

**Memorandum of Agreement between**  
**The North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission**  
**And**  
**The North Carolina Marine Fisheries Commission**

To facilitate cooperation and collaboration between the Wildlife Resources Commission (WRC), and the Marine Fisheries Commission (MFC) regarding delineation of Inland Fishing Waters and Coastal Fishing Waters and subsequent management and regulation of resources in and around those fishing waters, the Chairmen of the WRC and the MFC, have reached an agreement in principle on modifications to inland-coastal boundary lines. In addition, the Chairmen have identified a list of necessary, though not exhaustive, issues to address before adopting rules for and related to these boundary lines. While this agreement in principle has reached by the Chairmen, execution of this document requires approval of both Commissions.

**WITNESSETH:**

**WHEREAS**, the Chairmen agreed to the attached inland-coastal fishing water boundary lines as modifications to the current inland-joint-coastal fishing water boundary lines to improve regulatory clarity and consistency for stakeholders and the public, and to address conflict and confusion that has arisen based on the current joint rules pertaining to joint fishing waters;

**WHEREAS**, the Chairmen have agreed to these modified inland-coastal fishing water boundaries, and acknowledge that the joint rulemaking necessary to amend the current boundary lines will have implications beyond their Commission's authority and that their respective Commissioners and constituents may have concerns beyond what they have initially agreed to;

**WHEREAS**, the Chairmen acknowledge the mutual advantages likely to result from this agreement and the communication and collaboration that ensues between the Commissions and Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF) and WRC staffs;

**WHEREAS**, the Chairmen commit to prioritizing the codification of changes to the delineation of inland-coastal fishing waters and the adoption of joint rules resulting from those modifications by December 2024;

**NOW, THEREFORE**, the Commissions do hereby commit to a transparent joint rulemaking process resulting in updated inland fishing water and coastal fishing water boundary lines, without joint fishing waters, based on the attached maps. The process will include public input and a combined regulatory impact analysis/fiscal note where the following issues are considered prior to beginning any rulemaking necessary to modify boundary lines or the regulations associated with those lines:

- Clarification of regulations, authority, and management including:
  - Cooperative management of species across inland-coastal fishing water boundaries
  - Striped Bass Management Areas

- Protection of rare, endangered, threatened, and special concern species
- Statutory definitions applying to fishing waters, and inland, migratory, and coastal fisheries
- Recreational limits and season consistency
- Fishery Management Plan coordination
- Commercial fishing activities in newly designated inland fishing waters, to include licensing, monitoring, and reporting
- Management through proclamations and rulemaking
- Dual agency enforcement
- Coordination with other divisions of the NC Department of Environmental Quality, local governments, and other agencies, to identify regulatory solutions for conflicts associated with policies and regulations referencing boundary lines.

**(REMAINDER OF PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK;  
SIGNATURE PAGE TO FOLLOW.)**

DRAFT 7.14.22

In witness whereof, the Commissions hereto have caused this Agreement to be executed, to be effective as of the date of the last signature below.

NORTH CAROLINA WILDLIFE RESOURCES COMMISSION

By: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

NORTH CAROLINA MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION

By: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

DRAFT 7-14-22