

JCAA NEWSPAPER JANUARY 2020

Official Newspaper of the *JERSEY COAST ANGLERS ASSOCIATION*

(Published on December 23rd, 2019)

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

JCAA REGULAR MEETING:

Tuesday, January 28th, 2020

Starting at 7:30 PM

385 Herbertsville Rd, Brick

NEXT JCAA BOARD MEETING

Tuesday, January 9th, 2020

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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2019 OFFICERS

President	Mark Taylor	732-245-9445
1st V.P.	John Toth	732-656-0139
2nd V.P.	Bill Browne	732-504-9344
Treasurer	Doug Tegeder	732-575-2661
Rec. Sec.		
Cors. Sec.	Paul Turi	609-709-9215
Mem. Sec.	Kyren Dooley	609-713-7712
Tournament Dir.	Paul Turi	609-709-9215

Committee and Chairpersons listed on last page

IMPORTANT DATES

January 9th JCAA Board meeting
January 28th JCAA General Meeting
February 3rd-6th ASMFC Winter Meeting
February 8th Salt Water Sportsman Seminar Series
February 13th JCAA Board Meeting
February 13th-16th New Jersey Boat Sale & Expo
February 25th JCAA General Meeting
February 26th -March 1st Atlantic City Boat Show
March 13th-15th Saltwater Expo

President's Report

By Mark Taylor

I made phone calls to all the clubs that I had contact numbers for to notify and remind them of the change of date for the December meeting. After making all the phone calls and talking to some people and leaving messages with others, I didn't get enough response back to have a quorum. I made a decision to cancel the December meeting. There will be a January meeting on the 28th and I hope all the clubs send their representatives because there is some important information that needs to be discussed. I will be asking the representatives that are present to update their club's information that night. For those clubs that are not at the meeting, I will be working with the new membership secretary to update all the clubs' information. We will be asking each club to give two names with contact information, such as phone numbers and email addresses. We as a group need to be better connected and involved or we as a user group will lose in the end.

There has been some major discussion the last few months on how we can have more clubs get more involved. Some of the board members are looking into some different ideas. If you have any ideas, please let me know because this is your Association and I want you to get involved.

It has been a great honor being elected to serve as your President for the last 2 years. Unfortunately, the by-laws limit the term of President to 2 years. I won't be going anywhere because I believe in what JCAA is fighting for and is all about. I will continue working hard to make Jersey Coast Anglers Association the best user group in the state of New Jersey. I hope I lived up to your expectations when your club voted for me.

Volunteers and Nominations for 2020 JCAA Officers

We need a quorum present at the January 28th meeting so the clubs can vote on the leadership of JCAA for 2020. There are a few positions that you can fill on the board if you ever thought of becoming more involved in JCAA. Be present and let me know at the meeting if you want to step up. If you don't want to be a board member and want to get more involved, you can be a volunteer for JCAA. Being a volunteer is just as important.

Show Time

The time is fast approaching for clubs having fishing flea markets and the big shows. I will be putting a list of volunteers together to work for JCAA, so if you can help please contact me. I will have the signup sheets at the next meeting. JCAA will be having a booth at this time at the following shows:

- 2020 National Seminar Series featuring George Poveromo, February 8th in Atlantic City
- Atlantic City Boat Show, February 26 - March 1, 2020
- Saltwater Fishing Expo, March 15 - March 17, 2020

JCAA had a table at some clubs' fishing flea markets last year but as of the time I am writing this article we have not committed to any. If your club is having one and would like to have JCAA there, contact me at mtsport64@aol.com and put in the subject "Club Fishing Flea Market."

Jersey Coast Anglers Association will always be there for you, but we need more people to get involved to help protect the future of our fisheries. There is power in numbers.

Fisheries Management & Legislative Report

By Tom Fote

Report on December Joint Meeting of ASMFC & MAFMC

For a number of reasons, I did not make the Joint ASMFC/MAFMC meeting in Annapolis. I did listen to most of the webinar. It was really frustrating.

Scup: As I pointed out at the August Joint Meeting, I never saw such a crazy proposal with a total disregard for the impact on the recreational sector. Years ago when the scup quota was set up, we were recreational fishing between 26 – 30% of the scup fishery. The majority of the scup fishery was commercial bycatch. That bycatch was in several different commercial fisheries and was destroying the scup fishery. The bycatch was larger than both the directed commercial and recreational fisheries combined. To placate the commercial side and give them incentive to reduce bycatch, the Council through the NMFS proposed reducing the recreational quota by 18%. As usual, I was upset by this proposal. But back in 1996, people told me there would never be any regulations on scup, black sea bass and other recreational fisheries. I said they were wrong and regrettably I was proven right. Here we are in 2019. We are now looking at the fourth or fifth reiteration of surveys to gather recreational information. We keep tweaking the models and trying to get better response rates. In 2007, Dr. John Borman, in his Congressional testimony, pointed out that in order to get good recreational statistics we had to increase the funding from 11 million to 50 million dollars. We are still only spending 11 million dollars a year and think of what 11 million dollars bought 40 years ago compared to now. Though I went to college during the dinosaur days of punch cards, the adage holds true, garbage in garbage out. Here is the proposal. Presently we are at a 50 fish bag limit. Because of the MRIP numbers, we are now fishing above our 18% quota. To stay within the quota, the reduction necessary would have been 58%. In the heat of the discussion at the August meeting, I said we should never have been at 18%, the commercial sector is not harvesting 20% of their quota every year and the bycatch is still high,

probably more than the recreational catch. But the most important thing is that we are two times over the threshold, way above the target. The scup stocks are one of the healthiest and NMFS doesn't see any immediate problem. I stated if they are going to destroy the recreational scup fishery, I will regrettably recommend New Jersey takes this issue to the Secretary of Commerce. Our rationale would be that this change in quota would not impact the stocks at all but have a huge economic impact from Massachusetts to Virginia on the recreational scup fishery. After the MAFMC members were balking at voting on this, NMFS said they had to vote. So they voted to take the 58% reduction with the idea that they would come up with a correction. The correction is to ignore all their charts and graphs and punt. They didn't admit they were wrong but decided to leave the scup fishery at status quo. NMFS and ASMFC didn't want to look like fools if this issue went to the Secretary of Commerce.

Black Sea Bass: Again, another species where the catch has been overly restricted by the precautionary measures of the SSC and NMFS. The SSC and NMFS don't trust their own data. When the science says the quota could be much higher, NMFS says they don't trust the data. But when the data reduces the recreational catch, NMFS treats that data like the gold standard. There was a great deal of flack about the proposed changes for the recreational sector. There was a huge outcry from the recreational sector to increase the quota for both the recreational and commercial sectors since there is an abundance of black sea bass and an expansion of their range. NMFS thought they were magnanimous in suggesting staying at status quo. No one believes that this was an appropriate solution. I believe we will still go over the quota because of the abundance of black sea bass available. Actual catch in the recreational sector reflects availability, not quota.

Summer Flounder: To refresh your memory, when the new MRIP numbers came out on summer flounder, NMFS told us they were underestimating the size of the stocks for many years. Because of the retrospective analysis, we have been taking larger numbers of summer flounder than has been estimated. In August of 2018, NMFS increased the commercial quota by 49% to reflect the larger biomass. What did they do to the recreational sector? They kept regulations in place that would cause us to underfish our quota. They didn't trust their own numbers, so

they rewarded us with status quo. For the last four years we have been underfishing our quota and 2019 was no different. We are under quota by 24%. I was appalled when one of the staffers treated the underfishing as a non-issue. We all know if the commercial sector underfished by 24%, that would be a huge issue. Why are we treated differently? The commercial fishery spends money to get economic data on the value of the catch and uses that data to convince NMFS to rule in their favor. According to their own Magnusson Stevens Act, NMFS must do an economic study to show the impact of regulatory changes on the recreational sector. Because we never won a lawsuit on the recreational data, NMFS feels secure in just ignoring this requirement. Why??? Because NMFS does not manage fisheries using common sense or to protect anglers. They pretend to protect the fish. What they are really doing is managing to avoid lawsuits that might be filed by NGOs. In the 80's and 90's they learned how much money the lawsuits would cost them and they manage to avoid this at all costs. Since the recreational and commercial sector's NGOs don't have deep pockets as other NGOs, they also don't have the same ability to sue as they do.

Bluefish: I was never so disappointed with Council and Commission members as I was when they failed to point out that NMFS has been transferring quota to the commercial sector from the unused recreational quota for years. Tens of millions of pounds of bluefish have been caught by commercial fishermen since the late 90's using the "so called" unharvested recreational quota. With the new MRIP numbers, it becomes apparent that NMFS should never have been transferring quota for all these years. NMFS, not the fishermen, have gotten us into this situation. But they will not suffer any economic impact. They will not lose any salary for the mistakes they have made. But they will certainly punish the recreational and commercial fishermen for NMFS mistakes. As always, we take it on the chin for their bad data and, once again, the commercial and recreational fishermen are the bad guys because we were overfishing. Understand, fishermen don't create the regulations. That is the job of NMFS. When they don't do their job correctly, the fishing industry suffers. In the last few years, NMFS has succeeded in putting many businesses that serve the recreational and commercial communities out of business. Once again, there was absolutely no reference to the economic impact of these new regulations and Magnusson Stevens was

totally ignored. For the recreational community, there will be reduction to a 3-fish bag limit, down from 15. For the for-hire sector, the decrease will be from 15 to 5. For the commercial fishery, the reduction will be 18%. No one from NMFS admitted this was their fault and, as always, blamed us for over fishing.

With the party and charter boats and the private boats, there has always been a discussion about whether there should be separate regulations. Years ago, the recreational industry, considering the pros and cons, decided separate regulations would not work. If you do sector separation regulations correctly, they are based on quotas; one for the private and surf and one for the for-hire sector. This would get us fighting among ourselves as we see in the Gulf of Mexico. It would also stifle the growth of the party and charter boat industry. When you set up quotas, you set them up based on historical catch. Often when the availability is low on a species, party and charter boats will fish for something else so their customers need to catch fish. This skews the historical data. When the stocks become abundant and other party and charter boats want to fish on that species, they are confined to the low percentage. If you are not in a separate sector, no one cares if the party and charter boats catch more fish since we are all recreational anglers. That is why we did not create separate sectors with these new regulations. We did not want to play one sector of the community against another. NMFS wouldn't mind since that would move the heat from them.

Since NMFS followed no rules in creating the new regulations, all the above discussion is moot. Sector separation was never part of the amendment or addendum on bluefish. It has never been used as a tool for bluefish. There is no precedent. And the results followed none of the normal rules. The public had no idea that this would be proposed and so the public was not represented at these decisions. There was no transparency. As always, no questions were accepted through the webinar. The one for-hire sector participant in the audience was always for sector separation without understanding the consequences for the recreational sector at large. There is no way to effectively monitor this and no penalties were built in. This was a travesty of fisheries management and I cannot believe not one of the Commissioners or Council members raised these objections.

The most depressing part is many recreational anglers from Maine to Florida began their fishing for snappers. I am teaching my young great nephews and

nieces to fish by catching snappers off my dock. I also teach them we should eat what we catch and at a limit of 3 snappers, do we stop fishing or fish and release. All those piers in Seaside will need to limit the young anglers as they learn to fish. What NMFS has accomplished is to reduce the growth of the recreational sector. The recreational fishery coastwide was down by 24% in 2019. There are plenty of fish but we can't keep them. The decrease in participation continues to get worse year by year. If you can't catch a fish to keep, many anglers don't bother to go fishing. They also don't bother to teach their children or grandchildren how to fish. The next generation doesn't learn to be stewards of the resource. We are watching the demise of recreational fishing and the industries that depend on fishing.

Menhaden

There are two letters below. One sent by 9 Governors to the Secretary of Commerce. This letter included Governor Ralph S. Northam Commonwealth of Virginia and Governor Phil Murphy of New Jersey asking the Secretary of Commerce, Wilbur Ross, to vote the State of Virginia out of Compliance. The other is from Chris Oliver saying that the Secretary of Commerce did find Virginia out of Compliance. This is a victory for the fish that forage off menhaden in the Chesapeake Bay.

Nine East Governor's Letter on Menhaden Including Governor Murphy



December 13, 2019

The Honorable Wilbur L. Ross
Secretary of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave NW
Washington, DC 20230

Secretary Ross,

As you know, the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) recently voted to find the Commonwealth of Virginia out of compliance

with the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic menhaden. This action was the direct result of Omega Protein Corp. brazenly exceeding the Chesapeake Bay harvest quota by more than 35 million pounds. The vote was unanimous and as governors of the states that collectively made this recommendation to you through ASMFC, we urge you to uphold the integrity of this important body and its legitimate science-based management process by imposing a moratorium on this industrial menhaden reduction fishery in Virginia waters, as Virginia Governor Ralph Northam has already requested.

The science is clear that the Chesapeake Bay is a key feeding and nursery area for migratory species like striped bass, bluefish, seatrout, drum, and others that are recreationally and commercially important to states up and down the Atlantic coast. The science is also clear that Atlantic menhaden are a critical part of the diet of these fish species as well as seabirds, and marine mammals that live in the Chesapeake Bay and Atlantic Ocean marine ecosystems. Limiting menhaden harvest in Virginia's portion of the Chesapeake Bay while ASMFC develops ecological reference points to guide future stock assessments and quota setting helps ensure that we minimize unintended consequences to all managed stocks and impacted ecosystems.

The coastal economies of our states depend on healthy ecosystems to support recreational and commercial fisheries that are worth tens of billions of dollars and responsible for hundreds of thousands of jobs according to NOAA's Fisheries Economics of the United States report.

Allowing any one company to jeopardize that balance is simply unacceptable. We urge you to bring Omega back in line with American fishery management standards by imposing a moratorium on their fishing operations in Virginia.

Sincerely,



Governor Ned Lamont
State of Connecticut



Governor John C. Carney
State of Delaware



Governor Janet T. Mills
State of Maine



Governor Larry Hogan
State of Maryland



Governor Charlie Baker
Commonwealth of
Massachusetts



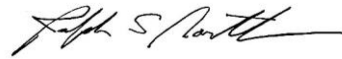
Governor Phil Murphy
State of New Jersey



Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo
State of New York



Gov. Gina M. Raimondo
State of Rhode Island



Gov. Ralph S. Northam
Commonwealth of Virginia

Letter Informing ASMFC that Secretary of Commerce has Declared Virginia out of Compliance



United States Department of
Commerce - National Oceanic and
Atmospheric Administration -
National Marine Fisheries Service

December 17

Mr. Robert Beal
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 N. Highland St. Suite 200-A
Arlington, VA 22201

Dear Mr. Beal:

I wanted to keep you informed on the status of the Commonwealth of Virginia's non-compliance with the Atlantic menhaden Interstate Fishery Management Plan (ISFMP). In accordance with the delegation of authority under the provisions of the Atlantic Coastal Fisheries Cooperative Management Act (Atlantic Coastal Act), 16 U.S.C. 5101 et seq., from the Secretary, NOAA's Fisheries Service completed its independent review of the Commission's determination and concurs with the Commission that the Commonwealth of Virginia is not in compliance with the ISFMP.

Specifically, Virginia has not implemented a Chesapeake Bay Reduction Fishery cap of 51,000 mt. as per the ISFMP. NOAA Fisheries also finds that this management measure is necessary for the conservation of the menhaden resource. The best available information shows that menhaden in the Chesapeake Bay are an important component of the

overall health of the stock, and further that their role as forage for predator species in the Chesapeake Bay is critical to the marine environment.

I have notified the Commonwealth of Virginia of the finding by letter (enclosed). A moratorium on fishing for Atlantic menhaden in Virginia state waters and possession of and landing of Atlantic menhaden if harvested in Virginia state waters will be imposed effective June 17, 2020.

We chose the June implementation date after consulting with relevant staff from Virginia, and reviewing the facts of this situation. Based upon our analysis, we found that a June 2020 implementation date is appropriate for two principal reasons. First, a June closure date will give Virginia the time necessary for its legislature to bring these regulations back into compliance. Second, although the involved measure is necessary for conservation, the immediacy of that need is less critical given the 2020 fishing season will not begin until spring 2020 and the 51,000 mt Bay cap has never been reached, or even come close to being reached by mid-June.

Virginia has not protested this finding of non-compliance. In our communication with the Commonwealth, they have indicated that they intend to work with the legislature to implement the required management measure as soon as practicable. Virginia has been very cooperative and forthcoming with their intent during the determination period. I encourage the Commission to continue to monitor Virginia's process to implement the Chesapeake Bay Reduction Fishery.

If the Commonwealth of Virginia does enact such a measure, and the Commission determines that the measure is compliant with the ISFMP, under the Atlantic Coastal Act, the Commission would immediately notify the Secretary that the Commonwealth of Virginia is in compliance with the ISFMP. If NOAA Fisheries Service concurs, the moratorium in the state waters of Virginia will be rescinded.

Please contact Alan Risenhoover, Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, if you need additional information. He can be reached at 301-427-8500, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910, or alan.risenhoover@noaa.gov.

Sincerely,



Chris Oliver
Assistant Administrator for Fisheries

ASMFC Winter Meeting Preliminary Agenda

The agenda is subject to change. Bulleted items represent the anticipated major issues to be discussed or acted upon at the meeting. The final agenda will include additional items and may revise the bulleted items provided below. The agenda reflects the current estimate of time required for scheduled Board meetings. The Commission may adjust this agenda in accordance with the actual duration of Board meetings. Interested parties should anticipate Boards starting earlier or later than indicated herein.

Tuesday, February 4, 2020

9:30 - 11:00 am Atlantic Herring Management Board

- Consider Approval of Draft Addendum III for Public Comment
- Technical Committee Review of Ocean Dredged Material Disposal Site
- Review and Set Atlantic Herring Fishery Specifications for 2020 Season

11:15am - 3:00 pm Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board (lunch will be provided)

- Review and Consider State Implementation Plans and Conservation Equivalency Proposals

3:15 - 4:00 pm Coastal Sharks Management Board

- Update on Implementation of CITES Appendix II Provisions for Atlantic Shortfin Mako
- Update on Atlantic Shortfin Mako from November International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas Meeting (if available)

4:15 - 5:00 pm Bluefish Management Board

- Review and Consider Approval of Conservation Equivalency Proposals

Wednesday, February 5, 2020

8:30 am - Noon Atlantic Menhaden Management Bd.

- Review 2019 Atlantic Menhaden Single-Species and Ecological Reference Point Benchmark Stock Assessments and Peer Review Panel Reports, and Consider Approval for Management Use
- Consider Management Response to Benchmark Stock Assessments

1:00 - 5:00 pm South Atlantic State/Federal Fisheries Management Board

- Consider Atlantic Croaker Addendum III and Spot Addendum II for Final Approval
- Consider Management Action to Align State and Federal Management of Spanish Mackerel
- Review SEDAR 58 Cobia Benchmark Stock Assessment and Peer Review Reports and Consider Approval for Management Use
 - Consider Management Response to SEDAR 58 Cobia Assessment Results
- Consider Initiation of Red Drum Stock Assessment and Draft Terms of Reference

Thursday, February 6, 2020

8:00 - 10:00 am Executive Committee

- Discuss Potential Allocation of Remaining Plus-Up Funds
- Update on Future Annual Meetings

10:15 am - 12:15 pm Interstate Fisheries Management Program Policy Board

- Executive Committee Report
- Review and Discuss Commissioner Survey Results
- Progress Update on American Shad and American Lobster Benchmark Stock Assessments
- Review and Consider Revisions to Stock Status Definitions
- Discuss Strategy to Incorporate Ecosystem Management into the Interstate Fisheries Management Process

12:15 - 12:30 pm Business Session

- Consider Noncompliance Recommendations

Council and Commission Recommend Recreational Bluefish Management Measures for 2020

MAFMC Press Release, 12/17/2019

ANNAPOLIS, MD – Last week, the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) recommended and the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (Commission) approved new recreational fishing regulations for the 2020 Atlantic bluefish fishery from Florida to Maine. These measures, which include a 3-fish bag limit for private anglers and shore-based fishermen and a 5-fish bag

limit for for-hire fishermen, represent a substantial reduction compared to the federal 15-fish bag limit that has been in place since 2000. The Commission's actions are final and apply to state waters (0-3 miles from shore), while the Council will forward its recommendation for federal waters (3 – 200 miles from shore) to the NOAA Fisheries Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Administrator for final approval.

The most recent operational assessment of the Atlantic bluefish stock concluded that the stock is overfished but not experiencing overfishing. During their joint meeting in October, the Council and Commission adopted a recreational harvest limit (RHL) of 9.48 million pounds for 2020 and 2021, which is an 18% decrease compared to the 2019 RHL. Using the current regulations, the recreational sector is projected to land 13.27 million pounds, which will exceed the RHL by 28.56%. Therefore, the Council and Commission met last week to approve new recreational management measures to constrain harvest to the reduced RHL.

The Council and Commission considered several combinations of bag limits and minimum size limits, including options to set a single set of regulations for all fishing modes or different regulations for shore/private modes and the for-hire mode. Although the Council's Bluefish Monitoring Committee recommended a coastwide 3-fish bag limit, the majority of comments from the public and Bluefish Advisory Panel (AP) members expressed opposition to this option, noting that it would have severe economic consequences for the for-hire sector, which was only responsible for 3.6% of coastwide landings from 2016 to 2018. Additionally, AP members and the public emphasized that these proposed reductions come at a challenging time for for-hire stakeholders as they are also facing new restrictions on striped bass, black sea bass, summer flounder, and scup.

After an extensive discussion and thorough consideration of public comments, the Council recommended and Commission approved a 3-fish bag limit for private and shore modes and a 5-fish bag limit for the for-hire mode. No restrictions were made to minimum fish size or seasons.

"For many years, bluefish has been one of our most abundant recreational fisheries," said Council Chairman and ASMFC Board member Mike Luisi. "The Council and Commission are fully committed to the effective conservation and management of this stock, but we also recognize that a sudden change in

regulations could have severe socioeconomic consequences for some stakeholders. After evaluating a wide range of options and considering numerous comments from the public, we feel that this approach is the most fair and effective way to achieve the necessary reduction in harvest next year.”

The Council and Commission are continuing to work on development of a rebuilding plan as part of the Bluefish Allocation and Rebuilding Amendment. Additional information and updates on this action are available at [this link](#).

Omega Protein/Cooke Inc. Gets Spanked by Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross and the ASMFC

Capt. Paul Eidman, Board member & Forage Fish Committee Chairman

Highlights lifted from the press about the Bunker decision:

This past Thursday, U.S. Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross, issued a decision cracking down on overfishing in the Chesapeake Bay and paving the way for better management of the menhaden fishery. Ross found the State of Virginia out of compliance after foreign-owned Omega Protein willfully violated the fishing cap on menhaden, a key food source for striped bass in the Chesapeake Bay.

This decision comes at a critical time because menhaden’s top predator, Atlantic striped bass, is currently in poor condition and the Chesapeake Bay is the primary spawning and nursery area for the species. Reduction fishing for menhaden threatens the livelihoods of thousands of hard-working fishing guides and tackle shop owners and impacts everything from striped bass to whales.

The ASMFC’s Policy Board has some of the finest fishery managers in the country on it and they unanimously found Virginia out of compliance with the Menhaden Fishery Management Plan. Upholding the ASMFC’s non-compliance finding for Virginia was simply the right thing to do. Secretary Ross defended both the management system and the forage base in the Chesapeake Bay.

Healthy and sustainable forage fish and sportfish stocks are equally important to the recreational boating and fishing community and this

decision is a major step toward protecting and rebuilding both of these critical populations.

Since October, tens of thousands of recreational anglers, including JCAA and Menhaden Defenders, dozens of businesses and organizations, and nine Governors along the east coast, and Virginia Governor Ralph Northam, all requested that the Secretary take action on this issue.

This action and the unprecedented move by Gov Northam could pave the way to change Virginia’s fishery management methods for the better: The Virginia General Assembly, which meets in early 2020, must now decide whether to transfer management of menhaden to the Virginia Marine Resources Commission or face a moratorium.

According to a recent scientific study, menhaden reduction fishing contributes to a nearly 30 percent decline in striped bass numbers. The striped bass fishing industry contributes \$7.8 billion in GDP to the economy along the Atlantic coast.

Additionally, there was breaking news this morning that SAIGlobal, the organization responsible for granting Marine Stewardship Certification for sustainability to Omega, will now be revisiting the decision made earlier this year. Cooke seafoods, the parent organization that owns Omega protein was looking forward to claiming and profiting from the fact that the feed made from menhaden that was being used to feed salmon and fish farms around the world was sustainable. Cooke/Omega shot themselves in the foot by blatantly disregarding the Bay cap that was agreed upon and may suffer the consequences in more ways than one.

A Century of Conservation (Part 2)

*Part of the History of NOAA Fisheries
in the Northeast*

By John A. Guinan and Ralph E. Curtis, 1971

On July 9, 1970, President Nixon proposed Reorganization Plan No. IV which would transfer to the Department of Commerce from the Department of the Interior those functions administered through or primarily related to the Bureau of Commercial Fisheries. Excepted from the proposed transfer were Great Lakes fishery research and activities related to the Great Lakes Fisheries Commission, Missouri River Reservoir research, the Gulf Breeze, Fla., biological laboratory, and the Trans-Alaska Pipeline

Investigations. These excepted functions remained in Interior with the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife. The Reorganization also transferred to Commerce the functions related to the marine game fish programs which had been the responsibility of the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife. The former Bureau of Commercial Fisheries was renamed the National Marine Fisheries Service and joined several other government units in Commerce's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, when the plan became effective October 3, 1970, and a new era in marine fisheries began. History shows that Congress has had a continuing interest in our nation's fisheries. The concern actually predates 1871 because the very first Congress took action to assist the new nation's first industry.

Because the fishing industry was a heavy user of salt, Congress provided relief from the import duty of six cents a bushel on salt by authorizing a payment of five cents for each quintal.

The Second Congress was more direct in support of fisheries by repealing the provision of the five-cent payments and substituting a direct subsidy to both owners and fishermen. Depending on the tonnage of fishing vessels, a subsidy of up to \$170 was paid annually, three-eighths to the owners and five-eighths to the fishermen. It is not generally known what \$170 would buy in the days of the Second Congress, but we do know that the Secretary of the Treasury, who administered the program, was paid less than \$300 per month, and members of Congress received \$6 per day.

Since 1871, Congress has given the federal fishery agency a broad mandate to study aquatic resources. Under specific statutes, the NMFS serves as the research agency for the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission, and the United States Section of the International North Pacific Fisheries Commission. NMFS is heavily committed to management research in support of U.S. obligations and interests under nine international fishery commissions and a number of bilateral agreements. Not only has such research been essential for the wise use of the resources, but in many cases the data have served to protect our interest in, and our access to, the resources.

An example is evident in the research program of the United States under the International Convention for the High Seas Fisheries of the North Pacific Ocean, agreed to by the United States, Canada, and Japan in 1952.

Under the Convention, research in red salmon spawned in the streams and lakes of western Alaska has provided a broad base of scientific data for the North Pacific Convention area. The data include abundance and life history information, migration patterns of various year classes of salmon during their years at sea, and information on the areas and extent that salmon of North American origin and salmon of Asian origin intermingle at sea. The Alaska Department of Fish and Game also has supplied essential elements of red salmon research. Because of the scientific data, and working within the framework of the 1952 Convention, the United States has achieved a high degree of protection for its Alaska red salmon resources. In most years the impact of high seas salmon fishing on Alaska red salmon has been minimized because of the willingness of the Convention signatories to limit fishing effort in critical areas.

Over the past 60 years, the U.S. catch has varied greatly in species composition, due in part to changes in abundance of the various stocks, to the discovery of new resources and processing techniques and to changes in consumer taste preferences. For example, in 1908 shad, sea trout, and carp were among the ten most valuable U.S. fishery products, accounting for nearly 10 percent of the total catch value. In 1970, while still important, these fisheries combined contributed only about one percent of the total catch value. Conversely, in 1908, tuna barely showed in the industry statistics, and shrimp accounted for only about one percent of the total catch.

In more recent years, shrimp has accounted for more than a fifth of the total value of the U.S. fishery catch. In 1970, the preliminary data shows that the total shrimp catch of all species was worth about \$130 million to the fishermen--about 23 percent of the total value of the entire U.S. catch. In 1970, tuna landings will show a slight increase over the 323 million pounds for 1969, when the catch was valued at \$54 million at dockside. Salmon, oysters, lobsters, crabs, and, until recently, haddock have consistently ranked among our most valuable fisheries through the years since shortly after the turn of the century.

In 1970, according to preliminary information, the total U.S. catch was about 4.8 billion pounds, worth about \$570 million to the fishermen. Both the value and volume were up sharply from 1969--in fact, the value was the highest ever paid U.S. fishermen for a one-year catch, and the total volume was the eighth

largest on record and the highest since 1962. As recently as 1968, more than 75 percent of our total domestic supply of all fishery products came from imports. In 1969, the import figure dropped to 64 percent, and in 1970 it was about 57 percent. The pattern has developed because of sharply reduced imports of fishmeal.

The total supply of fishery products for human food increased from 5.6 billion pounds in 1969 to 6.3 billion pounds in 1970, reflecting increased demand for quality seafood items. A greater percentage of the total food fish supply was of domestic origin than in the previous two years, even though imports of edible products rose in 1970.

A fish unknown to most Americans accounts for the largest share of our landings. That fish is the menhaden, a herring-like species used primarily for manufacturing fishmeal, an important additive in poultry rations. Of the total U.S. catch of 4.8 billion pounds, nearly 2 billion pounds was menhaden caught along the Atlantic coast and in the Gulf of Mexico.

The frequent reorganizations and transfers of the federal fishery agency indicate constantly changing conditions, calling for changes in the federal approach to the changing problems. Change appears to be a dominant word in the history of our fisheries. After the old Bureau of Commercial Fisheries became the National Marine Fisheries Service, and other organizations with missions in the atmosphere and the oceans were united in NOAA, Secretary of Commerce Maurice H. Stans issued the following statement:

"The establishment of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration in the Department of Commerce marks a significant consolidation of research, exploration, development, conservation, monitoring and educational activities as they relate to the oceans and atmosphere. The intelligent use of the oceans, which constitute three-fourths of the entire earth's surface, is vital if we are to strike a proper balance between development and conservation of its vast but surely not unlimited resources. In many respects we are more familiar with the surface of the moon than we are with the ocean depths of our own planet. Until now, in spite of sincere efforts, government has failed to organize itself to meet effectively the challenge and opportunities of operating in an ocean environment. Instead of 23 departments and agencies of government competing for various parts of the Federal mission in the ocean and the atmosphere, we will now have a single agency providing a unified national thrust in delivering on

both the promise and potential of this last great frontier on earth."

The Secretary added: "Among the fields in which NOAA will assume Federal civilian leadership will be the mapping and charting of the global oceans and the Great Lakes; ocean fish exploration and conservation; aquaculture development; marine biological research; fish technology and industry services; technology of the air and sea; the monitoring of such geophysical phenomena as pollution, seismicity, climate and geomagnetism; and scientific and technological data collection and dissemination."

The first Director of the new NMFS is Philip M. Roedel of California, who had served for a year as Director of BCF. Mr. Roedel joined the federal service after some 30 years as an internationally known scientist and administrator in the California Department of Fish and Game. His latest state assignment was as Director of the California Marine Fish Program, and he has served as a representative of both the state and federal government at dozens of international conferences and meetings. When NOAA was formed, he said:

"We feel that the creation of NOAA marks the birth of a new era for marine fisheries in the United States. As the National Marine Fisheries Service, our responsibilities are broader than they were as the Bureau of Commercial Fisheries. We now have the responsibility for the total living marine resources including both commercial and recreational interests."

Mr. Roedel added: "We have realigned our internal structure to include our broader responsibilities and to enable us to approach fishery problems in totality rather than on a piecemeal basis. We view NMFS as having a responsibility in two major areas: one dealing with problems relating to the living marine resources; the other with problems that arise after they are caught. It is our feeling that consideration of the resource must come first... because without the resource, there would be neither commercial nor recreational users."

Asked about the basic goal of the National Marine Fisheries Service, Mr. Roedel said that the basic goal is conservation--that is, the wise use of the resource. He said that a strong, sound, biological base is fundamental to the goal. On the occasion of the centennial, Director Roedel said that in years past it was the custom of the federal fishery agency to try to adapt to problems such as split jurisdiction over fisheries matters and institutional barriers placing unrealistic and sometimes prohibitive restrictions on

commercial fishing. It is apparent, he said, that this premise has not produced viable solutions to the complex problems. "It is generally agreed that there is a need for strengthening and improving the management of our fisheries, and it is our intention to look at all possibilities of a new federal-state partnership under which we would manage the resource jointly in the best interests of all concerned."

2020 Regulatory Update Stripers, Blues, Fluke, Sea Bass & Scup

By Paul Haertel

Striped Bass - As most of you know, at their October meeting the Striped Bass Board of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) set the coastwide standard of one fish at 28"-35". This was in spite of the fact that the clear majority of comments they received from individuals, clubs and organizations favored one fish at 35" or greater. However, conservationally equivalent proposals were allowed and states had until the end of November to submit them if they chose to do so. However, these proposals had to meet the 18% mandatory reduction and would have to be approved by the ASMFC's technical committee. I do know that the New Jersey Bureau of Marine Fisheries (NJBMF) submitted proposals, though I am not privy to what they were or which ones were approved. Since adopting a 28"-35" slot in NJ would result in more than an 18% cut for our state, I am certain that our proposals will be slightly more liberal. I suspect that we may see a couple different proposals for slot limits with a broader range than the coastwide standard. We will probably also see a proposal with a minimum size a couple inches below the 35" size that was one of initial sub-options in the addendum. I am hopeful that we may see a proposal or two that would allow us to keep one fish at 28" or greater but with seasonal closures.

At any rate, once our proposals are approved, the New Jersey Marine Fisheries Council's (NJMFC) striped bass committee will hold an advisors meeting sometime this winter. The committee will likely narrow the options down to about four that will eventually be released to the public. First, though, all the proposals from the various states will have to be

given final approval by the ASMFS at their meeting in early February. Finally, the NJMFC will likely hold a special meeting later in February where the council will decide what our new 2020 regulations will be. This meeting will be open to the public and all those in attendance will be given an opportunity to comment on their preference prior to the council voting.

Bluefish – What a mess! At their joint meeting earlier this month the ASMFC and the Mid -Atlantic Marine Fisheries Council (MAFMC) voted for a coastwide standard of only a 3-fish bag limit for private anglers and a 5-fish bag limit for charter and party boats. Not only did they vote in favor of a draconian measure that drops the limit from 15 to 3 fish for most of us, but now they have created what is going to become a rift between the for-hire sector and private anglers. In the past NJ has always kept the same regulations for both sectors and by doing so we always worked together in seeking the best regulations for all of us. Now we may be fighting amongst ourselves for whatever quota we are given. Further allowing this would set a bad precedent as the next thing you know the for-hire sector will be asking for separate regs for fluke, sea bass and other species as well. We cannot allow this to happen.

Again, though, states may submit conservationally equivalent proposals. I don't know what they will be but if our state does decide to submit any, they would likely include size limits or possibly seasonal closures. While a 3-fish bag limit would hurt the for-hire fleet, imagine what it will do to kids and sustenance fishermen fishing from shore who want to bring home some snappers to eat. Many kids are taught to fish on the docks of the bays for snappers and to bring them home to eat. These kids are our future fishermen but will their parents even bother taking them anymore? Imagine the harm that will be done to the various businesses that depend on fishermen. Also, what about fluke fishermen who want to use snappers for bait and what about shark fishermen who need to stock up their freezers with bait. Lastly, what about the fact that the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) allowed millions of pounds of bluefish that recreational fishermen had chosen to conserve by releasing them to instead be transferred to the commercial sector? This occurred over the last number of years and now because of this mis-management recreational fishermen will have to pay the price.

Fluke – A little better news here as ASMFC and MAFMC voted in favor of status quo. I suppose

that is a good thing but since we underfished the quota the last couple of years a case could be made for a little liberalization. Therefore, NJ fluke regulations for the upcoming year will likely remain at 3 fish at 18" except in the Delaware Bay area where it will continue to be 3 fish at 17" and at Island Beach State Park where there is a 2 fish limit at 16". The season length will remain the same but dates may change slightly.

I speculate that the season will begin in late May and end in late September as it has during the past couple of years.

Sea Bass – The ASMFC and MAFMC decided on status quo but it wasn't easy. There was a lot of discussion on this and some favored cutbacks in the quota. However, since the stock is rebuilt to about 240% of its target, common sense prevailed and they let us have status quo. Therefore, our size limits, bag limits and season length are likely to remain the same. Season dates may be adjusted slightly.

Scup (Porgies) – The ASMFC and MAFMC also voted for status quo regulations for porgies but again there were some who were calling for cutbacks.

The regulations for blues, fluke, sea bass and porgies will likely be set at the NJMFC meeting in March. JCAA will keep you posted on all of this via our newsletter and on our Facebook page. Also be sure to read Tom Fote's article that will explain in much more depth how the new MRIP numbers and poor management decisions are negatively affecting recreational fisheries.

NJDEP Establishes Offshore Wind Working Group

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

The first meeting of the Environmental resources offshore wind working group meeting was held this past Wednesday evening. In attendance, in addition to myself representing recreational fishing interests, was a very interesting mix of user groups with the majority being members or those voicing concerns of the commercial fishing community, especially those having specific interest due to the nature of the bottom trawling gear they utilize. There were also several environmental organizations present in addition to many DEP staffers, including

Commissioner McCabe and deputies Bukowski and Mans and marine fisheries lead Joe Cemino.

Notably, there were members of the US Coast Guard present and this was a refreshing sight. I have been to every single meeting to date (BOEM & BPU) and they have been noticeably absent. The coast guard plays an important role in this project as the wind farms will interface with a myriad of user groups and has the unique ability to respond to certain maritime issues as they come up. There were also representatives from Sen. Menendez and Cong. Pallone's office along with someone from NOAA and BOEM and NJ's own Economic development and board of public utilities.

The meeting was held at the Jacques Cousteau National Research Reserve in Tuckerton from 5pm until 7pm. The agenda was set to cover the state of fisheries, offshore wind discussion, overview of the working group, review of the OSW timeline and BPU's role in it all. Next, we spent time identifying key issues and concerns and wrapped it all up with a review of the next steps to be taken and set a January meeting for the next session.

My takeaway from the meeting was that this was a good start, but NJ is a bit late to the game and needs to step it up quickly. We clearly need to partner with the states in New England that are about a year ahead of NJ instead of reinventing the wheel. The offshore wind topic is a very deep one and is going to need A LOT of time and effort to deal with. There's 9 million people in Jersey and barely a handful even realize the extent of the what is going down right in the middle of it all. Imagine if we were building another Jersey Turnpike in less than 4 years! Already, there is well over a billion dollars on the line in addition to hundreds of companies in the supply chain, thousands of workers and enormous ships for the next decade and beyond.

There are so many aspects of this project ranging from maritime port concerns to Horseshoe crabs and everything in between. I strongly encourage members of JCAA affiliated clubs to assign a person to engage and become active in this massive undertaking. There are going to be many opportunities for public comment and interaction on various levels. The underlying theme of the entire meeting was that the clock is ticking loud, moving quickly and we are going to have steel in the water and blades spinning by 2024!

This is a call to action. We **MUST** engage early in the planning process and make sure that the project is done responsibly to avoid future conflicts.

Nominations Sought for New Recreational Electronic Reporting Task Force

NOAA Fisheries News, 11/20/2019

NOAA Fisheries and the Marine Fisheries Advisory Committee (MAFAC) are pleased to announce the opening of nominations for the new Recreational Electronic Reporting Task Force. This Task Force will provide expert advice to MAFAC, and subsequently NOAA Fisheries Leadership, on the generation, delivery, and use of electronically reported data from private recreational anglers to assist NOAA Fisheries in fulfilling its mission activities. The information provided by the Task Force and MAFAC will assist NOAA Fisheries in fulfilling its central role in providing useable high quality, accurate data on recreational fisheries.

The Task Force will be comprised of approximately 10 individuals who demonstrate subject matter expertise and experience in one or more relevant fields including, but not limited to, sampling statistics, survey methodologies, citizen science, fishery stock assessment science, electronic monitoring or reporting, fisheries management, database development and/or management, mobile technology applications (apps), and marine recreational fishing.

It is not intended that all Task Force members be scientists or researchers, however, other members should have experience with issues related to the generation, delivery, and use of opt-in electronic data, public attitudes about participating in such programs, or similar ecological self-reporting data systems from which parallels can be drawn. At least one member of MAFAC will serve as a member of the Task Force.

All subject matter experts who meet the membership criteria outlined in the Federal Register Notice are invited to submit nomination materials, and self-nominations are acceptable. Membership is voluntary and, except for any potential reimbursable travel and related expenses, service is without pay. All details are in the Federal Register Notice that published today.

How to submit a nomination: Nominations should be addressed to Heidi Lovett and must be

postmarked or have an email date stamp on or before January 21, 2020 (NMFS Office of Policy, 1315 East West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910; or heidi.lovett@noaa.gov).

For more information please contact: Assistant Executive Director, MAFAC or 301-427-8034.

Salt Water Sportsman National Seminar Series Ready for Atlantic City

Series Presented by Bass Pro Shops

Ticket sales have been brisk for the February 8, Salt Water Sportsman National Seminar Series at Resort Casino Hotel, in Atlantic City.

Hosting the 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. event will be **George Poveromo**, Host of George Poveromo's World of Saltwater Fishing on the Discovery Channel. Nick Honachefsky will serve as co-host, a noted writer, author, TV personality and New Jersey fishing authority. Joining Poveromo and Honachefsky in Atlantic City will be:

- **Captain Rich Wilkowski** - Renowned monster blackfish, sea bass and Golden tilefish pro, and offshore fishing expert aboard the Point Pleasant Beach-based, Jersey Hooker!
- **Captain Joe Cunningham** - Noted Sea Isle City-based authority on trolling for trophy stripers and tunas, and offshore jigging and deep-dropping, with Relentless Fishing!
- **Captain Ray Lopez** - Innovative specialist at trolling for trophy stripers, and offshore fishing authority with the Forked River-based, Miss Liane Sportfishing!
- **Captain Liane Lopez** - Authority on fishing New Jersey's inshore and offshore waters, and captain aboard the boat releasing the most white marlin during the 50th Annual White Marlin Invitational tournament!
- **Ryan Degraw** - Manasquan-based trophy striped bass pro and specialist at jigging, trolling and chunking for tunas!
- **Captain Tom Daffin** - Premier Cape May-based trophy striped bass, fluke, wreck and offshore fishing authority with Fishin' Fever Sportfishing!

- **Dante Soriente** - Noted Beach Haven-based authority on catching trophy class blackfish and jig-fishing the Jersey coast!
- **Scott Newhall** - Absecon-based authority on fishing New Jersey's back bays, inlets and beaches for striped bass and trophy fluke, with Time Out Charters!
- **Captain David Wicker** – Noted specialist at using marine electronics to locate and catch more fish!
- **Captain Alan Wenzel** - South Florida-based authority on offshore live-baiting and trolling as well as conventional- and deep-drop bottom-fishing!

"The National Seminar Series has become the nation's longest-running and most popular educational course on recreational marine angling tactics and techniques," says Poveromo. "This is year number 33 for the tour and the backbone to its success has always been the vast amount of cutting edge and pertinent how-to information on catching more and bigger game fish within the waters of the respective Seminar Series stop. This information is explained in great detail by some of the very best saltwater anglers, and each session is backed by elaborate visuals that include video bytes, technical- and action-oriented images and on-stage demonstrations. One can't help but to walk away from the seminar with numerous new tricks and techniques, regardless of their experience level".

Courses for the February 8, seminar will focus on striped bass, trophy fluke tactics, secrets to fishing the back bays, deep jigging tactics, wreck fishing; blackfish, sea bass, chumming, kite fishing for sharks and tunas, cutting edge trolling tactics for wahoo and tunas, how to find and fish near shore and offshore surface temperature breaks, and much, much more.

The Seminar Series kicks off at 9:00 a.m. and will conclude by 3:00 p.m. with a one-hour break at noon. Considered to be 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, a one-year subscription or extension to Salt Water Sportsman, one Roffer's Ocean Fishing Forecast Analysis, bottle of OrPine Wash & Wax, bottle of Star tron fuel treatment, bottle of Corrosion Block, a \$10.00 discount card off any purchase of \$75.00 or more from Bass Pro Shops and chances to win

thousands of dollars' worth in door prizes! The grand prize at the conclusion of the New Jersey seminar is a Florida Keys fishing trip with one of several premier guides. The super grand prize, to be awarded two weeks after the conclusion of the 2020 series, is a new Mako Pro Skiff 17 cc!

At the conclusion of the seminar, an After Seminar Party will be held inside the Bass Pro Shops in Atlantic City. Beginning at 4:00 p.m. and concluding at 6:00 p.m., seminar participants and a guest of their choice can enjoy socializing with many of the seminar faculty, Poveromo included. There will be complimentary food, soft drinks and music. A cash bar will be on hand.

How to Register - To pay with Visa, MasterCard and American Express, call (800) 448-7360, or register on-line, visit: www.nationalseminarseries.com.

About Salt Water Sportsman's National Seminar Series - In its 33rd year, the Salt Water Sportsman National Seminar Series is the nation's longest running and most popular educational seminar on recreational marine angling. Featuring George Poveromo, SWS's Editor-At-Large, and Host of "George Poveromo's World of Saltwater Fishing" on the Discovery Channel, Poveromo will take the stage at each location, along with teams comprised of Salt Water Sportsman editors, nationally-recognized anglers and some of the region's top guides. Their job: Cover in explicit detail the how-tos and where-tos of catching the most popular game fish within a specific Seminar Series region, along with the latest rigging and fishing techniques.

Report on the NJ Outdoor Alliance's Caucus with Legislators in Trenton

By John Toth

People who want to have legislators support their cause write letters explaining their issue, call the legislator's office or sometimes mail petitions to them with the signatures of many people. That's all fine and good to get the attention of legislators. However, another very effective way in getting legislators to support your cause is to talk to them face-to-face so that they can better understand why it is so important

to you. They can also ask questions to better understand your issue.

With this in mind, the New Jersey Outdoor Alliance (NJOA) held a caucus in Trenton in the Annex Building on December 16th so that our legislators could hear the concerns that we have about forestry issues, increased funding for our Marine Fisheries and hunting-related issues. We found that the best format to do this is to not only give legislators an invitation to this caucus, but to have an open door in one of the meeting rooms and let legislators come into it at their own leisure instead of providing them with specific times that they need to be there to meet us. This approach fits better into their hectic schedule. Refreshments are also available to them to have a quick bite and get ready for their next meeting. Members of the NJ DEP were also on hand to respond to any questions posed by the legislators. Tom Fote was also there representing the JCAA. Since I am also a Trustee of the NJOA, I represented the NJOA. Other members of the NJOA were there as well to interact with incoming legislators.

One of the issues that both the NJOA and JCAA have been pushing our legislators to support is increased funding for HOFNOD (Hooked on Fishing not on Drugs). It has a present budget of \$200,000. We would like it to be increased to a total of \$450,000 since we have found HOFNOD to be so helpful in getting youths involved in fishing, especially from disadvantaged neighborhoods. We talked to Senate President Sweeney to gain his support in posting this legislation in the Senate. (We later found out that he did it and it passed the Senate with a vote of 38 to 0). Now this bill has to be passed in the Assembly. Hopefully, it will be passed in waning days of the Lame Duck session of the legislature.

Having better funding for our Marine Fisheries has been an ongoing problem for a number of years. The staff in Marine Fisheries has to respond to a number of federal mandated studies for fishing management plans and has lacked the staff to do it among other related issues it has to deal with. In comparison to other states and the economic value the sport of fishing generates for our state, Marine Fisheries has been underfunded by our legislators. Both the JCAA and the NJOA have petitioned our legislators to increase funding for it over a number of years.

For example, New Jersey's marine resources support some of the largest recreational and commercial fisheries on the U.S. Atlantic coast worth

about 1.5 to 2 billion dollars. Yet, our state appropriates \$3.668 million dollars to operate its Marine Fisheries compared to other states of up to almost \$20 million that have less economic impact than New Jersey. We have a staff of 50 to run our Marine Fisheries, while Massachusetts has 150 and North Carolina has 300 staff members to operate its Marine Fisheries. I can give you more examples, but I think you get the picture about this funding problem.

I talked to Dan Hirshberg, who is the Chief of Staff for Assemblyman John DiMaio (23rd Legislative District) about this issue and he told me, "you have two minutes to do it, since I am going to another meeting." I showed him a graph that displayed the funding other states provide for their marine fisheries and he told me to set up a meeting with members of NJ's Fish & Wildlife and his office so that the Assemblyman John DiMaio could learn more about this issue and support it.

While it is effective to talk directly to legislators to gain their support for your cause, it is also very effective to talk to their Chief of Staff since they have the ear of their legislator. Legislators have many issues on their plates and do not have the time to do the necessary research to better understand the issue at hand. Their Chief of Staff does this type of research and passes it on to their legislator to assist their decision-making process.

When setting up the date of the caucus, the NJOA was unaware of the legislative calendar and just picked the date of December 16th. On this date, the legislature had voting sessions on very controversial issues at the same time and brought so many people to Trenton to lobby legislators for or against these issues and they were chanting so loudly that you could hear them in the building where the voting was taking place. Also, there were so many people in this building that I had difficulty just to walk out of it!

Unfortunately, while we had about 38 legislators attend a similar caucus in 2018, we only had about 14 legislators and staff at this caucus since legislators had their hands full dealing with the hearings and meetings required to hear and vote on these three controversial issues. Hopefully, when we hold our caucus in 2020, we have it at a more peaceful time without the disrupting protests.

Youth Education Report

By Greg Kucharewski

NJ HOFNOD WORKSHOPS

During 2020, think about becoming a HOFNOD instructor. New Jersey HOFNOD facilitator workshops are hosted by the DEP Division of Fish and Wildlife and it was well worth the time to learn creative aquatic activities to teach youngsters the importance of becoming environmental stewards.

During a 1.5 day program, you can learn about the following activities: Conservation & Experiential Education Concept Mapping, What do you know about fish and/or fishing, Ecological Awareness & Wildlife Interdependence, First Impressions, exploring our “perception” about wildlife and ourselves, water, shelter and appropriate space to survive, Fish Biology - Anatomy, Fins & Parts of a Fish, Rods and Reels, Know your Lures & bait, Watersheds, Point & non-Point Pollution, Fly Tying, Environmental Action and Stewardship, Rules & Regulations and Angler Ethics.

This workshop is a great learning experience. If you are interested in attending a NJ HOFNOD workshop, please contact Coordinator Liz Jackson, email: liz.jackson@dep.state.nj, phone: 908-637-4125 x122. Next training date is May 15-17, 2020.

SEND US YOUR EVENT INFORMATION

The JCAA's Youth Education Committee is asking JCAA member clubs/organizations for a listing of scheduled youth and family events that are going to be held by your club or organization during 2020. The purpose of this request is to alert other fishing clubs and organizations that would like to participate in your youth and family event. The JCAA newspaper is a way to get the word out about what's happening in your club. Use this opportunity to inform others about events your fishing club is doing to promote fishing. The JCAA's Youth Education Committee will support your event with “Hooked on Fishing Not on Drugs” materials. Please contact Greg Kucharewski with your listing of youth and family events and don't forget the Sportsmen Shows. Include your booth location, fishing club or organization that will attend. By providing this information you're fishing club or organization can improve membership and increase consumer participation. Please stop by

the JCAA show booth and learn about issues affecting recreational anglers.

HIGH SCHOOL FISHING TEAMS

New Jersey high school fishing teams are already gearing up for the Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament 2020. With the onset of colder temperatures high school fishing club students started to tie rigs and teasers for fishing next year. We expect the following schools to join the GSFT tournament: Manasquan High School Fishing Club, Toms River HS North, Delaware Valley Regional HS, Lacey Township High School Fishing Club, Brick HS Fishing Club, Gateway Regional High School, Manahawkin High School, and Howell High School. We expect more schools and organizations to enter the tournament this year. Schools that would like more information about the GSFT can contact Karen Byrne at 609-748-4347 or e-mail karen.byrne@dep.nj.gov.

HIGH SCHOOL FISHING FLEA MARKETS

Lacy High School Fishing Club Fisherman's 11th Annual Flea Market, January 18, 9 am until 2 pm. The flea market will be held at Lacey Township High School Gymnasium, 73 Haines Street, Lanoka Harbor, NJ 08734. The fundraiser is being held to benefit the students of the fishing club by raising money to fund fishing trips taken throughout the school year, plus scholarships for student members.

The 2020 NJBBA's “Pete D'Alessio Memorial” Flea Market will be held on Saturday, January 25 at the Toms River South High School (TRSHS), 9 am to 2 pm. The Flea Market is co-sponsored by TRSHS “Fishing Indians” and features vendors selling their merchandise at over 100 tables in the TRSHS Cafeteria. Food includes - light breakfast of donuts, bagels and coffee and an awesome lunch featuring chili, hot dogs, baked beans, soda or water will be available to purchase. All proceeds from food purchases go to support the TRSHS Fishing Team.

JERSEY SHORE SURFCASTERS

We appreciate the continued support of the Jersey Shore Surfcasters for our veteran Play HOOK-e from PTSD and NJ HOFNOD youth fishing program. We look forward to working together during 2020. Don't forget to come out and support Surf Day on February 22 at Brookdale Community College, 765 Newman Springs Road, Lincroft, NJ 07738.