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# Wildlife Commission Approves New Regulations for 2015-16

The N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission yesterday approved 57 changes to the state's game land, wildlife management and inland fishing regulations for the 2015-16 seasons. Effective dates for new regulations are May 1, 2015 for game land regulation changes and Aug. 1, 2015 for wildlife management and inland fishing regulation changes.

**Game Land Regulations Changes** The Commission approved 14 changes to game land regulations that include prohibiting all target shooting on both Holly Shelter and Stones Creek game lands in Pender and Onslow counties, as well as seven other game lands across the state that are within a 30-mile radius of a current or planned shooting range facility. These game lands are:

- Angola Bay Game Land, in Duplin and Pender counties;
- Cape Fear River Game Land in New Hanover and Pender counties;
- R. Wayne Bailey-Caswell Game Land in Caswell County;
- Nicholson Creek Game Land and Rockfish Game Land in Hoke County;
- Sampson County Game Land in Sampson County; and
- Sandhills Game Land in Hoke, Moore, Richmond and Scotland counties

"We are implementing an aggressive communication plan to raise awareness about this new regulation. Public safety on our game lands is paramount," said Executive Director Gordon Myers. "Extensive non-hunting related shooting on several game lands has caused significant habitat destruction and safety concerns for game land visitors and homeowners who live nearby."

**Wildlife Management Regulations Changes** Among the wildlife management-related changes the Commission approved was the creation of a Youth Deer Hunting Day, which will coincide with National Hunting and Fishing Day, held annually on the fourth Saturday in September. On this day, youth under 16 will be able to use all legal weapons to hunt deer of either sex on both private lands and game lands. They will not need to be accompanied by an adult, except where otherwise required. Adults will be able to hunt with or without a youth on Youth Deer Hunting Day, but will be restricted to the legal weapon for the open season in that area. All hunters will be required to wear blaze orange on that day.

Two other wildlife management-related regulation changes allow hunters to use electronic calls to take feral swine and eliminate the Gaddy Goose Refuge goose zone and season in Anson County, returning this area to the Southern James Bay Hunt Zone for goose hunting.

**Inland Fisheries Regulations Changes** The Commission also modified the general statewide regulation for striped bass and hybrid striped bass by increasing the minimum size limit from 16 inches to 20 inches and reducing the daily creel limit from eight fish in aggregate to four fish. The exception that allowed anglers to retain two fish less than the minimum size limit in the daily creel limit was eliminated. This proposed regulation will affect the following reservoirs: High Rock Lake, Tuckertown Lake, Badin Lake, Lake Tillery, Blewett Falls Reservoir, Hiwassee Reservoir and W. Kerr Scott Reservoir.

Other approved fishing-related regulatory changes include the designations of several waters in western North Carolina as Public Mountain Trout Waters. They include:

- 3.6 miles of Lovills Creek in Surry County from the U.S. 52 Business bridge to the Ararat River, classified as Hatchery Supported Trout Waters
- 2.2 miles of the Tuckasegee River in Swain County from the U.S. 19 bridge to the Slope Street bridge, classified as Delayed Harvest Trout Waters
- 0.6 mile of the Cane River in Yancey County from Blackberry Ridge Road to the downstream boundary of Cane River County Park, classified as Delayed Harvest Trout Waters.

**Other Actions** In addition to voting on the 57 proposed regulations changes, Wildlife Commissioners approved a no-wake zone for Grandy in Currituck County, as well as a request by the Lake Wylie Marine Commission to amend one no-wake zone and create a new no-wake zone on Lake Wylie. These no-wake zones, located on the west and east sides of Sadler Island, will be enforced by wildlife enforcement officers.

The Lake Wylie Marine Commission originally had requested the Wildlife Commission establish a no-wake zone west of Sadler Island. After multiple site visits, Wildlife Commission enforcement officers determined that there were significant safety issues between kayakers and motorboat operators to warrant the addition of no-wake zones both on the west and east sides of Sadler Island.

The Wildlife Commission also approved shortening the length of the original no-wake zone requested by the Lake Wylie Marine Commission.

Each year in March, Wildlife Commissioners vote on proposed regulations changes after hearing staff recommendations and reviewing comments received during nine public hearings, which are held across the state every January.

To view the full text of all 57 proposed regulations, visit the Commission's website.

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# 55 Attend Anson County Republican Convention

The Anson County Republican Party held their annual Convention this past Saturday, March 7 with 55 in attendance. Speakers Mark Brody (NC House) and Tom McInnis (NC Senate) talked about agriculture committees they are on as well as current Anson County interests in Raleigh.



Pictured here are, from left, newly elected Chairman Brian Johnson, Immediate past Chairman Donna Wells and 8th District Chairman John Lewis.

# This Week in Sports

Anson High School Athletic Director Terry Mabry has released the sports events scheduled for this week.

Mabry said, "I want to invite you to come out and support our kids. Remember all staff have free admission, just show your school ID card."

- WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11**
- AHS: Softball vs. Cheraw - 6:00 - Away
- THURSDAY, MARCH 12**
- AHS: Soccer vs. E. Montgomery - 6:00 - Away
- AHS: Softball vs. Parkwood - 4:30 @ Home
- FRIDAY, MARCH 13**
- AHS: JV & V Baseball vs. N. Stanly - 4:30, 7:00 @ Home
- AMS: Baseball and Softball - Long Middle Tournament
- SATURDAY, MARCH 14**
- AHS: Track @ Weddington
- AMS: Baseball and Softball - Long Middle Tournament

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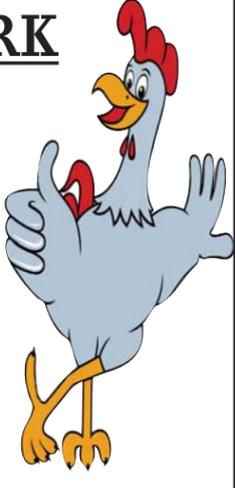
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