

**"PERTAINING TO BLUE CRAB SANCTUARY"****CHAPTER 4VAC20-752-10 ET SEQ.****PREAMBLE**

This chapter establishes the Virginia Blue Crab Sanctuary areas and provisions to control the harvest of crabs from these areas. This chapter is promulgated pursuant to the authority contained in §§28.2-201, 28.2-203, and 28.2-203.1 of the Code of Virginia. This chapter amends and re-adopts, as amended, previous Chapter 4VAC20-752-10 et seq. which was promulgated November 19, 2012 and made effective on November 30, 2012. The effective date of this chapter, as amended, is June 1, 2015.

**4VAC20-752-10. PURPOSE.**

The provisions of this chapter are in response to reduced abundance in the blue crab stock and over-exploitation of this resource. This chapter promotes conservation of the blue crab resource within the below designated areas of the Chesapeake Bay system.

**4VAC20-752-20. DEFINITIONS.**

“COLREGS Line” means the COLREGS Demarcation Line, as defined in the Code of Federal Regulations (33 CFR 80.510 Chesapeake Bay Entrance, VA).

“THREE NAUTICAL MILE LIMIT” means the offshore limit of state waters within the belt three nautical miles wide that is adjacent to Virginia’s coast and seaward of the mean low-water mark.

“Virginia Blue Crab Sanctuary” means four distinct blue crab sanctuary areas as described below:

“Virginia Blue Crab Sanctuary Area 1A” shall consist of all tidal waters of the Chesapeake Bay that are bounded by a line beginning at a point, northeast of Windmill Point, Latitude 37° 38.3855000’ N., Longitude 76° 15.9923333’ W.; thence northerly to a point, east of Great Wicomico Light at Latitude 37° 48.2620000’ N., Longitude 76° 14.5525000’ W.; thence northeasterly to a point, Latitude 37° 49.3016667’ N., Longitude 76° 13.1000000’ W.; thence northeasterly to Smith Point Lighthouse, Latitude 37° 52.7925000’ N., Longitude 76° 11.0250000’ W.; thence northwesterly to a point on the Virginia – Maryland State Line, Latitude 37° 54.0831667’ N., Longitude 76° 11.7493333’ W.; thence northeasterly following the Virginia – Maryland State Line to a point on that line, Latitude 37° 55.7298333’ N., Longitude 76° 7.2145000’ W.; thence southeasterly to a point, southwest of Tangier Island, Latitude 37° 44.9975000’ N., Longitude 76° 01.5718333’ W.; thence southeasterly to a point, southeast of Tangier Island, Latitude 37° 43.6841667’ N., Longitude 75° 57.8640000’ W.; thence

**"PERTAINING TO BLUE CRAB SANCTUARY"****CHAPTER 4VAC20-752-10 ET SEQ.**

northeasterly to a point south of Watts Island, 37° 45.6158333' N., Longitude 75° 52.8978333' W.; thence southeasterly to a point, Latitude 37° 44.9358333' N., Longitude 75° 51.5530000' W.; thence southwesterly to a point west of Parkers Marsh, Latitude 37° 42.6915000' N., Longitude 75° 55.1051667' W.; thence southwesterly to a point, northeast of Windmill Point, Latitude 37° 38.3855000' N., Longitude 76° 15.9923333' W., said point being the point of beginning.

"Virginia Blue Crab Sanctuary Area 1B" shall consist of all tidal waters of the Chesapeake Bay that are bounded by a line beginning at a point, near the western shore of Fishermans Island, Latitude 37° 05.9595000' N., Longitude 75° 58.7623333' W., being on a line from the Cape Charles Lighthouse to the Thimble Shoal Light; thence southwesterly to Thimble Shoal Light, Latitude 37° 00.8708333' N., Longitude 76° 14.3970000' W.; thence southwesterly to the Ocean View Fishing Pier (formerly Harrison's Fishing Pier) at a point 200 feet offshore of mean low water, Latitude 36° 57.6985477' N., Longitude 76° 15.5855211' W.; thence northerly to Flashing Green Buoy "9" on the York River Entrance Channel, Latitude 37° 11.4898333' N., Longitude 76° 15.7095000' W.; thence northeasterly to Wolf Trap Light, Latitude 37° 23.4185000' N., Longitude 76° 11.3673333' W.; thence northwesterly to a point, northeast of Windmill Point, Latitude 37° 38.3855000' N., Longitude 76° 15.9923333' W.; thence northeasterly to a point west of Parkers Marsh, Latitude 37° 42.6915000' N., Longitude 75° 55.1051667' W.; thence southwesterly to a point west of Cape Charles Harbor, Latitude 37° 15.6205000' N., Longitude 76° 04.2298333' W.; thence southeasterly to a point near the western shore of Fishermans Island, Latitude 37° 05.9595000' N., Longitude 75° 58.7623333' W., being on the line from Cape Charles Lighthouse to Thimble Shoal Light, said point being the point of beginning.

"Virginia Blue Crab Sanctuary Area 2" shall consist of all tidal waters of the Chesapeake Bay that are bounded by a line beginning at the mean low water line of Willoughby Spit at its intersection with the center line of the Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel facility, Latitude 36° 58.0456514' N., Longitude 76° 17.8459721' W.; thence in a northwesterly direction to a point 200 feet offshore of mean low water, Latitude 36° 58.0637717' N., Longitude 76° 17.8812821' W.; thence and following a line in a general easterly direction, said line being 200 feet offshore of the mean low water line, to a point on Ocean View Fishing Pier (formerly Harrison's Fishing Pier), Latitude 36° 57.6985477' N., Longitude 76° 15.5855211' W.; thence northeasterly to Thimble Shoal Light, Latitude 37° 00.8708333' N., Longitude 76° 14.3970000' W.; thence northeasterly to Cape Charles Lighthouse, Latitude 37° 07.3743333' N., Longitude 75° 54.3898333' W.; thence southwesterly along the COLREGS Line to its intersection with the mean low water line of Cape Henry, Latitude 36° 55.6885268' N., Longitude 76° 00.3772955' W.; thence, in a general westerly direction, following the mean low water line of the Chesapeake Bay, crossing the mouth of the Lynnhaven River along the north side of the Lesner Bridge and the Mouth of Little Creek at the offshore ends of the stone breakwaters and continuing along said

**"PERTAINING TO BLUE CRAB SANCTUARY"****CHAPTER 4VAC20-752-10 ET SEQ.**

mean low water line to a point at its intersection with the center line of the Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel facility, said point being the point of beginning.

“Virginia Blue Crab Sanctuary Area 3” shall consist of all tidal waters of the Atlantic Ocean that are bounded by a line beginning at Cape Charles Lighthouse, Latitude 37° 07.3743333’ N., Longitude 75° 54.3898333’ W.; thence southwesterly along the COLREGS Line to Cape Henry Lighthouse, Latitude 36° 55.5840000’ N., Longitude 76° 00.4321667’ W.; thence easterly to a point on the Three Nautical Mile Limit, Latitude 36° 55.5436667’ N., Longitude 75° 55.9015000’ W.; thence northeasterly along the Three Nautical Mile Limit to a point, Latitude 37° 03.1915000’ N., Longitude 75° 53.4503333’ W.; thence northeasterly to a point, east of Cape Charles Lighthouse, Latitude 37° 06.7500000’ N., Longitude 75° 52.0833333’ W.; thence westerly to the Cape Charles Lighthouse, said point being the point of beginning.

“Virginia Blue Crab Sanctuary Area 4” shall consist of all tidal waters of the Atlantic Ocean that are bounded by a line beginning at a point on the Three Nautical Mile Limit, Latitude 36° 55.5436667’ N., Longitude 75° 55.9015000’ W.; thence southerly following the Three Nautical Mile Limit to an intersection point on the Virginia – North Carolina State Line, Latitude 36° 33.0224955’ N., Longitude 75° 48.2662043’ W.; thence westerly to a point along the Virginia – North Carolina State Line at its intersection with the mean low water line, Latitude 36° 33.0224003’ N., Longitude 75° 52.0510498’ W.; thence northerly, following the mean low water line to the Rudee Inlet weir; thence easterly along the weir to the stone breakwater; thence following the stone breakwater to its northernmost point; thence northerly to the mean low water line at the most northeastern point of the northern stone jetty; thence westerly along the mean low water line of said stone jetty to the mean low water line along the shore; thence northerly following the mean low water line to a point, Latitude 36° 55.5781102’ N., Longitude 76° 00.1530758’ W., said point being the intersection of the mean low water line with the line from Cape Henry Lighthouse easterly to a point on the Three Nautical Mile Limit, Latitude 36° 55.5436667’ N., Longitude 75° 55.9015000’ W., said point being the point of beginning.

**4VAC20-752-30. HARVEST RESTRICTIONS.**

- A. It shall be unlawful for any person to conduct commercial or recreational crabbing within Virginia Blue Crab Sanctuary Area 1A, from June 1 through September 15.
- B. It shall be unlawful for any person to conduct commercial or recreational crabbing within Virginia Blue Crab Sanctuary Area 1B, from May 16 through September 15.
- C. It shall be unlawful for any person to conduct commercial or recreational crabbing within Virginia Blue Crab Sanctuary Area 3, from May 9 through September 15.

"PERTAINING TO BLUE CRAB SANCTUARY"

CHAPTER 4VAC20-752-10 ET SEQ.

D. It shall be unlawful for any person to take, harvest, or possess crabs for commercial purposes from Virginia Blue Crab Sanctuary Areas 2 and 4, from May 9 through September 15.

4VAC20-752-40. PENALTY.

As set forth in §28.2-903 of the Code of Virginia, any person violating any section of this chapter shall be guilty of a Class 3 misdemeanor, and a second or subsequent violation of any provision of this chapter committed by the same person within 12 months of a prior violation is a Class 1 misdemeanor.

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This is to certify that the foregoing is a true and accurate copy of the chapter passed by the Marine Resources Commission, pursuant to authority vested in the Commission by § 28.2-201 of the Code of Virginia, duly advertised according to statute, and recorded in the Commission's minute book, at meeting held in Newport News, Virginia on May 26, 2015.

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA  
MARINE RESOURCES COMMISSION

BY: *John M. R. Bull*  
John M. R. Bull  
Commissioner

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 28<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2015.

*Michelle Guilford*  
Notary Public  
