

COMMISSIONERS:

SPENCER HEADLEY (VA)
Chairman

ROBERT A. BOARMAN (MD)
Vice Chairman

GREG GWALTNEY (MD)
Secretary

JOSEPH GRIST (VA)

DR. JIM WESSON (VA)

JOSH KURTZ (MD)
(PROXY: MICHAEL LUISI)

WILLIAM L. RICE, Sr. (MD)

S. LYNN KELLUM (VA)

MARYLAND - VIRGINIA

"Potomac River Compact of 1958"

Potomac River Fisheries Commission

P.O. Box 9

Colonial Beach, Virginia 22443

www.prfc.us



OFFICERS:

RONALD W. OWENS
Executive Secretary

JOHN J. BILLINGSLEY, ESQ.
Legal Officer

TELEPHONE:
(804) 224-7148

E-MAIL:
contact@prfc.us

PRESS RELEASE

Potomac River Fisheries Commission • P.O. Box 9 • Colonial Beach, VA 22443

Phone: (804) 224-7148 Email: contact@prfc.us

For Immediate Release

Date: May 22, 2026

Contact: Ronald W. Owens

Potomac River Fisheries Commission Meeting

Colonial Beach, VA —

Chairman Spencer Headley announced today the Potomac River Fisheries Commission will hold its next regular meeting on **Friday, June 5, 2026, at 8:30 a.m.** in the John T. Parran Hearing Room at the PRFC Commission Office. Chairman Rice invites all interested persons to attend this open public meeting.

Items on the agenda include summaries of the advisory committee meetings and the ASMFC spring meeting, the preliminary crab harvest report, orders pertaining to female and male harvest limits for the 26/27 season. A summary of the winter crab dredge survey, oyster harvest report for 25/26 season, and an update on current oyster projects. The Items for Consideration of Public Hearing will be presented to the Commission to determine whether to send an item for a public hearing in September. There will be an opportunity for the public to comment on items that are not on the agenda.

This meeting is open to the public and all interested people are invited to attend. The PRFC does not discriminate against individuals with disabilities; therefore, if you are in need of reasonable accommodations due to a disability, please call (804) 224-7148 no later than three working days prior to the meeting date and identify your needs.

The Commission uses Microsoft Teams for its online meeting format. If you are unable to attend this meeting in person, you have the option to attend virtually by joining the meeting from your computer, tablet, or smartphone by using one of the methods below:

Microsoft Teams Meeting ID: 266 603 825 407 900

Passcode: ym2iY92q

1. Type <https://teams.microsoft.com> into your browser. Click Join Meeting and use the above meeting ID and passcode.
2. On your smartphone, open the Teams meeting app and use the above ID and passcode.
3. Call in by dialing (872) 333-2524 and using the conference ID: 611930808#

The Items for Consideration for Public Hearing will be presented to the Commission at the June 5, 2026 quarterly meeting. Items approved to advance to a public hearing would be heard at the Commission’s next scheduled quarterly meeting in September 2026.

General (Housekeeping)

1. Amend **Reg. III, Sec. 1(b) Resisting or Impeding Officers** - to strike “curse” from language to comply with US Constitutional First Amendment Rights.
2. Amend **Reg. III, Sec. 13(d) Individual Striped Bass Allocation Transfer from Gill Net to Commercial Hook and Line** - to clarify the dates for when such transfer may occur
3. Repeal **Reg. VIII Oyster Management Reserve Program** and amend **Reg. II, Section 2(g)(1) Identification Tags Required** - to reflect the dissolution of the program
4. Amend **Regulation II, Sec. 2(b) Season Dates, Days, and Times for taking of Landing Oysters** – to include “in accordance with the NSSP Ordinances”
5. Amend **Reg. II, Sec. 2(g) Concealment of Oysters** – to strike “unless said person has a written permit from the commission” and replace with “as approved by the Commission by order.”
6. Amend **Regulation II, Section 3(a) Measures Used for Oysters in Shell and Oysters Shells** – to align with existing regulations

Finfish

7. Amend **Reg. III, Sec. 9(a) Gear Specific Fishing Seasons** - to extend pound net season to Dec. 25

Oyster

8. Amend **Reg. II, Sec. 2(a)(4) Closed Areas for Hand Scraping / Hand Tonging** - to strike #1 to allow hand scraping above the existing line from Cuckhold Creek to Rosier Creek.
9. Amend **Reg. II, Sec. 4(a) Oyster Sanctuaries** - to strike #2 and open Bluff Point Lumps to harvest
10. Amend **Regulation II, Section 1(l) Oyster Basket** – to include dimensions for all containers allowable in the storage of oysters

Crab

11. Amend **Regulation I, Section 2(d)(5) Crab Pot ID Tags/Decals Fee and Replacement** – to allow for waiving of fee for inactive licenses
12. Amend **Regulation VII, Section 1, Section 2(c), Section 6(a)** – to add definitions for crab containers such as bushels, barrels and lugs

See page 2 for PRFC Advisory Committee Items for Consideration

Items to Consider for Public Hearing- Advisory Committee Recommendations

The following items were requested for consideration by the three PRFC advisory committees (Finfish, Oyster/Clam, and Blue Crab) during their recent meetings. Some of the items have been requested/discussed by the committees previously, staff have provided context and initial considerations for the commission's guidance.

Finfish Advisory Committee

- 1. Propose allowing a pound net to be transferred to a gill net stand. Motion was made by Chip Crowder, seconded by Richard Turner. Passed with 12 in favor and 1 (Cook) abstained.**

At the direction of the Commission during the March 2026 quarterly meeting, a subcommittee was assembled to develop a framework to allow the transfer of licenses and striped bass quota from pound net gear to gill nets. The subcommittee proposes that one pound net be equivalent to two gill net stands due to the varying striped bass quota allocation of the two gears. Additionally, it was discussed that any PN stands converted to GN stands be allowed to revert to a PN stand again, thus making a two-way conversion. The two-way conversion was favored to allow users flexibility if baitfish populations rebound and the pound net fishery becomes economical again. Since the pound net fishery is currently capped at 100 licenses maximum, the subcommittee suggested replacing the fixed cap with a dynamic cap to allow for the transfers of licenses between the limited entry licenses.

- 2. Issuing a single commercial license number per individual and one harvest report per person for each fishery. Motion was made by Jamie Bowling, seconded by Chip Crowder. Motion passed with 12 in favor and 1 null vote.**

This item was initially recommended by the FFAC at their August 23, 2023 meeting. Since then, the committee has continued to voice support for this initiative but staff has had to prioritize effort to the ongoing database recreation/online reporting project.

- 3. Add beneficiaries and designated users to all commercial licenses. Motion was made by Jamie Bowling, seconded by Robert Brown. There was no opposition or abstention to the motion and passed unanimously.**

The FFAC first recommended this item at their August 26, 2025 meeting. The proposed initiative to add beneficiaries and authorized users to licenses introduces several layers of complexity involving legal risk, policy design, operational feasibility, and enforcement. Although these topics were combined into one motion, staff has identified these as two separate issues to be addressed.

Oyster Clam Advisory Committee proposed no additional items.

Blue Crab Advisory Committee will meet May 28, 2026. If any additional items are brought forward by this committee, staff will provide an email update prior to the June 5, 2026 quarterly meeting.