

**North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries  
Pamlico Sound Gill Net Restricted Area  
Sea Turtle Resuscitation and Handling Requirements**

As part of its Section 10 Permit from the National Marine Fisheries Service, the North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries (NCDMF) is required to notify fishermen of handling and resuscitation requirements that they must use for incidentally captured sea turtles. In fulfillment of that requirement, the following guidelines are issued:

- A. Fishermen must bring captured turtles aboard immediately upon detecting them in their net and remove them from the net with all due care to avoid further injury to the turtle.
- B. Resuscitation must be attempted on sea turtles that are inactive or comatose by placing the turtle in its normal position on its breastplate (plastron) and elevating its hindquarters several inches for a period of one to 24 hours. The amount of the elevation depends on the size of the turtle; greater elevations are needed for larger turtles. Sea turtles being resuscitated must be kept moist and protected from excessive heat and cold.
- C. Sea turtles that are actively moving or begin actively moving following resuscitation must be held aboard the vessel in an open container (e.g. a fish box) that allows the turtle to rest normally on its breastplate, while restricting its movement and preventing the possibility of injury from any fishing operations. Turtles that are too large to fit inside a holding container must be otherwise confined to an area of the vessel that is free from sharp objects of harmful materials and where chance of injury from fishing operations is minimal.
- D. **For sea turtles that are active and uninjured**, fishermen must transport the turtle to Hatteras or Ocracoke Inlet and release it into the water. **Do not release turtles in Oregon Inlet as dredging operations in that area continue.** Turtles must be released over the stern or side of the boat with the engine out of gear, in an area where they are unlikely to be injured by vessels. Turtles must be brought as near as possible to the actual mouth of the inlet for release, consistent with safe operation of the vessel given sea and weather conditions, but in no case should turtles be released farther than 2.5 nautical miles from the inlet mouth. Vessels fishing along the mainland shore of Pamlico Sound should follow the directions for injured, lethargic or dead sea turtles in letter E below.
- E. **For sea turtles that are injured, lethargic, or dead**, fishermen must contact the NCDMF Marine Patrol at 1-800-682-2632 or (252) 726-7021 and transfer the turtle to a Marine Patrol Officer. If no NCDMF Marine Patrol is in the vicinity you will be instructed what to do until a Marine Patrol Officer arrives. Fisherman in the vicinity of Oregon or Hatteras Inlet should transport these turtles by boat to the nearest Coast Guard Station.