago, a limited harvest season and creel limit in the inland fishing waters is proposed. These changes will allow some angling opportunity for this hatchery-supported fishery while still maximizing protections to the striped bass population for the majority of the year.

Fiscal Impact

State Impact

This rule amendment is anticipated to have no impact as the change is part of routine fisheries management and will not require additional staff time or resources for implementation and enforcement.

Local Impact

This rule has no anticipated local government impact.

Private Impact

Biological data indicate that the population can sustain limited harvest since it is completely hatchery supported. As a result, the proposed season, size limit, and creel limit are intended to benefit anglers with a new recreational harvest opportunity for Striped Bass. The WRC does not have a mechanism to determine the specific fiscal impact of the proposed change. However, Striped Bass fishing is very common amongst NC anglers and thus the Commission expects there to be anglers who take advantage of this opportunity.

Modify Size Limit on Roanoke River:

² <https://deq.nc.gov/about/divisions/marine-fisheries/hot-topics/information-estuarine-striped-bass-amendment-2>

This proposed amendment modifies the size limit of striped bass on the Roanoke River and its tributaries by eliminating the upper 27 inch size limit restriction which will have the effect of prohibiting the possession of any striped bass larger than 22 inches. The minimum size limit will remain 18 inches.

The 2020 stock assessment for Roanoke River Striped Bass showed that the population is overfished, and overfishing is continuing to occur. In coordination with Division of Marine Fisheries and as part of the development of Amendment 2 to the NC Estuarine Striped Bass Fishery Management Plan, it was determined that rebuilding the population and expanding the age structure to include larger and older fish was critical. The proposed regulation change will provide protection to older, larger fish. The change to prohibit harvest of striped bass larger than 22 inches -- including those over 27 inches -- should allow for the striped bass population to increase over time.

Fiscal Impact

State Impact

This rule amendment is anticipated to have no impact as the change is part of routine fisheries management and will not require additional staff time or resources for implementation and enforcement.

Local Impact

This rule has no anticipated local government impact.

Private Impact

As a result of eliminating the upper limit of 27 inches and prohibiting the possession of any fish over 22 inches, this amendment is intended to improve the quality of Striped Bass recreational fishing experiences in the long term, a benefit to anglers overall. This prohibition may impact anglers who wish to harvest larger fish. While the proposed change will alter what anglers may harvest, the change is not expected to impact overall participation in fishing. The WRC does not have a mechanism to determine the specific fiscal impact of the proposed change. Striped Bass creel data from the Roanoke River show limited harvest of fish greater than 27 inches compared to smaller sizes, so the impact to anglers from prohibiting harvest of fish over 27 inches is expected to be minimal.

15A NCAC 10D .0104 FISHING ON GAME LANDS

The proposed amendment to the rule will clarify that Grogan Creek, Cedar Rock Creek, and John Rock Branch in Transylvania County are closed to fishing. This proposal will not remove any water from Public Mountain Trout Waters.

The Bobby N. Setzer State Fish Hatchery has a water intake on Grogan Creek and fishing is prohibited in the Grogan Creek watershed to minimize human activity and reduce fine sediment input in the water supply. However, there are stream name discrepancies in this watershed on published maps. Some USGS topography maps refer to Grogan Creek as 'Cedar Rock Creek' or fail to clearly label the lower reaches before its confluence with the Davidson River. This

proposal will include all local stream names in the rule to clarify that the entire watershed is closed to fishing. No additional prohibitions are proposed.

Fiscal Impact

State Impact

This rule amendment is anticipated to have no impact as the proposed amendment is to clarify an already existing prohibition on Grogan Creek. This change will allow law enforcement to more easily articulate to the public that this body of water, regardless of what an individual calls it, is prohibited to fishing.

Local Impact

This rule has no anticipated local government impact.

Private Impact

This rule has no anticipated private impact but will clarify to anglers that fishing in this area is prohibited.

1 **15A NCAC 10C .0205 PUBLIC MOUNTAIN TROUT WATERS**

2 (a) For purposes of this Rule, the following definitions apply:

- 3 (1) "Natural bait" means any living or dead organism (plant or animal), or parts thereof, or prepared
4 substances designed to attract fish by the sense of taste or smell.
- 5 (2) "Single hook" means a fish hook with only one point.
- 6 (3) "Artificial lure" means a fishing lure that neither contains nor has been treated by any substance that
7 attracts fish by the sense of taste or smell.
- 8 (4) "Artificial fly" means one single hook dressed with feathers, hair, thread, tinsel, rubber, or any
9 similar material to which no additional hook, spinner, spoon or similar device is added.
- 10 (5) "Youth anglers" are individuals under 18 years of age.

11 (b) For purposes of this Rule, 15A NCAC 10C .0316, and 15A NCAC 10D .0104, the following classifications apply:

- 12 (1) "Public Mountain Trout Waters" are all waters included in this Rule and so designated in 15A NCAC
13 10D .0104.
- 14 (2) "Catch and Release/Artificial Flies and Lures Only Trout Waters" are Public Mountain Trout Waters
15 where only artificial flies and lures having one single hook may be used. No trout may be possessed
16 or harvested while fishing these streams. Waters designated as such include tributaries unless
17 otherwise noted.
- 18 (3) "Delayed Harvest Trout Waters" are Public Mountain Trout Waters where between October 1 and
19 one-half hour after sunset on the Friday before the first Saturday of the following June, it is unlawful
20 to possess natural bait, use more than one single hook on an artificial lure, or harvest or possess trout
21 while fishing. From 6:00 a.m. on the first Saturday in June until noon that same day, only youth
22 anglers may fish and these waters have no bait or lure restrictions. From noon on the first Saturday
23 in June until October 1, anglers of all ages may fish and these waters have no bait or lure restrictions.
24 Waters designated as such do not include tributaries unless otherwise noted.
- 25 (4) "Hatchery Supported Trout Waters" are Public Mountain Trout Waters that have no bait or lure
26 restrictions. Waters designated as such do not include tributaries unless otherwise noted.
- 27 (5) "Special Regulation Trout Waters" are Public Mountain Trout Waters where watercourse-specific
28 regulations apply. Waters designated as such do not include tributaries unless otherwise noted.
- 29 (6) "Wild Trout Waters" are Public Mountain Trout Waters which are identified as such in this Rule or
30 15A NCAC 10D .0104. Only artificial lures having only one single hook may be used. No person
31 shall possess natural bait while fishing these waters. Waters designated as such do not include
32 tributaries unless otherwise noted.
- 33 (7) "Wild Trout Waters/Natural Bait" are Public Mountain Trout Waters where all artificial lures and
34 natural baits, except live fish, may be used provided they are fished using only one single hook.
35 Waters designated as such include tributaries unless otherwise noted.
- 36 (8) "Undesignated Waters" are all other waters in the State. These waters have no bait or lure
37 restrictions.

1 (c) Seasons, creel, and size limits. Seasons, creel, and size limits for trout in all waters are listed in Rule .0316 of this
2 Subchapter.

3 (d) Classifications. This Paragraph designates waters in each county that have a specific classification. Waters on
4 game lands are so designated in 15A NCAC 10D .0104, unless otherwise indicated in this Paragraph. All other waters
5 are classified as Undesignated Waters.

6 (1) Alleghany

7 (A) Delayed Harvest Trout Waters are as follows:

8 Little River (S.R. 1133 bridge to 275 yards downstream of the intersection of S.R. 1128
9 and S.R. 1129 [marked by a sign on each bank])

10 (B) Hatchery Supported Trout Waters are as follows:

11 Big Pine Creek

12 Bledsoe Creek

13 Brush Creek (N.C. 21 bridge to confluence with Little River, except where posted against
14 trespassing)

15 Cranberry Creek

16 (Big) Glade Creek

17 Little River (275 yards downstream from the intersection of S.R. 1128 and S.R. 1129
18 [marked by a sign on each bank] to McCann Dam)

19 Meadow Fork

20 Pine Swamp Creek

21 Piney Fork

22 Prathers Creek

23 (C) Wild Trout Waters are as follows:

24 All waters located on Stone Mountain State Park

25 (2) Ashe County

26 (A) Catch and Release/Artificial Flies and Lures Only Trout Waters are as follows:

27 Big Horse Creek (Virginia state line to Mud Creek at S.R. 1363, excluding tributaries)

28 (B) Delayed Harvest Trout Waters are as follows:

29 Big Horse Creek (S.R. 1324 bridge to North Fork New River)

30 Helton Creek (900 yards upstream of SR 1372 bridge [marked by a sign on each bank] to
31 North Fork New River)

32 South Fork New River (upstream end of Todd Island to the SR 1351 bridge)

33 Trout Lake

34 (C) Hatchery Supported Trout Waters are as follows:

35 Beaver Creek (N.C. 221 to confluence of Beaver Creek and South Beaver Creek)

36 Big Horse Creek (Mud Creek at S.R. 1363 to S.R. 1324 bridge)

37 Big Laurel Creek (S.R. 1315 bridge to confluence with North Fork New River)

- 1 Buffalo Creek (S.R. 1133 bridge to N.C. 194-88 bridge)
- 2 Cranberry Creek (Alleghany Co. line to South Fork New River)
- 3 Nathans Creek
- 4 North Fork New River (Watauga Co. line to Sharp Dam)
- 5 Old Fields Creek (N.C. 221 to South Fork New River)
- 6 Peak Creek (~~headwaters to~~ Upper boundary of NCDA-NCSU Upper Mountain Research
- 7 Station to Trout Lake, except Blue Ridge Parkway waters) Lake)
- 8 Roan Creek
- 9 Three Top Creek
- 10 (3) Avery County
- 11 (A) Catch and Release/Artificial Flies and Lures Only Trout Waters are as follows:
- 12 Elk River (portion on Lees-McRae College property, excluding the millpond)
- 13 Lost Cove Creek (game land portion, excluding Gragg Prong and Rockhouse Creek)
- 14 Wilson Creek (game land portion)
- 15 (B) Hatchery Supported Trout Waters are as follows:
- 16 Boyde Coffey Lake
- 17 Elk River (S.R. 1305 crossing immediately upstream of Big Falls to the Tennessee state
- 18 line)
- 19 Linville River S.R. 1504 to the Blue Ridge Parkway boundary line, except where posted
- 20 against trespassing)
- 21 Milltimber Creek
- 22 North Toe River — upper (Watauga St. to Roby Shoemaker Wetlands and Family
- 23 Recreational Park, except where posted against trespassing)
- 24 North Toe River — lower (S.R. 1164 to Mitchell Co. line, except where posted against
- 25 trespassing)
- 26 Squirrel Creek
- 27 Wildcat Lake
- 28 (C) Wild Trout Waters are as follows:
- 29 Birchfield Creek
- 30 Cow Camp Creek
- 31 Cranberry Creek (headwaters to U.S. 19E/N.C. 194 bridge)
- 32 Gragg Prong
- 33 Horse Creek
- 34 Kentucky Creek
- 35 North Harper Creek
- 36 Plumtree Creek
- 37 Roaring Creek

- 1 Rockhouse Creek
- 2 Shawneehaw Creek (portion adjacent to Banner Elk Greenway)
- 3 South Harper Creek
- 4 Webb Prong
- 5 (4) Buncombe County
- 6 (A) Catch and Release/Artificial Flies and Lures Only Trout Waters are as follows:
- 7 Carter Creek (game land portion)
- 8 (B) Hatchery Supported Trout Waters are as follows:
- 9 Bent Creek (headwaters to N.C. Arboretum boundary line)
- 10 Cane Creek (headwaters to S.R. 3138 bridge)
- 11 Corner Rock Creek (Little Andy Creek to confluence with Walker Branch)
- 12 Dillingham Creek (Corner Rock Creek to Ivy Creek)
- 13 Ivy Creek (Ivy River)(Dillingham Creek to U.S. 19-23 bridge)
- 14 Lake Powhatan
- 15 Reems Creek (Sugar Camp Fork to U.S. 19-23 bridge, except where posted against
- 16 trespassing)
- 17 Rich Branch (downstream from the confluence with Rocky Branch)
- 18 Stony Creek
- 19 Swannanoa (S.R. 2702 bridge near Ridgecrest to Wood Avenue bridge [intersection of
- 20 N.C. 81 and U.S. 74A in Asheville], except where posted against trespassing)
- 21 (5) Burke County
- 22 (A) Catch and Release/Artificial Flies and Lures Only Trout Waters are as follows:
- 23 Henry Fork (portion on South Mountains State Park)
- 24 (B) Delayed Harvest Trout Waters are as follows:
- 25 Jacob Fork (Shinny Creek to lower South Mountains State Park boundary)
- 26 (C) Hatchery Supported Trout Waters are as follows:
- 27 Carroll Creek (game land portion above S.R. 1405)
- 28 Henry Fork (lower South Mountain State Park line downstream to S.R. 1919 at Ivy Creek)
- 29 Linville River portion within Linville Gorge Wilderness area and portion below Lake
- 30 James powerhouse from upstream bridge on S.R. 1223 to Muddy Creek)
- 31 (D) Special Regulation Trout Waters are as follows:
- 32 Catawba River (Muddy Creek to City of Morganton water intake dam)
- 33 (E) Wild Trout Waters are as follows:
- 34 All waters located on South Mountains State Park, except those waters identified in Parts
- 35 A and B of this Subparagraph
- 36 (6) Caldwell County
- 37 (A) Delayed Harvest Trout Waters are as follows:

- 1 Wilson Creek (game land portion below Lost Cove Creek to Philips Branch)
- 2 (B) Hatchery Supported Trout Waters are as follows:
- 3 Boone Fork Pond
- 4 Buffalo Creek (mouth of Joes Creek to McCloud Branch)
- 5 Joes Creek (first falls upstream of S.R. 1574 to confluence with Buffalo Creek)
- 6 Wilson Creek (Phillips Branch to Brown Mountain Beach Dam, except where posted
- 7 against trespassing)
- 8 Yadkin River (Happy Valley Ruritan Community Park to S.R. 1515)
- 9 (C) Wild Trout Waters are as follows:
- 10 Buffalo Creek (Watauga Co. line to Long Ridge Branch including game land tributaries)
- 11 Joes Creek (Watauga Co. line to first falls upstream of the end of S.R. 1574)
- 12 Rockhouse Creek
- 13 (7) Cherokee County
- 14 (A) Hatchery Supported Trout Waters are as follows:
- 15 Davis Creek (confluence of Bald and Dockery creeks to Hanging Dog Creek)
- 16 Hyatt Creek (Big Dam Branch to Valley River)
- 17 Junaluska Creek (Ashturn Creek to Valley River)
- 18 Shuler Creek (Joe Brown Hwy [S.R. 1325] bridge to Tennessee state line)
- 19 Valley River (S.R. 1359 to U.S. 19 Business bridge in Murphy)
- 20 (B) Special Regulation Trout Waters are as follows:
- 21 Apalachia Reservoir
- 22 (C) Wild Trout Waters/Natural Bait are as follows:
- 23 Bald Creek (game land portion)
- 24 Dockery Creek (game land portion)
- 25 (8) Clay County
- 26 (A) Delayed Harvest Trout Waters are as follows:
- 27 Fires Creek (Rockhouse Creek to the foot bridge in the USFS Fires Creek Picnic Area)
- 28 (B) Hatchery Supported Trout Waters are as follows:
- 29 Buck Creek (game land portion downstream of U.S. 64 bridge)
- 30 Fires Creek (foot bridge in the USFS Fires Creek Picnic Area to S.R. 1300)
- 31 Tusquitee Creek (Compass Creek to lower S.R. 1300 bridge)
- 32 (9) Graham County
- 33 (A) Delayed Harvest Trout Waters are as follows:
- 34 (Big) Snowbird Creek (USFS footbridge at the old railroad junction to USFS Rd. 2579)
- 35 (B) Hatchery Supported Trout Waters are as follows:
- 36 Calderwood Reservoir (Cheoah Dam to Tennessee state line)
- 37 Cheoah Reservoir

- 1 Panther Creek (confluence of Stand Creek and Rock Creek to Lake Fontana)
2 Santeetlah Creek (Johns Branch to Lake Santeetlah)
3 (Big) Snowbird Creek (USFS Road 2579 to S.R. 1127 bridge)
4 Stecoah Creek (upper game land boundary to Lake Fontana)
5 Tulula Creek (S.R. 1201 to lower bridge on S.R. 1275)
6 West Buffalo Creek
7 Yellow Creek (Lake Santeetlah hydropower pipeline to Cheoah River)
- 8 (C) Wild Trout Waters are as follows:
9 Little Buffalo Creek
10 South Fork Squally Creek
11 Squally Creek
- 12 (D) Wild Trout Waters/Natural Bait are as follows:
13 Long Creek (game land portion)
- 14 (10) Haywood County
- 15 (A) Delayed Harvest Trout Waters are as follows:
16 West Fork Pigeon River (Queen Creek to the first game land boundary upstream of Lake
17 Logan)
- 18 (B) Hatchery Supported Trout Waters are as follows:
19 Cold Springs Creek (Fall Branch to Pigeon River)
20 Jonathan Creek (upstream S.R. 1302 bridge to Pigeon River, except where posted against
21 trespassing)
22 Pigeon River (Stamey Cove Branch to upstream U.S. 19-23 bridge)
23 Richland Creek (Russ Avenue [U.S. 276] bridge to U.S. 19 bridge)
24 West Fork Pigeon River (Tom Creek to Queen Creek, including portions on game lands,
25 except Middle Prong)
- 26 ~~(C) Wild Trout Waters/Natural Bait are as follows:~~
27 ~~Hurricane Creek~~
- 28 (11) Henderson County
- 29 (A) Delayed Harvest Trout Waters are as follows:
30 North Fork Mills River (game land portion below the Hendersonville watershed dam)
- 31 (B) Hatchery Supported Trout Waters are as follows:
32 (Rocky) Broad River (end of S.R. 1611 to Rutherford County line)
33 Cane Creek (railroad bridge upstream of S.R. 1551 bridge to U.S. 25 bridge)
34 Clear Creek (Laurel Fork to S.R. 1582)
35 Green River (Lake Summit powerhouse to game land boundary)
36 (Big) Hungry River (S.R. 1885 to Green River)
- 37 (12) Jackson County

- 1 (A) Catch and Release/Artificial Flies and Lures Only Trout Waters are as follows:
2 Flat Creek
3 (East Fork) Tuckasegee River(game lands portion upstream of Tanasee Creek Lake,
4 including Duke Energy powerline corridor)
5 Tuckasegee River (upstream from the Clark property)
- 6 (B) Delayed Harvest Trout Waters are as follows:
7 Tuckasegee River (downstream N.C. 107 bridge to the falls located 275 yards upstream of
8 the U.S. 23-441 bridge [marked by a sign on each bank])
- 9 (C) Hatchery Supported Trout Waters are as follows:
10 Balsam Lake
11 Bear Creek Lake
12 Cedar Cliff Lake
13 Cullowhee Creek (Tilley Creek to Tuckasegee River)
14 Dark Ridge Creek (Jones Creek to Scott Creek)
15 Greens Creek (Greens Creek Baptist Church on S.R. 1370 to Savannah Creek)
16 Savannah Creek (Shell Branch to Cagle Branch)
17 Scott Creek (Dark Ridge Creek to Tuckasegee River, except where posted against
18 trespassing)
19 Tanasee Creek Lake
20 Tuckasegee River — upper (John Brown Branch to the downstream N.C. 107 bridge)
21 Tuckasegee River — lower (falls located 275 yards upstream of U.S. 23-441 bridge
22 [marked by a sign on each bank] to S.R. 1534 bridge at Wilmot)
23 Wolf Creek Lake
- 24 (D) Wild Trout Waters are as follows:
25 Gage Creek
26 North Fork Scott Creek
27 Tanasee Creek
28 Whitewater River (downstream from Silver Run Creek to South Carolina state line)
29 Wolf Creek (except Balsam Lake and Wolf Creek Lake)
- 30 (E) Wild Trout Waters/Natural Bait are as follows:
31 Chattooga River (S.R. 1100 bridge to the South Carolina state line)
32 ~~Scotsman Creek (game land portion)~~
- 33 (13) Macon County
- 34 (A) Delayed Harvest Trout Waters are as follows:
35 Nantahala River (Whiteoak Creek to Nantahala hydropower discharge canal)
- 36 (B) Hatchery Supported Trout Waters are as follows:
37 Burningtown Creek (Left Prong to Little Tennessee River)

- 1 Cartoogechaye Creek (downstream U.S. 64 bridge to Little Tennessee River)
- 2 Cliffside Lake
- 3 Cullasaja River (Sequoyah Dam to U.S. 64 bridge near junction of S.R. 1672)
- 4 Nantahala River — upper (Dicks Creek to Whiteoak Creek)
- 5 Nantahala River — lower (Nantahala hydropower discharge canal to Swain Co. line)
- 6 Queens Creek Lake
- 7 (C) Wild Trout Waters/Natural Bait are as follows:
- 8 Chattooga River (S.R. 1100 bridge to South Carolina state line)
- 9 Kimsey Creek
- 10 Park Creek
- 11 ~~Tellico Creek (game land portion)~~
- 12 ~~Turtle Pond Creek (game land portion)~~
- 13 (14) Madison County
- 14 (A) Delayed Harvest Trout Waters are as follows:
- 15 Big Laurel Creek (N.C. 208 bridge to the U.S. 25-70 bridge)
- 16 Shelton Laurel Creek (N.C. 208 bridge at Belva to the confluence with Big Laurel Creek)
- 17 Spring Creek (N.C. 209 bridge at Hot Springs city limits to iron bridge at end of Andrews
- 18 Ave.)
- 19 (B) Hatchery Supported Trout Waters are as follows:
- 20 Big Laurel Creek (Puncheon Fork to the S.R. 1318 [Big Laurel Rd.] bridge downstream of
- 21 Bearpen Branch)
- 22 Big Pine Creek (S.R. 1151 bridge to French Broad River)
- 23 Little Ivy Creek (confluence of Middle Fork and Paint Fork at Beech Glen to confluence
- 24 with Ivy Creek at Forks of Ivy)
- 25 Max Patch Pond
- 26 Meadow Fork Creek (Meadow Fork Campground to Spring Creek)
- 27 Puncheon Fork (Wolf Laurel Branch to Big Laurel Creek)
- 28 Roaring Fork (Fall Branch to Meadow Fork)
- 29 Shelton Laurel Creek (confluence of Big Creek and Mill Creek to N.C. 208 bridge at Belva)
- 30 Shut-in Creek
- 31 Spillcorn Creek
- 32 Spring Creek (junction of N.C. 209 and N.C. 63 to the confluence with Meadow Fork)
- 33 West Fork Shut-in Creek (lower game land boundary to confluence with East Fork Shut-
- 34 in Creek)
- 35 ~~(C) Wild Trout Waters/Natural Bait are as follows:~~
- 36 ~~Big Creek (headwaters to the lower game land boundary)~~
- 37 (15) McDowell County

- 1 (A) Catch and Release/Artificial Flies and Lures Only Trout Waters are as follows:
2 Newberry Creek (game land portion)
- 3 (B) Delayed Harvest Trout Waters are as follows:
4 Catawba River (portion adjacent to Marion Greenway)
5 Curtis Creek (game land portion downstream of the USFS boundary at Deep Branch)
6 Mill Creek (U.S. 70 bridge to I-40 bridge)
- 7 (C) Hatchery Supported Trout Waters are as follows:
8 Armstrong Creek (Cato Holler line downstream to upper Greenlee line)
9 Catawba River (Catawba Falls Campground to Old Fort Recreation Park)
10 Little Buck Creek (game land portion)
11 North Fork Catawba River (headwaters to North Cove School at S.R. 1569 bridge)
- 12 (16) Mitchell County
- 13 (A) Delayed Harvest Trout Waters are as follows:
14 Cane Creek (N.C. 226 bridge to S.R. 1189 bridge)
15 North Toe River (U.S. 19E bridge to N.C. 226 bridge)
- 16 (B) Hatchery Supported Trout Waters are as follows:
17 Big Rock Creek (headwaters to N.C. 226 bridge at S.R. 1307 intersection)
18 Cane Creek (S.R. 1219 to N.C. 226 bridge)
19 East Fork Grassy Creek
20 Grassy Creek (East Fork Grassy Creek to mouth)
21 Little Rock Creek (Green Creek bridge to Big Rock Creek, except where posted against
22 trespassing)
23 North Toe River (Avery Co. line to S.R. 1121 bridge)
- 24 (C) Wild Trout Waters are as follows:
25 Green Creek (headwaters to Green Creek bridge, except where posted against trespassing)
26 Little Rock Creek (above Green Creek bridge, including all tributaries, except where
27 posted against trespassing)
28 Wiles Creek (game land boundary to mouth)
- 29 (17) Polk County
- 30 (A) Delayed Harvest Trout Waters are as follows:
31 Green River (Fishtop Falls Access Area to the confluence with Cove Creek)
- 32 (B) Hatchery Supported Trout Waters are as follows:
33 Green River (Mouth of Cove Creek to the natural gas pipeline crossing)
34 North Pacolet River (Joels Creek to N.C. 108 bridge)
- 35 (18) Rutherford County
- 36 (A) Hatchery Supported Trout Waters are as follows:

- 1 (Rocky) Broad River (Henderson Co. line to U.S. 64/74 bridge, except where posted
2 against trespassing)
- 3 (19) Stokes County
- 4 (A) Hatchery Supported Trout Waters are as follows:
5 Dan River (Virginia state line downstream to a point 200 yards below the end of S.R. 1421)
- 6 (20) Surry County
- 7 (A) Delayed Harvest Trout Waters are as follows:
8 Ararat River (portion adjacent to the Ararat River Greenway)
9 Mitchell River (0.6 miles upstream of the end of S.R. 1333 to the lowermost bridge on S.R.
10 1330)
- 11 (B) Hatchery Supported Trout Waters are as follows:
12 Ararat River (S.R. 1727 bridge downstream to the N.C. 103 bridge)
13 Big Elkin Creek (dam 440 yards upstream of N.C. 268 bridge to a point 265 yards
14 downstream of N.C. 268 [marked by a sign on each bank])
15 Fisher River (Cooper Creek)(Virginia state line to I-77 bridge)
16 Little Fisher River (Virginia state line to N.C. 89 bridge)
17 Lovills Creek (U.S. 52 Business bridge to Ararat River)
18 Pauls Creek (Virginia state line to .3 miles below S.R. 1625 bridge)
- 19 (21) Swain County
- 20 (A) Delayed Harvest Waters Trout Waters are as follows:
21 Tuckasegee River (U.S. 19 bridge to Slope Street bridge)
- 22 (B) Hatchery Supported Trout Waters are as follows:
23 Alarka Creek (game land boundary to Fontana Reservoir)
24 Calderwood Reservoir (Cheoah Dam to Tennessee state line)
25 Cheoah Reservoir
26 Connelly Creek (Camp Branch to Tuckasegee River)
27 Deep Creek (Great Smoky Mountains National Park Boundary line to Tuckasegee River)
28 Nantahala River (Macon Co. line to existing Fontana Lake water level)
- 29 (22) Transylvania County
- 30 (A) Catch and Release/Artificial Flies and Lures Only Trout Waters are as follows:
31 Davidson River (headwaters to Avery Creek, excluding Avery Creek, Looking Glass Creek
32 and Grogan ~~Creek~~Creek, Cedar Rock Creek [tributary to the Davidson River at Bobby N.
33 Setzer State Fish Hatchery] and John Rock Branch)
- 34 (B) Delayed Harvest Trout Waters are as follows:
35 East Fork French Broad River (East Fork Baptist Church to the downstream S.R. 1107
36 bridge)
37 Little River (confluence of Lake Dense to 100 yards downstream of Hooker Falls)

- 1 (C) Hatchery Supported Trout Waters are as follows:
2 Davidson River (Avery Creek to lower USFS boundary)
3 French Broad River (confluence of North Fork French Broad River and West Fork)
4 French Broad River to the Island Ford Rd. [S.R. 1110] Access Area
5 Middle Fork French Broad River (upstream U.S. 178 bridge to French Broad River)
6 West Fork French Broad River (S.R. 1312 to confluence with North Fork French Broad
7 River)
- 8 (D) Wild Trout Waters are as follows:
9 All waters located on Gorges State Park
10 Whitewater River (downstream from Silver Run Creek to South Carolina state line)
- 11 (E) Wild Trout Waters/Natural Bait are as follows:
12 North Fork French Broad River (game land portion downstream of S.R. 1326)
13 Thompson River (S.R. 1152 to South Carolina state line, except where posted against
14 trespassing)
- 15 (23) Watauga County
- 16 (A) Catch and Release/Artificial Flies and Lures Only Trout Waters are as follows:
17 Laurel Creek (confluence of North and South Fork Laurel creeks to Elk Creek, excluding
18 tributaries)
19 Pond Creek (headwaters to Locust Ridge Rd. bridge, excluding the pond adjacent to Coffee
20 Lake)
- 21 (B) Delayed Harvest Trout Waters are as follows:
22 Lake Coffey
23 Watauga River – upper (S.R. 1114 bridge to Valle Crucis Community Park lower
24 boundary)
25 Watauga River – lower (S.R. 1103 bridge to confluence with Laurel Creek)
- 26 (C) Hatchery Supported Trout Waters are as follows:
27 Beaverdam Creek (confluence of Beaverdam Creek and Little Beaverdam Creek to an
28 unnamed tributary adjacent to the intersection of S.R. 1201 and S.R. 1203)
29 Beech Creek
30 Buckeye Creek (Buckeye Creek Reservoir dam to Grassy Gap Creek)
31 Buckeye Creek Reservoir
32 Cove Creek (S.R. 1233 bridge at Zionville to S.R. 1214 bridge at Sherwood)
33 Dutch Creek (~~second bridge on S.R. 1134~~ (S.R. 1136 bridge to mouth)
34 Elk Creek (S.R. 1510 bridge at Triplett to Wilkes Co. line, except where posted against
35 trespassing)
36 Laurel Creek (S.R. 1123 bridge at S.R. 1157 intersection to Watauga River)
37 Meat Camp Creek (S.R. 1340 bridge at S.R. 1384 intersection to N.C. 194)

1 Middle Fork New River (adjacent to intersection of S.R. 1539 and U.S. 321 to South Fork
2 New River)
3 Norris Fork Creek
4 South Fork New River (canoe launch 70 yards upstream of U.S. 421 bridge to lower
5 boundary of Brookshire Park)
6 Stony Fork (S.R. 1500 bridge at S.R. 1505 intersection to Wilkes Co. line)
7 (D) Wild Trout Waters are as follows:
8 Dutch Creek (headwaters to ~~second bridge on S.R. 1134~~ S.R. 1136 bridge)
9 Howard Creek
10 Maine Branch (headwaters to North Fork New River)
11 North Fork New River (from confluence with Maine and Mine branches to Ashe Co. line)
12 Watauga River (Avery Co. line to S.R. 1580 bridge)
13 Winkler Creek (lower bridge on S.R. 1549 to confluence with South Fork New River)
14 (24) Wilkes County
15 (A) Delayed Harvest Trout Waters are as follows:
16 East Prong Roaring River (Bullhead Creek downstream to Stone Mountain State Park
17 lower boundary)
18 Elk Creek — upper (Watauga Co. line to lower boundary of the Blue Ridge Mountain
19 Club)
20 Elk Creek — lower (portion on Leatherwood Mountains development)
21 Reddies River (Town of North Wilkesboro water intake dam to confluence with the Yadkin
22 River)
23 Stone Mountain Creek (from falls at Alleghany Co. line to confluence with East Prong
24 Roaring River and Bullhead Creek)
25 (B) Hatchery Supported Trout Waters are as follows:
26 Basin Creek (S.R. 1730 bridge to confluence with Lovelace Creek)
27 Bell Branch Pond
28 Boundary Line Pond
29 Cub Creek (.5 mile upstream of S.R. 2460 bridge to S.R. 1001 bridge)
30 Darnell Creek (North Prong Reddies River)(downstream ford on S.R. 1569 to confluence
31 with North Fork Reddies River)
32 East Prong Roaring River (Stone Mountain State Park lower boundary to S.R. 1002 bridge)
33 Fall Creek (S.R. 1300 bridge to confluence with South Prong Lewis Fork, except where
34 posted against trespassing)
35 Middle Fork Reddies River (Clear Prong)(headwaters to bridge on S.R. 1580)
36 Middle Prong Roaring River (headwaters to second bridge on S.R. 1736)

- 1 North Fork Reddies River (Vannoy Creek)(headwaters to Union School bridge on S.R.
- 2 1559)
- 3 Pike Creek
- 4 Pike Creek Pond
- 5 South Fork Reddies River (S.R. 1355 bridge to confluence with Middle Fork Reddies
- 6 River)
- 7 South Prong Lewis Fork (Fall Creek to U.S. 421 bridge adjacent to S.R. 1155 intersection)
- 8 (C) Wild Trout Waters are as follows:
- 9 All waters located on Stone Mountain State Park, except East Prong Roaring River from
- 10 Bullhead Creek downstream to the Stone Mountain State Park lower boundary where
- 11 Delayed Harvest Trout Waters regulations apply, and Stone Mountain Creek from falls at
- 12 Alleghany County line to confluence with East Prong Roaring River and Bullhead Creek
- 13 in Stone Mountain State Park where Delayed Harvest Trout Waters regulations apply
- 14 (25) Yancey County
- 15 (A) Catch and Release/Artificial Flies and Lures Only Trout Waters are as follows:
- 16 South Toe River (headwaters to Upper Creek)
- 17 Upper Creek
- 18 (B) Delayed Harvest Trout Waters are as follows:
- 19 Cane River (Blackberry Ridge Rd. to downstream boundary of Cane River County Park)
- 20 (C) Hatchery Supported Trout Waters are as follows:
- 21 Bald Mountain Creek (except where posted against trespassing)
- 22 Cane River (Bee Branch [S.R. 1110] to Bowlens Creek)
- 23 Price Creek (junction of S.R. 1120 and S.R. 1121 to Indian Creek)
- 24 South Toe River (Clear Creek to lower boundary line of Yancey Co. Recreation Park,
- 25 except where posted against trespassing)
- 26 (D) Wild Trout Waters are as follows:
- 27 Cattail Creek (bridge at Mountain Farm Community Rd. to N.C. 197 bridge)
- 28 Lickskillet Creek
- 29 Middle Creek (game land boundary to mouth)

31 *History Note: Authority G.S. 113-272; 113-292;*
 32 *Eff. February 1, 1976;*
 33 *Amended Eff. July 1, 1998; July 1, 1997; July 1, 1996; July 1, 1995; July 1, 1994; July 1, 1993;*
 34 *October 1, 1992;*
 35 *Temporary Amendment Eff. July 1, 1999;*
 36 *Amended Eff. July 1, 2000;*
 37 *Temporary Amendment Eff. July 1, 2001;*

1 *Temporary Amendment Eff. July 1, 2002;*
2 *Amended Eff. August 1, 2002 (approved by RRC on 6/21/01 and 04/18/02);*
3 *Temporary Amendment Eff. June 1, 2003;*
4 *Amended Eff. June 1, 2004 (this amendment replaces the amendment approved by RRC on July 17,*
5 *2003);*
6 *Amended Eff. August 1, 2018; August 1, 2017; August 1, 2016; August 1, 2015; August 1, 2014;*
7 *August 1, 2013; August 1, 2012; August 1, 2011; August 1, 2010; May 1, 2009; May 1, 2008; May*
8 *1, 2007; May 1, 2006; June 1, 2005;*
9 *Readopted Eff. August 1, 2019;*
10 *Amended Eff. August 1, 2022, August 1, 2021; August 1, 2020.*

11

1 **15A NCAC 10C .0206 TROTTLINES, JUG HOOKS AND SET HOOKS**

2 (a) For purposes of this Rule, the following definitions apply:

- 3 (1) "set hook" means a fishing device consisting of a single line having no more than three hooks that
4 is attached at one end only to a stationary object.
- 5 (2) "jug hook" means a fishing device consisting of a single line having no more than three hooks that
6 is attached to a float.
- 7 (3) "trotline" means a fishing device consisting of a horizontal common line having multiple hooks
8 attached.

9 (b) Except as otherwise prohibited in this Rule, trotlines, jug hooks, and set hooks may be set in the inland waters of
10 North Carolina, provided no live bait is used. Trotlines, jug hooks, and set hooks may not be set in any of the
11 impounded waters on the Sandhills Game Land. Trotlines, jug hooks, and set hooks may not be set in any designated
12 public mountain trout waters except impounded waters of power reservoirs and municipally-owned water supply
13 reservoirs open to the public for fishing. In Lake Waccamaw, trotlines, jug hooks, or set hooks may be set only from
14 October 1 through April 30. In the Roanoke River, trotlines, jug hooks, or set hooks may be set only from July 1
15 through March 31.

16 (c) Each trotline, set hook, and jug hook shall bear legible and indelible identification of the user's name and address
17 or the user's Wildlife Resources Commission customer number. Each trotline shall be conspicuously marked at each
18 end and each set hook conspicuously marked at one end with a flag, float, or other prominent object so that its location
19 is readily discernible by boat operators and swimmers. Trotlines shall be set parallel to the nearest shore in all inland
20 fishing waters unless otherwise prohibited. The number of jug hooks that may be fished is limited to 70 per boat. All
21 trotlines, set hooks, and jug hooks shall be fished at least once daily and all fish removed at that time. Trotlines, set
22 hooks, and jug hooks without bait or not labled as described in this Paragraph may be removed from the water by
23 wildlife enforcement officers. It is unlawful to use metal cans or glass jugs as floats.

24
25 *History Note: Authority G.S. 113-134; 113-272; 113-292;*
26 *Eff. February 1, 1976;*
27 *Amended Eff. July 1, 1993; May 1, 1992; July 1, 1989; January 1, 1982;*
28 *Temporary Amendment Eff. July 1, 2002;*
29 *Amended Eff. August 1, 2015; August 1, 2014; August 1, 2013; May 1, 2008; June 1, 2005; August*
30 *1, 2002.*

1 **15A NCAC 10C .0302 MANNER OF TAKING INLAND GAME FISHES**

2 (a) Inland game fishes may only be taken with hook and line unless otherwise provided.

3 (b) Landing nets may be used to land fishes caught on hook and line.

4 (c) Game fishes taken incidental ~~to~~ to

5 ~~(1) commercial fishing operations in joint fishing waters or coastal fishing waters shall be immediately~~
6 ~~returned to the water unharmed.~~

7 ~~(2)~~ the use of special devices for taking nongame fishes from inland fishing waters as authorized in
8 ~~Rule .0402 of this Subchapter~~ 15A NCAC 10C .0402 or as authorized by 15A NCAC 10C .0407 by
9 anglers licensed under G.S. 113-272.2(c) shall be immediately returned to the water unharmed
10 except:

11 ~~(A)(1)~~ that a daily creel limit of American and hickory shad may be taken with dip nets and bow
12 nets from March 1 through April 30 in those waters where such gear may be lawfully used;
13 and

14 ~~(B)(2)~~ white perch may be taken when captured in a cast net being used to collect nongame fishes
15 in all impounded waters west of Interstate 95 and in the Tar River Reservoir (Nash County).

16 (d) Inland game fishes taken from Inland Fishing Waters shall not be sold.

17 (e) In the inland waters of the Roanoke River upstream of U.S. 258 bridge, only a single barbless circle hook may be
18 used when fishing with live or natural bait from April 1 to June 30. With all other tackle, only a single barbless hook
19 or a lure with a single barbless hook may be used. used from 1 April to 30 June. "Circle hook" as used in this Rule
20 means a hook with the point turned perpendicularly back to the shank. "Barbless" as used in this Rule requires that
21 the hook does not have a barb or the barb is bent down.

22
23 *History Note: Authority G.S. 113-134; 113-272.3; 113-292;*

24 *Eff. February 1, 1976;*

25 *Amended Eff. July 1, 1996; October 1, 1994; July 1, 1993; May 1, 1992; January 1, 1982;*

26 *Temporary Amendment Eff. November 1, 1998;*

27 *Amended Eff. June 1, 2022; August 1, 2014; August 1, 2002; April 1, 1999;*

28 *Readopted Eff. October 1, 2021.*

1 **15A NCAC 10C .0306 CRAPPIE**

2 (a) There is no daily creel limit for Crappie, except for waters identified in Paragraphs ~~(b), (c), (d), (e), and (f)~~ (d)
3 through (h) of this Rule.

4 ~~(b)~~ There is no minimum size limit ~~for these fish, except for in~~ waters identified in Paragraphs ~~(d), (e), and (f)~~ (f)
5 through (h) of this Rule.

6 (c) There is no closed season.

7 ~~(b)~~(d) In Buckhorn Reservoir in Wilson and Nash counties, the daily creel limit is 20 fish.

8 ~~(e)~~(e) In Lake Chatuge in Clay County, the daily creel limit is 30 fish.

9 ~~(d)~~(f) In the following waters, the daily creel limit is 20 fish and the minimum size limit is 10 inches:

10 ~~(1)~~ (1) ~~B. Everett Jordan Reservoir;~~

11 ~~(2)~~(1) Roanoke River and its tributaries downstream of Roanoke Rapids dam;

12 ~~(3)~~(2) Cashie River and its tributaries;

13 ~~(4)~~(3) Middle River and its tributaries;

14 ~~(5)~~(4) Eastmost River and its tributaries; and

15 ~~(6)~~(5) Lake Mattamuskeet and associated canals in Hyde County.

16 ~~(e)~~(g) In the following waters, the daily creel limit is 20 fish and the minimum size limit is eight inches:

17 (1) Lake Norman;

18 (2) Lake Hyco;

19 (3) Lake Ramseur;

20 (4) Cane Creek Lake (Union County);

21 (5) Lake Hampton (Yadkin County);

22 (6) Tar River downstream of Tar River Reservoir Dam and all tributaries;

23 (7) Neuse River downstream of Falls Lake Dam and all tributaries;

24 (8) Haw River downstream of Jordan Lake Dam and all tributaries;

25 (9) Deep River downstream of Lockville Dam and all tributaries;

26 (10) Cape Fear River and all tributaries;

27 (11) Waccamaw River downstream of Lake Waccamaw Dam and all tributaries;

28 (12) Lumber River including Drowning Creek and all tributaries;

29 (13) all other public fishing waters east of Interstate 95, except Tar River Reservoir in Nash County,
30 Sutton Lake in New Hanover County, and waters listed in Paragraph ~~(d)~~ (f) of this Rule; and

31 (14) all public waters west of Interstate 77, except Lake Chatuge.

32 (15) B. Everett Jordan Reservoir.

33 ~~(f)~~(h) In John H. Kerr Reservoir, the daily creel limit is 25 fish and the minimum size limit is nine inches.

34 *History Note: Authority G.S. 113-134; 113-292;*

35 *Eff. November 1, 2013;*

36 *Amended Eff. August 1, 2017; August 1, 2016; August 1, 2015;*

37 *Readopted Eff. August 1, 2019;*

38 *Amended Eff. June 1, 2022; August 1, 2020.*

1 **15A NCAC 10C .0314 STRIPED BASS**

2 (a) The daily creel limit for ~~Striped Bass~~ striped bass and its hybrids is four fish in the aggregate, except in waters
3 identified in Paragraphs ~~(b), (c), (f), (g), (h), (i), and (j)~~ d and (g) through (m) of this Rule.

4 ~~(b)~~ The minimum size limit for these fish is 20 inches, except in waters identified in Paragraphs ~~(b), (c), (d), (e), (f),~~
5 ~~(g), (h), (i), and (j)~~ (d) through (m) of this Rule.

6 ~~(c)~~ There is no closed season, except for waters identified in Paragraphs ~~(g), (h), (i), (j), and (k)~~ (i) through (n) of this
7 Rule.

8 ~~(b)~~ (d) In the Dan River upstream from its confluence with Bannister River to the dam at Union Street in Danville, VA
9 and in John H. Kerr Reservoir, the daily creel limit on ~~Striped Bass~~ striped bass and its hybrids is two in the aggregate
10 and the minimum size limit is 20 inches from October 1 through May 31. From June 1 through September 30, the
11 daily creel limit on ~~Striped Bass~~ striped bass and its hybrids is four in the aggregate with no minimum size limit.

12 ~~(e)~~ (e) In Lake Gaston and Roanoke Rapids Reservoir, the minimum size limit for ~~Striped Bass~~ striped bass and its
13 hybrids is 20 inches from October 1 through May 31. There is no minimum size limit for these fish from June 1
14 through September 30.

15 ~~(d)~~ (f) In ~~Lake Norman~~, Hyco Lake, Moss Lake, Mountain Island Reservoir, Oak Hollow Lake, Lake Thom-A-Lex,
16 Lake Townsend, and Salem Lake the minimum size limit for ~~Striped Bass~~ striped bass and its hybrids is 16 inches.

17 ~~(e)~~ (g) In Lake Chatuge in Clay County, the daily creel limit is 15 in the aggregate. There is no minimum size limit,
18 but only two may be greater than 22 inches.

19 ~~(f)~~ (h) In Lake Mattamuskeet, and in the Pee Dee River and its tributaries downstream from the Blewett Falls Dam to
20 the South Carolina state line, the daily creel limit for ~~Striped Bass~~ striped bass and its hybrids is three fish in the
21 aggregate, and the minimum size limit is 18 inches.

22 ~~(g)~~ (i) In the inland fishing waters of Neuse, Pungo, and Tar Pamlico rivers and their tributaries extending upstream
23 to the first impoundment of the main course on the river or its tributaries, and in all other inland fishing waters east of
24 Interstate 95 not specified in Paragraphs ~~(f), (h), (i), and (j)~~ (j) through (l) of this Rule, the daily creel limit for
25 ~~Striped Bass~~ striped bass and its hybrids is two fish in the aggregate. The minimum size limit is 26 inches. In these
26 waters, the season for taking and possessing ~~Striped Bass~~ striped bass is closed from May 1 through September 30.

27 ~~(h)~~ (j) In ~~the inland fishing waters of the Cape Fear River and its tributaries downstream of Buckhorn Dam and in~~
28 ~~the ponds associated with Martin Marietta Park in Craven County, the season for taking and possessing~~ ~~Striped Bass~~
29 striped bass is closed year-round.

30 (k) In the inland fishing waters of the Cape Fear River from Lock and Dam 1 upstream to Buckhorn Dam and its
31 tributaries, the daily creel limit for striped bass and its hybrids is two fish. The minimum size limit is 18 inches. In
32 these waters, the season for taking and possessing Striped Bass is closed from May 1 through the last day in
33 February.

34 ~~(i)~~ (l) In the inland and joint fishing waters of the Roanoke River Striped Bass Management Area, as established in
35 15A NCAC 03R .0201 and identified in 15A NCAC 10C .011 which includes the Roanoke, Cashie, Middle, and
36 Eastmost rivers and their tributaries, the open season for taking and possessing ~~Striped Bass~~ striped bass and its hybrids
37 is March 1 through April 30 from the joint-coastal fishing waters boundary at Albemarle Sound upstream to Roanoke

1 Rapids Lake dam. During the open season, the daily creel limit for ~~Striped Bass~~ striped bass and its hybrids is ~~two~~ one
2 fish in the aggregate, and the minimum size limit is 18 inches. No fish ~~between~~ over 22 inches ~~and 27 inches~~ in length
3 shall be possessed in the daily creel limit. ~~Only one fish larger than 27 inches may be possessed in the daily creel limit.~~

4 ~~(j)(m)~~ In designated inland and joint fishing waters of Roanoke Sound, Croatan Sound, Albemarle Sound, Chowan
5 River, Currituck Sound, Alligator River, Scuppernong River, and their tributaries (excluding the Roanoke River and
6 Cashie River and their tributaries), the ~~Striped Bass~~ striped bass fishing season, size limits, and creel limits are the
7 same as those established by rules or proclamations of the Marine Fisheries Commission in adjacent ~~joint or~~ coastal
8 fishing waters.

9 ~~(k)(n)~~ In accordance with G.S. 113-292, the Executive Director may, by proclamation, ~~suspend~~, suspend or extend
10 the hook-and-line season for ~~Striped Bass~~ striped bass in the inland and joint waters of coastal rivers and their
11 tributaries. It is unlawful to violate the provisions of any proclamation issued under this authority.

12

13 *History Note: Authority G.S. 113-134; 113-292; 113-304; 113-305;*
14 *Eff. November 1, 2013;*
15 *Amended Eff. June 1, 2018; August 1, 2016; August 1, 2015; August 1, 2014;*
16 *Readopted Eff. August 1, 2019;*
17 *Amended Eff. August 1, 2021; August 1, 2020;*
18 *Temporary Amendment Eff. September 1, 2022; November 30, 2021;*

1 **15A NCAC 10C .0401 MANNER OF TAKING NONGAME FISHES**

2 (a) Except as permitted by the rules in this Section, ~~it is unlawful no person shall to~~ take nongame fishes from the
3 inland fishing waters of North Carolina in any manner other than with hook and line, grabbling, or special device with
4 a special device fishing ~~license~~.license, or inland fishing license.

5 (b) Nongame fishes may be taken from inland fishing waters by hook and line, grabbling, or special device with a
6 special device fishing license at any time without restriction as to size limits or creel limits, except as ~~designated~~
7 specified in this Rule. Section.

8 (c) Special devices ~~may only be used to take nongame fishes with a special device fishing license shall only be used~~
9 in those counties and waters with open season designated in ~~Rule .0407 of this Section.~~ 15A NCAC 10C .0407.

10 (d) Archery equipment ~~may used with either a hunting license or inland fishing license may only be used to take~~
11 nongame fishes year-round in all inland fishing waters, except:

- 12 (1) ~~for the take of catfish on in the~~ Pee Dee River downstream of Blewett Falls Dam to the South
13 Carolina state line and in all tributaries, where only catfish can be taken;
- 14 (2) in impounded waters located on the Sandhills Game Land; and
- 15 (3) in public mountain trout waters.

16 (e) Set hooks, jug hooks, and trotlines may be used to take nongame fishes as designated in 15A NCAC 10C .0206.

17 (f) The season for taking nongame fishes by hook and line in designated public mountain trout waters is the same as
18 the trout fishing season. Trout seasons are designated in 15A NCAC 10C .0316.

19 (g) ~~Freshwater mussels, including the Asiatic clam (Corbicula fluminea), may be taken only from impounded waters,~~
20 ~~except mussels shall not be taken in:~~

- 21 (1) ~~Lake Waccamaw in Columbus County; and~~
- 22 (2) ~~University Lake in Orange County.~~

23 ~~The daily possession limit for freshwater mussels is 200 in the aggregate, except there is no daily possession limit for~~
24 ~~the Asiatic clam (Corbicula fluminea).~~

25 (h) ~~Blue crabs shall have a minimum carapace width of five inches (point to point) and it is unlawful to possess more~~
26 ~~than 50 crabs per person per day or to exceed 100 crabs per vessel per day.~~

27 (i) ~~While boating on or fishing in the following inland fishing waters, no person shall take river herring (alewife and~~
28 ~~blueback herring) that are greater than six inches in length, or possess such herring regardless of origin in:~~

- 29 (1) ~~Roanoke River downstream of Roanoke Rapids Dam;~~
- 30 (2) ~~Tar River downstream of Rocky Mount Mill Dam;~~
- 31 (3) ~~Neuse River downstream of Falls Lake Dam;~~
- 32 (4) ~~Cape Fear River downstream of Buckhorn Dam;~~
- 33 (5) ~~Pee Dee River downstream of Blewett Falls Dam;~~
- 34 (6) ~~Lumber River, including Drowning Creek;~~
- 35 (7) ~~all the tributaries to the rivers listed above; and~~
- 36 (8) ~~all other inland fishing waters east of I 95.~~

1 ~~(j) In waters that are stocked and managed for catfish and located on game lands, on Commission owned property,~~
2 ~~or on the property of a cooperator, including waters within the Community Fishing Program, it is unlawful to take~~
3 ~~channel or blue catfish by means other than hook and line; the daily creel limit for channel catfish is seven. Waters~~
4 ~~where this creel limit applies shall be posted on site with signs indicating the creel limit.~~

5 ~~(k) The daily creel limit for blue catfish greater than 32 inches is one fish in the following waters:~~

- 6 (1) Lake Norman;
- 7 (2) Mountain Island Lake;
- 8 (3) Lake Wylie;
- 9 (4) Badin Lake;
- 10 (5) Lake Tillery;
- 11 (6) John H. Kerr Reservoir (North Carolina portion);
- 12 (7) Dan River (Downstream of the Union Street Dam in Danville, VA);
- 13 (8) Lake Gaston (North Carolina portion); and
- 14 (9) Roanoke Rapids Reservoir.

15 ~~(l) The daily creel limit is five catfish in aggregate on the Pee Dee River downstream of Blewett Falls Dam to the~~
16 ~~South Carolina state line and all tributaries.~~

17 ~~(m) The daily creel limit for American eels taken from or possessed, regardless of origin, while boating on or fishing~~
18 ~~in inland fishing waters is 25, and the minimum size limit is 9 inches. Eels greater than 9 inches in length and with a~~
19 ~~minimum body depth greater than ½ inch may be cut for use as bait.~~

20 ~~(n) Grass carp shall not be taken or possessed on Lake James, Lookout Shoals Lake, Mountain Island Reservoir, and~~
21 ~~Lake Wylie, except that one fish per day may be taken with archery equipment.~~

22 ~~(o) Grass carp shall not be taken or possessed on Lake Norman and the North Carolina portion of John H. Kerr~~
23 ~~Reservoir, except for scientific study by permit issued by the Wildlife Resources Commission.~~

24 ~~(p) In inland fishing waters, gray trout (weakfish) recreational seasons, size limits, and creel limits are the same as~~
25 ~~those established by Marine Fisheries Commission rule or proclamations issued by the Fisheries Director in adjacent~~
26 ~~joint or coastal fishing waters.~~

27 ~~(q) No person while fishing shall remove the head or tail or otherwise change the appearance of any nongame fish~~
28 ~~specified in Paragraphs (h), (i), (k), (m), and (p) of this Rule having a size limit so as to render it impractical to measure~~
29 ~~its total original length, except as provided in Paragraph (m) of this Rule. No person while fishing shall change the~~
30 ~~appearance of any nongame fish specified in Paragraphs (g), (h), (j), (k), (l), (m), (n), (o), and (p) of this Rule having~~
31 ~~a daily creel limit so as to obscure its identification or render it impractical to count the number of fish in possession,~~
32 ~~except as provided in Paragraph (m) of this Rule.~~

33 ~~(r) (g) Nongame fishes taken by hook and line, grabbling, or by special device with a special device fishing license~~
34 ~~may be sold, sold unless otherwise specified in this Section. with the following exceptions:~~

- 35 (1) alewife and blueback herring, excluding those less than six inches in length collected from Kerr
36 Reservoir (Granville, Vance, and Warren counties);
- 37 (2) blue crab; and

1 (3) ~~bowfin.~~

2 ~~(s) Margined madtom and tadpole madtom shall not be taken or possessed from inland fishing waters.~~

3 (h) In the inland waters of the Roanoke River upstream of U.S. 258 bridge, only a single barbless circle hook may be
4 used when fishing with live or natural bait from April 1 to June 30. With all other tackle, only a single barbless hook
5 may be used. "Circle hook" as used in this Rule means a hook with the point turned perpendicularly back to the shank.
6 "Barbless" as used in this Rule requires that a hook does not have a barb or the barb is bent down.

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9 *History Note: Authority G.S. 113-134; 113-272; 113-292;*
10 *Eff. February 1, 1976;*
11 *Amended Eff. July 1, 1994; July 1, 1993; May 1, 1992;*
12 *Temporary Amendment Eff. December 1, 1994;*
13 *Amended Eff. July 1, 1998; July 1, 1996; July 1, 1995;*
14 *Temporary Amendment Eff. July 1, 1999;*
15 *Amended Eff. July 1, 2000;*
16 *Temporary Amendment Eff. July 1, 2002; July 1, 2001;*
17 *Amended Eff. August 1, 2002 (approved by RRC on 06/21/01 and 04/18/02);*
18 *Temporary Amendment Eff. June 1, 2003;*
19 *Amended Eff. May 1, 2004 (this amendment replaces the amendment approved by RRC on July 17,*
20 *2003);*
21 *Amended Eff. August 1, 2019; August 1, 2018; August 1, 2016; August 1, 2015; August 1, 2014;*
22 *August 1, 2013; August 1, 2012; August 1, 2011; August 1, 2010; May 1, 2009; May 1, 2008; May*
23 *1, 2007; May 1, 2006; June 1, 2005;*
24 *Readopted Eff. August 1, 2020;*
25 *Amended Eff. August 1, 2021.*

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1 **15A NCAC 10D .0104 FISHING ON GAME LANDS**

2 (a) Generally. Except as otherwise indicated herein, fishing on game lands that are open to fishing shall be in
3 accordance with the North Carolina rules. All game lands are open to public fishing except restocked ponds when
4 posted against fishing, Hunting Creek Swamp Waterfowl Refuge, Grogan ~~Creek, Creek~~, Cedar Rock Creek (tributary
5 to the Davidson River at Bobby N. Setzer State Fish Hatchery), and John Rock Branch in Transylvania County, and
6 in the case of private ponds where fishing may be prohibited by the owners thereof. No trotline or set-hook or any net,
7 trap, gig, archery equipment, or other special fishing device of a type mentioned in 15A NCAC 10C .0404(b),(c),(d),
8 and (f) may be used in any impounded waters located entirely on game lands. Archery equipment may be used to take
9 nongame fishes in impounded waters located entirely on game lands with the exception of those waters mentioned in
10 15A NCAC 10C .0404(a). Blue crabs taken by hook and line (other than set-hooks) in designated waterfowl
11 impoundments located on game lands shall have a minimum carapace width of five inches (point to point) and the
12 daily possession limit is 50 per person and 100 per vessel.

13 (b) Designated Public Mountain Trout Waters

14 (1) Location. All waters located on the game lands listed in this Subparagraph are designated public
15 mountain trout waters except as noted:

- 16 (A) Cold Mountain Game Land in Haywood County;
- 17 (B) DuPont State Forest Game Lands in Henderson and Transylvania counties, except Little
18 River from 100 yards downstream of Hooker Falls downstream to the DuPont State Forest
19 boundary, Lake Imaging, Lake Dense, Lake Alfred, Lake Julia, and Fawn Lake;
- 20 (C) Green River Game Land in Henderson and Polk counties, except Green River downstream
21 of the natural gas pipeline crossing;
- 22 (D) Headwaters Game Land in Transylvania County;
- 23 (E) Nantahala National Forest Game Lands in Cherokee, Clay, Graham, Jackson, Macon,
24 Swain, and Transylvania counties, except Cheoah River downstream of Santeetlah
25 Reservoir and Cherokee Lake;
- 26 (F) Pisgah National Forest Game Lands in Avery, Buncombe, Burke, Caldwell, Haywood,
27 Henderson, Madison, McDowell, Mitchell, Transylvania, Watauga, and Yancey counties,
28 except Grogan ~~Creek, Creek~~, Cedar Rock Creek (tributary to the Davidson River at Bobby
29 N. Setzer State Fish Hatchery), and John Rock Branch North Fork Catawba River
30 downstream of the mouth of Armstrong Creek, Big Laurel Creek downstream from the US
31 25-70 bridge to the French Broad River, Mill Ridge Pond, Nolichucky River, Pigeon River
32 downstream of Waterville Reservoir to the Tennessee state line, and Spring Creek below
33 US Forest Service road 223;
- 34 (G) Pond Mountain Game Land in Ashe County;
- 35 (H) Rendezvous Mountain State Forest Game Land in Wilkes County;
- 36 (I) South Mountains Game Land in Cleveland and Rutherford counties;
- 37 (J) Three Top Mountain Game Land in Ashe County;

- 1 (K) Thurmond Chatham Game Land in Wilkes County;
- 2 (L) Toxaway Game Land in Transylvania County; and
- 3 (M) William H. Silvers Game Land in Haywood County.

4 (2) All designated public mountain trout waters located on the game lands listed in Subparagraph (b)(1)
5 of this Rule are Wild Trout Waters unless classified otherwise. [See 15A NCAC 10C .0205(d)]
6 (c) Ponds. In all game lands ponds, it is unlawful to take channel, white, or blue catfish (forked tail catfish) by means
7 other than hook and line and the daily creel limit for forked tail catfish is six fish in aggregate.

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9 *History Note: Authority G.S. 113-134; 113-264; 113-272; 113-292; 113-305;*
10 *Eff. February 1, 1976;*
11 *Amended Eff. July 1, 2000; July 1, 1998; July 1, 1996; July 1, 1995; July 1, 1994; July 1, 1993;*
12 *July 1, 1992;*
13 *Temporary Amendment Eff. July 1, 2002; July 1, 2001;*
14 *Amended Eff. August 1, 2002 (approved by RRC on 06/21/01 and 04/18/02);*
15 *Temporary Amendment Eff. June 1, 2003;*
16 *Amended Eff. August 1, 2018; August 1, 2017; August 1, 2015; August 1, 2014; August 1, 2010;*
17 *May 1, 2009; August 1, 2004.*