

JCAA NEWSPAPER JANUARY 2018

Official Newspaper of the *JERSEY COAST ANGLERS ASSOCIATION*

(Published on December 26th, 2018)

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

JCAA REGULAR MEETING:

Tuesday, January 30th, 2018

Starting at 7:30 PM

385 Herbertsville Rd, Brick

NEXT JCAA BOARD MEETING

Thursday, January 11th, 2018

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.**

## **2016 OFFICERS**

|                            |              |              |
|----------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| <b>President</b>           | John Toth    | 732-656-0139 |
| <b>1<sup>st</sup> V.P.</b> | Ken Warchal  | 908-715-0791 |
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| <b>Treasurer</b>           | Doug Tegeder | 732-575-2661 |
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| <b>Cors. Sec.</b>          | Paul Turi    | 609-660-2126 |
| <b>Mem. Sec.</b>           | Kyren Dooley | 609-713-7712 |
| <b>Tournament Dir.</b>     | Paul Turi    | 609-660-2126 |

**Committee and Chairpersons listed on last page**

## **IMPORTANT DATES**

**January 4<sup>th</sup>** ASMFC Black Sea Bass Hearing

**January 11<sup>th</sup>** JCAA Board Meeting

**January 30<sup>th</sup>** JCAA General Meeting

**February 10<sup>th</sup>** JCAA Beefsteak Dinner and Fishing Seminar

**February 24<sup>th</sup>** Saltwater Sportsman Seminar Series

**February 28<sup>th</sup>-March 4<sup>th</sup>** Atlantic City Boat Show

**March 16<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup>** Saltwater Expo at New Jersey Convention and Exposition Center, Edison

## **President's Report**

*By John Toth*

The first thing I want to say to you is **Happy New Year** and may it be a healthy and prosperous one for you and your family members!

Not only did 2017 go by fast – it flew! During this year, the JCAA had a nice fluke tournament and especially the Awards Ceremony that I wrote about earlier in this newsletter. We also had an enjoyable Sportsperson of the Year Dinner that honored our fellow anglers who contributed and still continue to support this sport we all love in so many ways.

There will continue to be challenges to our fisheries in 2018. Every year there seems to be some drama over fluke fishing and 2017 was a whopper with even our country's Commerce Secretary, Wilbur Ross, getting involved with it. Is that crazy or what? Our country's Commerce Secretary weighing in on our state's fluke season! In my personal file cabinet, I have files going back a number of years over fluke issues with meetings I attended held in Baltimore, Galloway Township, Philadelphia and other locations. This fishery always seems to be so contentious! While we have issues with fluke, sea bass is even worse with fishing managers telling us this stock is completely rebuilt (some 230%), yet we always experience cutbacks in our fluke quotas year after year.

Hopefully in 2018 things will be better. Our JCAA committee member, Paul Hertel, was present at the joint meeting of the ASMFC/MAMFC in Annapolis, Maryland for two days to cover the fluke and sea bass hearings for us. From what Paul heard, Paul thinks we will have a better fluke season in 2018. That remains to be seen. The sea bass fishery always seems to be a problem. See Paul's report on the Annapolis meetings in this newsletter.

There will be a public hearing scheduled in New Jersey by the ASMFC to hear what we have to say about fluke and sea bass. The date and time has not been scheduled yet, but we will keep you informed about it. You need to show up at this public hearing to make your comments heard!

At the November New Jersey Outdoor Alliance (NJOA) meeting, New Jersey Beach Buggy Association's member (NJBBA), Paul Harris, made a recommendation that a letter should be written to Governor Chris Christie asking him to approve 19 positions for New Jersey's Bureau of Marine Fisheries that have been already funded (\$1.3 million), but need new job titles. We want him to approve these positions before he leaves office. I wrote a letter to the Governor on NJOA letterhead that is posted in this newsletter. I am happy to report that our Governor has signed off on these new positions and people are being hired right now for jobs that desperately need to be filled. The JCAA and the NJOA have always advocated for more funding for our state's Bureau of Marine Fisheries and while we would like to see more funding and staff hired, at least we are off to a good start for it in 2018! This letter additionally covers a hunting issue and it also asks the Governor to appoint two new members to New Jersey's Fish & Game Council. There is concern that the incoming administration would fill these two positions with individuals who do not have adequate fishing and hunting backgrounds. It can take almost a year or more for F&G candidates to receive approval to be on it. At the time of my writing this article, one candidate has already received approval in less than two months and the other candidate is just about ready to be approved for this important Council by the Governor.

Both Ken Warchal and I recently listened to a 4-hour webinar hosted by the Bureau of Energy Management (BOEM) on sand mining issues – how they do it, issue contracts, etc. The point made, especially by Ken, is that we do not want the

Manasquan Ridge touched by the Army Corps of Engineers to take sand from this ridge for the beaches. I commented that it cannot be touched! There were about 40-50 people on the call list and the BOEM facilitator always asked what organization you represent when you make comments. So, the JCAA was represented and made a strong case that the Manasquan Ridge is a prime fishing area and we do not want its sand placed on beaches and then see this sand inevitably wash away in time.

As you can see from my report that JCAA staff is always trying to improve our fisheries. We are all volunteers, with the exception of our Office Manager who has to be in our office a lot to handle many administrative duties. We are trying to do the best we can for our JCAA members and also for everybody who fishes in our state.

Finally, I want to THANK YOU for the support you have given me during my presidency! I am asking you to give the same support you have given me to JCAA's new President in 2018, Mark Taylor!

It is getting that time to take inventory of your tackle and dream about your next trip on the water. Jersey Coast Anglers Association will be at two shows in 2018 which are run by National Marine Manufacturers Association (NMMA). This is great origination that works hard for you. So show support to them by attending the shows they run.



Season's Greetings

**Dear JCAA Supporter,  
JCAA Wishes you and your family Happy  
Holidays!**

We thank you for your continuing support of the JCAA! Without it we could not have accomplished all of our objectives during this year.

This has been a challenging year for JCAA. There are ongoing costs associated with trips that are required for JCAA volunteers to represent anglers at fishing-related meetings in Washington and other locations throughout the country, especially in Trenton where legislation affecting our fisheries and environmental issues is passed. In addition to the administrative costs associated with mailings, office

rentals, etc., the JCAA actively supports youth educational programs and staff show youths how to fish and enjoy this sport. The JCAA also supports scientific research that is sorely needed by the recreational community. All of the activities of the JCAA is done by volunteer staff, with the exception of an Office Manager who is needed to handle required administrative activities.

The JCAA is a 501.C3 organization and donations that are given to it are eligible for tax deduction purposes. The year 2017 is rapidly coming to a close and during this time period individuals and businesses often make contributions to charities and organizations that provide a tax deduction benefit.

Please consider providing a donation to the JCAA. Your donation will help us to fight for and protect the fishing rights for all recreational anglers who fish in New Jersey. You also benefit since your donation can be used to reduce your 2017 tax assessment. If your company provides for a matching donation, you may be able to double your contribution.

Please make your check out to the Jersey Coast Anglers Association and mail it to

JCAA  
1594 Lakewood Road  
Victoria Plaza Unit 13  
Toms River, NJ 08755

Thank you so much for your continued support! May your holidays be joyful and may you have a very **Prosperous** and a **Healthy** New Year!

John Toth  
President, JCAA

## 2018 Show Season for JCAA

*By Mark Taylor*

**2018 Atlantic City Boat Show** is being held **February 28<sup>th</sup> to March 4<sup>th</sup>** at Atlantic City Convention Center. This is the show you need to be at if you are looking to invest in a new boat. Pick up the show guide book as you enter the show. This will make it easier to navigate through the show. Check out the JCAA ad in this guide. There are a lot of different manufactures present at this show and you

may find the boat of your dreams. After you check out the boats and are walking the rest of the show, stop by the Jersey Coast Anglers **Booth #460** and talk to the volunteers at the booth. Pick up the latest free newsletter which will have important information about the latest on issues dealing with recreational fishing. While you're there support JCAA by taking a few chances on our High Roller Raffle. By you taking a few chances in turn this helps JCAA support you in Trenton fighting for New Jersey Anglers.

**2018 Saltwater Fishing Expo** is being held on **March 16<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup>** at the New Jersey Convention & Exposition Center in Edison, NJ. This is a new location which is larger, so NMMA can bring you even more great information from manufactures, vendors and originations. By doing this NMMA is giving you more access to the people you need to talk to. JCAA has **booth #136** so stop by and see what we have to offer you as a recreational angler.

As always, I am looking for volunteers to man the JCAA booths so if you have time and are willing, please contact me at [mtsport64@aol.com](mailto:mtsport64@aol.com).

## Fisheries Management & Legislative Report

*By Tom Fote*

I would like to thank Chris Zeeman for his service as my ongoing proxy for many years. Most of you know Russ Allen who is recently retired from the Division of Fish and Wildlife Bureau of Marine Fisheries. He has become my new proxy and will be attending the ASMFC meeting in February. With all the changes at the Division, I am pleased to have someone with so much experience representing me. It is hard to find a proxy for an unpaid job that requires attending meetings that just make you depressed. Thankfully Russ stepped up to the plate.

### Bluefish

There is an old expression, "Don't poke the bear." I could not believe that the Council and the Commission were discussing the reallocation of bluefish to go to scoping meetings under an addendum to the plan. This proposed change to the bluefish management plan would reward the recreational community for their conservation by catch and release and their allowance for the transfer of the unused

recreational quota to the commercial community by reallocating the recreational quota to the commercial fishermen. I could not believe that anyone would suggest this.

Many years ago, when the recreational fishing community realized that the bluefish management plan was having a negative effect on the commercial fishermen, the recreational community allowed some of the unused recreational quota to be moved to the commercial quota. What started as a small figure has become a constant yearly transfer of 4 – 5 million pounds to the commercial fishing community. In the past few years, the recreational anglers were nearing the allowable quota and this had an impact on the allowable commercial catch. This transfer of unused quota has never been reciprocated even when that could have happened. The commercial fishing community decided to propose an addendum that would give them a larger quota at the expense of the recreational quota, whether or not recreational anglers were meeting that quota themselves. As other recreational fisheries such as black sea bass, tautog or summer flounder have shorter seasons, the recreational community and industry has turned more and more to bluefish. When the recreational community was forced to put a 10-fish bag limit on bluefish, the party and charter boat community lost many customers from out of state. They came from the Amish communities in Pennsylvania and Ohio and other church groups looking to have fish fries stopped coming. They counted on big bag limits to make the trip worthwhile. People asked me why individuals needed such large catches. We discovered bluefish was smoked, pickled, frozen or used in fish fries. This supplemented a diet and made the price of a charter or party boat worthwhile. We could have had bigger bag limits with the unused quota. My suggestion to do this at a joint meeting of the Mid-Atlantic Council and ASFMC resulted in a lengthy argument about allowing larger quotas. The motion failed because NMFS was against it. Mike Nussman and I talked to the head of NMFS and in the mid-90's we were allowed to increase the bag limit to 15 fish.

The historical split was 83 recreational and 17 commercial dating back to the 50's. When Al Ristori first went on the Council in 1977, he started a bluefish management plan because he knew how crucial this was to the recreational community. There was a fear that this would become a purse

seine fishery and much of the catch would be sent overseas. It is interesting that this is the first time in a long time that the New York and New Jersey delegations were in 100% agreement. The representative from Florida flew to Annapolis for just the 90-minute segment of this meeting to talk about bluefish. His comment was, "Mark this date, December 14, 2017. Florida 100% agrees with the points made by Tom Fote." The recreational representatives at the meeting all agreed this was not the time to do a scoping document on bluefish. We are waiting for the revised recreational numbers and we have no idea what they will be. We have postponed the benchmark stock assessment for summer flounder because we don't know how much those numbers will change. Knowing how crazy the recreational statistics numbers can be, we might have NMFS saying that we have been overfishing bluefish for the last 10 years. A scoping meeting should not be scheduled until we get this data. Postponing the scoping meeting was also agreed to by many of the long-time Commission and Council members who have a sense of the history. I also pointed out that there are many people in the recreational community who have always been upset that their conservation effort has always rewarded the commercial community. Many of the new state and commercial Council members have no sense of the history and no understanding of how upset the recreational community would be and voted yes. The new directors saw this as a way to transfer quota from one state to another to use the entire quota. Again, "Don't poke the bear."

What should we do? We should be writing and calling the Mid-Atlantic Council and ASMFC members and Congress and explaining the outrageous move by the Council and the Commission. We need to stop this process now, not wait for it to go any further. A yes vote would be a major reallocation to the commercial community based on the historical fishery of the last 10 years. This could allow the commercial quota to go from 17% to over 40%.

## **Summer Flounder**

This is the same good news/bad news scenario I always seem to report. The good news is the rules put in place throughout the states resulted in a larger reduction than the 30% required. The bad news is that means we did not allow the recreational community to come close to what they could have harvested. This had a dramatic negative impact on the entire recreational fishing industry. The good news was that

we could increase the recreational summer flounder fishery by 39%. The bad news is that a motion was made by the Council and Commission to do status quo and allow for no increase. In the end, we succeeded in getting a 17% increase in the recreational summer flounder catch for 2018. We got less than half of what we could have had and that will allow for just a few days increase in the season. All this is because summer flounder has not had good recruitment in the last few years. Some Council and Commission members ignored what the last benchmark stock assessment said. Once the spawning stock biomass is this large, it has no impact on recruitment. The stock assessment said there is no relationship between spawning stock biomass and recruitment. The science proves this but some members prefer to ignore the science. When the stocks were 2/3 the size they are now, we had great recruitment. Once the stocks were declared recovered, the recruitment dropped dramatically. What NMFS and its scientists should look at is the example of West Coast halibut. It is interesting to learn that allowing an increase in catch and reducing the spawning stock biomass for West Coast halibut actually improved the recruitment. The other thing people tend to forget is that we rebuilt this stock with ones, twos and threes. Summer flounder is sexually mature after the first year, at 13–14 inches. Those stocks were rebuilt with small fish, not big fish. What used to be a doormat was a 12-pound summer flounder. Now a 12-pound fish is not a big deal. To make the news, you need at least a 20 pounder. Right now, in 2018, we get a slight increase and we are still waiting on the new benchmark assessment. NMFS keeps postponing and I wouldn't bet on it being done by 2018.

### **Black Sea Bass**

Unlike summer flounder, this is just bad news/bad news! Because the SSC still does not like the information that NMFS supplies to set the quotas, the SSC penalizes both the commercial and recreational fishermen for the last of good science from NMFS. Even though we are 215% above the target, we are going to see a reduction in 2018. There was a chance we could stay at status quo but after seeing the 5<sup>th</sup> wave of data, we are going to be over. Of course, that doesn't surprise me. We should be going over every year because of the absurdity of the quota. The available stock

assessment and science says there is a lot of black sea bass out there. But the SSC sets a low estimate of the spawning stock biomass and then set the quota for that low estimate. Then we set the rules based on a false low number of fish available, forcing us to go over every year. We are set up to fail every year and then the recreational fishing community is blamed for their lousy interpretation of the science. What really upsets me is that the Council and its membership could take that power away from the SSC anytime. The Chairman of the SSC has made that clear to the Council. But the Council refuses to act. You should be writing to your Council members and the governors who appointed them, telling them to use the power they have to rectify this system so we aren't programmed to fail.

### **Island Beach - A Sonnet in the Sands**

Without Island Beach State Park, my life would be totally different. When I was in the hospital at Fort Dix, my girlfriend took me to Island Beach State Park to fish. I took many family members on trips to Island Beach. I'm a Brooklyn boy and after I got out of the service, I started going to school at Hofstra. But Island Beach State Park kept drawing me to the Jersey shore. My wife and I would travel from Long Island to attend Berkeley Striper Club meetings and spend the night at the motel at the entrance to IBSP. When I finished college, I encouraged Lynda to job hunt as close to Island Beach State Park as possible. Part of my activism in the beginning was protecting Island Beach State Park and the fish I could catch from the beach. This led me to getting involved with Jersey Coast, with fisheries management and an appointment to the ASMFC. None of that would have happened without Island Beach State Park.

Imagine my delight when Gordon Hesse told me he was writing a book about Island Beach State Park. I gave him some information about fishing there and was waiting for the book to be published. My Christmas present arrived when I received a copy at my house. This is a fabulous book. It covers the entire history of Island Beach State Park and is filled with gorgeous pictures, both past and present. Since I have been going to Island Beach State Park since 1970, I thought I knew a lot, but I really learned a lot. I learned about the rocket testing during World War II, about the pirates, the duck hunting and much more. Anyone who has even wet a line at Island Beach or just goes for a walk or sits on the beach needs a copy of this book. You can order on line at [www.jersey](http://www.jersey)

shorebooks.com or call 888-22-SHORE. I did most of my Christmas shopping there. I would like to thank Gordon Hesse for doing such a great job and George at Jersey Shore Publications for publishing this beautiful book.

## **Modern Fish Act of 2017**

Every major national recreational fishing group and most of the state fishing groups are supporting the Modern Fish Act of 2017. This is a step in the right direction for managing recreational fisheries. We started as step children in the Magnusson/Stevens Act. NMFS was formed as the Bureau of Commercial Fisheries absorbed the Bureau of Recreational Fishing from the Department of Interior. But in the early years, NMFS really ignored recreational fishing and devoted most of its time, energy and money to the commercial sector, even though nationally, economically recreational fishing is as important as the commercial sector. This bill is helping the Magnusson/Stevens Act correct how it overlooked the importance of recreational fishing. Below is an excerpt from Keep America Fishing which was started by ASA. ASA is in the forefront in working for passage of this bill. This bill has moved from the Natural Resources Committee in the House. You can go to the Keep America Fishing webpage for help in sending letters to your Congressmen and Senators. With the mid-term elections coming in 2018, it is time to ask, "What have you done to support recreational fishing in New Jersey?" Their answer should be that they are supporting the Modern Fish Act of 2017. In addition to your letters, you and your clubs should be inviting both your current Congressmen and Senators to a meeting but also reaching out to any candidates. There is a release from Keep America Fishing and a copy of the bill below.

### **Keep America Fishing**

(excerpt)

On April 6, 2017, the Modern Fish Act was introduced in the House of Representatives by Representatives Garret Graves (R-La.), Gene Green (D-Tex.), Daniel Webster (R-Fla.) and Rob Wittman (R-Va.). Officially known as the Modernizing Recreational Fisheries Management Act of 2017, H.R. 2023 addresses many of the most critical

challenges facing saltwater recreational anglers in federal waters.

UPDATE - On December 13, 2017, the Modern Fish Act was approved by the House Natural Resources Committee as part of H.R. 200. A companion bill, S. 1520, was introduced in the U.S. Senate on July 11, by Roger Wicker (R-Miss.), Bill Nelson (D-Fla.), Roy Blunt (R-Mo.), Brian Schatz (D-Hawaii), John Kennedy (R-La.) and Joe Manchin (D-W.Va.).

Rather than continuing to manage recreational fishing in the same way as commercial fishing - much like the proverbial square peg and the round hole - the new bill is a comprehensive package designed to provide federal managers with the tools and data they need to effectively manage America's 11 million saltwater anglers.

If you need more information, click [here](#) to learn more about the issue.

As a recreational angler, I urge you to support HR 200 - the Strengthening Fishing Communities and Increasing Flexibility in Fisheries Management Act.

Since 1976, saltwater recreational fishing in federal waters has been regulated by the Magnuson-Stevens Act (MSA). While the MSA achieved success in managing commercial fishing, it never adequately accounted for recreational fishing.

The Modern Fish Act aims to address these shortcomings by improving public access to America's federal waters, promoting conservation of our precious natural marine resources, and spurring economic growth.

On December 13, 2017, the Natural Resources committee passed H.R. 200 which included language from the Modern Fish Act.

Saltwater recreational fishing contributes \$70 billion to the nation's economy annually and supports 455,000 American jobs. And yet, when it comes to federal management, our sport is frequently overlooked.

As an angler and your constituent, I ask that you support H.R. 200. Thank you for your consideration.

### **Modern Fish Act**

Press Release - July 11, 2017

**Washington, D.C.** – July 11, 2017 – Yesterday, the recreational fishing and boating community praised the Senate introduction of the Modern Fish Act by

Senators Roger Wicker (R-Miss.), Bill Nelson (D-Fla.), Roy Blunt (R-Mo.), Brian Schatz (D-Hawaii), John Kennedy (R-La.) and Joe Manchin (D-W.Va.). The “Modernizing Recreational Fisheries Management Act of 2017” (Modern Fish Act) would improve public access to America’s federal waters, promote conservation of our natural marine resources and spur economic growth. A companion bill, H.R. 2023, was introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives on April 6, by Congressmen Garret Graves (R-La.), Gene Green (D-Texas), Daniel Webster (R-Fla.) and Rob Wittman (R-Va.).

“On behalf of America’s 11 million saltwater anglers, we thank Senators Wicker, Nelson, Blunt, Schatz, Kennedy, and Manchin for their leadership and commitment to modernizing federal recreational fishing management,” said Jeff Angers, president of the Center for Sportfishing Policy. “Recreational fishing is a tradition worth safeguarding through proper management policies and a critical component of the U.S. economy, with an annual economic contribution of \$63+ billion. With a bipartisan bill introduced in both chambers, we are hopeful the Congress will ensure all Americans have fair and reasonable access to our nation’s marine resources by passing the Modern Fish Act.”

For years, the recreational fishing community has been hindered by antiquated policies that restrict access to public waters, hurt the U.S. economy and detract from conservation goals. The Modern Fish Act addresses many of the challenges faced by recreational anglers, including allowing alternative management tools for recreational fishing, reexamining fisheries allocations, smartly rebuilding fish stocks and improving recreational data collection. The bill aims to benefit fishing access and conservation by incorporating modern management approaches, science and technology to guide decision-making.

“We applaud Senators Wicker, Nelson, Blunt, Schatz, Kennedy, and Manchin for working across the aisle to introduce the Modern Fish Act in the Senate. When passed, this landmark legislation will modernize the federal regulations governing access to the public’s natural resources by boaters and anglers,” said National Marine Manufacturers Association President Thom Dammrich. “We appreciate the commitment of Senators Wicker, Nelson, Blunt, Schatz, Kennedy and Manchin to finding solutions that allow for better management of

our recreational fisheries and bring federal management into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.”

“The Modern Fish Act will achieve many goals, the most important of which is getting more Americans outdoors and enjoying our wonderful natural treasures,” said Mike Nussman, president of the American Sportfishing Association. “This bipartisan legislation includes key provisions that will adapt federal fisheries management to manage recreational fishing in a way that better achieves conservation and public access goals. Recreational fishing provides many economic, social and conservation benefits to the nation, and with this legislation, the federal fisheries management system will better realize those benefits.”

“The Magnuson Stevens Act is designed to be reviewed regularly because the management needs of our nation’s fisheries are constantly evolving. Since the last reauthorization, it has become abundantly clear that the law needs to be revised to provide quality angling opportunities for all stakeholders,” said Patrick Murray, president of Coastal Conservation Association. “This legislation signifies that our elected officials on both sides of the aisle recognize the unique needs of the recreational angling sector and the changing nature of fisheries management. We commend Senators Wicker, Nelson, Blunt, Schatz, Kennedy and Manchin for providing a pathway that provides for proper conservation and better management of our marine resources in the future.”

“The Modern Fish Act offers reasonable solutions to a management system designed primarily for commercial fisheries but which has failed to address the needs of millions of saltwater anglers,” said Congressional Sportsmen’s Foundation President Jeff Crane. “The simple adjustments in this bipartisan bill would continue to ensure conservation of our nation’s saltwater fisheries, while finally establishing greatly needed parity for the recreational fishing community.”

“The Modern Fish Act would fix key issues in the law governing marine fisheries that keep recreational anglers from enjoying access to healthy fisheries,” said Jim Donofrio, executive director of the Recreational Fishing Alliance.

The coalition of groups supporting the Modern Fish Act includes American Sportfishing Association, Center for Sportfishing Policy, Coastal Conservation Association, Congressional Sportsmen’s Foundation, Guy Harvey Ocean Foundation, International Game Fish Association, National Marine Manufacturers

Association, Recreational Fishing Alliance, The Billfish Foundation and Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership.

## **Modernizing Recreational Fisheries Management Act of 2017**

### Section by Section

#### TITLE I – Conservation and Management

##### **Sec. 101. Allocation**

This section would establish clear, objective criteria upon which allocation decisions could be based, and require periodic review of allocations in mixed-used fisheries--limited to the South Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Councils. For many mixed-use fisheries (i.e., those fished by both the commercial and recreational sectors), allocations of harvestable quota for each sector are based on decisions in fisheries management plans written decades ago. Because no formalized process exists to prompt the regional fishery management councils toward examining these allocations, and because allocation discussions have been historically contentious, fisheries managers lack the necessary incentives to reexamine allocations regardless of how outdated and/or inequitable they may be today.

##### **Sec. 102. Alternative Management**

This section would clarify that NOAA Fisheries can implement alternative management approaches more suitable to the nature of recreational fishing while adhering to the conservation principles of the Magnuson-Stevens Act (MSA). Recreational and commercial fishing are fundamentally different activities that require different management approaches. State fishery managers use different management approaches for recreational and commercial sectors. NOAA Fisheries does not, however. NOAA Fisheries manages recreational fisheries the same way as commercial fisheries--by setting a poundage-based quota at or near maximum sustainable yield and attempting to enforce it in real time. While this may be an ideal management strategy for commercial fishing, where harvesting the maximum biomass is desired, it is not an effective management tool for many saltwater recreational fisheries.

##### **Sec. 103. Limited Access Privilege Programs in Mixed-Use Fisheries**

This section would help address concerns with limited access privilege programs (LAPPs), or catch shares, in mixed-use fisheries. LAPPs are intended to reduce capacity and participation in a fishery. While this model has applicability in purely commercial fisheries, it has created significant user conflicts in fisheries pursued by both recreational and commercial fishermen. LAPPs remove flexibility to manage resources according to changing economic and demographic factors, and present an often-insurmountable obstacle to managing marine resources to their highest and best use for the public which ultimately owns those resources.

##### **Sec. 104. Rebuilding Fishery Stock Timelines**

This section would allow for modest flexibility in setting rebuilding time frames by offering a science-based alternative to the arbitrary 10-year rebuilding timeframe. Proposed modifications would also afford statutory consistency with recent revisions to National Standard 1 Guidelines. When NOAA Fisheries sets the length of time to rebuild a depleted fishery, it also sets the pace at which a specific stock size must meet its rebuilding target. Yet, the speed at which a stock can rebuild is often unpredictable and influenced by factors outside of fishing. Even minor flexibility with rebuilding timeframes provides anglers with greater opportunities to access rebuilding fish stocks while still meeting conservation goals. Flexibility with rebuilding also helps minimize the negative impacts when rebuilding time frames or rebuilding targets are set using poor science.

##### **Sec. 105. Annual Catch Limits**

These revisions would provide flexibility with the application of annual catch limits (ACLs), which, as implemented by NOAA Fisheries, have created challenges with many recreational fisheries to largely to a lack of available data. The application of ACLs when biological and/or harvest data are limited makes it extremely difficult to set reasonable regulations and has a negative and unfair impact on the recreational sector. MSA currently requires an ACL for every species regardless of whether there is good science or an adequate monitoring system in place to support the catch limit. This section would provide modest but important exemptions for ACLs to better align this requirement with available recreational data.

## **Sec. 106. Exempted Fishing Permits**

These revisions will establish specific criteria to evaluate permit applications and formalize an expanded review process that requires greater regional stakeholder input on the merits of each permit application. The exempted fishing permit process was originally intended to allow researchers and fishermen to test gear modifications and fishing practices outside of regulations in place to manage certain stocks of fish. EFPs can enact programs that run multiple years and have significant impacts to the management regime of an entire fishery, and yet the permits need only approval by a single entity - NOAA Fisheries - to be enacted. In recent years, the EFP process has been misused as a mechanism to simply circumvent Council process and/or public opposition to controversial measures that benefit a certain sector or even select individuals within a certain sector.

TITLE II – Recreation Fishery Information, Research, and Development

### **Sec. 201. Cooperative Data Collection**

This section would require the Secretary of Commerce, in consultation with the science and statistical committees of the regional councils and the marine fisheries commissions, to submit a report to the relevant congressional committees on facilitating greater incorporation of data, analysis, stock assessments, and surveys from state agencies and nongovernmental sources such as fishermen, fishing communities and research institutions. Cooperative data collection will help improve the accuracy of fish stock information and data collection and analysis by incorporating data collected by anglers themselves into fisheries management decisions.

### **Sec. 202. Recreational Data Collection**

This section would transition existing federal funds toward state programs to improve fisheries harvest data. The federal program that estimates angler harvest – the Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) – is capable of providing baseline trends in fishing effort. But, for many offshore fisheries MRIP does not provide data at the level of accuracy or timeliness needed for in-season management. By contrast, many states, especially in the Gulf of Mexico, have developed complimentary angler harvest data collection systems to provide real-time and better harvest data.

## **Upcoming ASMFC BSB Hearing and ASMFC Winter Meeting Agenda**

The agenda for the ASMFC winter meeting is below. There will be many important actions taken at this meeting including action on the black sea bass amendment, striped bass and many other species. While I am at the meeting, I always go on line and watch the webinar. It just makes it easier for me to see the presentations. It is a shame that more people from New Jersey don't go to the webinars. It is important to attend the black sea bass hearings on January 4 and the January JCAA meeting to help set JCAA policy. Please read Paul Haertel's black sea bass column for his important analysis. If you need a copy of the amendment, you can go to the ASMFC webpage and download a pdf file. If you would rather have a word file, email me.

### **States Schedule Public Hearings on Draft Addendum XXX**

Board Seeks Input on Regional Management Options for Black Sea Bass Recreational Fisheries for 2018 and Beyond

New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife  
January 4, 2018 at 6:30 PM  
Galloway Township Branch of the Atlantic County Library  
306 East Jimmie Leeds Road  
Galloway, New Jersey  
Contact: Peter Clarke at 609.748.2020

Draft Addendum XXX was initiated to consider alternative regional management approaches for the recreational fishery, including options for regional allocation of the recreational harvest limit (RHL) based on historical harvest and exploitable biomass. The Draft Addendum also includes an option for coastwide management of black sea bass recreational fisheries should a regional approach not be approved for management.

In recent years, challenges in the black sea bass recreational fishery have centered on providing equitable access to the resource in the face of uncertain population size, structure, and distribution. Since 2012, the recreational fishery has been managed under an ad-hoc regional management approach, whereby the

states of Massachusetts through New Jersey have individually crafted measures aimed at reducing harvest by the same percent, while the states of Delaware through North Carolina have set their regulations consistent with the federal waters measures. While this approach allowed the states flexibility in setting measures, some states expressed concerns about equity and accountability in constraining harvest to coastwide catch limits. Additionally, the 2016 Benchmark Stock Assessment provided information on the abundance and distribution of the resource along the coast that was not previously available to include in the management program.

Draft Addendum XXX proposes two approaches for regional allocation of the RHL in the black sea bass recreational fishery: (1) allocation based on a combination of stock biomass and harvest information, or (2) allocation based solely on historical harvest. The regional allocation options offer advantages over coastwide regulations by addressing geographic differences in the stock (size, abundance, and seasonality) while allowing for more uniformity in measures between neighboring states. The Draft Addendum also proposes an option for evaluating harvest and adjusting measures against the annual catch limit, which aims to reduce year to year changes in management measures.

Anglers and other interested groups are encouraged to provide input on Draft Addendum XXX either by attending state public hearings or providing written comment. The Draft Addendum is available at [this link](#) and can also be accessed on the Commission [website](#) under Public Input. To aid the submission of public comment, please refer to the decision tree found in Appendix III on PDF page 23, which outlines the management options being considered. Public comment will be accepted until 5:00 PM (EST) on January 22, 2018 and should be forwarded to Caitlin Starks, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, 1050 N. Highland St., Suite 200 A-N, Arlington, Virginia 22201; 703.842.0741 (fax) or at [comments@asmfc.org](mailto:comments@asmfc.org) (Subject line: Draft Addendum XXX).

*For more information, please contact Caitlin Starks, at [cstarks@asmfc.org](mailto:cstarks@asmfc.org) or 703.842.0740.*

## **ASMFC Winter Meeting February 6-8, 2018**

The Westin Crystal City, Arlington, Virginia  
Preliminary Agenda

### **Tuesday, February 6**

#### **9:30am-12 - American Lobster Management Board**

- Consider American Lobster Addendum XXVI and Jonah Crab Addendum III for Final Approval
- Subgroup Report on Goals and Objectives for Management of the Southern New England Stock
- Consider 2020 American Lobster Benchmark Stock Assessment Terms of Reference
- Elect Vice-chair

#### **1:00-2:00pm - Atlantic Herring Section**

- Review Technical Committee Report on Effectiveness of Current Spawning Closure Procedure
- Elect Chair and Vice-chair

#### **2:15-4:15pm - Winter Flounder Mgmt. Board**

- Review Results of the 2017 Groundfish Operational Stock Assessment for Gulf of Maine and Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic Winter Flounder Stocks Discuss Potential Management Response
- Consider Specifications for 2018 Fishing Year
- Consider Approval of Fishery Management Plan Review for 2016-2017 Fishing Year
- Elect Chair and Vice-chair

#### **4:30-6:00pm - American Eel Management Board**

- Consider Approval of Draft Addendum V for Public Comment
- Consider Approval of 2016 Fishery Management Plan Review and State Compliance Reports

### **Wednesday, February 7**

#### **8:00-9:30am - Executive Committee**

(A portion of this meeting may be a closed session for Committee members and Commissioners only)

- CCSP Program Update
- Discuss ASMFC Leadership Nomination Process
- Discuss Updating Appeals Process
- Discuss Updating Conservation Equivalency Guidelines

#### **9:45-11:15am - Strategic Planning Workshop**

- Review Annual Commissioner Survey Results
- Discuss Next Steps in Developing 2019-2023 Strategic Plan

#### **11:30am-12:15 - Weakfish Management Board**

- Consider Approval of 2017 Fishery Management Plan Review and State Compliance Reports
- Consider the Use of Fishery-independent Samples in Fulfilling Biological Sampling Requirements of the Fishery Management Plan

#### **12:45-2:45pm - South Atlantic State/Federal Fisheries Management Board**

- Review Technical Committee Report on State Implementation Plans for the Interstate Cobia Fishery Management Plan
- Consider Approval of Draft Addendum I to the Black Drum Fishery
- Management Plan for Public Comment
- Review Technical Committee/Plan Review Team Report on Recommended Updates to the Annual Traffic Light Analyses for Atlantic Croaker and Spot
- Consider Approval of 2017 Fishery Management Plan Reviews and State Compliance Reports for Spanish Mackerel and Spot

#### **3:00-4:30pm - Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board**

- Review and Consider Maryland Conservation Equivalency Proposal
- Update on Process and Timeline Regarding Board Guidance on Benchmark Stock Assessment

#### **Thursday, February 8**

#### **Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board**

- Review and Consider Maryland Conservation Equivalency Proposal
- Update on Process and Timeline Regarding Board Guidance on Benchmark Stock Assessment

#### **8:00-10:00am - Risk and Uncertainty Policy Workshop**

#### **10:15am-1:30pm - Interstate Fisheries Management Program Policy Board**

- Consider Approval of Climate Change and Fisheries Management Policy
- Review Shad Benchmark Stock Assessment Timeline and Consider Terms of Reference

- Habitat Committee Report
- NOAA Fisheries Overview of Right Whale Issue
- Update on Marine Recreational Information Program

#### **1:30-2:00pm - Business Session**

- Consider Noncompliance Recommendations (If Necessary)

#### **2:15-4:15pm - Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Management Board**

- Consider Black Sea Bass Addendum XXX for Final Approval
- Finalize Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Recreational Measures

## **Sea Bass Update – Important NJMFC/ASMFC Hearing on January 4, 2018**

*By Paul Haertel*

The New Jersey Marine Fisheries Council (NJMFC) will meet at 4 PM on Thursday, 1/4/18, at the Galloway Township Branch of the Atlantic County Library, 306 East Jimmie Leeds Road, Galloway, New Jersey. Then at the same location, at 6:30 PM, our Bureau of Marine Fisheries (NJBMF) in conjunction with the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries (ASMFC) will have a public hearing pertaining to Addendum XXX for black sea bass.

Though the meeting agenda is not yet available for the NJMFC meeting, the possibility of opening the sea bass season in February may be taken up. However, based on public sentiment against it at the last council meeting and now with the recently released preliminary wave 5 (September – October) MRIP numbers showing that we harvested more fish than projected, it is unlikely that the council will vote to open a winter season. The problem is that we would have to subtract our state's allotment for February from our target quota for the rest of the year which could result in fewer days to fish during the regular season. Still, it would be good to be on hand to voice your opinion one way or the other if this topic comes up at the council meeting.

However, JCAA believes it is extremely important to attend the meeting that begins at 6:30 PM that will only be about the addendum regarding sea

bass. The addendum was just released on 12/22/17 but prior to getting into some of the specifics of the addendum, I would like to provide you with a little background information. Below are comments that JCAA submitted to the ASMFC/MAFMC seabass board while the addendum was still being prepared.

“Regarding sea bass we are urging you to leave the quota at 4.29 million pounds rather than lowering it to 3.66 million pounds. The spawning stock biomass is at 230% of the target and we need to create more fishing opportunities for these fish. Sea bass are not only competing for various forage species with other desirable species but have been devouring their young as well. Further allowing us to harvest more sea bass would reduce the pressure we put on other species such as fluke. Also, please consider the fact that sea bass are protogynous hermaphrodites and with a 12 ½” size limit, we are harvesting almost all males while allowing the females to continue to breed.

We would also like to see options that would change the alignment of the regions included in the addendum. Specifically, we support options that would allow New Jersey to become its own region or to be placed in the southern region as opposed to remaining in the region with states to our north. If in fact the regions are realigned in this fashion, the JCAA supports the quotas being established based on the historical percentage of the harvest over at least the last ten years. We understand that the time periods being considered to establish quotas are either from 2011 to 2015 or from 2006 to 2015. In 2011 draconian regulations were forced upon us that resulted in New Jersey harvesting their fewest sea bass during this entire century. It would be wrong to use this year as part of the basis for developing quotas. There was relaxation of the regulations in 2012 at which time New Jersey was placed in the northern region. Then for 2013, NJ was forced to establish harsh regulations that resulted in us harvesting only 61% of our target quota. At the same time, New York harvested 125% of its target and Connecticut harvested 150% of its target. NJ did its part but then the following year all states in the northern region had to cut back by the same percentage. In other words, CT and NY were rewarded for going over their target quotas while NJ was penalized for underfishing theirs. Those stringent regulations that NJ set in 2013 have hurt us every year since. Further, NJ’s historical share of the harvest was 47.7 % for the period from 2001 to 2010

and probably even more than that previous to those years. We believe it would be very unfair to base quotas on years when New Jersey’s share of the harvest was at or near its lowest and other states were at or near their highest levels. We urge you to use the historical harvests over longer periods of time to be fair to all the states involved.”

On 12/13, well after our comments were submitted, I attended the joint meeting of the ASMFC/MAFMC regarding seabass. Addendum XXX, which was only for board review, was discussed. A motion was made and then passed that removed the options that would have allowed New Jersey to be put in the southern region. Therefore, those options are not in the addendum that was just released to the public. However, there will be options to allow NJ to be its own region or to stay in the region with the states to our north. The problem with the addendum as I see it is the timeframe that will be used for setting specifications. Though the public was given an opportunity to comment at the meeting, I was the only one to do so. I pointed out that from 1992 to 2010, NJ harvested more sea bass than any other state except for two years. In those two years we finished second and third. I stated that it would be unfair to use the years from 2011-2016 as a basis for our quota as those were the years when New Jersey’s share of the harvest was lowest. In fact, during that period of time, NJ finished first in harvest only once and also finished fourth in another which was our lowest ever. I suggested adding a third option using only the years from 2006-2010 as those years were more in line with our traditional share of the harvest. Upon completion of my testimony, one of our state’s representatives, Jeffrey Brust, made a motion to do just that. Unfortunately, after a discussion the motion failed. However, it did bring to their attention that using just those years would be problematic for us. There is probably now a better chance that the option to use the years from 2006-2015 as the basis will be chosen. That would certainly be better than using just the five-year average and is the one we should all support. There are other interesting topics in the addendum as well such as alternative approaches to managing the fishery. One option that seems intriguing would be to set allocations based on both exploitable biomass and historical harvest rather than using only the historical harvest.

Unfortunately, though, the decision to reduce the coast wide quota from 4.29 million pounds this year to 3.66 million pounds in 2018 was made back in August. There doesn’t seem to be much we can do

about it at this point but we have to try. The reason for the reduction is that the spawning stock biomass (ssb) is expected to decline in 2018. It doesn't make sense to me that we are being forced to reduce considering the ssb is 2.3 times the target and the fact that a strong 2015 year class is now entering the fishery. Still though, at the time of the December meeting the projected harvest would have allowed us to remain at status quo. Then on 12/15 more bad news came in as the wave 5 (Sept-Oct) data showed that we had a higher harvest than projected. We are now facing a strong possibility of having more stringent regulations forced upon us for the upcoming year. JCAA member clubs should review the addendum so that our association can take a formal position on this at our next meeting. Afterwards we will keep everyone abreast of what is happening via email alerts and on our Facebook page.

Anglers and other interested groups are encouraged to provide input on Draft Addendum XXX either by attending our state's public hearing or providing written comment. The Draft Addendum is available at [this link](#) and can also be accessed on the Commission [website](#) under Public Input. To aid the submission of public comment, please refer to the decision tree found in Appendix III on PDF page 23, which outlines the management options being considered. Public comment will be accepted until 5:00 PM (EST) on January 22, 2018 and should be forwarded to Caitlin Starks, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, 1050 N. Highland St., Suite 200 A-N, Arlington, Virginia 22201; 703.842.0741 (fax) or at [comments@asmfc.org](mailto:comments@asmfc.org), subject line: Draft Addendum XXX.

## Saltwater Sportsman National Seminar Series back in Linwood!

February 24, 2018

The Salt Water Sportsman National Seminar Series will return to the Linwood Country Club (500 Shore Road, Linwood) on Saturday, February 24. 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 Chris Dos Santos** – Legendary authority on catching trophy blackfish, fluke and sea bass, aboard his Point Pleasant Beach-based charter boat, Barb Gail IV!
- **David Arbeitman** – Renowned deep-drop specialist who excels at catching trophy class Golden tilefish and other benthic species off the Jersey coast; Arbeitman is also a noted trophy fluke authority!
- **Captain Tom Daffin** – Premier trophy striped bass, fluke, wreck and offshore fishing authority with Fishin' Fever Sportfishing!
- **Captain Joe Trainor** – Fabled South Jersey-based offshore and canyon pro with Over Under Sportfishing!
- **Captain Sean Reilly** – Noted South Jersey trophy fluke, blackfish, wreck- and bottom-fishing specialist who also excels at catching sharks and tuna!
- **Ava McMahon** – South Jersey coastal and back bay-fishing specialist for fluke, blackfish and striped bass!
- **Chris Lido** – Information and Education specialist at New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife, and accomplished fluke and blackfish authority!
- **Captain Brian Williams** – Noted Ocean City-based shallow water and back bay fishing specialist with his Badfish Fishing Charters!
- **"Crazy" Alberto Knie** - Legendary trophy striped bass authority and innovative specialist at catching trophy class fluke and blackfish!
- **Captain David Wicker** – Noted marine electronics specialist and authority on reading the bottom and water column to locate fish!
- **Alan Wenzel** – South Florida-based offshore- and bottom-fishing specialist!

Courses for the February 24th 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 3:00 p.m. 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 course textbook, 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 2018 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 previous four years. To pay with Visa, MasterCard and American Express, call (800) 448-7360, or register on-line, visit: [www.nationalseminarseries.com](http://www.nationalseminarseries.com).

## JCAA Fluke Tournament Director Position Open

The JCAA is seeking a person who will manage its JCAA Fluke Tournament in 2018. This person in this position will promote the tournament with press releases, interacting with tournament sponsors to obtain prizes and recognition in promotional materials, handle promotional mailings to anglers concerning the tournament, distribute promotional material to tackle shops and port locations, enter tournament applicants in the JCAA's data base and be responsible for the overall management of the tournament for its successful result. This position requires the following skills:

- Effective writing skills
- Computer expertise skills with Microsoft Office
- Good verbal skills
- Experience in dealing with the public
- Ability to be a self-starter to complete tasks.
- Organizational abilities to prioritize tasks
- Prior experience in managing an event is desirable

The JCAA Fluke tournament will take place in July of 2018. This position **requires** the applicant to work part time starting November 1st and attend Board and General meetings. Starting in April the position becomes almost full time. It becomes full time throughout the month of June 2018 and part of July up to the Awards Ceremony at the Clarion Hotel in July. (Salary ranges from \$3,000 up to \$5,000 with possible bonuses dependent on the Tournament Director's ability to increase the number of anglers entering the tournament.)

The JCAA is now accepting resumes for this position. All resumes should be sent to JCAA President, John Toth, by November 1, 2017 at the following address or at his email: [tothjohn@verizon.net](mailto:tothjohn@verizon.net).

## **Summer Flounder Update from ASMFC/MAFMC**

*By Paul Haertel*

On 12/12/17 there was a joint meeting of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) and the Mid-Atlantic Fisheries Management Council (MAFMC) regarding summer flounder. Despite the fact that our coastwide quota will increase from 3.77 million lbs. in 2017 to 4.42 million lbs. in 2018 and the fact that we underfished the recreational harvest limit this year, a motion for no liberalization of the regulations was made. However, New Jersey's Adam Nowalski amended the motion to allow for up to a 17% liberalization which he felt was reasonable even though he believed it did not go far enough. A lengthy discussion ensued and the public was eventually given an opportunity to comment. Only three individuals chose to comment and all were from New Jersey. Tom Trageser, Victor Hartley and I all spoke in favor of the increase. However, it was the efforts of our representatives Adam Nowalski, Tom Fote and Jeff Brust whose efforts helped get the motion passed. They did an exceptional job of representing our state and we owe all of them a big thank you!

As a result of the meeting, the board and council voted to extend addendum XXVIII and NJ will continue to be its own region. States/regions may submit regional conservation equivalency proposals that constitute a 17% liberalization relative to the projected coastwide 2017 harvest (3.23 million lbs.). The harvest was projected since the wave 5 (September/October) data was not yet available. However, the preliminary wave 5 data has since been released and with it factored in with the rest of the year, it shows that we harvested 3.06 million lbs. That may not help us much but it is fortunate that we did not exceed their projected harvest. Further, NJ will not have to have the same size limit as Connecticut and New York as was specified in the addendum for 2017. Also in 2018, NJ will still have the ability to set specific regulations for Delaware Bay west of the COLREGS line in NJ waters as well as for Island Beach State Park.

What this means for NJ is that we will have an opportunity to extend our fluke season into September while leaving the size limit at 18" and the

bag limit at 3 fish. We need to close the gap from when fluke season closes until seabass season reopens. I believe that the New Jersey Marine Fisheries Council (NJMFC) will agree with that. However, our Bureau of Marine Fisheries (NJBMF) is expected to develop other proposals as well. The public will be able to comment on these various options at council meetings in the upcoming months. JCAA will keep you advised via our Facebook page and email alerts as to exactly when the meeting will occur.

## **JCAA Beefsteak Dinner and Fishing Seminar 2/10/18**

*By Paul Haertel*

On Saturday, 2/10/18, the JCAA will be holding an all-you-can-eat Beefsteak Dinner along with a fishing seminar. The event will begin at 5 PM and will be held at the Forked River Tuna Club located at 18 Bay Ave, Forked River, NJ. The event will kick off with an update on our fisheries regulations particularly as they pertain to fluke and sea bass. That will be followed by a power point presentation by renowned writer and fisherman, Chris Lido, who will be discussing ten tips to catch more fish in 2018. Up next will be a seminar about fluke fishing by a speaker yet to be confirmed. Then at 7 PM, an all-you-can-eat beefsteak dinner will be served by Nightingale Catering. Salad, French fries, beefsteak and dessert will be served along with soft drinks, coffee and tea. A cash bar will also be available. There will also be a silent auction for a few nice items before the affair concludes with a 50/50 drawing. Tickets are just \$50 per person. To reserve your tickets, call Paul Haertel at 973-943-8201 or email him at [anglerpmh@aol.com](mailto:anglerpmh@aol.com).

## **Office Manager's Report**

*By Paul Turi*

Club dues & Sponsorships are due January 1<sup>st</sup>. Notices have recently been mailed.

Just recently also, we sent out a mailing for our Super 50/50 raffle. Unfortunately, there was a glitch in our computer system and multiple letters went out to everyone on our mailing list. Unfortunately, we didn't catch it until most of the letters went out. We apologize for any inconvenience it has caused anyone who received these multiple letters.

# Youth Education Report

By Greg Kucharewski

## NJ HOFNOD NEWS

During December the JCAA Youth Education Committee assisted NJ HOFNOD Boating Education and Rescue Leaders Mike and Debbie Bennett with a fly tying presentation for their youth fishing group at Ocean County Park. Youngsters learned how to tie a saltwater fly using a variety of synthetic and natural fibers.

NJ HOFNOD, Team BEE (Byram Environmental Education), is looking for fly tying volunteers for a NJ HOFNOD school program. Dates are Mondays 3:40 to 4:30 1/29 and 2/26. They have about 30 students and would like more volunteer participation to assist students tying saltwater and freshwater flies. Contact: Betty Saar & Melissa Randall, Byram Township Intermediate School, 12 Mansfield Dr, Stanhope, NJ 07874, (973) 347-1019.

NJ HOFNOD leader training “Crash Course” will be held Friday, January 26th at the Hackettstown Fish Hatchery. Please contact Liz Jackson for registration information.

New Jersey DEP Division of Fish and Wildlife’s NJ Hooked on Fishing-Not on Drugs (HOFNOD) training sessions will start again in 2018. Please check their website and stop by their booth at upcoming outdoor shows to learn how you can become a certified NJ HOFNOD instructor.

The Jersey Coast Anglers Association will provide training funds for upcoming NJ HOFNOD workshops. You must be a member of JCAA to receive training funds. To receive an application from the JCAA Youth Education Committee, email: [gkucharews@jcaa.org](mailto:gkucharews@jcaa.org).

NJ HOFNOD is coordinated by Liz Jackson, HOFNOD Coordinator DEP Fish & Wildlife. Please contact Liz to learn more about the benefits of becoming a NJ HOFNOD instructor, 908-637-4125 x122 or e-mail at [Liz.Jackson@dep.nj.gov](mailto:Liz.Jackson@dep.nj.gov).

## HRFA 2017 PROMOTION OF YOUTH FISHING PROGRAMS

Members of the Hudson River Fishermen’s Association were extremely busy during 2017 promoting a total of 19 youth and family fishing programs.



*HRFA first Catfish Chaos event was a huge success.*

## “PLAY HOOK-e”

During October, we launched our “PLAY HOOK-e” magnet fundraising campaign to support veteran fishing programs and we thank the following merchants for supporting our veterans: Betty & Nicks Bait and Tackle, Brielle Bait and Tackle, Dunkin Donuts Point Pleasant, Gabriel Bait and Tackle, Grumpy’s Bait and Tackle, Jersey Hooker Outfitters, Jay’s News Stand, Norma K III, Reel Seat Bait and Tackle, River Rock Restaurant and Teddy Bears By the Seashore. Please remember to support local business/tackle shops, they support us. It pays to shop local, that’s how we stay strong at the shore.

Throughout the year we spoke about NJ HOFNOD, youth and veteran fishing programs to the following organizations and we thank them for all their support: Brick Rotary, Sandy Hook Bay Anglers, Jersey Shore Surfcasters, American Legion Post 346 Women’s Auxiliary, Monmouth Jet Center, Bear Education and Rescue, and Point Pleasant Elk’s Lodge. We also presented at Manasquan Fishing Club and at the 2017 Ohio Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance Annual Conference.

## PROJECT HEALING WATERS FLY FISHING

Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing Jersey Shore Chapter 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. During the winter PHWFF Jersey Shore Chapter will meet on the first Sunday of each month, 10:00 – 1200 Noon at VFW POST 2226, 212 Norwood Ave, (Hwy 71) Oakhurst, NJ. January 27, 2018, they will travel to the Edison Fly Fishing Show.. Email Raoul for details about attending.

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



*Harold Eckett - NJ Salt Water Flies teaches veteran Laslo Hasko about tying a clouser minnow fly.*

# **In 2018 Teach Someone Who Has Never Fished How To**

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