



HOUSE BILL 442: Restore Flounder/Red Snapper Season.

2025-2026 General Assembly

Committee:	House Wildlife Resources. If favorable, re- refer to State and Local Government. If favorable, re-refer to Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House	Date:	April 29, 2025
Introduced by:	Reps. Iler, Goodwin, Davis, Kidwell	Prepared by:	Aaron McGlothlin
Analysis of:	PCS to First Edition H442-CSCC-2		Committee Counsel

OVERVIEW: *The Proposed Committee Substitute for House Bill 442 would direct the Fisheries Director, Marine Fisheries Commission, and the Division of Marine Fisheries to open the flounder and red snapper fisheries for recreational fishing between May 15 and November 15 of each year until August 1, 2029.*

CURRENT LAW / BACKGROUND:

The marine fisheries resources of the State are largely managed through the Fishery Management Plan Process. The North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries (Division) prepares proposed Fishery Management Plans (FMPs) for adoption by the Marine Fisheries Commission (Commission) for all commercially or recreationally significant species or fisheries. The goal of the FMPs is to ensure the long-term viability of the State's commercially and recreationally significant species or fisheries. The Commission may delegate to the Fisheries Director the authority to issue proclamations suspending or implementing, in whole or in part, particular rules of the Commission that may be affected by variable conditions.

BILL ANALYSIS:

Section 1 of the PCS would direct the Fisheries Director, the Commission, and the Division to issue proclamations and undertake amendments to the fishery management plans for flounder and red snapper in order to allow for a recreational fishing season for these species between May 15 and November 15 each year through August 1, 2029. The daily creel limit for this season would have to be set at one or more fish per day, with no seasonal limit. All other size and manner of take limits would continue to apply to the flounder and red snapper fisheries.

This section would also require the Fisheries Director, the Commission, and the Division to revise any regulations or policies to provide that any flounder or red snapper caught and released by recreational fishermen will not be counted towards catch limits or quotas set by the Commission or Division.

Section 2 would require the Division to submit an annual report assessing the progress in conserving flounder and red snapper populations and estimating a time frame for the Division to increase the daily creel limit above one fish per day for flounder and red snapper.

EFFECTIVE DATE: This bill would become effective upon becoming law, and would expire August 1, 2029.

Kara McCraw
Director



Legislative Analysis
Division
919-733-2578