

# JCAA NEWSPAPER JANUARY 2008

Official Newspaper of the *JERSEY COAST ANGLERS ASSOCIATION*

(Published on December 28th, 2007)

Remember New Monthly Meeting Room

**"WORKING FOR MARINE RECREATIONAL ANGLERS"**

## **JCAA REGULAR MEETING:**

**Tuesday, January 29th, 2008**

**Starting at 7:30 PM**

**Brick Plaza at 270 Chambers Bridge Rd**

**NEXT JCAA EXECUTIVE MEETING**

**Thursday, January 17th, 2008**

**Starting at 7:30 PM at JCAA Office**

## **OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER OF THE JERSEY COAST ANGLERS ASSOC.**

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**JCAA Newspaper Publisher Tom Fote**

**JCAA Newspaper Editor Paul Turi**

This publication is printed and mailed one week prior to each regular monthly meeting of the Jersey Coast Anglers Association. One of the prime goals of JCAA is to get accurate information into public hands as soon as possible.

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**JCAA General Membership Meetings are for club representatives and invited guests only. These meetings are not open to the general public. If you would like to attend as a guest, call the President at 732-446-6298 or Tom Fote at (732) 270-9102 before the meeting date to ask permission.**  
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## **2008 OFFICERS**

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**Committee & Chairpersons listed on last page**

## **JCAA HIGH ROLLER RAFFLE**

It is now time for the JCAA High Rollers 2008 Raffle. We have put together a terrific selection of rods and reels and other prizes for a raffle that will be drawn on April 29, 2008. This is a major fundraiser for the JCAA. The 8 prizes are listed below with a value of almost \$3,500. Tickets will be two dollars each and Club Representatives can get books of tickets to sell by attending a JCAA meeting. JCAA will be staffing a booth and selling tickets at the upcoming January 11<sup>th</sup> -13<sup>th</sup> Garden State Outdoor Show, Atlantic City International Boat Show February 6 - February 10 and the Saltwater Fishing Expo at the Garden State Exhibit Center, Somerset, March 14-16. Stop by and say hello. If you would like to buy raffle tickets call the JCAA office. When your club representative brings them to your club, please help with your purchase. Without your continued support we cannot function as an organization in protecting the marine resource and angler's rights. Shimano provided reels at a special price to JCAA. His Seas is supplying it new 30 pound braid for each rod and reel combination.

1. Shimano Tiagra TI-30WLRSA reel with a Shimano LCX8MHRSA rod Value \$805
2. Minn Kota Riptide Trolling Motor model RT 55/SE/L&D Value \$550  
*Donated by Johnson Outdoors Inc*
3. Fisherman's Headquarters, Ship Bottom, NJ donates a \$500.00 Shopping Spree Value \$500
4. U S REEL 240 SX reel with Lamiglas EXS 722 rod Value \$450  
*Donated by Lamiglas and US REELS*
5. Shimano TLD 30 reel with Profile GL5630 stand up rod Value \$430  
*Donated by Profile Rods*
6. Penn 850SSm Spinfisher reel with a Offshore Angler OMCP11SS rod Value \$300  
*Donated by Bass Pro Shops*
7. Shimano Stradic - ST-5000FI Reel with Shimano Terramar TMS-70MH Rod Value \$280  
*Donated by Shimano*
8. Tsunami TSSD 3000 reel and TFSBC-601MH rod Value \$150  
*Donated by Bimini Bay Outfitters*

**Total Value \$3,465**

## **IMPORTANT DATES**

**January 3rd** NJ Marine Fisheries Council Mtg

**January 8<sup>th</sup>** NJ Fish & Game Council Mtg

**January 12<sup>th</sup>** Salt Water Sportsman National Seminar

**January 11<sup>th</sup> -13<sup>th</sup>** Garden State Outdoor Show

**January 17<sup>th</sup>** JCAA Board Meeting

**February 4<sup>th</sup> -7<sup>th</sup>** ASMFC WEEK

**January 29<sup>th</sup>** JCAA General Meeting

**February 6<sup>th</sup> -10<sup>th</sup>** AC Boat Show

**March 14<sup>th</sup> -16<sup>th</sup>** Garden State Exhibit Center, Somerset,

## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

*By John Toth*

**Pot Bill** - At the time I am writing this report, we have received assurances that the Pot Bill should come up for a vote in the Senate on January 7<sup>th</sup> and in the Assembly on January 3<sup>rd</sup>. If all goes well, it should move on to Governor Corzine for signature. There was some reluctance in getting this bill posted for vote in both houses due to pressure from commercial interest groups. I wrote letters on behalf of the JCAA to Senator Codey and Assemblyman Roberts urging them to post the bills for vote. Additionally, a letter was prepared and sent out to Assemblyman Jeff Van Drew urging him to use his influence in getting this bill posted for a vote, and that letter went to him with signatures from the RFA, NJSFSC, JCAA and the NJ Outdoor Alliance. This pot bill has been a joint effort among our groups. A special thank you is order to Anthony Mauro from the NJ Outdoor Alliance for coordinating the comments from our respective groups in developing the final letter that went to Assemblyman Van Drew. At this point, I have my fingers crossed and hope for the best. If this bill becomes law, it will be a great victory for recreational anglers. If not, we will have to take up the same fight during 2008.

**Fluke Hearing** – I went to the December 11<sup>th</sup> meeting at the Holiday Inn in Secaucus to hear what the Mid -Atlantic States Marine Fishery Council and the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission had to say what lies ahead next year for our summer flounder quota. I listened to two hours of discussion including the absurd idea of closing down the fluke season for one summer month to reduce our catch, the same time when the party and charter boats make

most of their income. After testimony from the angling community who protested about how these regulations are ruining the industry, and this testimony seemed to fall on deaf ears, I decided to take a different tactic. I told the management councils that they should impose the lowest quota, stop fishing during July or August, and close the fluke season for all of next year! This way in a few years down the road the waters will be teeming with fluke, but there will be no marinas left or boats to fish for them since they all will be out of business! I said this is the scary scenario we are facing with marinas already in financial trouble and developers would love to buy them to make high priced condos that adjoining towns would like to see for increased rateables. I said that once these marinas are gone **they are not coming back!** I also testified that while fishing management must fashion rules to abide by the Magnuson Stevens Act, it is also incumbent on them to inform Congress that these regulations are destroying the fishing industry and that there needs to be a pause in the enforcement of these regulations to see if more flexibility, etc. can be incorporated in them. I finished by saying that **“we all see a train wreck coming and that something needs to be done to stop it!”** One of the Council members even lamented on these regulations, “we will burn the village in order to save it.”

We will soon learn what the 15.77 million pound quota will translate into minimum size and season for next year. However, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) has the final say on this matter and they have not been responsive to the problems they have created for the fishing industry. In fact, it came out in testimony that not one study has ever been done by NMFS and other management councils to determine the socio-economic impacts that their regulations have on the angling community since quotas have been introduced over the years!

**Fluke Stock Assessment** - The JCAA membership has recently approved **\$15,000** for the hiring of several scientists to evaluate the information and the analytical techniques used by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) in developing stock assessment for fluke quotas in 2008. While the JCAA supports a complete and independent review of the statistics and methods used to determine fluke stocks, the NMFS has agreed to a benchmark review of fluke stocks that includes a number of scientists that will review if the

information and analysis that goes into the 2008 fluke quota is correct. There is a Benchmark Assessment Workshop that is scheduled for June of 2008 and our group of scientists will be participating in it. More money most likely will be needed to fund this project and other fishing groups have expressed interest in assisting us. More detailed information on this issue is in Tom Fote's Legislative Report that follows in this newsletter.

**JCAA Dinner Dance** – We had a full house and a good time was had by all. I want to thank all of you for supporting our dinner dance since it is also a fundraiser and it is nice just once in awhile to spend a night with your fishing friends and have good food and a good time.

**2008 will be a Challenging Year** - with all of the Draconian fluke regulations that we will be facing and, of course, more issues will surface in this ever-changing industry. The First Vice President position is vacant and needs filling. We will need people to sit in on the numerous hearings that go on during the year for bluefish, fluke and other species. Please get involved! We need to expand our Board to better address our increasing responsibilities and please contact me if you are interested, especially in the Vice President position. I can be reached at (732) 656-0139 or at [tothjohn@verizon.net](mailto:tothjohn@verizon.net). Thank You!

## **FISHERIES MANAGEMENT & LEGISLATIVE REPORT**

*By Thomas Fote*

### **JCAA VOTED TO SPEND \$15,000 ON FLUKE RESEARCH**

At the November JCAA meeting, we voted to allocate up to \$15,000 to hire scientists to be part of the 2008 benchmark summer flounder stock assessment. If other groups are able to provide additional funding, JCAA may not need to expend the entire \$15,000 on this section of the study and will have money in this account to pay for additional services, studies or other ongoing expenses.

In last month's JCAA Newspaper, Bruce Freeman mentioned that we are involved with a coalition that includes JCAA, RFA, United Boatmen of NY and NJ, the Garden State Seafood Association and the NY Tackle Trades Association. These groups have been meeting for the past year to look at

long-term summer flounder research and secure the necessary funds to pursue this research. Because of a 2008 Summer Flounder Benchmark Stock Assessment by the National Marine Fisheries Service, this coalition has decided to make sure that there is a truly independent stock assessment review. It is extremely important that this assessment includes all of the most complete and accurate fishery information as well having the assessments use the most complete analytical techniques referred to as modeling. We can only ensure this by sending our own scientists to be involved in the Benchmark Stock Assessment Workshop scheduled for June 2008. JCAA voted to spend up to \$15,000 to fund the independent stock assessment for our scientists to be part of a working group leading up to the benchmark review. Bruce Freeman has volunteered his time for JCAA to be one of the four scientists for this coalition to be involved with the June meeting, but he will also participate in several preliminary meetings leading up to the June workshop. The highly respected stock assessment scientists we have chosen to lead this effort are Dr Eric Powell (HSRL Rutgers), Dr Ken Able (IMCS Rutgers), and Dr Brian Rothschild (Univ. of Massachusetts). We have developed a budget to pay for services and travel expenses for these three. So far the Garden State Seafood Association and the RFA have also made a commitment to help fund this project. The other organizations participating in this committee are also attempting to secure additional funds.

Bruce Freeman and I will keep you updated on what this research group is doing.

### **JOINT ASMFC AND MAMFC DECEMBER MEETING**

Many JCAA members including myself were in attendance at the Summer Flounder, Scup, Black Sea Bass and Fisheries Management Plan joint meeting of ASMFC and MAMFC. Even though we are not happy with the low quota of 15.77, we got the best deal under the current circumstances. I testified in support of using a conservation equivalency on summer flounder. This was the fairest move for all the states along the coast. Some of the states would have done better under coast wide measures. But that would have been very unfair for the rest of the states. I can appreciate the pain all the states are facing with the small summer flounder quotas. The real shame is that the recreational and commercial fishing industry and the

people for whom fishing is a way of life are suffering needlessly to reach an imaginary target.

The PEW Foundation funded NGOs and their comrades were also there in force. They still have not come to realize the pain the measures they support are creating. The recreational and commercial interests that depend on summer flounder are facing continued business losses and some of them will not recover. These NGOs admit the science is bad and we need better science but persist in acting as though the existing science and the targets are perfect. I am hoping the 2008 benchmark as described above will provide us with some of the answers for the underlying problem. I still believe we need an independent outside peer review of these models and the assumptions on which they are based. NMFS keeps protesting that this stock assessment model has been peer reviewed a number of times. They insist they had an outside peer review but it was done in conjunction with other peer reviews and was done in 1998. Some of us were concerned when the original targets were set but the problem has intensified in the last 4 years. The targets being used currently were never reviewed by an outside peer review. Just think how well we did with NMFS last internal review. In 2006 we asked them to do an outside peer review to reduce the targets and find out what is going on. NMFS had only an internal review and actually raised the total biomass target from 204 million pounds to 215 million pounds. There was some confusion when they switched to a SSB of 197 million pounds. We will not know what the bag limit and seasons will look like for 2008 until the technical committees look at all the options and set up tables we can use.

### **BLACK SEA BASS AND SCUP**

Black sea bass will stay status quo for the recreational fishery. The controversy was over scup. Four states make up 97% of the recreational catch. New Jersey has 3%. In the overall catch the recreational catch is very small. The commercial discard is greater than the entire commercial landings and the recreational fishery combined. In the overall scheme of things, New Jersey's 3% recreational catch makes no difference. But, because the other states with the 97% scup fishery were also states that supported the coast wide solution for summer flounder, there was little sympathy for New Jersey's position on scup. New Jersey will be

required to produce a 50% decrease in our scup fishery. Remember, this is a fishery that **does not have an approved stock assessment** but NMFS has already created imaginary targets that we will be required to reach. It makes me wonder if the "inmates are running the asylum?"

### **JCAA'S PARTICIPATION IN THE MARINE FISH CONSERVATION NETWORK**

There has been much public discussion about why JCAA belongs to the Marine Fish Conservation Network. In 1994 when the Marine Fish Conservation Network was first formed, JCAA was invited to participate along with many other recreational organizations. JCAA decided to participate to ensure that the recreational interests and our point of view were represented in the Network. Some major recreational groups approached JCAA and asked us to serve on the board in 2001 to represent all of our interests including keeping the MPA issue off the MFCN agenda. The MPA issue is still a major issue and at our urging the Network has remained neutral on this issue. There are many other issues that are important to JCAA and are also a high priority for the Network. For example, the Network has an initiative on protecting forage species including menhaden. They are also pushing for funding in next year's Federal budget to pay for the best possible science. Together we share a commitment to the environment dealing with issues like endocrine disruptors and water quality and quantity. Over the years, there have been disagreements, discussions and compromises but JCAA has always represented recreational interests. Although there was some internal pressure to keep all discussions private within the Network, JCAA has never agreed to that. Recently, JCAA has been criticized for remaining in the Network given their position on the lack of flexibility in the 10 year rebuilding plans. Our participation in the Network has been discussed many times at JCAA Board and General Membership meetings and members of the Marine Fish Conservation Network have been present for some of these discussions. The general consensus of the JCAA membership maintains that there is still value in being represented in the Network. Recently, we worked hard to get the Network to refrain from sending a letter on the summer flounder issue that would argue for a much reduced quota. Fishing groups who do not belong to

the Network cannot influence its decisions. IGFA and ASA supported JCAA's position and some of the commercial groups supported us as well. Had we not been at the table, the Network would have sent a letter to NMFS that reflected the positions of some of their membership who don't fish and lack understanding about recreational issues. Every recreational organization has a right to an opinion and JCAA respects that. However, our membership has made a decision that we are more valuable to the Network and the recreational community by maintaining a seat at the table and being part of the discussion and decision-making process. JCAA is concerned about new directions at PEW and the impact those decisions will have on the Network. We also have concerns about the new direction that the Network has taken since it became an independent 501C3. The Network represents a diverse and influential group of interests and the JCAA will try to steer it to also represent the best interests of the angling community.

No one outside of the Network and the JCAA, IGFA and ASA boards has any idea how much time and energy was invested in the recent discussions to steer the Network in the right direction. It would have been far easier for me, Bruce Freeman and Tom Siciliano to just walk away and criticize from afar. Personally, I have spent hundreds of hours with the Network. It is easy to be part of a coalition of the like minded. It is harder to work with others who have very different points of view. JCAA has decided that it is more important at this time to do the thing that is harder rather than make the easy choice.

## **JCAA Newspaper December 2003**

**Article by Tom Fote**

### **WORKING TOGETHER IN THE NGO COMMUNITY**

It is a shame that we have to spend so much time on issues that really should be non-issues. I am upset that every statement is put under a microscope because of the strain with the NGO (Non-Governmental Organization) community. I feel some people are just looking for things to discredit a person or group. JCAA is an NGO as are some other recreational and commercial fishing organizations. Some NGOs have decided to ignore this and treat all recreational and commercial organizations as the enemy. It has made some groups look for allies in the wrong place. It has also made

most recreational anglers and commercial fishermen very suspect of the motives of other NGO groups that do not fish for consumption and we are always looking for their hidden agendas. Since I am also legislative chairman for New Jersey State Federation of Sportsmen Clubs, even though I do not hunt I believe the same feelings are true in the hunting community. Without the help and support of fishing and hunting groups many of the environment successes in the last 100 years would not have happened. Just think of all the land that has been purchased to protect the environment and wildlife with hunting and fishing funds. How many land acquisitions, state and federal parks and environment laws been passed due to the hard work of fishing and hunting groups.

We also have some NGOs that think fishing and hunting should not occur at all and this also makes it tough for the community to work together.

What are the costs of these divisions? As I see it, the distrust among groups that should be allies has brought us to a standstill on many important issues. It also puts legislators in a difficult position as they are torn between two constituent groups. The groups that oppose our work in conservation and environment are united and can take advantage of our dissension to meet their own aims.

Some of our environmental allies are occasionally oblivious to the consequences of their actions and don't see the big picture. What they think is a minor point with little impact may, in fact, have a major disruptive impact on the fishing community. For example, the subway cars. People who fought against the subway cars had their stated reasons but they were totally unaware of the positive social and economic impact of those cars for the recreational fishing community. The reefs built with these subway cars provide quality of life for the anglers who want to bring fish home to eat. They provide jobs to the recreational industry because the reefs encourage more people to fish. The same was true of summer flounder. One of the lawyers said to me, "It's only a million pounds. What's the big deal?" A million pounds meant 20 - 30 days closure in states. A million pounds meant people didn't fish for those 20 - 30 days, bringing no fish home for personal consumption and no money spent. I would guess along the coast the total economic impact was in excess of \$250,000,000.

Some of us who have been doing this for a time wonder where it all went wrong. We wonder

when friends became adversaries, allowing our opponents easy victories.

What I do know is that I spend an inordinate amount of my time on the 3% of the issues that we disagree on instead of the 97% that we all agree on. Most of the time, these issues are not even crucial to the environment. I have certainly been guilty of taking things personally. But I have also learned how destructive this can be. We are only successful when we can leave our egos in the parking lot and focus on the big issues that unite us.

My involvement in the Barnegat Bay Estuary Program has taught me many lessons. Most importantly, I have learned to put myself in the other person's shoes and find ways to work for consensus. Consensus means none of us win and all of us win. We find ways to satisfy the varying needs and opinions that bring us to the table and allow everyone to participate in the decision-making. On occasion, we will not reach consensus for the group and will take the issue off the table. That may leave groups or individuals to pursue an issue on their own outside of the framework of the umbrella group. At least the discussion gives us all a better understanding of the different positions and an opportunity to come back together again as a functioning community. I believe it also leads to more civility and understanding. We may be adversaries on occasion when we decide the issue is important enough but we can take those adversarial positions outside of the group, allowing the group to continue functioning on issues where we agree.

## **JCAA Newspaper February 2004**

**Article by Tom Fote**

### **WORKING TOGETHER IN THE NGO COMMUNITY PART 2**

After writing the article **Working Together in the NGO Community** for the December JCAA newspaper, I began to think about more reasons why there is a lot of difficulty with groups and people working together lately both at the state and federal level. JCAA has been in the middle of some of these battles where former friends and allies are not talking or working together anymore. These battles get a lot of press but it is not the best utilization of our time. There are a lot of missed positive opportunities because of this.

This was not to single out any particular group but to discuss the problems. There is enough blame to go around and none of us are without

blame. As a volunteer, I am concerned with the amount of time that I am spending on nonproductive battles. I could instead be spending my limited time on issues of substance that will make a difference. The same is true for the paid staff and volunteers at some of the other organizations.

What I was trying to say is that we should be a little more civil with each other and try to work things out. We really should make an effort to understand the other person's concerns and to address them. The comments I have received on this article have been very positive. This was especially true from the people who have been in the middle of these battles from all parts of the NGO community. They were happy someone said it out loud. I was trying to be constructive based on some of the lessons I have learned in over 30 years of doing this. It was not a ranting but an attempt to stimulate some productive dialog between groups.

Many people are afraid to put anything in writing since they feel it can be misunderstood or taken out of context. We communicate much differently than we did 10 years ago. Face to face meetings and phone conversations are interactive and seem to be more civil. Looking into the face of someone or talking to them gives you a better understanding of how they are really feeling and tends to make you think a little more about what you are saying. Letters and articles take time and you have the opportunity to read them over again before you finish and do a lot of changes. You might give a letter or article to someone else to be proofed and receive comments.

Emails and some internet conversations are not like that. For the most part they are instantaneous and done without a lot of deliberation. The emails are short and sometimes they are your first thoughts on a subject. People do not look them over and think about how they would sound to another person. I do not know how many emails there has been that I have sent back and asked the person to read his or her email as if I were sending it to them. It is surprising how many apologies I have received or how often people say that is not what they meant and then they restate it in a more productive way. I have learned not to send an email written when I am upset but to let it sit and read it over again and try to think about the impact. I need to consider whether I am trying to pick a fight, discuss an issue or bring about a solution to a problem.

It seems to be even worse when people do not use their real names and feel they can say whatever they want. They really do not want to discuss an issue but, instead, look for fights or an opportunity to prove how right they are and how wrong you are. Sometime they just want to be the center of attention. I call these internet bullies. Some of the most negative comments and the strongest attacks I have received have been from people who will not say anything to me in public. One individual has made numerous attacks on me on the internet but has never called me or showed up to a meeting to even ask a question. This does not lend itself to open discussion or a solution to the disagreement. I feel sometimes as though that is not what these people want any way and that they are just looking to make attacks to get attention.

Writing this has also been helpful for me in doing a little reflection on my interaction with people. After spending two weeks in Hawaii I am also learning to hang loose a little more.

## **MERCURY AND ENDOCRINE DISRUPTERS PROBLEMS**

USA Today with Gannett Publishers ran a series on 3 environmental issues. Todd Bates, from the Asbury Park Press, contacted me on these issues; mercury, endocrine disruptors and global warming. In their Sunday Impact section on November 18th, the Asbury Park Press covered the mercury situation in New Jersey and on November 25 the endocrine disrupters. I have reprinted two of the three articles below. In the article they listed the New Jersey webpage for more information (<http://www.state.nj.us/dep/dsr/mercury/>). The other two articles in Sunday's Asbury Park Press dealt with the health problems caused by consumption of large amounts of mercury contaminated fish. I look forward to the additional articles on these important topics. We will try to post all this information on the webpage.

**N.J. freshwater fish advisories remain  
DEP studying 4 lakes for effects of cutting  
mercury emissions  
Asbury Park Press on 11/18/07  
By Todd B. Bates Environmental Writer**

Mercury contamination is so widespread in New Jersey that all of its fresh waters are covered by advisories warning people — especially pregnant women,

children and others at high risk — to generally limit or avoid eating freshwater fish.

Although the state has reduced mercury emissions, "the problem we're dealing with is all the coal-fired power plants" in the Midwest, said Thomas P. Fote of Toms River, a recreational fisherman and legislative chairman of the Jersey Coast Anglers Association.

However, the state Department of Environmental Protection is investigating the hypothesis that significantly reducing mercury emissions from individual sources here will lead to a significant reduction in mercury levels in fish in nearby water bodies, according to DEP information e-mailed to the Press.

One of the four lakes being studied is Lake Assunpink, which is in Upper Freehold and Millstone townships.

The mercury issue, which became high-profile in New Jersey after high levels of the toxic metal were found in largemouth bass and chain pickerel in 1994, is about as persistent as the metal itself.

For mercury, the state has a general statewide advisory for all fresh waters and freshwater fish species, and 23 are covered by advisories for specific water bodies, the DEP says.

Aside from Lake Assunpink, Mountain Lake, Merrill Creek Reservoir and Parvin Lake are the focus of a new DEP long-term mercury monitoring project focusing on the mercury reduction hypothesis.

The project began last month, and the hypothesis has important implications for how mercury emissions are regulated in New Jersey and, potentially, nationwide, the DEP says.

Largemouth bass and surface water in the four lakes will be sampled every two years through 2013.

Leaf samples upwind and downwind of mercury sources also will be analyzed as an indicator of mercury that falls from the sky.

The DEP is also sampling fish from about 32 freshwater ponds, lakes and other waters within the Atlantic coastal region, including the Pinelands, according to the DEP.

Fish are being tested for mercury, polychlorinated biphenyls, which are long-lasting industrial chemicals, pesticides and polybrominated diphenyl ethers, which are flame retardants, according to the DEP and the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry Web site. Results are expected next year.

Other research involves sampling in the Raritan River watershed, including lakes, reservoirs, streams and rivers that drain into the North or South Branch of the Raritan River and ultimately into Raritan Bay. Limited sampling was done in the tidal Raritan River and Raritan Bay, according to the DEP.

The information will be used to update advisories next year, the DEP says.

"In the long run, we should be reducing the inputs of mercury to the environment," according to an e-mail from Dr. Michael Gochfeld, a professor of environmental and occupational medicine at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School in Piscataway.

Gochfeld chaired the New Jersey Mercury Task Force, which released a comprehensive report on mercury in 2002.

Some sources of mercury, including waste incinerators and mercury switches in cars, have been or are being addressed, according to Gochfeld's e-mail. But "the main problem" is emissions from Midwest power plants that are carried by the prevailing winds over New Jersey and New England and then deposited on land and water, mainly when it rains, Gochfeld wrote.

### **Effects of endocrine disruptors researched** **Asbury Park Press, November 25, 2007** **By Todd B. Bates Environmental Writer**

Cutting-edge research on endocrine-disrupting chemicals, which may feminize male frogs and cause other abnormal impacts, is under way in New Jersey, according to state officials.

"It's scarier than global warming," said Thomas P. Fote of Toms River, legislative chairman for the Jersey Coast Anglers Association.

"It doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure out something's wrong here," he said.

Recent evidence suggests that levels of the herbicide atrazine that are common in New Jersey surface waters can cause male frogs to develop female characteristics, according to a 2003 state Department of Environmental Protection publication on the Web.

The causes of gross frog deformities are still unresolved, but environmental contaminants may play a role, the paper says.

In addition, male fish in waters with effluent from sewage treatment plants have been found with female characteristics, including egg-containing testes. The discharge of female hormones, including birth control metabolites, appears to be involved, according to the paper.

Endocrine disruptors are chemicals that interfere with hormones in the body, according to the Natural Resources Defense Council Web site. Known or suspected disruptors are in pesticides, plastics and other common chemicals.

"It's one of those issues that's like global warming," Fote said. "It affects every country, every area."

It's a relatively new field of study, and the DEP has "no indicators of trends at this time" in New Jersey, according to an e-mail from DEP spokeswoman Elaine Makatura.

"Other than the frog study, we in (New Jersey) have no evidence of effects of endocrine disruptors on humans or critters," her e-mail says.

The state is looking into how to reduce the impacts of endocrine disruptors on wild-life and people by limiting the ability of such chemicals to get into surface and drinking water, according to e-mailed DEP information.

Studies also are under way to learn more about the potential impacts of endocrine disruptors. Here's DEP information on the studies:

Samples of maternal urine, maternal serum, amniotic fluid, cord serum and infant meconium (first stool) have been collected from 150 mother-infant pairs at St. Peter's University Hospital in New Brunswick.

The samples, which reflect fetal exposure during gestation, are being analyzed for a wide range of potential endocrine-disrupting chemicals. They include phthalates, organophosphate and organochlorine pesticides, phenols and flame retardants.

Despite concern about widespread exposure to such chemicals and their impact on health, this is the first time such data have been collected in New Jersey, and almost the first time anywhere.

The data, to be published in scientific and medical journals, represent the first step in understanding the extent of exposure during pregnancy. The information also provides the foundation for investigating sources of exposure, identifying populations at higher risk and linking health to exposures.

### **Op-Ed** **Working for Smart Fishing Policy** **By U.S. Rep. Jim Saxton**

In November 1984, I was pleased to be elected to the U.S. House of Representatives for the first time, and I immediately became a member of the committee with jurisdiction over fishery management at that time: the Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee. On January 3, 2008, I will begin my final year in Congress, having announced my retirement some weeks ago.

My predecessor, the late Congressman Ed Forsythe, had been the highest-ranking Republican on the committee, which was, of course, chaired by a member of the majority party, the late Democrat Walter Jones Sr., of North Carolina.

I remember many things about my early years on the committee. As a freshman, I was surprised to experience the friendly atmosphere among the members, both Republican and Democrat. I was also surprised (although I should not have been) to find that many of the members were from coastal states, and I was soon to learn that fisheries issues were very complex and thus mighty confusing to a freshman member who had never really been exposed to fisheries governance and the many competing interests and issues.

I soon realized that I had much homework ahead of me. Learning about the complexities of coastal marine issues would take time. Strange terms were abundant: anadromous fish species (fish that live in salt water and spawn in fresh water), estuarine waters (areas in coastal waters where fresh water and salt water mix), and ecosystem management, just to name a few.

There was one topic that totally confounded me, and I was to soon learn that it would be one of the most difficult with which I would deal. I kept hearing about “collapsed fisheries.” That is, fisheries where the valuable fish species subject to management had virtually disappeared. Ground fish in New England, striped bass and shark in the Atlantic, redbfish in the Gulf of Mexico, sea urchin on the West Coast, these were all fishery stocks that had “collapsed.”

Several colleagues on the committee articulated the situation in clear terms. Our management system had numerous successes in fishery recoveries, but the prelude to such a success was almost always a failure, the collapse of a fish stock population. This meant that a fish stock had to collapse before Congress would pass laws or a federal agency would issue regulations that would permit the recovery of the species.

Over time it became clear that our system was badly flawed. Why in our management system was it necessary for a fishery to fail before the cause, usually intense fishing pressure, could be fixed? It didn't make sense. Why not put in place a system to ward off or slow that overly-intense fishing pressure in the first place?

Then in 1996 a battle occurred. On one side, it featured those of us who believed in what I called “sensible management.” Put simply, we wanted to pass a law to provide forward-looking management rather than to continue the old concept that had embodied the necessity of failure and collapse before we could have a success in rebuilding a fish stock. On the other side were a number of groups of interested people who thought we were intent on destroying the commercial and recreational fishing industries forever with forward-looking management.

Consequently, the law that emerged, the “Sustainable Fisheries Act,” provided, among other things, that targets be set for populations for various species that were on the decline. This was an effort to ensure our regulations and laws would reflect a concept of growing fish populations to meet established targets before the stocks collapsed.

The new law, as modified by the courts, provided for 10-year periods, during which regulators were to manage the growth of species populations toward targets, through the use of quotas, fishing seasons, bag limits and size limits.

As a result, fish populations grew. On the East Coast, summer flounder (fluke) provides a good case study. The population surged ahead, as explained by an accomplished summer flounder fisherman friend of mine

who remarked that “there are more summer flounder today than at any time in my lifetime.”

The case of summer flounder, however, is an interesting one. Today, fishermen are fit to be tied because most have experienced the same observation as my friend. And, while there is in fact an abundance of summer flounder, the regulators had been forced, under the “10-year rebuilding time limit,” to set the goal for total population growth, 10 years in advance. In the world of fisheries, it is hard to know what will happen in a fishery next year, never mind 10 years in the future, and in this case the target was set too high and could not be reached as the 10 years ended.

As we neared the deadline, seasons were shortened, bag limits decreased, and minimum size limits increased, each intended to help reach an “out of reach goal” within the 10 years. In spite of the great success we had in growing the summer flounder population, we had not reached the artificial goal, and fishermen suffered from lower quotas, size, season and bag-limit restrictions.

Today, some want to repeal the law. But there are other options. I would much rather enjoy the successes we have had as a result of the Sustainable Fisheries Act of 1996, which in this case has been an abundance of summer flounder. At the same time, we should consider modifying the law to provide the appropriate flexibility to give regulators the ability to adjust the time frame available to meet the target, or perhaps adjust the target itself. In the case of summer flounder, Congress legislated a 3-year extension to the law, bringing the time frame to 13 rather than 10 years. This was a “seat of the pants” adjustment and has proven to be inadequate in itself.

However, a law which could provide for a periodic review of population targets, and progress in fisheries population growth toward those targets, could be enacted. For example, we could maintain the 10-year time frame, understanding that regulators or “target-setters” are not able to look accurately 10 years into the future.

Flexibility could be built in by providing for interval reviews of progress toward targets at, say, years 4 and 7. These reviews could result in an extension of the 10-year rebuilding period, and hence, changes in annual quotas. The ability to modify the time frame based on scientific information in a timely way would provide a system built on the successes provided by the Sustainable Fisheries Act, and at the same time provide the flexibility to let the law work.

Those of us who had a hand in writing the current law have no “pride of authorship.” In other words, we are not trying to keep the law because we wrote it, but rather to rationally evaluate the law we passed. I recognize that it has merit in that stocks are growing. But, we also recognize the need for realism in achieving a balanced approach which will protect and enhance fish populations and at the same time protect and enhance fishing opportunities.

## Oyster Creek Power Plant

*By Tom Siciliano*

Here we go again! Another fish kill at the power plant. I picked up the newspaper today and the headline read, "Hundreds of fish perish in plant shutdown." Not surprising, every year when the weather gets cold and the power plant has a problem and shuts down there is a fish kill and there is an article in the paper. They talk of the hundreds or thousands of fish that are killed when the discharge of warm water stops and the surrounding water temperature drops. These fish are visible as they float out into Barnegat Bay.

What doesn't get into the headlines is the millions if not billions of small fish, shrimp, fry, eggs and larvae that are killed every day of the year when the cooling tower is running. Yes, 24/7, 365 days a year these small fish are sucked into the intake of the giant cooling tower that keeps the reactor cool.

As conversationalists and environmentalists, the JCAA has been calling for a closed-cycle cooling tower for the power plant for years. Now is the perfect time to insist that a cooling tower be installed. This requirement is a MUST HAVE if the Oyster Creek power plant is to be re-licensed to run another 20 years.

Just think how much better the fishing in Barnegat Bay would be if these 24/7, 365 days a year fish kills had not been going on for the past 37 years. How many more fluke would there be? How many more weakfish would there be? How many more winter flounder? Not to mention the forage fish and shrimp that these fish feed on. Maybe, just maybe we would not be in a crisis situation with fluke if something had been done years ago. If the JCAA had been successful in having a closed-cycle cooling tower mandated for the Salem Nuclear Power Plant, how much better would the fish situation be in Delaware Bay? Multiply Oyster Creek by all the power plants up and down the coast and you can see that these power plants are having an enormous negative impact on the environment and the quantity of fish.

Ecosystem fisheries management is a requirement of the newly reauthorized Magnuson/Stevens Act. Now would be a good time for every angler to start insisting that everything possible be done to improve the chances of fisheries to grow and prosper. The JCAA has been working and will continue to work for a better environment so that every fishery will be improved. We can't do it alone.

We need your help and the help of all fishing and environmental groups.

What can you do? Write, fax, or call Lisa Jackson, Commissioner of the NJ DEP and insist that a cooling tower be mandatory for the Oyster Creek Nuclear Power Plant as a requirement for re-licensing. Lisa's contact information is:

Office of the Commissioner

401 E. State St., 7th Floor, East Wing, P.O. Box 402, Trenton, NJ 08625-0402, phone: 609-292-2885, fax: 609-292-7695

## Jersey Coast Anglers Association

### Youth Education Report

*By Greg Kucharewski*

### INDOOR CASTING DEMONSTRATION

The JCAA Youth Education Committee is invited to support the Keansburg Father Time indoor fishing stations on January 26, 2008. It's the third year Jeff Johnson will organize the event for the Bolger Middle School. The JCAA Youth Education Committee will support the Father Time event with an indoor casting demonstration. Several fishing clubs will volunteer time and provide fishing learning stations for children and their families. For more information on the Father Time organization, call Johnson at (732) 787-2007, ext. 2554.

### OUTDOOR SPORTSMEN SHOWS

It's going to be a long cold winter and it can be the perfect opportunity to introduce children to learning about making hand-crafted fishing lures, rod repair, tying saltwater and freshwater flies, reel maintenance, and going to the outdoor hunting and fishing expositions. Outdoor sportsmen shows offer a variety of fun fishing and hunting attractions for children and their families. There are many learning displays set up at outdoor shows for children to keep busy and spark an interest in healthy outdoor activities. Families can also find bargains on hunting and fishing equipment for the novice hunter or fisher. If your funds are available, after the holidays, consider taking a fishing vacation where the weather is warm. Disney World offers freshwater fishing and the rates are reasonable if you plan your trip in advance. The Jersey Coast Anglers Association's, Youth Education Committee, will feature special youth education seminars at upcoming sportsmen shows. Participating merchants at the hunting and fishing expositions will offer promotions at their booths for children attending the Jersey Coast

Anglers Association's, Youth Fishing Seminars. Parents are also welcome to attend.

## **Every kid needs to visit the great outdoors**

**By J.B Kasper December 07, 2007**

Growing up in the 1950s and 1960s we didn't have video games, cell phones, I-Pods and all the other modern gizmos kids have these days. Tell that to a kid today and they are likely to ask, "How did you get by?"

To tell the truth, we got by right nicely. We spent most of the time playing outside, summer or winter, played sandlot baseball and football, went skating on the lake in the winter, went fishing, and when we got older we went hunting. Overweight kids were few, as most of us were skinny runts that burned up a lot of energy each day. Oh, yes, kids were back at the house for dinner on time without being told.

Compare that to today, when childhood obesity is an increasing problem, a lot of kids are going deaf by the time they are in their 20s from being plugged into the headset for too many hours, and mom has to call the kids on the cell phone to get them to the dinner table.

The simple truth is, kids are spending too much time indoors seeing the world through virtual reality instead of spending time in the outdoors seeing the real world firsthand.

There are some programs, however, that are putting kids in the outdoors, giving them some quality time to get their hands dirty and have some fun without being wired to an electric contrivance.

For the last several years, one of the best of these programs has been the kids fishing derbies that are being supported by the New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife in conjunction with different communities and organizations.

Close to 80 such events were held this past year, in which the division stocked state lakes and ponds in preparation for the derbies with fish from the Charles O'Hayford Fish Hatchery in Hackettstown. In addition to the stocking of fish from the state's warm- water hatchery for the derbies, the division also provides logistical support and printed information.

Some 10,000 kids, mostly from urban areas, participated in these derbies, and for many of them it was their first chance to learn about fishing. For many more it was a chance to get away from the problems of everyday life and experience something different.

The program hit its peak several years back when 119 such derbies were held throughout the state. Since then the program has fallen on hard times, and fewer and fewer derbies are being held each year.

The program is now in danger of being shelved altogether and the worst part of it is that it's not for a lack of funding, volunteers or organizations wanting to put them on.

The problem has to do with the state's hiring freeze.

The O'Hayford Fish Hatchery raises in excess of 1 million warm- water fish that are stocked in the state's lakes, reservoirs, ponds and streams each year. The crew at the hatchery was made up of six full- time employees and a couple of volunteers who are 67 years old. This is still understaffed for an operation of that size, but until recently the quality of the staff and their dedication to the outdoors was enough to make up for the missing people.

In the last year, two of the full- time employees have taken promotions in other departments in the state, leaving the hatchery even further understaffed.

Most of the work on the derbies was done by the hatchery staff on weekends, over and above their du ties at the hatchery. By state law they either have to be paid for their time or be given comp time, and this further puts a strain on the hatcheries operations.

As a result, the division has had to make a decision to either cut back on the fish being raised at the facility or shelve the Kids Fishing Derby Program. Since the job of the hatchery is to produce fish, the division has made the choice to cut the Derby Program.

The Division of Fish and Wildlife has a \$300,000 grant under the Sportfishing Restoration Program that can be used to hire the personnel needed at the hatchery, thus keeping the hatchery running a peak performance as well as keeping the kids program going.

Because of Gov. Corzine's hiring freeze for the state, the division cannot replace the personnel who have transferred out to take promotions, even though the money is available to pay for new people under the federal grant. Both the governor and Department of Environmental Protection commissioner Jackson have it within their power to make an exception in the hiring freeze to allow the division to hire the hatchery personnel, especially when the money is coming from a federal program and not from any state monies.

Another thing that needs to be considered is that under the Sport fishing Restoration Program, the state gets \$3 for every \$1 that the state puts up toward restoring fisheries. By having the hatchery understaffed and not producing at peak proficiency, the state is losing federal money.

The general public which benefits from this program, as well as the state's sportsmen, should be outraged that the governor is willing to penalize the kids who need this program for some hiring freeze that hasn't even come close to solving the state's budget problems. Shame on Gov. Corzine and Jackson, it's time they stepped up to the plate and allowed the Division of Fish and Wildlife to do the job it is mandated to do. People need to contact the governor and commissioner and voice their displeasure at this ridiculous state of affairs.

## We need the support of your club and its members

Your club should be a member of JCAA and make a difference for only \$50 a year. Your club will have a voice in all JCAA positions that affect your fishing future. Your club will receive up-to-date info on vital issues each month.

**Club Membership Application**

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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President's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Pres. Address: Street \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

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Ph. # \_\_\_\_\_

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Please make check \$50 payable to JCAA

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The JCAA has four levels of sponsorship, \$50, \$100, \$250 & \$500.

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Only \$25 per year! Support the Goals of JCAA and receive a subscription to JCAA NEWS that gives you the Most Up-To-Date News about Fisheries Management and Environmental Issues

**JERSEY COAST ANGLERS**  
**ASSOCIATE MEMBER APPLICATION**

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