

§ 113-203. Transplanting of oysters and clams.

(a) Repealed by Session Laws 2009-433, s. 6, effective August 7, 2009 (subdivision (a)(2)), and by Session Laws 2014-120, s. 26, effective September 18, 2014 (remainder of subsection (a)).

(a1) Repealed by Session Laws 2014-120, s. 26, effective September 18, 2014.

(a2) It is unlawful to do any of the following:

- (1) Transplant oysters or clams taken from public grounds to private beds except when lawfully taken during open season and transported directly to a private bed in accordance with rules of the Marine Fisheries Commission.
- (2) Transplant oysters or clams taken from permitted aquaculture operations to private beds except from waters in the approved classification.
- (3) Transplant oysters or clams from public grounds or permitted aquaculture operations utilizing waters in the restricted or conditionally approved classification to private beds except when the transplanting is done in accordance with the provisions of this section and implementing rules.

(a3) Unless the Secretary determines that the nursery of shellfish in an area will present a risk to public health, it is lawful to transplant seed oysters or seed clams taken from permitted aquaculture operations that use waters in the prohibited, restricted, or conditionally approved classification to private beds pursuant to an Aquaculture Seed Transplant Permit issued by the Secretary that sets times during which transplant is permissible and other reasonable restrictions imposed by the Secretary under either of the following circumstances:

- (1) When transplanting seed clams less than 12 millimeters in their largest dimension.
- (2) When transplanting seed oysters less than 25 millimeters in their largest dimension.

(a4) It is unlawful to conduct a seed transplanting operation pursuant to subsection (a3) of this section if the seed transplanting operation is not conducted in compliance with its Aquaculture Seed Transplant Permit.

(b) It is lawful to transplant from public bottoms to private beds oysters or clams taken from waters in the restricted or conditionally approved classifications with a permit from the Secretary setting out the waters from which the oysters or clams may be taken, the quantities which may be taken, the times during which the taking is permissible, and other reasonable restrictions imposed by the Secretary for the regulation of transplanting operations. Any transplanting operation which does not substantially comply with the restrictions of the permit issued is unlawful.

(c) Repealed by Session Laws 2009-433, s. 6, effective August 7, 2009.

(d) It is lawful to transplant to private beds in North Carolina oysters taken from natural or managed public beds designated by the Marine Fisheries Commission as seed oyster management areas. The Secretary shall issue permits to all qualified individuals who are residents of North Carolina without regard to county of residence to transplant seed oysters from said designated seed oyster management areas, setting out the quantity which may be taken, the times which the taking is permissible and other reasonable restrictions imposed to aid the Secretary in the Secretary's duty of regulating such transplanting operations. Persons taking such seed oysters may, in the discretion of the Marine Fisheries Commission, be required to pay to the Department for oysters taken an amount to reimburse the Department in full or in part for the costs of seed oyster management operations. Any transplanting operation which does not substantially comply with the restrictions of the permit issued is unlawful.

(e) The Marine Fisheries Commission may implement the provisions of this section by rules governing sale, possession, transportation, storage, handling, planting, and harvesting of oysters and clams and setting out any system of marking oysters and clams or of permits or

receipts relating to them generally, from both public and private beds, as necessary to regulate the lawful transplanting of seed oysters and oysters or clams taken from or placed on public or private beds.

(f) The Commission may establish a fee for each permit established pursuant to this subsection in an amount that compensates the Division for the administrative costs associated with the permit but that does not exceed one hundred dollars (\$100.00) per permit.

(g) Advance Sale of Permits; Permit Revenue. – To ensure an orderly transition from one permit year to the next, the Division may issue a permit prior to July 1 of the permit year for which the permit is valid. Revenue that the Division receives for the issuance of a permit prior to the beginning of a permit year shall not revert at the end of the fiscal year in which the revenue is received and shall be credited and available to the Division for the permit year in which the permit is valid. (1921, c. 132, s. 2; C.S., s. 1959(b); 1961, c. 1189, s. 1; 1965, c. 957, s. 2; 1967, c. 878; 1973, c. 1262, s. 28; 1977, c. 771, s. 4; 1987, c. 641, s. 6; c. 827, s. 98; 1989, c. 727, s. 100; 1997-400, s. 5.7; 2007-495, s. 3; 2009-433, s. 6; 2013-360, s. 14.8(s); 2014-120, s. 26; 2019-37, s. 5.)