

JCAA NEWSPAPER OCTOBER 2019

Official Newspaper of the *JERSEY COAST ANGLERS ASSOCIATION*

(Published on October 3, 2019)

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

JCAA REGULAR MEETING:

Tuesday, October 29th, 2019

Starting at 7:30 PM

385 Herbertsville Rd, Brick

NEXT JCAA BOARD MEETING

Tuesday, October 10th, 2019

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

October 7th-10th Joint ASMFC & MAFMC Meeting

October 10th JCAA Board Meeting

October 15th-17th MAFAC Meeting Silver Spring

October 27th ASMFC Annual Meeting

October 29th JCAA General Meeting

November 10th JCAA Sportsperson Dinner

Sportsperson of the Year Dinner

By Paul Turi, Co-chairman

On Sunday, November 10th, 2019 we will be having our annual Sportsperson of the Year Dinner. It will be held at the beautiful Martell's Water's Edge, 125 Bayview Ave, Bayville, NJ from 4-8pm. Tickets again this year are \$80 per person and \$650 for a table of 10. To reserve your tickets, contact Dan Miller at 609-641-7821 or blueangray@comcast.net.

For dinner we will be starting with mixed field greens with a honey-balsamic vinaigrette. There will be three dinner selections: Chicken Marsala with wild mushrooms and marsala wine; broiled lemon sole with white wine and garden herbs; slow roasted prime rib of beef au jus. For dessert there will be a brownie bar station: Warm triple chocolate brownie served with vanilla ice cream. There will be a cocktail hour with a cash bar and six individual hand-passed hors d'oeuvres; mini crab cake balls, herb & garlic cheesy stuffed mushrooms, filet mignon & vegetable skewers, chicken & pineapple skewers with teriyaki glaze, chilled jumbo shrimp and clams casino.

We MUST give a head count one month prior to the dinner, so please call or email Dan and let him know whether or not you or your club is attending and how many will be attending. At this time we are not sure who the guest speaker is going to be. And, as usual, we will be having a tricky tray auction, silent auction and plenty of door prizes.

I am also in need of door prizes and tricky tray Auction and silent Auction prizes. If you or your club

have something to donate, please contact me at (609) 709-9215 or at pturi72@gmail.com. It would help if each of our member clubs donated a prize or solicited the bait and tackle shops that its members support.

Remember, bring your significant other. I always have prizes for the ladies too!

This year's honoree is John A. Tiedemann. John is the Assistant Dean at Monmouth University's School of Science and Director of the Marine and Environmental Biology and Policy Program. Since 1978, John's career has been dedicated to protecting marine habitats and water quality. He helped identify sources of marine pollution and developed best practices for the management of marine fisheries, watersheds and coastal zones. John also works with Stripers Forever to protect striped bass and to restore the species.

In addition to his work as a researcher, scientist and educator, John is an avid angler and waterman who has been recognized with appointments to the Fisheries Conservation Foundation Board of Directors, the Advisory Committee to the NJ Sea Grant Consortium, the Coastal and Estuarine Research Federation Education Sub-committee and various other organizations.

You may see John on the beach fishing or with Monmouth University students collecting striper data and biological specimens and tagging released fish. John has introduced his students to fishing and helped them to catch their first striper.

In 2015, 1,000 striped bass posters were distributed to every bait and tackle shop and marina in NJ. John helped develop and distribute those posters along with 10,000 copies of the Striped Bass Catch and Release length/weight cards available for free at shows, club meetings, and other events.

John presented at the American Fisheries Society 2018 Annual Meeting and 2019 Jersey Shore Surfcasters Surf Day.

John's work is built into his daily life and his continuous work to protect the marine environment makes him worthy of this award.

President's Report

By Mark Taylor

The fall season is upon us and with that New Jersey's Fluke (summer flounder) season has come to an end and the surf / boat fishermen are gearing up for

the fall run of striped bass to start. A reminder that on Oct 1st the seabass bag limit increases to 10 and the tautog (blackfish) bag limit don't increase to 5 until Nov 16th.

I mentioned in many previous JCAA Newsletters, if you would like me to come and speak to your club just contact me. Well, a few months ago I was contacted by Jim Blandine of the Village Harbour Fishing Club (VHFC), who is the club's guest speaker chairman, to come and speak at their regular monthly meeting in September. It was my honor to speak on September 13th to a very active club. This club was started back in 1984 as a few anglers got together to further their knowledge of recreational fishing and how they can conserve the precious resource they so dearly loved. This club does participate in a few different types of fluke tournaments and has a yearly club dinner. They also are very much involved in the process of fisheries management by attending public meetings and putting their club's stands forward when need be. They are an active member club of Jersey Coast Anglers (JCAA) where their club representative is present at monthly meetings and members help out at shows in the JCAA booth. If you are looking for a club to join in the Manahawkin / Long Beach Island area you should check this one out (vhfishingclub.com). I would like to thank the Village Harbour Fishing Club for making me feel welcomed and comfortable during my speech.

There were a few public hearings in New Jersey on the latest addendum for striped bass. I personally was not able to attend any of them due to my schedule but JCAA had people there. I was informed that there were a lot of people with some different viewpoints on the options. I would have liked to hear that there were more people that were interested and attended these important hearings. The largest attendance was in Manahawkin. This is where you have some input with the upcoming regulations. If you were unable to make one of the hearings there is still time for you and your club to write in your comments by October 7th to Max Appelman. You can email Max Appelman, FMP Coordinator, at comments@asmfc.org (Subject: Striped Bass Draft Addendum VI) or by mail Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, 1050 North Highland Street Suite 200A-N, Arlington, VA 22201. Phone: (703) 842-0740, Fax: (703) 842-0741.

At the September JCAA general meeting a vote was taken on who will receive this year's Sportsman of the Year Award. All of the names of

the nominees that were submitted by member clubs are well-deserving for all the great work they do. This year's 2019 JCAA Sportsperson of the Year which was selected by member clubs is John Tiedemann. Congratulations on being selected and I am looking forward to presenting it to you at the dinner. This is a reminder, if you or your club has not purchased tickets to the Sportsperson of the Year Dinner on November 10th yet, there is still time but time is running out. Reach out and get your tickets in the next few weeks. Tickets again this year are \$80 per person and \$650 for a table of 10. To reserve your tickets, contact Dan Miller at (609) 641-7821 or blueangray@comcast.net. The venue has changed to Martell's Water's Edge, 125 Bayview Ave., Bayville, NJ from 4-8 pm. You don't want to miss this amazing time.

The month of December always puts some sort of a twist on when we can have our general meeting. This year is one on the worst since the meeting is the last Tuesday of the month which turns out to be New Year's Eve and the Tuesday before that is Christmas Eve. We can't have a meeting either of those nights. At the board meeting we discussed this issue and came to the conclusion to have the meeting on December 17th which is the 3rd Tuesday of the month. At that meeting we will be having something to eat. We will discuss what that would be at the November meeting. I will need to get a head count by December 3rd so the food can be ordered. If you can, email me if you are attending at mtsport64@aol.com and put in the subject "JCAA December Meeting."

The next JCAA General Meeting is October 29th at 385 Herbertsville Road, Brick NJ, 08724. Make sure you mark your calendar.

Remember, JCAA is always here for you, but we need more people to get involved to help protect the future of our fisheries.

Fisheries Management & Legislative Report

By Tom Fote

New Recreational Numbers Causing Problems

In a previous edition I discussed the impact of the new recreational numbers that NMFS is using. We saw the recreational summer flounder catch numbers greatly increase to the point that the commercial fishery was

given a 49% increase. At the same time the recreational sector, which had a 4-year average of 15% under what we could catch, saw no increase. The new numbers showed that summer flounder was not overfished and overfishing was not taking place.

When the new recreational numbers for striped bass came out and were included in the stock assessment, we went from striped bass not being overfished and with no overfishing occurring to striped bass being overfished and overfishing occurring. The same thing is now happening with bluefish. New numbers are telling us that bluefish could be overfished and overfishing may be occurring.

I would question if there is more bias in the data collected in recreational species. Was the conversion of the numbers handled correctly for recreational species? Historically, the same numbers can be interpreted in different ways leading to a huge change in how the stocks are perceived and regulated.

A lot of time and effort was put into making the recreational numbers more accurate. This has been done before and we have eventually found flaws in the overall interpretation of the data requiring more adjustments. I wonder if that is what is happening now on the predominately recreational species. I hope NMFS takes a serious look.

Traveling Man

October will be a busy month for me and many others. I will be attending three meetings; the Joint Meeting of ASMFC and MAFMC, Marine Fishery Advisory Council, and the Annual Meeting for ASMFC. I will miss the ASA Summit in Washington State since the date conflicts with another meeting. There will be some major decisions made at 2 of these meetings and recommendations will be made to the Secretary of Commerce. You can listen to the Joint Meeting and the ASMFC. Some of the materials for these meetings are already posted on the ASMFC and MAFMC webpages. I have included links to the agendas for both meetings. You can also listen after the meeting is concluded.

Striped Bass

I attended the three Striped Bass hearings in New Jersey. It was interesting to hear what people had to say. What I found upsetting was how self-protective

anglers were for their own vested interests. There was a complete disregard for the data about hook and release mortality. Hook and release mortality on striped bass is the largest factor in recreational mortality. As an example, the catch and release anglers and charter boats wanted to end the opportunity to keep a striped bass during particular seasons. They realize this would have no impact on them since they release everything. They would continue to fish and release their catch, adding to the overall mortality. Some of the catch and release anglers wanted to ignore the fact that in 2018 we reduced the catch by more than 18%, the reduction called for in the addendum.

I had others say that the habitat issues are not causing the problem. How can they ignore climate change and loss of habitat? The point is, we are seeing reductions of inshore fisheries in New Jersey and elsewhere because of a variety of factors. Beach replenishment is another factor. Warmer waters in the bays and estuaries certainly contribute to the problem. Water quality issues in the Chesapeake and other bays are another factor. The lack of forage species that striped bass depend on is certainly an issue. And you all know that I find endocrine disruptors to be a contributing factor in the changing genetic make-up of the spawning stock. We are definitely feminizing fish.

My biggest concern is that anglers will expect another reduction to solve the problem when the problem is not the spawning stock biomass numbers but other contributing factors. The last time we implemented the rules we called for a 25% reduction. In 2018 we had that reduction plus another 18% reduction. We all know this has not solved the problem. Another 18% reduction will do nothing except penalize the recreational anglers who want to take a fish home to eat. Under this addendum we are not even acknowledging the impact of catch and release beyond the promotion of circle hooks.

I am hoping that all these issues are handled under the Amendment we have been discussing at the last 3 meetings. It is time for us to actually do something to solve the problem rather than just repeating past mistakes.

I presume there will be a reduction in the catch of striped bass in 2020 and an increase in hook & release mortality. What I will be recommending to New

Jersey is that we conduct at least 2 public hearings to get input on how to best implement this reduction, trying to accommodate all interests. This will include party and charter boats, catch and release anglers, private boat anglers who want to take a fish home to eat, trophy anglers and surf fishermen. I realize how difficult this will be and everyone will need to compromise. Try to put yourself in the boots of another angler. The reason that government and politicians listen to anglers is because of the economic benefits to our state. We keep losing trips, boats, recreational anglers. Our strength lies in the fact there are 800,000 anglers in New Jersey. We need to find ways to keep all those anglers.

Joint ASMFC & MAFMC

I am just starting to look at the materials for the upcoming joint meeting. There are concerns about bluefish and other species. I will be reporting on these meetings in the next newspaper. It would help if a member of your club is able to listen in and report to you directly. It would also help if you review the materials, the power points and the audios that are posted after the meeting is completed. [Here is link](#) to the meeting schedule and additional information.

78th ASMFC Annual Meeting

Everyone is focused on striped bass at the Annual Meeting but there will be many other issues discussed as you can see from the agenda below.

We will need to deal with the fact that Virginia's menhaden reduction fishery is ignoring the cap on the harvesting in Chesapeake Bay. The cap on the catch of menhaden in the Chesapeake was created to protect the forage species that striped bass depends on in the bay. I can't believe Virginia is allowing this to happen.

The list below covers many board meetings and it is important for you to know what happens there. You really need to review the materials on the ASMFC webpage and follow up after the meeting with all the additional materials that will be posted. Preliminary agenda and more meeting information can be found at [this link](#) on ASMFC.org.

JCAA Position on Striped Bass Addendum VI

By Paul Haertel

Below is the letter that JCAA sent to the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission regarding Draft Addendum VI to Amendment 6 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Striped Bass. All individuals interested in striped bass are encouraged to submit comments regarding this addendum. The final date comments will be accepted is October 7, 2019 at 5:00 p.m. Comments may be submitted by mail to the address shown on the below letter or emailed to comments@asmfc.org or faxed to (703) 842-0741. Include "Striped Bass Draft Addendum VI" in the subject line of any emails.

Max Appelman, FMP Coordinator
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 North Highland St. Suite 200A-N
Arlington, VA. 22001

Max and ASMFC Striped Bass Management Board,

The Jersey Coast Anglers Association met on 9/24/19 and discussed Draft Addendum 6 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Striped Bass. Except for one abstention, we **unanimously voted to support Option 2** which would require an 18% reduction for both the commercial and recreational sectors from 2017 levels. While some of our member clubs felt that the stocks have collapsed, others believe that the stock has diminished significantly but much of the biomass has shifted into federal waters. However, what we all agreed on is that striped fishing during the last decade or so has declined a great deal. Though there have been isolated areas such as Raritan Bay and the Cape Cod Canal where the striped fishing has been fabulous at times, most of the east coast has had very poor fishing. This is evidenced by surveys taken by the internet group Stripers Forever which has many avid striped fishermen throughout the various east coast states.

Whether you believe the stocks have collapsed or that the stocks have shifted to the east, something

has to be done to further increase the biomass and improve our striped fishing. Even for those of you who may believe that the stocks have shifted to the east and that status quo is sufficient, please realize that by increasing the biomass, their range will expand not only to the north and south but hopefully to the west and into state waters where our many fishermen are allowed to fish for them.

Though we understand why some might argue for status quo, we don't agree with that for the reasons stated above and we are adamantly opposed to Option 3 that would result in a 20% reduction for recreational fishermen and only a 1.8% reduction for the commercial sector. JCAA was chiefly responsible for making striped bass a no-sale or gamefish in New Jersey and has been advocating for coastwide gamefish status for many years. While the commercial catch may seem relatively insignificant, the illegal sales of striped bass are a big problem in the states that allow stripers to be sold and these illegal fish are not added to the commercial harvest numbers.

Regarding the sub-options for Option 2, our clubs were almost equally divided with some favoring some form of the slot limit and others favoring a 35" minimum size limit. However, the majority of our clubs voted to support either **2-A1 with a 35" minimum size limit or 2-A 3 with a slot limit of 30"-38" as both these options would result in an 18% reduction.** Since option 2 requires an 18% reduction, we believe that the coastwide standard should be either or both of the aforementioned sub-options. We don't believe that a coastwide standard of 19% that would be required under 2-A2 or the 21% that would be required under 2-A4 would be fair when the commercial sector would be required to only cut back by 18%.

We thoroughly discussed the pros and cons of each of the options. Those clubs that preferred a slot limit felt the best way to restore the stocks would be by protecting the larger fish. However, those who preferred the 35" minimum size argued that the fastest way to restore the fishery is to protect the 2014 and 2015 year classes. The 2015 year class resulted in the largest recruitment of 1 year old fish (in 2016) since 2004. Some of these fish will be reaching spawning size in 2020. There was above average spawning in those two years so some of our members believe that we should be protecting them rather than forcing people to target them.

Though all of our clubs supported further conservation of the stocks, many were not happy with any of the sub-options. We believe that when reductions are necessary, they should be applied equally to all sectors of the angling community including C&R fishermen, those who prefer to take home a smaller fish to eat and those who prefer to fish in tournaments or target trophy fish. None of the sub-options offered allow us to do that. Therefore, we support conservation equivalency and we are hopeful that our state will develop options that will affect all sectors equally while meeting the anticipated mandatory reductions. For example, this could be done through seasonal closures or perhaps by allowing either a smaller striper or a larger striper to be harvested while protecting the medium sized fish that might be our best breeders.

Regarding the use of circle hooks, we support Option C which would require states/jurisdictions to promote the use of circle hooks by developing public education and outreach campaigns on their benefits when fishing with bait. We do not support Option B that would make circle hooks mandatory because it would create an enforcement nightmare for our limited law enforcement personnel. Further, the use of circle hooks is not practical under all circumstances. For instance, it would not be practical for long distance surfcasters who like to snag and drop bunker. We also suggest that additional ways to reduce the C&R mortality be included in educational efforts. People should be educated on the proper handling of fish so that they can be successfully released. The use of larger hooks and setting the hook quickly should be encouraged to reduce the chances of gut hooking fish. The use of heavier tackle so as not to unduly stress the fish should be encouraged. Fishermen should also be made aware of the effects of releasing fish when the water temperatures are high or the air temperatures are very cold.

In closing we would like to thank you for this opportunity to comment. Please take the appropriate action to restore our striper stocks!

Sincerely,
Mark Taylor
JCAA President

Report on Stockton University Conference on Windmills

By John Toth

On August 16th, I attended this “Time for Turbines” conference that was held at Stockton’s campus in Atlantic City, an all-day event and attended by people who support the windmill projects off our coastline. Many company representatives who want to receive contracts associated with the building of them were also in attendance. Approximately, 150 to 200 people were in the conference hall. After the welcoming speeches, the conference then moved into a panel type of format with four members discussing various topics related to windmills. This panel format left little room for taking questions from the audience so that the conference could adhere to its tight schedule.

The first panel (**New Jersey State Government Resources to Support Offshore Wind**) was moderated by Jeanne Fox from Center for Renewables Integration Inc. She asked panel members to comment on our state’s commitment to the windmill project and they included members from the NJ Board of Public Utilities, Sara Bluhm, Brian Sabina, NJ Senior VP Economic Transformation, Jane Cohen, Advisor to our Governor, and Shawn LaTourette, NJ DEP, Chief of Staff. All of their comments offered strong commitment from our state for windmill development.

The second panel (**What’s New and Spinning: Project Visions, Timelines, and Local Supplier Updates**) included Kris Oleth, Manager of Stakeholder Engagement for Orsted, the Danish company that won the award from our state to build windmills 15 miles off Atlantic City. She indicated that these new windmills will light up 500,000 homes and may be in operation by 2024. At this point, I asked this panel about how it intended to address the noise issue that would be generated by the anchoring of windmills and its effect on whale and fish migration. I was assured by panel members that issue was being reviewed and that measures were being considered to mitigate it, such as stopping construction if whales were migrating near them at the time.

The third panel (**Off Wind: An Economic Engine That Can Deliver**) focused on the many jobs

that would be created, up to 15,000 by constructing them. Union representatives also talked about the job training programs they will offer to get the workforce prepared for the many skills needed to construct them. Emphasis would also be on training workers from the local community and minorities.

Before breaking for lunch, we saw a video by Governor Murphy who spoke enthusiastically about this windmill project. Also, Senator Steve Sweeney, President of NJ Senate, strongly backed windmill development because of the many jobs that would be created and its boost to our state's economy (he also mentioned as a former ironworker, he would love to be building the big windmills)

The 4th panel (**Addressing Environmental Concerns**) was moderated by Catherine Bowes, National Wildlife Federation Program Director. Captain Paul Eidman talked about the windmills presently off Rhode Island and not only about the power they produce but also their reefs that are home to many fish. On this panel was a Bill Wall, Project Director, LS Cable America who gave a presentation on the type of cables that would be used to transfer energy from the windmills to land. The electromagnetic effect emanating from these cables is a **BIG** concern since they may negatively impact fish migration. I asked him if he thinks that these cables will affect fish migration and he replied that he did not think so, but could not rule it out altogether.

When this panel finished, I met Bill Wall outside the meeting hall and told him that this cable issue really needs a final resolution since it is an impediment of windmill development going forward. We do not need maybes, but an official statement from a reputable organization stating that the cables will not have a negative effect on fish. He told me that he will make contact with a person at Rutgers who he thinks has been doing research on these cables and may come up with the information I requested from him.

In addition to this cable issue, there is the problem of windmill placement over productive fishing grounds for scallops, clams and squid. Commercial fishermen are planning to sue the windmill industry over this since they will lose their access to these fishing areas and possibly go out of business.

During a break between the panel discussions, I asked Doug O'Malley, NJ Environment Director, if there could be some compromise like giving the developer a larger lease space so that the windmills

could be placed in alternate locations to mitigate his problem. He referred me to another person who is more familiar with this issue. This person, William O'Hearn, from Business Network for Offshore Wind, told me that "he did not have an answer for me." I did not even get a "we are looking into this" or at least tell me of some type of meeting planned in the near future with the commercial industry to discuss this problem.

In summary, there were a lot of "heavy hitters" at this conference and a lot of excitement to get the windmills up and operational. The comment I heard frequently from panel members was "let's get this right the first time." However, there are outstanding issues that will not go away by ignoring them and they will ultimately delay the installation of the windmills. The "I don't have an answer for you" won't stop the commercial industry from dragging their lawsuits through the courts that will delay movement on windmills. The cable problem I mentioned is another obstacle that needs resolution.

Fishing the Offshore Wind Foundations off Sandy Hook in '24

*By Capt. Paul Eidman, Board Member,
Habitat & Forage Fish Committee Chairman*

Last month, New York announced the award of two offshore wind projects that will provide 1,700 megawatts of power – enough to power 1 million homes – to the state. One of the developers, Equinor, owns the rights to develop offshore wind power in a lease area in the New York bight, approximately 15 miles south of Jones Beach, Long Island and 17 miles east of Sandy Hook, New Jersey.

For many anglers, offshore wind power has flown under the radar for years. Today, states are making ambitious commitments to develop more of this clean energy source in the next five years, but the only offshore wind project in the entire country consists of five turbines operating off Block Island. This is all going to change very quickly as we go from five to hundreds of turbines from New Jersey to Massachusetts right in front of our eyes.

Adding all of that underwater structure will serve as new artificial reef hot spots well within reach of many anglers, and sooner than we imagined. **The Block Island Wind Farm saw the turbine foundations covered in mussels in just a**

few months, and today anglers are catching black sea bass, fluke, cod, scup, tautog and mahi-mahi around the turbines.

In the Empire Wind development that Equinor is planning, offshore anglers from New Jersey and New York will likely find the bait-holding potential of the sixty to eighty turbine foundations attracting a number of pelagic species as well. **For those of us who run sixty or more miles offshore to chase tuna and other migratory species, looking for lobster pots, grass mats, current rips or anything that helps aggregate bait, the potential opportunity is very exciting.**

Notably, this project will also be the first proposed American project to use cement-filled “gravity foundations” for the turbines which do not require pile driving that can disturb fish and marine mammals during construction. While there are new methods to do pile driving responsibly, gravity foundations eliminate the need for this construction method.

Offshore wind power is only going to benefit recreational anglers if developed with our input in mind. Engaging early in the planning process to provide input on siting, permitting and access can avoid future conflicts. Whether you’re a resident of New Jersey or New York, you can have a say in this and other projects as they are developed in federal waters off our coastline.

Anglers need to speak up and get behind these basic principles today:

- 1. Access:** Recreational anglers must be able to fish up to the base of turbine foundations to take advantage of the new habitat that will be created by offshore wind power development. We understand access may be limited during construction.
- 2. Public Input:** Recreational anglers must be engaged early in the planning process for offshore wind power development. Clearly communicated opportunities to provide input on siting, permitting, access and other issues can avoid future conflicts.
- 3. Science:** Fisheries research before, during and after wind turbine construction is essential for monitoring impacts to species of interest to recreational anglers. Study results should be publicly available and regularly communicated to our community.

2019 - Omega Protein is Reduction Fishing off NJ Again

*By Capt. Paul Eidman, Board Member,
Habitat & Forage Fish Committee Chairman*

Last year right around this time, September 6th to be exact, Omega Protein Inc. out of Reedville, Virginia, (parent company Cooke Seafood) sent FOUR 200-foot-long reduction ships up to the New York Bight for 2 days. Each one has the holding capacity of 1.5 and 2 million fish each, equally to a total removal of EIGHT MILLION bunker from key waters in the fall, right before our striped bass migration arrives.

After a failed attempt to get some other guys to take the day off on short notice and go out and protest with me, I quickly trailered up to Atlantic highlands, launched and ran my 20-foot center console out 7 miles, (roughly to the end of the Ambrose channel) to take pictures and video to document exactly what was happening. Know that as long as they remain in federal waters, (outside the 3-mile line) it’s all legal, stamped and approved by the ASMFC which continues the archaic practice of managing these fish just like all the others, for “maximum sustainable yield”.

Legality aside, the key issue here is that two major factors are “overlooked”, and actions terminally delayed by wealthy Omega corporate interests, these factors are **localized depletion** and **the menhaden’s role in the ecosystem to provide nutrition up the marine food web.**

It would be a different story if the boats were smaller, family owned like they used to be. Private commercial fishing boat owners would head out for the day, take 50,000 or so bunkers and head back to the dock, offload and have a beer. Things have changed, not just for this, but for fish all over the world. The little guys are out, and massive industrial scale vessels now rule the sea. When these big blue ships pull into an area and set up shop, there is nothing left when they leave except for the mile-long nasty scum slick and the stench of death that drifts out of the vessels. The seagulls pick at the scraps and as can be expected, the predators, whether they are humpback whales, striped bass or cobia, all leave the area and seek food elsewhere. Fishermen come to fish and find it

barren of all signs of life and gamefish are nowhere to be found.

Go ahead and look on Youtube for Menhaden Defenders and you can watch what I witnessed; complete with purse boats running down the schools, plane overhead directing them over the schools and watching the crews vacuum the fish on board the massive factory ship. I filmed and watched as they filled the ships to the gunwales and then steamed back home 275 miles to Virginia to grind them up into fish meal and fish oil. The big question is, if the bunker stocks are as healthy as the ASMFC and Omega say they are, then why do they have to travel all the way to Jersey to catch bunker? Something is very wrong, the system has been clearly rigged by the good olé boys network for years and our fishing and waters are suffering because of it.

Yes, the east coast's favorite little forage fish is ground up, pelletized and shipped overseas to feed fish farms for foreign profit as America's coastal ecology and economies struggle to survive. Let that sink in.

Fishermen in New Jersey should be aware that the carnage has already begun right off our shores in August of 2019. Omega has been harvesting massive bunker schools off of Atlantic City and Cape May, New Jersey over the past couple of weeks. Each Sunday, my team of volunteers at Menhaden Defenders track these planes and can see the flight paths. A spotter plane leaves Virginia and flies north along the Jersey shore. By late Sunday evening, they pack up the crew and head out to sea. By Monday morning, they have been directed to the best schools and we can see where the fleet is headed, and it can number 6-8 ships at times. You can track the vessels just like we do, online using maritime ship traffic websites and following the Automated Identification System (AIS) movements of all commercial vessels.

The table is set for disaster, right where we live and fish. At a time when our striped bass and other gamefish need food the most, millions of bunker will be ground up and reduced into salmon food. I have been fishing out in the Bight all summer, watching 40-foot-long Humpback whales breaching out of the sea, mouths wide open and hundreds of bunker spilling out. The bunker schools grow by the day. It's just fantastic to see miles and miles of adult bunker in our area after

decades of working to restore the populations to a healthy level.

Tomorrow, Sunday, I will get a report from my plane spotters that will tell me if this week we will see the big blue ships steam north to Jersey again, vacuum all the bunker up and ship the pellets off to Canadian salmon farms that Cooke Seafood owns.

This is madness on multiple levels and so few anglers get involved and stand up and fight. **The struggle is real, guys. Join the fight today, the future of our sport and waters depends on it.**

Youth Education Report

By Greg Kucharewski

2019 JCAA YOUTH EDUCATION AWARD

Liz Jackson, NJ DEP Fish and Wildlife, was selected by the JCAA Youth Education Committee to receive the 2019 Youth Education Award. We received the following nomination from Sue Rothermel, New Jersey State Federation of Sportsmen Clubs.

"I am pleased to nominate Ms. Liz Jackson for your 2019 Youth Education Award. Liz is committed to promoting and creating the practices that contribute to a sustainable HOF-NOD program while making significant commitments to the Hooked on Fishing Not on Drugs program along with its program participants.

Liz Jackson reformed the HOF-NOD program from a one-day, one-shot fishing derby model of the past by seeking partnerships with youth organizations and individuals willing to create or enhance ongoing activities that involve learning to fish, appreciating aquatic and environmental resources, and developing positive life skills. These entities were directed to prove sustained engagement in HOFNOD content by submission of a calendar or schedule that illustrated their program offering (where, when, what and how). She required teams to organize their program with roughly 22 to 24 contact sessions with participating youth, where each course was not less than 1.5 hours per session. Each group was encouraged to include multiple all-day field trips, webinars, and guest-speaker events.

She transformed each team on a case-by-case basis to allow the program to be readily integrated into

their setting or situation. Program settings include curricular integration with middle schools and high schools, school-based extracurricular activity, content for afterschool programs, supplemental units for a summer day and sleep-over camps, community-based non-school activity in partnership with not-for-profits or NGOs, and county-based youth development club within the Rutgers' Cooperative Extension 4H model.

Liz takes it upon herself to provide exceptional support and service to new instructor groups; She discerns quickly their individual needs and moves efficiently to provide essential information, recommendations, or direction. Liz is a beautiful ambassador for our State...in assisting teams, instructors, and students as they navigate the HOF-NOD program.

Liz is always willing to pitch in for the good of the program. She has made a difference in our Statewide HOF-NOD program and has positively impacted the program participants of our state. Her skills, knowledge, willingness to help others, and dedication to Hooked On Fishing Not on Drugs make her the Excellence candidate for the 2019 JCAA Youth Education Award."

NJ FREE FISHING DAY/NJ HOFNOD

The next free freshwater fishing day in New Jersey will be Saturday, October 19, 2019. You will not need a license to try freshwater fishing. There is also a beginner fishing basics workshop at the Pequest Trout Hatchery.

HOF Dash Challenge & Jamboree will be held October 11-13, 2019 at Pequest Trout Hatchery. Activities include: lots of fishing and Fish-Off by the inch; obstacle challenge; archery & Shoot-Off; Saturday eve BBQ; camping; hiking; NJ Astrological Society presentation; performance by NJ Shout Down Drugs! winner(s); night game and bonfire.

Become a NJ HOFNOD certified volunteer. For more information about training sessions, please contact: Liz Jackson, NJ HOFNOD Coordinator, will host upcoming instructor training sessions.

If you would like to volunteer time with a NJ HOFNOD program near you and become a certified NJ HOFNOD instructor, please contact Liz Jackson, NJ DEP Division of Fish & Wildlife, Hooked on Fishing- Not on Drugs, 605 Pequest Road, Oxford, NJ 07683, 908-637-4125 x122.

Visit the NJ HOFNOD website to view their website and Leader groups.

BRICK HIGH SCHOOL'S NJ HOFNOD

Brick High School Fishing Club (BHSFC) traveled to Riverfront Park, Point Pleasant on the school bus for their first fishing outing on September 12. Students from grades 11 – 12 collected bait by seining and used fresh bait to catch snapper blues. Tim Brennan, Health & Physical Education Teacher and NJ HOFNOD certified instructor, taught students casting techniques, knot tying, and how to make rigs.

Local beachgoers commented what a good idea it was to teach youngsters about fishing and conservation. I witnessed students picking up beach trash when they returned to the rally area. Mr. Brennan is doing a good job of instructing students about protecting the environment. View the BHSFC NJ HOFNOD Facebook page to see their progress.



BHSFC setting up rods and reels for their class.

PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES OUTING

Newark Bait and Fly Casting Club held their fishing outing for People with Disabilities at Echo Lake in Mountainside, N. J. on September 21, 2019 in conjunction with the Union County Parks and Recreation Department which is also sponsored by the Tedesco Group. All participants had a great time, enjoyed lunch, received plenty of prizes, and had fun catching fish. Please view the NB&FCC website for photos and more information about the event.

NJ HOFNOD USS BATTLESHIP NEW JERSEY

Central Jersey Code Official Association along with the International Code Council and Camden County co-hosted the event. NJ HOFNOD Leaders and members of the New Jersey Beach Buggy Association taught children about knot tying and assisted with fishing tips. Fishing equipment is being

collected to be distributed to youngsters in the area so they will have their own fishing equipment to use when they go fishing.

Organizers would like to make this a yearly event on the USS Battleship New Jersey. The program will tie in with the NJ “Hooked on Fishing not on Drugs” program to bring awareness about the Opioids Epidemic in this country.



Paul Harris NJBBA discussing rod and reel basics.

NJBBA CHILDREN’S SURF FISHING

Boys and Girls that fished the 26th Annual NJBBA Children’s Surf Fishing Tournament, held on September 14, 2019 at Island Beach State Park, had loads of fun and won plenty of prizes. The kids pulled in 95 fish in a 3-hour time period. Fourteen - trophies, 9 10-foot surf rod/reel combos and 14 gift cards were handed out to the winners. The young surf anglers went home with t-shirts, goodie bags, and prizes of their choice from the 162 that were available for the taking. Chairman Ken Hollins always does a great job of promoting the event and organizing volunteers. Kids are already looking forward to the 27th Annual Children’s Surf Fishing event.

CATCHING SMILES



On Saturday, September 28, 2019 over 200 attendees enjoyed a day to help special needs children

and their siblings learn the joy of fishing at Lake Julianna. “Making Smiles” was the theme for children with special needs that attended the 3rd Annual “Kids Wish’n to go Fish’n” Outdoor Fun Day on the Ponderosa Estates Farm, Millstone Township, NJ. The goal of the fishing and outdoor fun day is to provide a psychological boost for special needs children and to relax at a beautiful private lake with their family caregivers.

Once again, Mr. Vito Cardinale, along with his family and friends opened their environmental welcome mat to Lake Julianna and provided plenty of food and fun surprises for everyone to enjoy. They made sure youngsters had time to experience lake fishing, hayrides, fly casting, pumpkin picking, and environmental games by JCAA and NJ HOFNOD / Boating Education and Rescue. Members of Mr. Cardinale’s team cooked and served food for everyone. Pizza, hamburgers, hotdogs, salad, cookies, cakes, and drinks were flying off the table as quick as they were making the food. Crystal at the food table stated the following about the event: “This is such a great experience for the kids. I love to see the excitement on their faces with a new found confidence that lessens the disability and creates new abilities.”

New Jersey State Police provided an awesome airboat for kids to view and explore. Youngsters asked a lot of questions about how the airboat operates and Troopers loaded the kids up with NJSP promotional items as they answered questions.

Volunteers from various fishing clubs came out to help along with local merchants, veteran organizations and contributors that provided prizes, ice cream, food, bait, first aid, and tee shirts.

