

JCAA NEWSPAPER JANUARY 2017

Official Newspaper of the *JERSEY COAST ANGLERS ASSOCIATION*

(Published on December 22nd, 2016)

Monthly Meeting at Jersey Coast Shark Anglers, 385 Herbertsville Road, Brick
"WORKING FOR MARINE RECREATIONAL ANGLERS"

JCAA REGULAR MEETING:

Tuesday, December 27th, 2017

Starting at 7:30 PM

At Jersey Coast Shark Anglers

NEXT JCAA BOARD MEETING

Thursday, January 12th, 2017

Starting at 7:30 PM at JCAA Office

OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER OF THE JERSEY COAST ANGLERS ASSOC.

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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 908-913-0551 or Tom Fote at (732) 270-9102 before the meeting date to ask permission.**  
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Committee and Chairpersons listed on last page

IMPORTANT DATES

December 27th JCAA General Meeting

January 12th JCAA Board Meeting

January 31st JCAA General Meeting

February 25th Saltwater National Seminar Series

March 2nd-5th Atlantic City Boat Show

March 17th-19th Saltwater Expo

President's Report

By John Toth

First of all, a **Happy Holidays** to you all, and the **very best for the upcoming New Year!** May 2017 be a healthy and happy New Year for you and your loved ones! **Also, may you have good fishing in 2017 too!**

I have Good news for you and also very Bad news for you.

First the Good News - after almost **10 YEARS** of trying, we got the commercial traps off the 13 reefs in federal waters! This is after our letter writing, sending post cards, calling legislators, attending meetings and signing **thousands of petitions** to free our reefs from choking traps. This is not only good news, but it is **Great News!** Under a compromise agreement, the two reefs in state waters (Sandy Hook and Axel Carlson) have a shared agreement that allows both commercial traps to be on them at specific locations and the other spaces on these reefs for recreational anglers only. To make up for the loss of space on these reefs for recreational anglers, a new artificial reef will be built for exclusive use by recreational anglers in the Manasquan area.

The 13 reefs in federal waters can be used by **ALL** anglers who use hook and line. This issue was resolved at a Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management

Council (MAMFC) meeting on December 12th in Baltimore, Maryland. I attended this meeting and I will give you a "behind the scenes" account of it in another section of this newsletter.

Now the BAD NEWS - It appears that we are looking at possible a minimum size for fluke in 2017 at **19 INCHES!** Discussions for the new 2017 fluke regulations were held by the MAMFC in Maryland on December 14th. I also attended this meeting along with JCAA member Paul Haertel. Paul's column in this newsletter will address some of the issues used by the MAMFC to justify this increase in minimum size. I also wrote a column in this newsletter that again gives more of a "behind the scenes" account of this terrible MAMFC meeting.

At our December 27th General Membership meeting we will be selecting a slate of officers for 2017. We are looking for a Recording Secretary and a Corresponding Secretary. If you are interested in volunteering for one of these positions contact Don Marantz at (908) 347-1434. We will also be accepting nominations from the floor on the night of the 27th at the General Membership Meeting.

Also at our December 27th General Membership Meeting we will be having food brought in for all those in attendance. So arrive early and enjoy the food compliments of the members of the Board of Directors.

On another subject, 2016 is rapidly coming to a close and the JCAA would appreciate any donations you can give to support this organization that is made up of all volunteers with the exception of one paid staff member who manages our office. Your donation not only helps us to help you with these fishing issues, but you can use your donation to lessen your tax burdens. JCAA is a non-profit 501 C-3 organization and as such any donation made to JCAA is tax deductible. Please send your donation to:

**Jersey Coast Anglers Association
1594 Lakewood Road (Rt. 9) Suite 13
Toms River, NJ 08755**

Happy Holidays

Fisheries Management & Legislative Report

By Tom Fote

Estate Planning

In the President's column, I noticed that John Toth pointed out that now is the time for you to make your tax deductible donations for 2016. After "Black Friday" we have "Cyber Monday" and then "Giving Tuesday." I must have received 150 emails that day asking for donations but none from JCAA. JCAA has been good at fighting our battles since 1981, making striped bass a no-sale fish, putting the reduction boats out of state waters or helping to stop the dumping of Agent Orange, sewage or chemicals in the ocean. What we have not been good at is raising money. In the beginning we were all volunteers and even now we only pay an office manager. Our members who attend meetings, including myself, sometimes get expenses but don't get paid for our time. It has been tough to raise money since the downturn in the economy. At one time our Fluke Tournament generated enough funds to meet all of our obligations but that is no longer true. When original owner of Penn Reels Betty Henze passed away in 2013, she left JCAA a portion of her IRA. This gave us the much needed funds in 2015. When New Jersey's new estate tax takes effect, some of you may be revisiting your estate planning. This would be a great time to set aside a small amount for JCAA. That is something I have done in my will. I hope you all live long enough that JCAA never collects. In the meantime, consider the charities you give to and include JCAA.

Fighting the Onerous Fluke Quota

NMFS has proposed to reduce the fluke quota to the lowest quota we have ever had. NMFS is doing this because of three stated reasons. The three reasons are poor recruitment, a drop in spawning stock biomass from their all-time highs and overage in New York and Connecticut.

Reason One and Two: Poor Recruitment and a Drop in Spawning Stock Biomass

The last few years we have not seen great recruitment by summer flounder. In his article, Paul

Haertel included the table on spawning stock biomass and recruitment. When you look at that table you will notice in the early years the spawning stock biomass was about 2/3 of what it is now. During that period of time, NMFS proposed that we could have a spawning stock biomass 5 times that number. It took us 17 years to get NMFS to lower the targets for the spawning stock biomass to a less onerous number. At the same time, they reduced the expectations for what the reachable quota would ever be. A few years ago they declared the fishery recovered since spawning stock biomass came within the target range. But once we reached a spawning biomass that large, recruitment began to decline. As you can see from the table, we had better recruitment when the spawning stock biomass was much lower. I have contended, and some scientists have agreed with me, that we have reached the top of a bell-shaped curve which coincides with the highest levels of spawning stock biomass ever recorded. The fact that we have exceeded the carrying capacity may be one of the reasons for the poor recruitment. In the last benchmark stock assessment, the peer review stated the summer flounder recruitment is not based on spawning stock biomass. So why is NMFS pushing to implement reductions in the quota which results in maintaining this high spawning stock biomass? If spawning stock biomass has nothing to do with recruitment, why are we lowering the quota? We know the economic hardship that will be caused by this drastic lowering of the quota. ASMFC's motto is to rebuild sustainable fisheries. A sustainable fishery means able to be harvested at a sustainable rate. Sometimes I feel NMFS is managing the fisheries to get the highest amount of fish in the ocean with no regard for anglers or the businesses they support. ASMFC manages 3 species with the Mid-Atlantic Marine Fisheries Management Council (NMFS can override any Council decision.). If this was just summer flounder it would not be so obvious but the same is true of black sea bass and scup. At the same time NMFS was reducing the summer flounder quota, they were putting in more stringent measures for the recreational community for scup even though scup spawning stock biomass is 2 1/2 times the target they set. While they were reducing the recreational quota for scup they were increasing the availability for the commercial harvest for scup with a new addendum. We all know black sea bass has expanded its range to the Gulf of Maine and New Hampshire but still

NMFS maintains a low quota. It reminds me of reading about Silas Marner and his hoarded gold. It seems NMFS just wants to hoard the fish.

Reason Three: NMFS Estimation of the Recreational Catch

NMFS is at it again with projections that no one has any faith in. This time Connecticut and New York get the short end of the stick. NMFS estimates that Connecticut and New York were way over their target for summer flounder. The numbers from MRIP suggest that in the July and August wave hundreds of thousands more anglers went fishing in New York and Connecticut than in 2015. In order to accomplish the numbers NMFS is proposing, NY had 425,000 more trips and that come out to an increase of 7,000 more anglers per day for the two months.

And in Connecticut, there were 285,000 more trips and that come out to an increase of 5,500 more anglers per day for the two months. Estimates of trips for Wave 4:

- 2015 - CT - July/Aug: 415,731
- 2016 - CT - July/Aug: 699,558
- 2015 - NY - July/Aug: 1,207,733
- 2016 - NY - July/Aug: 1,632,582

In Connecticut that would mean an increase in anglers fishing in July and August of 68%. In New York the increase for the same period would have been 35%. New York and Connecticut would have been thrilled if this were true. We cannot imagine that it is.

We had the same experience in 2016 with black sea bass and NMFS actually corrected the numbers. NMFS needs to take the same action on summer flounder. In the passage in 2006 of the Magnuson Stevens Act, Congress directed NMFS to correct the way we collect recreational statistics. We are now 10 years later and some of us feel the accuracy of the numbers is just as bad or worse. In my attempt to find an analogy that explains our dilemma, I want to tell you a story about my phone. I get a lot of criticism for still having a flip phone. I am encouraged to update and join the smart phone generation. A flip phone was designed to be a phone, just a phone. In the latest flip phones you can text but it is not an easy task. You can find the internet or take pictures but the outcome is only fair. To go to a smart phone you needed to neglect the original intent, making phone calls, and got to a mini computer that also makes

phone calls. I can go to Verizon and still buy a flip phone. It will still make phone calls. But it is still lousy at taking pictures or texting. But it is cheap. I can walk in and buy a smart phone which will make phone calls, collect data and answer all types of questions immediately. But it will cost me a lot more money and be a lot more complicated. In the process of designing a smart phone they added lots of computer chips and many “apps.” When NMFS got the mandate to correct the recreational statistical data gathering methods, did they go into their laboratory and spend the money for “smart phone” of statistical gathering? NMFS “flip phone” was designed to show trends in recreational fishing. It was designed to be the “smart phone” of recreational statistics. In order to do that they would have had to start over again, design a vehicle that can really collect the information they need instead of just inventing add-ons. Instead of getting a new program that would give us the information, we got a vehicle that is giving us worse data than ever before. NMFS solution, just keeps tinkering with the original “flip phone.”

In 2017 we are experiencing a double whammy. First, we are reducing the quota because of poor recruitment and, second, because of NMFS crazy numbers from MRIP. As you can see neither one of these reductions are necessary.

Congressman Frank Pallone and Senator Cory Booker Letter to NOAA Calling for Status Quo on Summer Flounder

Dear Assistant Administrator Sobeck:

We write in regard to a proposal by NOAA Fisheries to reduce the Acceptable Biological Catch (ABC), recreational and commercial quotas for summer flounder in 2017 and 2018. Implementing this proposed rule will have a dramatic impact on the livelihoods of recreational and commercial fishermen, damaging the economies of coastal communities that depend on this important fishery. NOAA Fisheries should reconsider this proposal, specifically by maintaining existing quota levels until it conducts a new summer flounder benchmark assessment.

As you know, the last summer flounder benchmark assessment took place in 2013, and the agency has scheduled a new assessment to take place in 2017. The scale of these reductions is serious, for

example, the summer flounder ABC would be reduced 29% in 2017 and a 16% in 2018. The recreational and commercial limits would both be reduced by approximately 30% in 2017 and 16% in 2018 respectively. NOAA Fisheries should make use of the best science available to ensure that it has updated numbers before making any decision of this level.

These proposed reductions would harm many coastal communities along the Jersey Shore, especially those that rely on the recreational and commercial fishing industries. These communities are already struggling. From 2007 to 2014 there was a loss of 2 million fishing trips in New Jersey, and 40% of fishing trips in New Jersey are in pursuit of summer flounder. The damage would not be limited to just fishermen; the tourism and boating industries along the Shore would be impacted as well. That is why we are respectfully requesting that NOAA Fisheries to postpone any decision on summer flounder quotas until it conducts a new benchmark summer flounder assessment. The agency should also maintain the current quotas until that assessment is conducted.

NOAA Fisheries should use the best science and updated data before it makes any decision to implement these dramatic quota cuts.

Sincerely,

Frank Pallone, Jr., Member of Congress
Cory A. Booker, United States Senator

Proposed Rule for 2017 and 2018 Summer Flounder Specifications

	Summer Flounder (million lb.)	
	2017	2018
Overfishing Limit	16.76	18.69
Acceptable Biological Catch	11.30	13.23
Commercial Annual Catch Limit	6.57	7.70
Commercial Annual Catch Target	6.57	7.70
Commercial Quota	5.66	6.63
Recreational Annual Catch Limit	4.72	5.53
Recreational Annual Catch Target	4.72	5.53
Recreational Harvest Limit	3.77	4.42

Reversing Course, EPA Says Fracking Can Contaminate Drinking Water

by Coral Davenport, New York Times,
December 13, 2016

WASHINGTON — The Environmental Protection Agency has concluded that hydraulic fracturing, the oil and gas extraction technique also known as fracking, has contaminated drinking water in some circumstances, according to the final version of a comprehensive study first issued in 2015.

The new version is far more worrying than the first, which found “no evidence that fracking systemically contaminates water” supplies. In a significant change, that conclusion was deleted from the final study.

“E.P.A. scientists chose not to include that sentence. The scientists concluded it could not be quantitatively supported,” said Thomas A. Burke, the E.P.A.’s science adviser, and deputy assistant administrator of the agency’s Office of Research and Development.

The report, the largest and most comprehensive of its kind to date on the effects of fracking on water supply, comes as President-elect Donald J. Trump has vowed to expand fracking and roll back existing regulations on the process. His choice to run the E.P.A., Scott Pruitt, the attorney general from Oklahoma, has built his career on fighting E.P.A. regulations on energy exploration.

Among Mr. Trump’s key energy policy advisers are Harold Hamm, the chief executive of Continental Resources, an energy firm that has been at the forefront of the fracking boom, and Representative Kevin Cramer, Republican of North Dakota, a state transformed by fracking.

Now that team must contend with scientific findings that urge caution in an energy sector that Mr. Trump wants to untether. Mr. Burke said that the new report found evidence that fracking has contributed to drinking water contamination in all stages of the process: acquiring water to be used for fracking, mixing the water with chemical additives to make fracking fluids, injecting the chemical fluids underground, collecting the wastewater that flows out of fracking wells after injections, and storing the used wastewater.

Still, Mr. Burke said that the report remained “full of gaps and holes,” and that the issue required far more study. He declined to offer policy recommendations based on the study, saying that it will “give a lot of information to help communities and decision makers do better in protecting water supplies.”

What kind of audience the new team of decision makers will be seems clear. In September, Mr. Trump promised a corporate conference of fracking executives in Pittsburgh: “The shale energy revolution will unleash massive wealth for America,” as he vowed to end regulations on fracking.

“I think probably no other business has been affected by regulation than your business,” he told the gas executives. “Federal regulations remain a major restriction to shale production.”

Fracking is subject to only light federal regulations. The Obama administration has put forth one rule intended to protect water from fracking waste. But that rule applies only to fracking on public lands, which hold about 100,000 fracking wells — representing about 10 percent of all fracking in the United States. The vast majority of fracking occurs on state or private land and is governed by state and local regulations.

Environmentalists seized on the new report as evidence that the federal government should strengthen federal protections on fracking.

“This report acknowledges what far too many communities across this country know to be true — fracking is a threat to our clean drinking water,” said Madeleine Foote, the legislative representative for the League of Conservation Voters.

“Given E.P.A. administrator nominee Scott Pruitt’s record of fighting fracking regulations, it will be important during the confirmation process for senators to ask him if he will follow the recommendations of his agency’s scientists, or continue to rely on industry spin,” she said.

Fracking advocates dismissed the report. “Even the new statement is still consistent with the finding that contamination attributable to shale development is neither widespread nor systemic,” Scott H. Segal, a fossil fuel lobbyist with the firm Bracewell Law LLP, wrote in an email. “But evidence of contamination is highly anecdotal and often overblown by the exaggeration often associated with litigation. The vast majority of third-party professional organizations and governmental officials have found shale development

to be highly consistent with environmental protection and energy policy objectives.”

The E.P.A has been working on the report since 2010, when it was requested by Congress. Mr. Burke called the study unprecedented in scope and depth, saying it included a review of over 1,000 existing studies as well as new research, modeling and analysis conducted by E.P.A scientists. In the process of completing the study, the E.P.A. produced 13 peer-reviewed reports and published as many studies in scientific journals.

**I was EPA Administrator.
Advice for the next one: Don't walk back
Environmental Progress.**

Opinion by Christine Todd Whitman

Christine Todd Whitman, EPA administrator from 2001 to 2003, is president of the Whitman Strategy Group environmental consulting firm and co-chair of the Clean & Safe Energy Coalition, which advocates for nuclear energy.

President-elect Donald Trump's nomination of Oklahoma Attorney General Scott Pruitt (R) to head the Environmental Protection Agency has drawn criticism because of Pruitt's public stances against the agency's authority and his numerous lawsuits to block agency regulations in his state. Given Pruitt's obvious dislike for what the agency does, I am disappointed in his selection, but his appointment does not come as a surprise given the professed views of the president-elect and many of his closest aides.

As a former EPA administrator under a Republican president, I recognize that it is easy to hate regulations in general. After all, regulatory action causes people to spend money or change behavior, often to solve problems they do not believe exist. Regulations have certainly gone too far in a number of areas, but it's important to remember that regulations are meant to be protective, and when it comes to the EPA, that means protecting human health and our world. Pruitt would be wise not to try to walk back the real progress that has been made.

Let's not forget the atmosphere in which the EPA was created. The nation was experiencing great turmoil in 1969 and 1970, with riots on college campuses and in many cities. The Cuyahoga River in Ohio caught fire, and our air and water sources were

being polluted by actors not required by any governing body to protect our citizens. People demanded that Washington protect them, and they got a Republican president to work with a Democratic Congress to establish the EPA and enact the Clean Water Act and the Clean Air Act. To forget that the EPA was borne out of public demand is to invite a real backlash.

So I hope that Pruitt will take time to rethink some of his criticisms of the agency and also recognize the role of science in a regulatory agency such as the EPA. Pruitt has questioned “the degree and extent of global warming and its connection to the actions of mankind.” I have long said that activists have done themselves a disservice by stressing that humans have “caused” climate change. That claim to sole causation results in people like Pruitt dismissing the need to address climate change because they doubt that humans have done all of the damage. The climate has always changed — after all, we've had numerous ice ages without human influence — but human activity has undoubtedly exacerbated Earth's natural trends beyond its capacity to adjust.

The New York-based Regional Plan Association reported last week that by 2050 the sea level along the Atlantic Coast could rise by an entire foot. This means every time there is a bad storm, more land will be susceptible to erosion and more of our coastline at risk for destruction. The cost in human lives and capital rebuilding will reach beyond the capability of any government or institution. The Joint Chiefs of Staff and other military leaders view climate change as a national security issue; hopefully that fact demonstrates, even to those who are most skeptical, the gravity of the situation we are facing. To the extent that we can slow the process, we would be wise to do it.

There are very practical ways that the EPA and federal government can protect our environment, as well as human health and our infrastructure. To slow the rate of climate change, we need to reduce our carbon output; thankfully, there are ways to achieve that goal that have significant economic benefits as well. Promoting energy conservation and reminding people only to use what they actually need benefits household budgets. Building nuclear plants and other clean-energy sources creates good jobs for Americans. The EPA should also work with the Transportation Department to advance mass transit, which will get people out of traffic jams, saving time for them and massively reducing carbon emissions from idling cars.

Between 1990 and 2012, the population grew by 38 percent, and electricity demand increased by 27 percent, but we more than doubled our gross domestic product in real numbers while at the same time reducing pollutants by 67 percent. This is not a zero-sum game. President-elect Trump and EPA Administrator-designate Pruitt should recognize that it is a fallacy to believe we cannot have a healthy, thriving economy and a clean and green environment. The new administration can vigorously pursue its economic goals while allowing the EPA to do what it was created to do: protect the health of the American people and a clean and green environment. The new administration can vigorously pursue its economic goals while allowing the EPA to do what it was created to do: protect the health of the American people and our land.

Rapid Evolution Saved this Fish from Pollution, Study Says

by Joanna Klein, New York Times,
December 9, 2016

The State of New Jersey says you can't eat the fish or shellfish from the Lower Passaic River and Newark Bay. That's because they're living in the Diamond Alkali Superfund Site, where toxic leftovers from the manufacture of chemicals like DDT and the infamous Agent Orange oozed into surrounding waterways to be taken up by the animals that inhabited them. It's an evolutionary miracle some of these animals are even alive. No, seriously. A fish that adapted to survive in this water shows evolution at its finest, according to a study published Thursday in *Science*.

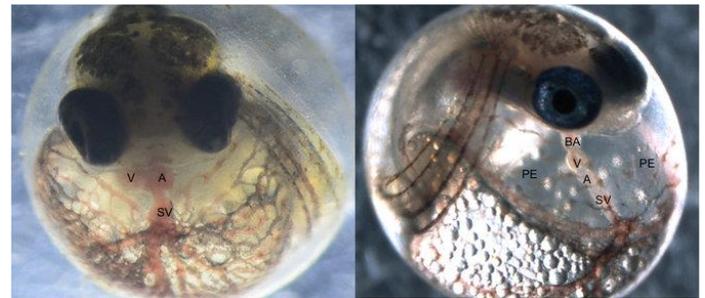
The Atlantic killifish is a slippery sliver of silver about the size of a fat finger and as common as the minnow. Starting in the late 1990s, researchers became aware that the fish was tolerant of the toxic waters at the Lower Passaic Superfund site and at least three other highly polluted areas along the Atlantic coastline. The new study found that over just a few decades, distinct populations of killifish independently developed similar genetic adaptations that make life possible in the most unlikely environments. The findings show that evolution doesn't have to start in one place to be repeated.

"It's these shared changes as well as the unique pattern of changes in these different populations that provide us with a really useful field

example of how animals can respond to rapidly changing and extreme environments," said Diane Nacci, a biologist at the Environmental Protection Agency who worked on the study.

She and other researchers, led by Noah Reid, an evolutionary geneticist at the University of Connecticut, compared the whole genomes of 384 killifish from these areas and nearby, less-polluted waters. They found that in all regions, one particular genetic pathway was the source of the pollution tolerance, although slightly different patterns of genetic changes were responsible in each population.

Normally, toxic chemicals like dioxins and polychlorinated biphenyls, or PCBs, set off a number of changes inside sensitive fish that interfere not just with the survival of adults, but also with the development of their embryos. But in the tolerant fish, the trigger for those changes is turned off, allowing some fish to survive levels of PCBs thousands of times higher than the levels affecting sensitive fish.



The killifish embryo on the left developed normally 10 days after fertilization. The embryo on the right was affected by PCBs. Credit Bryan Clark

The mutation occurred rather quickly. This speedy evolution was made possible, the researchers think, by the huge and genetically diverse killifish populations that may have harbored a rare mutation.

"Whenever you have large population sizes, there's a chance some might actually carry mutations on their genomes that are advantageous in novel environments, like pollution," said Michael Tobler, an evolutionary ecologist at Kansas State University who was not involved in the study but wrote a complementary paper on the research for the same issue of *Science*. "Any that didn't have this lucky mutation didn't make it."

Those that did reproduce, and so became the pollutant-tolerant Atlantic killifish. But in smaller populations with less diversity, the chance that a rare mutation like this already exists is slim: Evolution is put on hold until that mutation develops.

This story “adds to the body of literatures suggesting that preserving genetic diversity within species might be important for buffering them against global climate change,” Dr. Reid said.

But it’s not a mop for the pollutants we have imposed on our environment over the past century.

“At first sight this study might tell us, well, it will all be fine,” Dr. Tobler said, addressing the argument that perhaps we need not worry if nature appears to be finding solutions on its own. “These killifish can do it, and there’s probably many species out there that can respond in this particular manner, but there’s probably going to be lots of species out there that can’t.”

Additionally, adaptations typically come at a cost. The story of evolution predicts that once the water becomes clean, a tolerant fish won’t do as well as a sensitive fish. What’s the consequence of turning off this pathway, which is responsible for dealing with toxicity at less extreme levels? Researchers are still looking for answers.

Much Tougher Fluke Regulations Expected for 2017

By Paul Haertel

At their meeting in Baltimore on 12/14, the ASMFC and MAFMC discussed Draft Addendum XXVIII to the Summer Flounder, Scup, Black Sea Bass Fishery Management Plan. The addendum is expected to be tweaked a little and then released for public comment in the near future. Unfortunately, things are not looking good for our 2017 fluke regulations. Based on the MRIP survey numbers and the 30% cut in the coastwide quota that has been mandated by the MAFMC and ASMFC for 2017, it seems likely that our regulations regarding fluke will be significantly more stringent in 2017. Preliminary wave data through August shows at that time we had already harvested 5.67 million lbs. of fluke, slightly over the 5.42 million pound coastwide quota. Wave 6 (September-October) data will not be released until mid-December but the coastwide recreational harvest for the year is projected to be 6.28 million pounds. The problem is that for 2017, the quota is a mere 3.77 million pounds. The new quota coupled with the fact that we over harvested our quota for this year will result in us having to reduce our coastwide harvest by 41%. However, this number could go up

or down slightly when the wave 6 data becomes available. A shorter season, an increased size limit and a reduced bag limit or combination thereof will be considered. The reason for the cut is that there has been poor recruitment during the last few years and the spawning stock biomass has been declining.

Still, the problem as I see it is not with the fish or the fishermen but rather with our fisheries managers. They set a target of having 62,394 metric tons in the spawning stock biomass (SSB) but that has never been achieved. In fact, this number seems so high that it may be ecologically impossible to reach. The SSB and Recruitment table in the addendum shows that the SSB peaked in about 2003 at approximately 50,000 mt. This same table shows that there is no real correlation between the size of the SSB and recruitment. In fact it shows that some of the best spawning success was in the early 1980's when the SSB was only around 20,000 mt. If the SSB target was adjusted to a more reasonable level, we would not be forced into the draconian restrictions that are now being proposed.

Something also should be done to reduce catch and release mortality. A study funded primarily by Save our Summer Flounder Fishery Fund (SSFFF) showed that at the 18" size limit, 95% of the fluke harvested are females. In part, the study recommended that the size limit should be lowered to allow more males to be harvested which would also reduce catch & release mortality.

There are a number of options that were discussed at the meeting and none of them are good. It was nice to see Congressman Frank Pallone there and he made a passionate plea for the council and board not to take the drastic action they are considering. He went into depth as to how devastating this would be to our commercial and recreational fishermen as well as the various businesses that depend on them. Congressman Pallone also submitted a formal letter indicating same that was cosigned by Senator Cory Booker. Kudos to these two legislators for trying to help!

Various options are being considered including coastwide, regional and state-by-state measures. It is a real problem though because no matter which measures are chosen, some states will be hurt more than others. For instance, if the coastwide options were to be approved, all states would have a 4 fish bag limit at 19" with a season of 6/1 though 9/15. However, that option would have a negative impact on the states to our south where they are accustomed to a 16" size

limit and a 365-day season. If state-by-state measures were chosen NJ would have to cut back by 26% which would allow us to have a 3 fish limit at 19" with an 81-day season (down from 128 in 2016). However, New York and Connecticut would have to take at least a 73% cut which could result in them having a 21" size limit and a season less than two months long. Finally, we could continue the regional approach with the size limit going up one inch from last year for each region. Still, that would result in NJ, NY and CT having a 2 fish limit at 19" and a 107-day season. Regarding the regional approach there was no provision in the draft addendum for special regulations for Delaware Bay or for shore-based anglers. However, this was brought up and these options are expected to be included in the final document.

Be aware though that all the aforementioned options are just examples of regulations that would meet the necessary reduction in quota. Other options could be developed through conservation equivalency but those will be equally as bad. This is a real conundrum and nobody knows how it will pan out. Naturally, each state will be fighting for what is best for them and it will not be easy to reach an agreement. The ASMFC is expected to choose which management option to use at their winter meeting which is scheduled to run from 1/30 to 2/1. Unfortunately, though, the only real chance at reasonable regulations for the upcoming year may very well be through political intervention.

Update on Possible Fluke Regulations for 2107

By John Toth

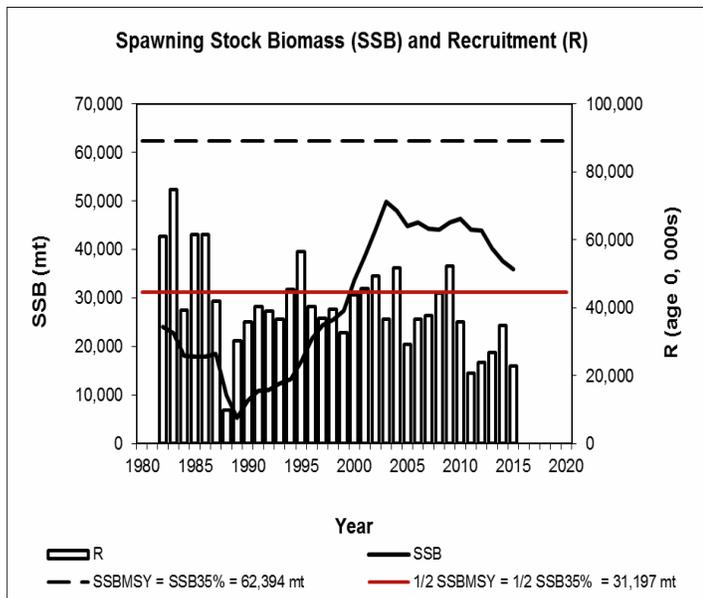
As I mentioned to you in my President's column, I want to give you my account of attending the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (MAMFC) meeting on **December 14th** that was held at the Royal Sonesta Harbor Hotel in Baltimore, Maryland to discuss possible new regulations for fluke in 2017.

When Paul Haertel and I arrived at the Sonesta Hotel, we encountered a MAMFC representative who was helpful in getting the MAMFC to vote for getting traps off the reefs at its November 12th meeting. I thanked him again for helping us to make the 13 reefs SMZ's and then I asked him, "Are we going to have an equally successful meeting this time concerning fluke regulations for 2017?" He responded to me and Paul, "No, you are looking at two fluke at 19 inches for 2017 and nothing can be done about it. Relief may come in 2018 the earliest. We (MAMFC) have to take these draconian measures or we will be sued." He did not elaborate, but I presume it is an organization like PEW. Unfortunately, he was prophetic in his comments to us concerning 19-inch fluke for 2017.

The MAMFC in its PowerPoint presentations made the case for a 19-inch minimum size for fluke. They went through a number of scenarios for different fluke sizes, but kept coming back to the 19-inch size.

Congressman Pallone even came to this meeting to say the 19-inch minimum size would be "devastating" for recreational anglers and that the MAMFC should take more time to study this issue and go to NOAA to change direction on this 19-inch issue. This letter too was also co-signed by Senator Booker (Senator Menendez's name was not on it). After Congressman Pallone left this meeting, the MAMFC went right back to discussing the 19-inch minimum size for 2017.

Ray Bogan, Jeff Guttaman (Captain, of the Voyager), a woman who operates a tackle shop in southern NJ, and myself pleaded to the MAMFC **NOT** to adopt a 19-inch minimum size. I indicated to the Council that it is tough to catch an 18-inch fish let alone a 19-inch one. Anglers do have an expectation to take home some fish to eat. If they don't, they don't come back to the boat and the captain eventually goes



out of business. I also cited that tackle shops like Meltzers in Bergen County that have been in business for 100 years and the party boat Doris Mae on Long Beach Island, in business for 50 years, went out of business and they both blamed excessive regulations for their demise. We did not, in my opinion, have any effect on most of these Council members with our comments. **If their livelihoods depended on it, they would most certainly have a different opinion than going with a 19-inch fluke!**

This meeting went on for about 3 hours and the Council approved a non-preferred coastwide measure of a **19-inch minimum size, a 4 fish bag limit, and a season from June 1 to September 15th.** This is **NOT** the final fluke regulation for 2017 and additional options will be considered. The Council is waiting for additional information on the number of fluke caught this year that will have a further impact on the new fluke regulations for 2017.

After this meeting and others that I have attended over the years, I keep wondering if we would be much better off if these management agencies did not exist with their bureaucracies that have mismanaged our fisheries to the point of putting people out of business. More party/charter boats, tackle shops will be put out of business with this 19-inch fish. These councils do not listen to what we have to say and I also wonder if they know anything about fishing other than what they read about it. We need a **change** from their disconnected policies who have discouraged more and more anglers from fishing.

How do we change this picture? I am not sure at this point, but we have to do something to save our fisheries!

Membership Report

By Kyren Dooley

Association membership dues are due on January 1, 2017 and invoices will be mailed to your club. Please complete all the information on the forms provided to you so that we can have accurate information about your club.

Please note that our JCAA address has changed!!! The JCAA has moved to a new location and the address is as follows:

**Jersey Coast Anglers Association
Unit 13
1594 Lakewood Road
Toms River, NJ 08755**

If there are any problems with the JCAA sending newsletters to the wrong addresses or to the wrong club members, please let me know so that corrections can be made. I can be reached at (609) 713-7712 or at dools702@comcast.net.

Salt Water Sportsman National Seminar Series Celebrates 30 Year Anniversary Tour with a Stop in Linwood!

The Salt Water Sportsman National Seminar Series will bring a stop on its 30 Year Anniversary Tour to the Linwood Country Club (500 Shore Road, Linwood) on Saturday, February 25. The host of the 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. presentation will be **George Poveromo** – of *George Poveromo's World of Saltwater Fishing* on the NBC Sports Network, and Contributing Editor for *Salt Water Sportsman*. **Nick Honachefsky**, a noted writer, author, TV personality and New Jersey fishing authority, will serve as co-host. The Tour is being presented by Bass Pro Shops.

Joining **Poveromo** and **Honachefsky** in Linwood will be:

- **Captain “Jersey” Justin Suarez** – Renowned Jersey City-based specialist at catching trophy striped bass, fluke, blackfish and sea bass, as well as dolphin, sharks and tunas with his *Jersey Justin Fishing Charters!*
- **Captain Trey Rhyne** - Veteran Avalon-based canyon and bluefin tuna fishing specialist with *Over-Under Sportfishing Charters!*
- **Gary Caputi** – Distinguished expert on fishing New Jersey's near shore and offshore waters, author, and Field Editor for *Salt Water Sportsman!*
- **Captain Michael Yocco** – Innovative mid-Atlantic/Northeast offshore pro who specializes in rigging and trolling dead bait for tuna and billfish in the canyons and near shore bluefins, with his *MJ's Sportfishing!*

- **Captain Alex Majewski** – Premier authority on fishing the flats and open waters of Barnegat Bay as well as its coastal waters for striped bass, fluke, bluefish and weakfish with his *Lighthouse Sportfishing!*
- **Mary Hinchcliffe** – Noted Cape May-based offshore fishing specialist, and authority on catching striped bass off southern New Jersey!
- **Captain Tom Ferarra** – Legendary Atlantic City-based wreck and bottom-fishing pro who excels at catching trophy blackfish, fluke and sea bass, with *TWrecks Charters!*
- **Captain Tom Daffin** – Veteran Cape May-based authority on catching trophy blackfish, fluke and sea bass, and noted offshore tuna pro with his *Fishin' Fever Sportfishing!*
- **Captain David Wicker** – Acclaimed bottom fishing pro and specialist in using marine electronics to catch fish!

Courses for the February 25th presentation will focus on: Trophy stripers on ultra-light tackle; Live-lining for trophy stripers; Top trolling tactics for stripers; Chunking for bluefish; Bluefish on surface lures; Inshore wire-line techniques; Jetty tactics; How to catch more and bigger fluke; Targeting trophy fluke; Top southern tactics for jumbo fluke; Secrets of fishing the Cape May Rips; Trophy drum in Delaware Bay; Secrets of fishing Delaware Bay; Top tactics for big blackfish; Catching blackfish by the score; Jigging for blackfish; No-nonsense weakfish tactics; How and where to locate weakfish; Variety fishing in and around inlets; How to locate and fish productive bottom (blackfish, sea bass, spot and fluke); Back-bay stripers; Can't-miss tuna-trolling patterns; Chunking for tunas; Live-baiting for tunas; Advanced methods for bluefin and yellowfin tuna; Cutting edge lure-trolling tactics; Subsurface offshore trolling; Cutting edge spreader bar and dredge tactics; Secrets for catching more inshore tuna; Reading water temperature charts; Targeting trophy Makos; Basic and advanced sharking techniques; Offshore kite fishing for sharks and tuna; Specialized tactics that take more big-eye tuna; How to troll up more wahoo and white marlin!

SUCH A DEAL! - The Seminar Series kicks off at 9:00 a.m. and will conclude by 3:00pm. Long considered the best bargain in sportfishing, a Seminar Series ticket is only \$ 55.00.

The ticket price covers five hours of instruction from the best pros in the business, a *Brand New 30th* Anniversary course textbook, a one-year subscription or extension to Salt Water Sportsman, one Roffer's Ocean Fishing Forecast Analysis, bottle of OrPine Wash & Wax, bottle of Star tron fuel treatment, bottle of Star brite Xtreme Clean, bottle of Corrosion Block, a \$ 10.00 Bass Pro Shops discount card (off any purchase of \$ 75.00 or more), and chances to win thousands of dollars' worth of door prizes! The Grand Prize at the conclusion of the Jersey seminar is a Florida Keys fishing trip! The Super Grand Prize, to be awarded two weeks after the conclusion of the 2017 series, is a new Mako Pro Skiff 17 cc!

A ROCKING GOOD TIME! - As an added bonus, attendees of the New Jersey seminar are entitled to attend the After Seminar Party at the Bass Pro Shops in Atlantic City. A special area will be set aside for the 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. party. Seminar attendees must show their Seminar Series name badge to gain entry, and are entitled to bring one additional guest regardless if they attended the seminar. Complimentary food, refreshments and live music will be provided. George Poveromo and several other faculty members will be present at the party.

HOW TO REGISTER – *Get your tickets now, as the New Jersey seminar sold out the last three years. To pay with Visa, MasterCard and American Express, call (800) 448-7360, or register on-line, visit: www.nationalseminarseries.com.*

Youth Education Report

By Greg Kucharewski

LOOKING BACK ON NJ HOFNOD 2016

Liz Jackson, Program Coordinator, NJDEP Division of Fish and Wildlife stated, “NJ HOFNOD had a great year. There were so many great activities, training, and fishing programs that took place throughout New Jersey.”

- **February:** NJ HOFNOD had their first Team Leader Gathering at Assunpink Wildlife Management Area
- **March:** Adventure at the Camden Aquarium
- **April:** Lakewood's Reel Fun Fishing team to attend the Pequest Trout Hatchery's Opening Day event along with four other NJ HOFNOD Teams.

Fairview Lake YMCA in Stillwater, NJ was the site for the first annual HOFNOD Jamboree. A 3-day 2-night adventure had 60 youths in attendance.

- **May:** Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament with many HOFNODer's from various clubs and groups. Trenton Urban Fishing Derby
- **June:** The first annual statewide NJ HOFNOD Youth Fishing Challenge (YFC) was held on Free Fishing Day June 11th. There were 18 community-based events covering 16 counties with roughly 1100 youth participants. Youth Fishing Challenge in Union County. One-day field trips included a Kids Fishing Derby presented by Newark Bait and Fly-casting Club.
- **September:** NJBBA Annual Youth Fishing Tournament support
- **October:** Adventure at the Camden Aquarium, Sussex County YMCA NJ HOFNOD Jamboree
- **November:** Adventure at the Camden Aquarium

There were four Team Leader training workshops. Overnight team leader trainings were held at the Lighthouse Camp for Natural Resource Education in Waretown on November 6-8, 2015 with 22 participants; Princeton Blairstown Center in Hardwick on March 11-13, 2016 with 23 participants; and the Hampton Inn Suites/Parvin State Park in Cumberland County with 34 participants. A two-day (non-overnight) training was held at the Pequest Trout Hatchery with 8 participants. This is an impressive amount of work to coordinate with NJ HOFNOD Team Leaders and other fishing groups throughout the state that support and promote NJ HOFNOD. NJ HOFNOD is getting better as more volunteers are certified. Since the passing of HOFNOD Bill A638 September 2012, the program has expanded and more funds should be allocated from the Drug Enforcement and Demand Reduction Fund (DEDRF) to keep NJ HOFNOD growing in the garden state.

Please contact Liz Jackson, NJ HOFNOD Coordinator, DEP Fish & Wildlife. Ask Liz about the benefits of becoming a NJ HOFNOD instructor. Phone her at 908-637-4125, x-122 or e-mail to liz.jackson@dep.nj.gov.

MANASQUAN HIGH SCHOOL FISHING CLUB

After meeting with Manasquan High School (MHS) Fishing Club Advisors, Jim Freda and Eric Wasnesky this month we found out Manasquan High School Fishing Club is more than just about fishing. Club members learn a variety of fresh and saltwater fishing techniques, marine science lessons and fish migrations along the Jersey Shore. If that's not enough, club members receive classroom instruction about conservation and how to protect the environment.

While speaking to Jim Freda I could tell he was an educator that was dedicated to teach members of the MHS Fishing Club not just the basics about sport-fishing. Jim and MHS Fishing Club Advisors go above and beyond to educate their young anglers about how to protect our aquatic resources. MHS Fishing Club members are lucky to have Captain Jim as an advisor. His background includes over 35 years experience fishing local waters, licensed owner of Shore Catch Guide Service, author/outdoor writer for newspapers and trade magazines.

Captain Jim also informed me about the history of the MHS Fishing Club. During the 1980's the Manasquan Board of Education approved the formation of a Manasquan HS Fishing Club. According to Al Monteverdi, Club Presiden, the Club started off with just a handful of students but as the word got out now has almost 60 members both male and female. The club has monthly meetings and a number of guest speakers that are local to the area that support club learning activities. The club fishes together, publishes a newsletter, hosts fishing tournaments, youth education programs for Manasquan Elementary School and sending districts, coordinates activities with MHS Environmental club and are involved with the local community to obtain community service hours.

The Club is seeking support from local tackle shops and industries and Dave Arbeitman of the Reel Seat in Brielle was the first to jump on board. Current fishing club advisors are MHS teachers Capt. Jim Freda, Capt. Jeff DeMuro, Mr. Eric Wasnesky and Mr. Kris Buss.

The MHS Fishing Club has plans to expand and join NJ HOFNOD and participate in the 2017 Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament. By the looks of some of their catches in their newsletter they have a good shot of having a winner at the Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament.



Anna Maraziti, 30 lb. Surf caught Striped Bass

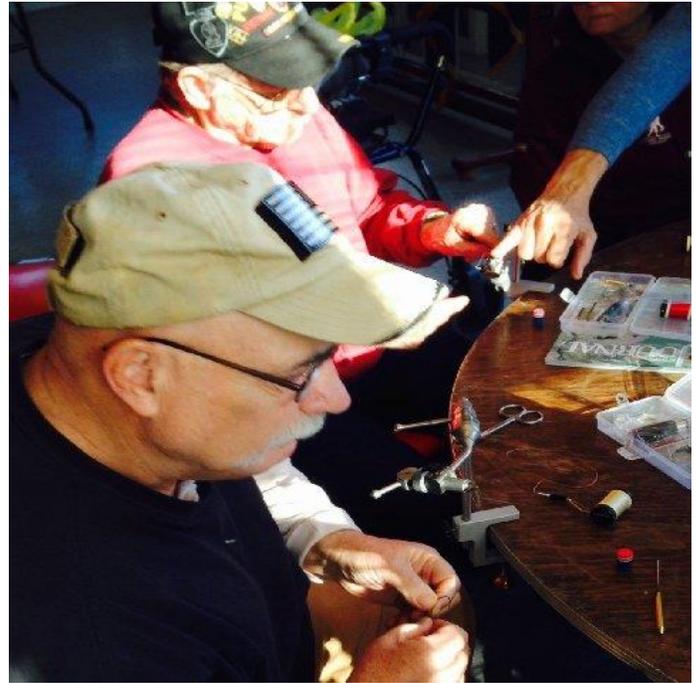
“PLAY HOOK-e” AND PROJECT HEALING WATERS FLY FISHING SUCCESS

During our December Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 12 “Play HOOK-e” program we partnered with Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing Jersey Shore Chapter. Veterans discussed 10 Tips for Attending Boating and Outdoor Sport Shows and how to tie a patriotic popper under the direction of Harold Eckett master fly tier and owner of NJ Salt Water Flies (NJSaltwaterflies.com).

Many thanks to The Fisherman magazine and Garden State Outdoor Sports Show for supporting our veteran men and women that attended our workshops. We also thank John Bushell from Betty & Nicks Bait and Tackle, Seaside Park, for donating fly tying materials and Pete Kupper, Charlie's Bait and Tackle, Normandy Beach for the gift certificates. Please remember to support our local tackle shops as they support us, Jersey Shore Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing.

The Jersey Shore Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing offers all Veterans with disabilities an opportunity to participate in and learn all facets of fly fishing. Meetings are held monthly and include presentations by fly fishing experts, fly tying sessions and fishing excursions to local waters. The next meeting will be Sunday, February 5th, 2017, 10:00 – 1200 Noon at VFW POST 2226, 212 Norwood Ave, (Hwy 71) Oakhurst, NJ and will feature a presentation on Fly Fishing the NJ Coast by Captain John Isdanavage.

For information about the Jersey Shore Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing contact: Raoul Cordeaux at jerseyshorephwff@gmail.com.



Ken Scarano and Fred Davies tie patriotic poppers designed by Harold Eckett - NJ Salt Water Flies

Super 50-50 Raffle

By Don Marantz

At our Board of Directors meeting on December 8th, we pulled the winning tickets for our Super 50-50 drawing. The winners are as follows:

- 1st ticket pulled was Bill Browne of Toms River, NJ who won \$1,357.50.
- 2nd ticket pulled was John Avery of Emerson, NJ who won \$814.50.
- 3rd ticket pulled was John Thomas of Lumberton, NJ who won \$543.00.

I would like to thank everyone who purchased a ticket and helping to support JCAA. Happy Holidays to everyone.

Make a Tax Deductible Donation to JCAA