

SUBSISTENCE FISHING IN COASTAL NORTH CAROLINA: A PROBLEM OF SOCIAL JUSTICE

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Fishing is a popular activity and provides a good source of inexpensive healthy nutrients to those who have access to fishing grounds, as do most residents of eastern North Carolina. Two issues have emerged in coastal North Carolina recreational fishing recently. First, increasing restrictions are limiting access to fishing through the new licensing structure and development of coastal properties. Second, self-caught fish pose a risk from contaminants that may be unknown to anglers. Surveys of coastal anglers found misinformation about contaminants, scanty knowledge of fish consumption advisories, and confusion due to mixed messages from state agencies. Fishing is especially important to low-income rural residents and the survey revealed resentment towards new license requirements and the belief that management decisions had been made without input from those who would be most affected.