

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2025

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HOUSE BILL 1113
Committee Substitute Favorable 5/19/26
Committee Substitute #2 Favorable 6/9/26

Short Title: Shellfish Leasing Moratoria.

(Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

April 30, 2026

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO EXTEND THE MORATORIA ON SHELLFISH LEASING IN THE NEW HANOVER COUNTY AREA AND IN BOGUE SOUND AND TO TEMPORARILY PROHIBIT THE ISSUANCE OF NEW SHELLFISH CULTIVATION LEASES IN CERTAIN AREAS OF PENDER AND ONSLOW COUNTIES.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

EXTEND SHELLFISH LEASE MORATORIUM IN THE NEW HANOVER COUNTY AREA

SECTION 1.(a) Section 7 of S.L. 2019-37, as amended by Section 12.3 of S.L. 2021-180, reads as rewritten:

"**SECTION 7.** Notwithstanding G.S. 113-202 and G.S. 113-202.1, a moratorium on new shellfish cultivation leases and new water column leases for aquaculture shall be imposed for all those waters enclosed by a line beginning at 34° 13.10221' N -77° 48.79544' W on the mainland side near Wrightsville Beach Bridge; running southeasterly to a point at 34° 12.51584' N -77° 47.81847' W on Wrightsville Beach; following the shoreline southwesterly to a point at 34° 11.121' N -77° 48.848' W at Masonboro Inlet; running southwesterly to a point at 34° 10.927' N -77° 48.771' W at Masonboro Inlet; continuing southwesterly to a point at 34° 05.04108' N -77° 52.08324' W near IWW marker #159 continuing running southwesterly to a point at 34° 03.64140' N -77° 53.41338' W on the mainland adjacent to the eastern mouth of Snow's Cut; running northeasterly along the shoreline to the point of beginning. The moratorium shall expire ~~July 1, 2026.~~ July 1, 2031. For purposes of this section, a new shellfish cultivation lease or water column lease shall include applications for either type of lease received by the Secretary but not granted as of July 1, 2019."

SECTION 1.(b) This section becomes effective June 30, 2026, and applies to the Department's consideration of applications for shellfish leases submitted to the Department on or after that date as well as applications for a new shellfish cultivation lease or a new water column lease received by the Secretary, but not granted as of July 1, 2019.

SECTION 2. The sum of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) in nonrecurring funds for the 2026-2027 fiscal year is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Environmental Quality, Division of Marine Fisheries, for public education activities and other notifications regarding the moratorium extension provided in Section 1 of this act.

EXTEND SHELLFISH LEASE MORATORIUM IN BOGUE SOUND



1 **SECTION 2.5.(a)** Section 8 of S.L. 2019-37, as amended by Section 12.3 of S.L.
2 2021-180, reads as rewritten:

3 **"SECTION 8.** Notwithstanding G.S. 113-202 and G.S. 113-202.1, a moratorium on new
4 shellfish cultivation leases and new water column leases for aquaculture shall be imposed for all
5 those waters enclosed by a line beginning at 34° 43.24641' N -76° 41.68436' W; running easterly
6 following the Highway 70 High Rise Bridge to a point at 34° 43.27819' N -76° 41.22259' W;
7 running southerly to a point 34° 42.375275' N -76° 40.80078' W on the southern tip of Radio
8 Island; running southerly to a point 34° 41.98273' N -76° 40.81929' W; following the shoreline
9 westerly to the Emerald Isle Bridge at a point 34° 40.05410' N -77° 03.80531' W; running
10 northwesterly following the bridge to a point 34° 40.77658' N -77° 04.02674' W on the mainland
11 near the Emerald Isle High Rise Bridge; running easterly following the shoreline to the point of
12 beginning. The moratorium shall expire ~~July 1, 2026.~~ July 1, 2028. For purposes of this section,
13 a new shellfish cultivation lease or water column lease shall include applications for either type
14 of lease received by the Secretary, but not granted as of July 1, 2019."

15 **SECTION 2.5.(b)** This section becomes effective June 30, 2026, and applies to the
16 Department's consideration of applications for shellfish leases submitted to the Department on or
17 after that date as well as applications for a new shellfish cultivation lease or a new water column
18 lease received by the Secretary, but not granted as of July 1, 2019.

19 20 **PROHIBIT NEW SHELLFISH LEASES IN PARTS OF PENDER AND ONSLOW** 21 **COUNTIES**

22 **SECTION 3.(a)** Notwithstanding G.S. 113-202 and G.S. 113-202.1, a moratorium
23 on new shellfish cultivation leases and new water column leases for aquaculture shall be imposed
24 for all those waters enclosed by a line beginning at the southeast end post of the northern fenceline
25 of Hampstead Marina, approximately 7.0' due east to the Point of Beginning on the Mean High
26 Water (MHW) Line at W77°41'05" N34°21'20", thence following the MHW Line northeastward
27 along mainland Pender County to the Onslow County line, thence following the MHW Line ENE
28 along mainland Onslow County to the intersection of the MHW Line with the Jones Onslow
29 Electric Cooperative (JOECO) ROW at W77°22'20" N34°31'06", thence SSE to the northeast tip
30 of the rock revetment in the JOECO ROW on Topsail Island, thence following the sound side
31 MHW line of Topsail Island WSW to its furthest southern extent at W77°39'42" N34°20'42",
32 thence WNW to the southern marsh edge of the east entrance to Howard's Channel at W77°40'26"
33 N34°20'49", thence through the following coordinates W77°40'33" N34°20'48", W77°40'48"
34 N34°21'00", W77°40'49" N34°21'06", W77°40'53" N34°21'12", W77°40'57" N34°21'12" along
35 the marsh edge, thence NW to the point of beginning. The moratorium shall expire July 1, 2028.
36 For purposes of this section, a new shellfish cultivation lease or water column lease shall include
37 applications for either type of lease received by the Secretary, but not granted as of July 1, 2025.

38 **SECTION 3.(b)** This section becomes effective July 1, 2026, and applies to the
39 Department's consideration of applications for shellfish leases submitted to the Department on or
40 after that date as well as applications for a new shellfish cultivation lease or a new water column
41 lease received by the Secretary, but not granted as of July 1, 2025.

42 43 **EFFECTIVE DATE**

44 **SECTION 4.** Except as otherwise provided, this act becomes effective July 1, 2026.