

Coastal Rivers Fisheries Reports – Neuse River

BASIC INFO:

River sampled:

Neuse River

Fisheries Biologists conducting sampling:

Ben Ricks, Kelsey Lincoln, Bennett Wynne

Date of sample:

3/13/2017-3/17/2017

Boat ramp(s) used to access river, Area(s) of river sampled, and water temps:

Cox's Ferry BAA, Goldsboro, NC 46°F
Maple Cyprus BAA; Fort Barnwell, NC; 54°F

Species (spp) information:

- Species and number captured:

Goldsboro; Hickory Shad (1) American Shad (19)
Fort Barnwell; Striped Bass (6)

- Size range by spp:

Hickory Shad: 15 inches
American Shad: 16-22 inches
Striped Bass: 19-30 inches

- Max size for spp:

Hickory Shad: 1 pound
American Shad: 4 pounds
Striped Bass: 11 pounds

- Sex ratio by spp:

Hickory Shad: 1:0
American Shad: 1.7:1
Striped Bass: 0:6

- Were the fish tagged? All Striped Bass were tagged.

ADDITIONAL OBSERVATIONS:

River level and other water quality observations (turbidity, etc.):

The Neuse River is very low with high turbidity. Water temperatures have dropped dramatically.

Weather conditions on sampling date?

Sunny; Windy; 40°F

Your observations of other people fishing on the river:

There were a few anglers out on the river fishing for shad, however less fishing effort was observed this week when compared to last week.

Comments to anglers about your sampling results, and fishing-related conclusions that can be drawn from your data:

Hickory and American shad are on or moving toward the spawning grounds. The sudden dip in temperatures has slowed things down a bit. Abundances should increase over the coming weeks. Striped Bass are staging in the lower Neuse River and are beginning to move upstream.

2017 Neuse River Creel Survey Information:

Dr. Drew Cathey of the N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF) shared some creel survey information collected from different stretches along the Neuse River. The creel surveys are conducted during March, April, and May in the upper portions of the Tar, Neuse, and Cape Fear rivers. The surveys are administered by the Division of Marine Fisheries through Coastal Recreational Fishing License funding, and the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission assists with survey design and data interpretation in the upper portions of each river.

Upper Region (Goldsboro to Raleigh)

Anglers were out targeting shad on the Upper Neuse despite the cold front persisting for another week. The shad run is moving into the Upper Neuse with Hickory Shad males and females being caught out of Milburnie Park and Cox's Ferry. Low water is still an issue for anglers trying to access these areas.

Central Region (Core Creek to Seven Springs, Goldsboro Area)

The shad run continues to be in full swing for the third week in a row throughout the entire Middle Neuse. Anglers reported good catches of Hickory shad with a few American shad mixed in. Cut bait was landing catfish as well as keeper striped bass. The most productive areas are the mouth of Contentnea Creek, Pitch Kettle Creek, and the Kinston area.

Lower Region (Spring Garden to New Bern)

A fair amount of stripers were caught out of Lawson's Creek. The majority were undersized and three were legal. Cowpen Landing saw 5 keeper striped bass. Shad fishing was robust with Hickory and American shad landed and over 175 hickory shad released.