

**Minutes
Coastal Committee
2 Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive, S. E.
Suite 1252 East Tower
Atlanta, GA 30334**

**Tuesday, September 26, 2023
9:00 a.m.**

Committee Members

Nancy Addison, Chair
Randy Dellinger
Charles DePriest
Joe Hatfield
Mark Hennessy
Kevin Jackson
Tim Lowe
Paul Shailendra
Gary Vowell
Dwight Davis, Board Chair, Ex-officio

Board Members

Patrick Denney
Penn Hodge
Duncan Johnson
Ray Lambert
Lesley Reynolds
Bodine Sinyard
Harley Yancey

Guests

Trevor Santos, National Shooting Sports Foundation
Debbie Phillips, GA Industry Environmental Coalition
Mark Woodall, Sierra Club
Alex Muir, GSU Law Student
Drew Kann, Atlanta Journal-Constitution
Rena Peck, Georgia River Network
Beth Findlay, GA DNR Human Resources
Cassandra Jones, GA DNR Accounting
Michelle Egan, State Parks and Historic Sites Division
Matt Elliott, Wildlife Resources Division
Anna Edmondson, Robbins Governmental Relations

Staff Members

Walter Rabon, Commissioner
Thomas Barnard
Kyle Pearson
Kate Iannuzzi
Cathy Barnette
Artica Gaston
Steve Friedman
Doug Haymans
Angie Johnson
Ted Will
Carolyn Belcher
Amy Knight
Brent Vendola

Jeff Cown, Director
John Eunice
James Boylan
Chuck Mueller
Anna Truszczynski

The September 26, 2023 meeting of the Coastal Resources Committee was called to order by Dwight Davis, Chairman of the Board of Natural Resources.

Chairman Davis called on Joe Hatfield, Acting Chair of the Coastal Resources Committee.

Mr. Hatfield called Dr. Carolyn Belcher to present a briefing on the proposed amendment to the Rules of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Saltwater Fishing Regulations, Chapter 391-2-4.

Dr. Belcher stated the Coastal Resources Division is proposing two changes to the Rules of the Saltwater Fishing Regulations. She further stated that both proposed changes will ensure Georgia's compliance with the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Coastal Sharks. She added that as an ASMFC member, Georgia has an affirmative obligation to implement the management measures contained within this interstate fishery management plan.

Dr. Belcher stated that the primary features of the proposed amendment are to restructure the shark related subparagraphs in Rule 391-2-4-.04 to ensure the daily creel limit of 1 per person or vessel per day is defined to apply to the aggregate of Hammerheads, Shortfin Mako Shark, and Shark, and to change the open season for Shortfin Mako Sharks. She further stated to address the closure of the commercial and recreational fisheries for Shortfin Mako Sharks, CRD is proposing to change the season from "All Year" to "When Federal Quota is Available". She added that by changing the season and not the daily creel and possession limit, Georgia anglers will be able to catch Shortfin Mako Sharks when NOAA Fisheries increases the current quota from zero in future actions.

Dr. Belcher stated the Administrative Procedures Act requires that during the formation and adoption of any Rules attempts shall be made to reduce the economic impact of those rules on small businesses. She further stated that this applies to businesses that are independently owned and operated, are not dominant in the field, and employ 100 employees or less. She added that although hammerhead sharks occur in state waters, very few recreational anglers target larger sharks for retention as evidenced by low catch estimates for these species. She further added the proposed administrative changes should have no negative impacts on small businesses.

Dr. Belcher stated that Shortfin Mako Sharks do not occur in Georgia waters, and, as such, the proposed season closure for Shortfin Mako Sharks should have no negative impacts on small businesses. She further stated that if anything, the net long-term consequence should be positive

as the proposed Rule will help conserve these species of sharks thereby ensuring future fishing opportunities. She added that CRD expects the change resulting from the proposed amendments to have little impact on recreational fishers, fishing-related businesses, or the general public.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.