

JCAA NEWSPAPER MAY 2020

Official Newspaper of the *JERSEY COAST ANGLERS ASSOCIATION*

(Published on April 21st, 2020)

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

JCAA REGULAR MEETING:

No Meeting Until Further Notice

Starting at 7:30 PM

385 Herbertsville Rd, Brick

NEXT JCAA BOARD MEETING

Tuesday, May 14th, 2020

Via Zoom Meeting

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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| | | |
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| Committee and Chairpersons listed on last page | | |

IMPORTANT DATES

April 28th JCAA General Meeting (Zoom)

May 5th-6th ASMFC Spring Meeting Webinar

May 6th Joint ASMFC & MAFMC Meeting Webinar

May 14th JCAA Board Meeting (Zoom)

May 26th JCAA General Meeting (Zoom)

June 11th JCAA Board Meeting (Zoom)

June 16th-18th MAFMC Meeting

June 30th JCAA General Meeting (Zoom)

July 9th JCAA Board Meeting (Zoom)

August 4th-6th ASMFC Summer Meeting

August 13th JCAA Board Meeting (Zoom)

September 12th JCAA Fluke Tournament (*new date*)

September 18th JCAA Tournament Award Ceremony

October 25th Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament

JCAA High Roller Raffle 2020 \$3000 Plus in Prizes!

By Don Marantz

The Jersey Coast Anglers Association is a charitable non-profit 501(c)3 organization that was formed in 1981. The original objective of the JCAA, that continues today, was to combine a group of marine sportfishing clubs in order to form and promote a united consensus on issues relevant to saltwater anglers in New Jersey. JCAA works to protect the rights of New Jersey's recreational fishermen by seeking fair and equitable fisheries management. It fosters conservation and education while seeking to do what is best for our fisheries to ensure they will be sustainable for future generations. JCAA also strives to create increased angling opportunities and better public access. Further, it is involved with issues concerning our marine environment, such as fighting for better fisheries habitat, keeping our waters clean, and protecting our forage species while supporting an ecosystem-based management approach. JCAA works in concert with New Jersey's legislature, many major local, state and

national organizations, congress and federal agencies to advance its objectives.

JCAA has evolved into one of the most powerful and unified organizations of its kind. JCAA's strength comes from its volunteer members and donations. If you or your fishing club is interested in becoming a member or making a tax-deductible donation, please call (732) 506-6565 or visit www.jcaa.org.

Another way you can help support us is to buy some of our raffle tickets. They will be mailed along with the Express Entry form for the fluke tournament in the near future. *Due to the Corona Virus, the drawing date for prizes has been changed and will be held on August 13 at 7:30 pm at our office.* Tickets are just **\$2 each, 3 for \$5 or 7 for \$10**. Thank you for your anticipated support!

List of Prizes (*retail values*)

1. Jersey Nutz Six Man Charter (6 hour, 6 man inshore weekday charter) – **\$850**, *Donated by Captains Robert and Cody Melton*
2. ODM 11' NXF1102 Spinning Rod/Canyon Salt 7500 Reel – **\$639**, *Donated by Canyon reels and JCAA*
3. \$500 gift Certificate from Fisherman's Headquarters – **\$500**, *Donated by Fisherman's Headquarters*
4. Shimano 6'6" Teramar TMC-E66MH Conv. Rod/Shimano HG14 Reel – **\$380**, *Donated by Grumpys Tackle and Shimano*
5. Quantum 7' QSW5701H Spinning Rod/Quantum Boca BSP60 Reel – **\$260**, *Donated by JCAA*
6. Costa Blackfin Sunglasses – **\$259**, *Donated by Costa*
7. Tica 7' WIGA70MHJ2S Spinning Rod/Tica CS4000 Reel – **\$147**

President's Report

By John Toth

This Corona virus has us all locked in our homes and while we are anxious to go fishing and enjoy life as we have done in the past, we still have to be cautious to stop the spread of this deadly disease

and be housebound until we receive the OK to resume business as usual.

Because of this virus, it has been tough for the JCAA to do business with social distancing that severely limits what we can do around people. What we have done to keep our membership informed of JCAA's activities is to have our meetings broadcasted on ZOOM. Our first club membership meeting on ZOOM was held on March 31st, the last Tuesday of the month when we normally have our meetings. Of course, we had some start-up issues with it and confusion about using it. But, given this virus situation, we have to use ZOOM so that we can all stay connected with each other. I do believe we will get more comfortable in using ZOOM for our meetings and it does save driving time and tolls for JCAA members that travel from distant locations to our meetings that are held at the Jersey Coast Shark Anglers Building in Herbertsville. While we may resume meetings at this location when the virus scare is gone, we will still continue to use ZOOM at the Shark Anglers Building to conduct our meetings.

In regard to using ZOOM, please remember that the use of ZOOM is for the use of JCAA member clubs only! Do NOT share our password and other ZOOM information with non-JCAA members. Our JCAA ZOOM meetings, just like our other JCAA meetings in the past, are open only to JCAA members.

Not all is doom and gloom! Our fluke tournament has been moved from its June date to **September 12th** and our Awards Ceremony will be held at the **Resorts Casino in Atlantic City on September 18th**! As a weigh master of JCAA fluke tournaments for many years, I have heard so many times participants say, "we are looking forward to going to Atlantic City for the Awards Ceremony." It took awhile for us to get back to going to Atlantic City, but we are there now for all of us to enjoy it. Resorts Casino is providing JCAA with a number of incentives for our tournament participants with discounts at restaurants and hotel rooms. But, more information on our fluke tournament and the Awards Ceremony is in another section of this newsletter that is provided by our Fluke Tournament Director, Paul Turi.

The success of our tournament depends on all of our member clubs participating in this tournament. With having Resorts Casino as a partner for our fluke tournament, we want to see a major uptick in the number of boats in our tournament. We are back to our original formula that made our tournaments so

successful in the past by having the Awards Ceremony in Atlantic City. This is a great way to celebrate the tournament by bringing your wife, family or significant other to not only collect tournament prize money, door prizes, possibly win a boat, motor and trailer and to also enjoy Resorts and all that this casino has to offer. So come on down to Resorts and have fun!

The tough economic times caused by this virus are affecting all of us and the JCAA is no exception. Because of the virus situation, our High Roller raffle tickets cannot be sold as they usually do because of social distancing. Accordingly, the JCAA has moved its original drawing date for these tickets from May 14th to **August 13th** so that we have more time to sell them. Please purchase as many of these tickets as you can. By doing so, you will support the JCAA so that it can support you! The High Roller raffle tickets will be in the mail shortly.

Finally, I am in the process of setting up a meeting with members of the recreational fishing community in October to meet with Mr. Mike Pentony, Northeast Regional Administrator of NMFS (National Marine Fisheries Services), to discuss a number of issues that are having a negative impact on our recreational fishing industry. We are witnessing tackle shops closing, party and charter boats going out of business and we want to see this decline of our recreational fishing industry reversed! I will keep you updated on the progress of this effort.

Fisheries Management & Legislative Report

By Tom Fote

The World Changed for Everyone & Everything including Fishing in February 2020 due to COVID-19

Like most anglers, at the beginning of February I was planning my fishing season. I thought because of the warm winter that I should book a number of trips in April and May. I called my fishing buddies and they agreed. We booked five charters for April with Captain Fletcher Chayes and another seven for May and early June. I was also planning my fisheries meetings for the spring. I had a Joint MAFMC meeting scheduled for April in New Jersey, a MAFAC meeting in Puerto Rico at the end of April,

the ASMFC spring meeting week in Washington, DC in May. In June there was the Joint ASMFC&MAFMC meeting in Virginia Beach. My calendar was full with trips and meetings. Then came COVID-19 and the world changed. Social distancing required more and more cancellations. Although I know this is crucial, it is still disappointing. Meetings were rescheduled to online and we all had to adjust. For JCAA, we started doing Zoom Board and General meetings. ASMFC is using another online system and the Councils are using a third. Like all of you, I am learning a lot. As the strictness of the social distancing increased, I realized I was not going to do any trips in April. It was a hard call for me to make to Fletcher cancelling all of these dates. I realized that I was not just losing my fishing trips, but he was losing his income and the financial burden this would cause. I began thinking and talking about the impacts on the entire recreational and commercial fishing industries this would cause. Tackle stores were closed. I understand four of the stores that closed are not planning on reopening. I suspect that many more tackle stores that were already struggling will go under. The same is true for party and charter boats. It is really depressing to see the industry I have worked so hard for in so much difficulty. We are not thought of as an essential service. Since commercial fishermen were considered essential, they could sail but there was no market for their fresh fish. When it comes to dealing with financial help, the fishing industries are always shortchanged. Just look at what happened after Sandy with the small amount of money we received for both fishing industries.

All of our lives have changed dramatically whether we fish or not. Our opportunities to socialize with family and friends have become limited. As I am writing this, I have no idea when we will be safely able to give a friend a hug, not just fish on the same boat. In New Jersey the party and charter boats are shut down. Private boats have a whole new set of rules that make it almost impossible to find a crew. The beaches are closed so there is no surf fishing. The question then is, what needs to be done to save this industry?

Where we are as of April 18, 2020

As of April 18, the state government has shut down all state and county parks, the local municipalities have closed the beaches and boardwalks, the party and charter boats are listed as non-essential in New Jersey so they cannot fish, tackle

stores are closed but they can do curbside for bait. I am not sure what the rules are for marinas, but I do see some people working on boats. With the beach closures, there is no surf fishing. There is freshwater fishing if you can find a spot where the parking lots are not closed and you can get to the lake or stream that is not in a park. As I write this, I have no idea how long these rules will be in place. The Governor has extended the shutdown to May 15 with the option to set new rules then or continue the shutdown. I was on an advisor's call for the MAFMC and a party boat captain shared these words of wisdom. I paraphrase his remarks, "Even when we open the fishery it will never be enough for me to recoup my losses. Just because someone says it is safe, that doesn't mean that my customers will feel safe returning." He feels it will take five years to get back to "normal" business. That struck home because I am thinking about all the concerts and plays my wife and I had planned to attend. How long before we feel safe sitting in a theater? There should be some grant and stimulus money but no one has really seen it yet and trying to apply is almost impossible. The fishing industry is paying rent, taxes, insurance, slip space and all the additional expenses whether or not there are any customers or fishing. They are not making any money. Both industries have been holding on by a thread since the economic crisis of 2007. Boat registrations from 2007 to 2014 decreased by 50,000. Over 60 party and charter boats have gone out of business or left New Jersey by 2018. We know more went out in 2019 and we anticipate more losses in 2020. We all know the steady stream of tackle stores and related businesses were continuing to close before the current crisis. The number of fishing trips have continued to decrease. In 2019 we were down 24% from the previous year which builds on a decrease in most recent years. How long can the industry survive?

What should ASMFC, NEFMC, MAFMC, SAFMC, NOAA, NMFS, the Federal Government and the State Governments do to stop the disastrous impact on the recreational and commercial fishing communities?

In these five points, I will talk about both the commercial and recreational fisheries since both have suffered extreme hardship due to the virus.

1. Federal Government

The Federal Government is passing bills for a stimulus package to help people get through the

economic crisis created by this virus. The first bill appropriated \$300,000,000 for the fishing industry. The fishing industry commercially is worth about 65 billion dollars per year and the recreational numbers are about 64 billion. In total the recreational and commercial industries are worth almost \$130,000,000,000. Recreational fishing in New Jersey alone is worth about 1.3 billion dollars. With the addition of the commercial and boat building industries, our total worth is about 4 billion dollars to the State of New Jersey. The sales tax numbers alone feed the state's coffers. Three hundred million dollars for the entire United States is a drop in the bucket. For the impact of Sandy in New Jersey there was 3 million to be shared with the commercial and recreational industries. That was like giving us a fishing bobber instead of a life vest when the boat overturned. It was nice but not nearly enough and we will still drown. At the same time, New England got 50 million in emergency funds. We cannot let that happen again. The Federal Government must also take responsibility for allowing NOAA and NMFS to manage by lawsuits instead of using good science. If this pandemic has taught us anything, it is that good science is essential. The President and Congress need to appropriate sufficient funds to NOAA and NMFS to get reliable science for the fishing industry, especially when it comes to stock assessment and recreational statistics. Just passing legislation without the money to implement does nothing to solve the problem.

2. State Government

State government needs to demand that the Federal Government allocate sufficient funding for the recreational and commercial industries to recover. In New Jersey it is a quality of life issue that goes beyond the commercial and recreational industries. Restaurants, fish stores and many other businesses depend on the catch of our commercial fishermen to attract customers. It is a struggle for them to keep ahead of the game because of fixed costs and cheaper product coming from overseas. As we found out during this crisis, we need to count on our commercial fishing industry to put food on our tables and fresh fish in our restaurants. Recreational fishing is one of the reasons people live in New Jersey or travel here from other states. We have 800,000 recreational anglers in New Jersey and, on an average year, 500,000 visitors to fish. Not only is it economic but also a quality of life issue. Why would I not want to

move from New Jersey? I feel we have some of the best and most diverse fishing on the east coast. We need to maintain the infrastructure to keep our tourism industry and provide for the enjoyment of our citizens.

3. ASMFC

The ASMFC will be holding its meetings by webinars for the foreseeable future. Doing a webinar meeting is much different than being there in person. In person, there are lots of opportunities for interaction beyond the actual meeting. If everyone is in the room, even if they are waiting for the next meeting, it is possible to be flexible with the schedule. If Commissioners and other interested people are joining from home based on the published schedule, a meeting could begin early and be done before we ever join the call. Again, this is a whole new way of doing business and we will need to stick to the schedule that is published, especially when meetings finish early. Not all Commissioners are interested in every board meeting and may just be joining for a specific meeting. If there is a lag time, there is much to discuss about how we deal with impacts of the virus.

ASMFC has more flexibility than the Councils due to the Magnuson/Stevens Act. On the species we regulate by ourselves, we can change the regulations for the fall. After Sandy I said there was no way we would exceed any quotas in 2013. Of course, with the horrible statistical system we have, the numbers showed we exceeded our quotas even though that made no sense at all with everything almost shut down because of Sandy. I will repeat myself and say there is no way we will exceed any quota for 2020. States that are shut down should be allowed to recoup some of the lost fishing effort of the spring by adjusting the fall fishing seasons. This is more complicated with species we jointly manage with the Mid-Atlantic Fisheries Management Council. ASMFC should demand that we do emergency actions with the species we jointly manage. We should be looking at these regulations for both the commercial and recreational industries. The mission statement for ASMFC is that they must promote sustainable fisheries, not destroy the fishing industry.

4. NOAA & NMFS

NOAA and NMFS need to start looking outside the box. There is always an excuse that the rules make it impossible to expedite any changes. The standard line is it will take 2 – 3 years to make any change. The

fishing industry cannot wait 2 – 3 years. In the last 55 years of fishing, I have never seen anything like this. World War II created its own set of problems for my dad's generation. There was no recreational fishing beyond trying to get something to put on a plate. Most of the men were in the service and commercial fishing served the war effort. We need to approach this crisis with the same level of urgency and flexibility. We are not going back to "normal" and the industry needs the help NOAA and NMFS to make that adjustment. I am not asking to throw out the management plans at this time and do away with quotas. What I am asking for is an adjustment in those plans to reflect the reality in which we are living. For example, if no one is fishing in the spring, we should adjust the regulations to allow an expanded fishery in the fall. They should also work with Congress to get the appropriations we need with a fair and equitable distribution of funds for the fisheries. I am tired of hearing we are managing in this way so we don't get sued. Put your lawyers to work and fight for the industry. Listen to your advisors, the Commissioners to ASMFC and the Council members and help us find a way to support the industry. I do not want to hear "my way or the highway" which is frequently what we get.

5. The Federal Fisheries Councils all around the US

With their meetings, the Councils and the Commissions need to stick to the times set up for the agenda. I am not sure how long we will be doing webinar meetings, but this creates its own problems. I was trying to attend a meeting on black sea bass on the webinar only to discover that they finished the whole day before this meeting was actually scheduled. When people are not in the room, meetings cannot be rescheduled on a whim. This is especially true when ASMFC & MAFMC do joint meetings since not every Commissioner is on every board and may just be attending for a specific board meeting.

Council members need to step up to the plate and instead of just accepting the rules from NMFS, they must force NMFS to be more flexible in this time of crisis. NMFS says its goal is to create sustainable fisheries. Its goal should not be to collapse the recreational and commercial industries during a crisis. The Council members need to push NMFS to use emergency action to reflect what is actually happening at this time. The Commission and the Councils are going to have a hard time with stock assessments

because of the cancellation of observer coverage and the cancellation of many independent fisheries surveys. There will also be a cancellation of intercepts for the recreational sector. We don't know when any of these will be resumed but this will be a poor data year. Since we are planning for 2021, we should just go for status quo in 2021 and begin planning for 2022. This could be a perfect storm. The SSC will have little faith in any data that is collected because it will be so sparse. The regulations currently in place will more than protect the stocks until we can resolve the data collection process. We should actually consider relaxing some regulations as a part of a stimulus package for the recreational and commercial industry when the changes won't hurt the stocks. The current regulations are so conservative that there is room for some flexibility. As an ASMFC Commissioner and a MAFAC member, I am looking forward to working with the Councils to make this happen.

6. What the recreational and commercial fishing communities need to do.

Like most of you, I am sitting at home most days at my computer. What you need to do as commercial fishermen and anglers is start calling your federal and state representatives and Governors and the Secretary of Commerce to remind them how important commercial and recreational fishing are to our economy. Explain that the fishing industry has never recovered from the economic crisis of 2008 and Hurricane Sandy.

The recreational industry has seen a steady closing of tackle stores and marinas and witnessed charter and party boats going out of business. The decline in recreational participation has steadily declined since 2008. The commercial industry has suffered similar problems. We not only want our representatives to help us through this hard-economic time but also work with us to rebuild both the commercial and recreational industry. You cannot just rely on the organizations that speak for this industry. You need to get personally involved. It is always more important to have someone who votes in their district share their feelings. All the commercial and recreational organizations are working to help us weather this disaster. But without your help we will not be successful. I will repeat what I have said thousands of times, "Get involved." I am also adding, "Stay safe."

Upcoming Fisheries Meetings

JCAA has adjusted to Zoom meetings for the foreseeable future. The Councils and ASMFC will be doing the same for the immediate future. You can check out YouTube videos to learn how Zoom and the other platforms work. Don't try to figure this out on the day of the meeting but in advance. Take it from me, a little practice is a good thing. If you have trouble, call a friend before the meeting begins. Before the upcoming JCAA Zoom meeting, let us know if you want us to run practice sessions. Let Captain Paul Eidman or George Browne know if you need help. Contact the Councils and ASMFC and ask them to do practice sessions for the public and what the rules are for public participation.

On a personal note, this is a great way to keep in touch with family and friends, especially those who live alone. Use facetime, skype or another platform to reach out. We can't meet face to face, but we can maintain our social contacts using technology. We need to help each other get through this. Stay safe.

ASMFC 2020 Spring Meeting Webinar Scheduled for May 5, 6 2020

ASFMC Release, 4/3/2020

Due to concerns regarding the coronavirus and following the recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission cancelled its in-person Spring Meeting. Instead, a number of Boards will be meeting via webinar to either (1) take required actions to allow for the fishery to be prosecuted now and into next year or (2) take non-decisional actions that allow for the continued development of draft management documents. Specifically, the Atlantic Herring and Tautog Management Boards will consider management actions. The Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program Coordinating Council will consider approval of its Funding Decision Document and request for proposals. The Atlantic Menhaden and Atlantic Striped Bass Management Boards will be informational though the Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board may provide feedback on next steps. The Bluefish and Summer Flounder, Scup and Black Sea Bass Management Boards will be meeting jointly with the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council to review public comment on two scoping/public information

documents, and provide further direction on the development of the respective Draft Amendments. Unless stated otherwise by the respective Board chairs, all votes will be recorded via roll call.

The agenda can be found below, attached, and on the ASMFC website at [this link](#).

For management boards that are anticipated to take final actions, such as the Atlantic Herring and Tautog Boards, the public and stakeholders will have the opportunity to provide brief comments on actions *for which the Commission has NOT established a specific public comment period*, as time allows. For all other meetings, the public should anticipate limited opportunity to provide comment via the webinar. When public comment is allowed, it will be at the discretion of the individual Board Chairs. As such, we strongly encourage members of the public to submit written comments in advance to be included in the meeting materials. Please see the following revised Public Comment Guidelines for more information about submitting public comment prior to the meeting.

For the remainder of Board actions previously scheduled to occur at the Spring Meeting, these actions have been deferred to the Summer Meeting or will be addressed via email. The types of issues that would be addressed via email include administrative items, such as FMP Reviews.

Details about the webinar and meeting process will be provided prior to the meeting.

JCAA 26th Annual Fluke Tournament

By Paul Turi, Fluke Tournament Director

Due to the Corona Virus, JCAA has moved the date of its annual fluke tournament to **Saturday, September 12th** and the awards presentations to **Friday, September 18th**.

The good news for this year, among all of the bad news of the day, is that our Awards Presentations this year will be taking place at the Resorts Hotel Casino in Atlantic City. Hopefully, if all goes well with cornering this virus, we will be able to have the Awards Presentations as planned.

I would like to give a shout-out to Resorts Hotel Casino for giving us the opportunity to have our

Awards Presentations in their hotel. They are excited to have us there and we are excited to be back there.

In addition to donating the use of their facility, Resorts will also be giving every attendee \$10 in slot play or \$20 in Match Play plus \$10 in food credits. There will also be a reduced room rate for those wishing to stay over. They will also be donating a package for each of our 7 regions. Each package will contain a free overnight stay in their hotel, show tickets and \$40 in food credits. In addition, they will also be taking an ad in our monthly newspaper.

Of course, all of this is dependent on whether or not the casinos can open and have large gatherings in September. I will keep everyone up to date and informed in future newspaper articles. In the meantime let's all be careful and abide by and practice social distancing.

Public Access

By George Browne

Here we are in the middle of the Covid-19 pandemic. Beaches, parks, and other fishing areas are closed or restricted. Bait and tackle shops are closed unless you can call in your order and do curbside pickup. How is it possible that there are critical public access issues that need to be addressed right now, especially when there is widespread public support for stay-at-home and social distancing? Unfortunately, there are two public access issues that need to be addressed during this crisis.

The first public access issue is at the Bay Point Condominiums in Point Pleasant Borough. The condo property is on the east side of the Point Pleasant Canal at the end of Bay Avenue and includes a public access point. In late March or early April someone put up a sign and a barricade at the entrance to the public access point. The sign says, "In accordance with the Governor's Stay at Home Order Please maintain the State mandated 6 feet social distancing as well as staying 6 feet from our homes/properties for all our safety. . . ." It goes on to say, "THE POLICE WILL BE PATROLLING - BPH RESIDENTS." Well that sure sounds pretty official, doesn't it? Except it is not. I checked with the Borough Administrator for Point Pleasant and he wrote back in an email, "As far as the DEP easement for fishing surrounding the condo complex, the Borough of Point Pleasant has repeatedly told the association there that we will not

enforce any of their wishes on that property nor do we have the jurisdiction to. The only thing we will do is have our Police Department respond to appropriate calls dealing with emergency situations. Any action happening on the easement there is solely being done by the Bay Pointe Harbor Condo Association.”

It appears that the sign and barricade were put up by the residents of Bay Point Harbor, on their own, without authorization from any governmental agency. This is not the first time the condo association or some of the homeowners have tried to restrict access. The 1982 CAFRA permit for the construction of these condos required a 6-foot-wide public access easement along the canal. In 2013, a homeowner called the police on an angler who was sitting in a chair in that 6-foot-wide access. Anglers were also told that fishing would not be allowed beginning in 2014. As a result of this, a public access complaint was filed with DEP in late 2013. In March 2014, the DEP wrote to the Bay Point Harbor Association and told them that the association was in violation of their CAFRA permit, they could not prevent people from using the access area, and they could not stop people from fishing. Since then, people who fish in the canal in that area have been repeatedly harassed by some homeowners who come out and yell at them. These homeowners tell anglers that they do not belong there and they threaten to call the police. All of this is part of the history of multiple attempts to block public access.

It gets more interesting, though. Immediately south of the Bay Point Condos, at the end of Bay Avenue and adjacent to the condos, is a municipally owned fishing pier and boat ramp. Both the pier and ramp have remained open during the crisis. The Borough feels that there is ample room for social distancing and there have not been any problems there. So how is it that there are no problems at the public area, but a problem at Bay Point Harbor? Sounds to me like the sign and barricade are just the latest attempt to abuse the public’s right to access this area.

In response to the sign and barricade, an email was sent, this week, to DEP Commissioner Catherine McCabe requesting that the sign and barricade be removed. We have not heard back yet but will let you know once we hear back. We will follow up with a formal complaint after the Covid-19 crisis calms down.

The other public access issue is the Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge’s draft Recreational Fishing Plan. This plan is important to us

because it will set how both saltwater and freshwater anglers can fish in the refuge. The refuge starts in Atlantic County and extends north to Brick Township in Ocean County. That is almost 50 miles of NJ’s coastline.

There are three components of the plan we need to be aware of and comment on; 1) freshwater fishing; 2) saltwater fishing; and 3) a proposal to ban lead while fishing in the refuge.

Freshwater Fishing

Freshwater fishing is only permitted at Lily Lake in Galloway Township, Atlantic County. The draft plan opens another fishing area at the Middle Branch Trailhead in Lacey Township. Any fishing access (fresh or salt water) should include reasonable accommodation for people who are handicapped.

Saltwater Fishing

This plan ignores opening any other areas to saltwater fishing. Nearly all saltwater fishing in the refuge requires a boat. There are hundreds of miles of tidal streams open to boat fishing in the refuge, but land-based fishing is only permitted at Holgate Beach (closed to all users April 1 to August 31 for nesting birds) and Graveling Point. Two additional land-based fishing (mostly bait fishing) and crabbing locations are Cedar Run Dock Road and Parkertown Dock Road in Southern Ocean County. In total there are four land-based locations in the almost 50 miles of coastline in the refuge.

The fishing plan needs to be revised so that saltwater anglers can walk into fish the refuge using existing sandy, tidal shorelines or in the water along those shorelines. This will not damage the marshes or sod banks. Fishing should be permitted in those locations and not be restricted to reaching them by boat.

It may also be possible to allow additional land-based locations if the access points are effectively managed. New access points through the marshes or sod banks can be monitored to gauge the impact of people walking through to a fishing location. Access points or fishing areas can be rotated to limit wear caused by people using those areas. There are ways to open access while limiting the impact.

We should also not be subject to getting a ticket because we walked in through tidal waters to fish or clam. Right now, it is difficult to tell when you are in the refuge or in an area that is closed. This

needs to be clarified in the plan to avoid any confusion.

The Lead Ban

The idea of banning lead in the refuge is based in part on the idea that bird hunters using lead shot have left large amounts of lead in the water. As a result, birds like ducks and geese ingest the shot as they graze the bottom. The birds bioaccumulate the lead passing it up the food chain. We need to oppose this for several reasons to make sure the use of leads while fishing continues to be permitted in the refuge.

First, while freshwater anglers use lead split shot for sinkers, they use one or two at a time and do not lose large amounts of split shot while fishing. The amount of split shot lost by freshwater anglers is statistically insignificant as to the impact that it has on wildlife.

Second, saltwater anglers typically do not use split shot.

Third, both saltwater and freshwater anglers use lead in jigs, lead heads, lures, sinkers, and other tackle that weighs from ½ ounces and up. Leads of this size will not be ingested by birds or other wildlife.

If you would like to view or download the draft of the plan, you can use [this link](#) to get a copy. Comments on the plan should be sent directly to the refuge using one of the addresses below. You have until May 1st to submit comments.

Email: forsythe@fws.gov

Regular mail:

Edwin B. Forsythe NWR
P.O. Box 72
Oceanville, NJ 08231
ATTN: Fishing

Striped Bass Catch & Release Tactics Aboard a Fly & Light Tackle Charter Boat

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

We catch hundreds of Stripers a year, of all sizes, and have used these methods over the past 20 plus years of catch and release, fly & light tackle striped fishing. Here is a random list of things we do

onboard “Reel Therapy” to greatly reduce mortality in random order:

- Zero kill during overfished status
- Zero barbs on board “All Barbless All the time”
- Zero “bonus tags”
- A rag or cloth never touches a fish, hands always wet first
- Single hooks on the rear of plugs
- Rubber coated landing net is a game changer, not only to keep slime on fish but for faster lure removal
- Hook removal tools easily retrievable and convenient
- Bass are left in water until camera gear is ready to go
- After the fight, especially the larger bass, are held at boat side until ready to move off on own, meaning fish is resting vertically in water, biting down on thumb, pushing water with tail, etc.
- Fish is always handled wet, deck flop is avoided at all cost
- Increasing fly rod weight and tippet strength to shorten fight
- Reduce stress with spinning gear with heavier gear to shorten fight
- Swap out treble plug hooks and replace with the new inline eye single hooks
- Avoiding the vertical hang, all lipped or net lifted
- Support the fish’s mid-section/weight during handling and photo
- No gill grabbing ever
- Caution around eyes and gill rakers
- Fish not out of water for longer than 15 seconds. The breath hold method is too long.
- Avoiding high water temperatures - we move out of warming backwaters, into the bay, then the ocean and then lay off the bass. Shift over to other species when temps start climbing in late June or so.

Tight Lines, Paul

Staying Home Shrinks Carbon Footprint, but How Much will Stay Shrunk?

by Amanda Oglesby, Asbury Park Press, 4/14/2020

With the coronavirus keeping millions of New Jerseyans off the roads and inside their homes, environmentalists and scientists are observing a unique phenomenon — what happens when millions of cars and industries are idle.

In the Northeast — including New Jersey — significant drops in air pollution have been detected, officials said. There's even a notion, held by some looking past COVID-19's devastation, the U.S. could be spurred to make some lasting, pro-environmental fixes.

NASA scientists reported last week that levels of nitrogen dioxide, a chemical produced through burning fossil fuels, were about 30% lower over the Interstate 95 corridor between Washington, D.C., and Boston compared with March a year ago.

Rutgers University researcher Monica Mazurek has been studying the same phenomenon.

Air particulate matter 'is at least a third to 50% better' over New Jersey, said Mazurek, who directs the Environment and Energy Program at Rutgers' Center for Advanced Infrastructure and Transportation.

'It's going to be a big asterisk in the record of fine particulate pollution,' she said.

Across the world, scientists say air pollution around major cities is at its lowest level in years. For example, people living in northern Punjab, India, can see the Himalayan mountains for the first time in years, according to CNN.

China, too, has seen decreases in air pollution around its major cities.

Helen Worden, a particle physicist who studies carbon monoxide and emissions pollution at the National Center for Atmospheric Research, is also noticing differences in air quality since the stay-at-home orders and lockdowns were initiated.

Worden's team found that coronavirus-induced reductions in transportation and industry in eastern China led to improvements in air quality. Now, Worden is looking at air quality changes in the United States. Before she draws conclusions, she must also see how light, weather, forest fire and other factors are affecting the atmospheric chemistry over the United States.

'This is a very unwanted atmospheric experiment, but we are going to try to learn as much as we can,' Worden said.

Transportation makes up a significant portion of the carbon footprint of New Jersey residents, said Rachael Shwom, a Rutgers University sociologist who studies how people make decisions about energy, consumption and climate change problems.

While driving and transportation has declined in New Jersey, other consumption may be on the rise, she said.

For example, home energy and water use will likely rise as people stay home from work, Shwom said. Computer and television usage, heating and cooling costs could drive up home energy use by 40%, she said.

People may also be increasing their consumption by hoarding food, said Shwom. Even before COVID-19, nearly 4 in 10 U.S. adults reported eating unhealthy foods in the last week due to stress.

'If they're buying a lot that they're not eating and throwing it out, that's... one dimension of increased food waste we might see,' she said.

Overall, Shwom expects carbon footprints are smaller than normal.

'I actually don't think they (New Jersey residents) will be consuming more,' she said, adding that job losses mean 'there's likely to be declines in resource use and pollution.

Mathis Wackernagel, founder and president of Global Footprint Network, expects these changes in consumption and pollution will be temporary.

'What we can say is there is a reduction, and the reduction is not a structural shift,' he said. 'It's not changing the way we consume.'

Wackernagel said the pandemic should spur companies to consider new methods of working: for example; whether video conferences are more effective than carbon-consuming flights to meetings, or whether employees should work from home and meet in occasional rented office space, instead of maintaining a physical building.

'Everybody will draw lessons,' Wackernagel said. 'I'm sure there will be some lasting benefits.' But what those benefits will be is still hard to predict, he said.

Mazurek, of Rutgers' Center for Advanced Infrastructure and Transportation, said now is the time for companies to consider green technology upgrades, like purchasing hybrid or electric vehicles with government stimulus money. In addition, Mazurek

hopes to see more electric vehicle infrastructure supported across New Jersey, particularly in cities where air pollution is the greatest.

'By reducing the particle loadings, this is going to help people who have respiratory problems, including asthma, heart disease,' said Mazurek. 'As people recover (from the current pandemic), good air quality should be part of that recovery option.'

Already, coronavirus has raised people's level of understanding about their interconnected relationships, said Wackernagel, of the Global Footprint Network. Once recovery begins, governments and businesses should consider their own resource security and carefully weigh trade-offs between supply chain efficiency versus resiliency, he said.

Will they model a future where they prepare for pandemics and impending climate change, or will they repeat the past? Wackernagel said people tend to model the past, when given the choice.

Yet, he sees some reason to hope that lessons will be learned from the COVID-19 crisis and that better planning, sustainable thinking and preventative action will be more valued going forward.

'We are one biology,' Wackernagel said. 'Now everybody knows everyone is connected to everybody else.'

Amanda Oglesby is an Ocean County native who covers Brick, Barnegat and Lacey townships as well as the environment. She has worked for the Press for more than a decade. Reach her at @OglesbyAPP, aoglesby@gannettnj.com or 732-557-5701.

Youth Education Report

By Greg Kucharewski

NJ HOFNOD WORKSHOP 2020

The Division of Fish & Wildlife has cancelled the 2-day Hooked on Fishing-Not on Drugs (HOFNOD) leader training on May 15-17, 2020, at the Lighthouse Center for Natural Resource Education in Ocean County.

The 28th Annual Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament May 17th is postponed until Sunday, October 25th.

Saturday, June 6, 2020. The Hooked on Fishing-Not on Drugs Program's Youth Fishing Challenge statewide event is cancelled until the state's second

Free Fishing Day, Saturday, October 17th, when no license is required to fish regardless of age.

Please check the New Jersey HOFNOD webpage for facilitator workshops. If you are interested in attending a NJ HOFNOD workshop, please phone or email Liz Jackson:

NJ HOFNOD Coordinator

Phone: 908-637-4125 x122

Email: liz.jackson@dep.state.nj.us

HOFNOD LOGO DESIGN CONTEST

Get all the details to enter the NJ Hooked on Fishing not on Drugs new logo design contest. The contest is open to New Jersey students aged 21 and under (*must be under 21 by the end of calendar year 2020 to be eligible).

If you have an idea for a new HOFNOD logo design, please download a copy of the rules at [this link](#).

OTHER EVENTS CANCELLED/POSTPONED

4th Annual Play HOOK-e from PTSD Take a Veteran Fishing Day May 9th is postponed until September. Our host's Vito Cardinale, Cardinale Enterprises Inc., and Randy Johnson, Laurita Winery will provide a weekend fishing program at Lake Julianna, Ponderosa Estates Farm, Millstone, NJ that will include a fishing fun day for special needs children and a veteran/active-military family fishing day September 21-22, 2020. Registration information will be updated on the Play HOOK-e Eventbrite website and Vietnam Veterans of America Play [HOOK-e page](#).

Newark Bait and Fly Casting Club has cancelled their youth and veteran fishing programs until further notice. Visit their [website](#) for more info.

Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing, Jersey Shore Chapter has moved scheduled fly tying programs to virtual meetings. Please visit their [FB page](#) for updates.

Hudson River Fisherman's Association, check their [new website](#) for updates to their calendar of events.

All disabled veteran Play **HOOK-e** from PTSD boat trips, fishing programs and events are cancelled until further notice. Visit their [web page](#) for updated information.

KID'S SURF FISHING THEN AND NOW

This is just an observation from my fishing experience in Monmouth and Ocean County for over 65 years of surf fishing at the Jersey Shore. During my youth, I recall many fishing trips with our family. All my cousins and friends had fishing rods and reels that we used at Barnegat Bay docks, Seaside pier and along the surf. It was always a fun adventure to go fishing and we enjoyed our summers in Seaside Heights, NJ.

I remember watching families tracking through the sand carry beach coolers, sand toys, blankets, chairs, beach umbrella and surf fishing equipment to stakeout space at the beach. Many families would bring youngsters to the shore area and go surf fishing before the beach opened and after beaches closed for the day. Families on summer vacation would have mini fishing competitions among the kids on the beach. After fishing, we would meet with our new friends that rented bungalows and enjoy some tasty fish and crab dinners together.

Pictures were not instantly posted on facebook and the internet. Our pictures were taken on film with a flashbulb, brought to the store, developed, picked up by your parents when they had the money, and viewed by the family during Sunday visits to see relatives. Sometimes we picked up our photographs and had pictures from summer fishing trips, a birthday and Christmas. Looking back at family fishing photos from days gone by, has a way of reminding you of what a great fishing time you had with family and friends.

During the 1960's, 70's, & 80's, I witnessed many days on the beach where youngsters were catching fish and unavoidably laying rods and reels in the sand to un-hook their catch, hold it up for a photo or take fish home for a meal. The kids were overly excited to catch sea robins, blowfish, fluke, snapper blues, weakfish, striped bass, spanish mackerel, kingfish, dogfish, and blackfish.

Over the years, there has been a decline in surf fishing families. These days, during early morning hours, I stand on the beach and see very few anglers or families fishing. This might be due to the economy, beach replenishment, super storm sandy, fishing harvest regulations, and now COVID-19.

Young anglers starting to fish now will face many challenges as resources and access to fishing areas dwindle. Today, I see young anglers throwing their rods and reels in the sand in frustration from not catching a fish or catching a short fish just under the legal limit. It seems the reward of going fishing for fun has lost its luster and today's children that invest time in fishing want to catch fish and keep a fish or two like kids in the past. Young anglers are looking for that proud moment with family to at least show something they caught and share it with friends and relatives. Maybe someday, our fishing resources will be restored to the way it was in the past. Until that time, please support organizations working to restore our fishery. During these uncertain times also remember to support local tackle dealers, party boats, and charter captains, they need your help to stay in business.

NORMA KELLER

As of this writing I was informed of our dear friend Norma Keller who always supported our veteran Play HOOK-e from PTSD programs passed away. She surely will be missed. My brother wrote the following in a text with the sad news: 'You can almost envision Norma floating up to heaven on a boat among the blue skies and billowy white clouds and there on the dock awaiting the arrival of the boat is Ken.' RIP Norma.

Fish Safe

Play Safe

Stay Safe

Keep Social

D i s t a n c e