



TOWN OF KILL DEVIL HILLS

Land Where Flight Began

Resolution Opposing Consolidated Atlantic Highly Migratory Species Fishery Management Plan Amendment 15 Section F Subsection F2

WHEREAS, the Outer Banks of North Carolina has a long heritage in commercial fishing, and commercial fishing is the second largest economic driver in Dare County; and,

WHEREAS, due to overregulation of the commercial fishing industry, the economic viability and the ever-decreasing number of area watermen threatens this valuable economic engine in eastern North Carolina and other coastal counties along the Eastern Seaboard of the United States; and,

WHEREAS, Dare County is the home port to 18 pelagic longline vessels and four seafood processing plants, directly providing employment for hundreds of its citizens and providing fresh, wild-caught product to seafood markets, restaurants, and consumers across the United States, including 1.82 million pounds of highly migratory species (swordfish, tuna, and mahi) in 2022; and,

WHEREAS, in 2006, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) adopted the Consolidated Atlantic Highly Migratory Species Fishery Management Plan; and,

WHEREAS, in 2015, NOAA adopted Amendment 7, adding the Electronic Monitoring Camera System on all pelagic longline vessels, and this system was installed and maintained by NOAA funding; and,

WHEREAS, on May 7, 2019, Procedure 04-115-02, "Cost Allocation in Electronic Monitoring Programs for Federally Managed Fisheries," was implemented and electronic monitoring continued to be funded by NOAA; and,

WHEREAS, in May 2023, NOAA released the Draft Amendment of the Consolidated Atlantic Highly Migratory Species Fishery Management Plan; and,

WHEREAS, in Draft Amendment 15, Alternatives Section F, "Electronic Monitoring Program," Subsection F2, would transfer all costs of the Electronic Monitoring Program from NOAA, the agency requesting the data, to the fishing industry, as vessel owners would be financially responsible for all aspects of electronic monitoring, including the equipment, services, sampling, and data storage of footage in which only 10% of a set would be viewed; and,

WHEREAS, Draft Amendment 15 establishes a cost for any and all sets at \$280.00 each, resulting in an estimated \$1,700.00 additional cost per trip on average; and,

WHEREAS, since 2015, the number of North Atlantic pelagic longliners has fallen from approximately 135 to less than 80 vessels, the resulting overall cost to NOAA for the electronic monitoring program is significantly lower than before, and it would therefore appear that the purpose and effect of Amendment 15 is purely punitive rather than an economic necessity; and,

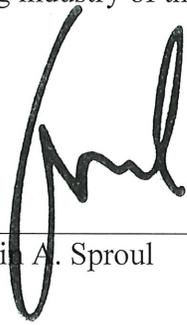
WHEREAS, on August 9, 2023, NOAA released the National Seafood Strategy report, which outlines NOAA's direction over the next five years for supporting a thriving domestic U.S. seafood economy and enhancing the resilience of the seafood sector in the face of climate change and other stressors; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, the Board of Commissioners for the Town of Kill Devil Hills, North Carolina opposes Draft Amendment 15 Section F subsection F2 as this would add a crushing financial burden on our already overregulated commercial watermen and seafood industry in the Outer Banks specifically and on the pelagic longline fishing industry of the East Coast.

This 27th day of September, 2023.

SEAL





Benjamin A. Sproul
Mayor

ATTEST:



James Michael O'Dell
Town Clerk