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September 2024

JCAA Sportsperson of the Year Dinner

November 10th • Captain's Inn

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Charles (Chuck) Santoro
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Jersey Coast Shark Anglers **2024 Tournament Schedule**

Kids Fishing Fever - July 20
Flukin' Fiesta - August 17
Striper Fever - November 2-9

For information go to www.jcsa.org

Forked River Tuna Club **2024 Tournament Schedule**

War at the Shore Meeting - March 17
Fishing and Hunting Flea Market - April 6
Bi-Club Fluke Tournament - July 27
Tuna Tournament - August 24, 25
Tournament Rain Date - August 31, Sept. 1

Mark Your Calendar

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In Memory of Tom Ortman. A great fisherman, a great guy!
In Memory of Randy Minix, Gibbstown, NJ
Hudson River Fisherman's Association, Cresskill, NJ
L Raymond Humphreys, Jr., Pennsville, NJ
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A Saltwater Anglers Club

New Members Welcome

www.FISHHAWKS.NJ.com

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New Jersey Beach Buggy Association

PO Box 511, Seaside Park, NJ 08752

Buggy Membership Info: Ken Hollins 732-814-7021

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Manasquan Fishing Club

PO Box 513, Manasquan, NJ 08736

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Manasquan Woman's Club, 62 Main Street

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JCAA NEWSPAPER SEPTEMBER 2024

Official Newspaper of the *JERSEY COAST ANGLERS ASSOCIATION*

(Published on August 28th, 2024)

"WORKING FOR MARINE RECREATIONAL ANGLERS"

JCAA REGULAR MEETING

September 24th, 2024, 7:30pm

Jersey Coast Shark Anglers Building
385 Herbertsville Rd, Brick, NJ 08724

or via Zoom, for link contact:

tothjohn@verizon.net or mtsport64@aol.com

NEXT JCAA BOARD MEETING

Thursday, September 12th

OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER OF THE JERSEY COAST ANGLERS ASSOC.

c/o Info Age, 2201 Marconi Road
Wall, NJ 07719

Phone 732-506-6565 Fax 732-506-6975

Publisher Tom Fote, Editor Paul Turi

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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2023 OFFICERS

President	Mark Taylor	732-245-9445
1st V.P.	Greg Kucharewski	732-429-9637
2nd V.P.	Don Marantz	908-347-1434
Treasurer	Doug Tegeder	732-575-2661
Rec. Sec.		
Cors. Sec.		
Mem. Sec.	John Toth	732-656-0139

Committee and Chairpersons listed on last page

IMPORTANT DATES

September 12th JCAA Board Meeting
September 24th JCAA General Meeting
October 10th JCAA Board Meeting
October 29th JCAA General Meeting
November 10th JCAA Awards Dinner
November 14th JCAA Board Meeting
November 26th JCAA General Meeting

JCAA Hi-Roller Raffle

By Mark Taylor

Congratulations to all the winners of **2024 JCAA High Roller Raffle**. I would like to thank all those individual fishermen and women that supported JCAA through this fundraiser. It was amazing talking to all of you at all of the events where raffles tickets were sold. The drawing was done at the *old* JCAA Office on July 11th in Toms River and the winners list was posted the next day on the JCAA Facebook Page. All winners were contacted and have received their prizes, and some I had the privilege of delivering to personally. We had great conversations about fishing.

List of Winners and Prizes

1. **James Muller** - Jersey Nutz Six Man Charter (6-hour, 6-man inshore weekday charter) – **\$1200**,
Donated by Captains Robert and Cody Melton
2. **Stephen Marroletti** - 7' Palmarius Model 1 / Curado 200XG Conventional Combo – **\$545**,
Donated by Palmarius Rods and Curado Reels
3. **NJBBA President Mark Dzindzio** - \$500 Gift Certificate from Fisherman's Headquarters – **\$500**,
Donated by Fisherman's Headquarters
4. **John Connahan** - 10'6" Tsunami Airwave / SaltX 4000 Spinning Combo – **\$500**, *Donated by JCAA*
5. **Anthony Grassi** - 7' Magictail / Penn Battle III DX Spinning Combo – **\$390**, *Donated by Magictail Outfitters and Penn Fishing*

6. **Jim "Guido" Giffoniello** - 7' Penn Battle II 4000
Spinning Combo – **\$150**, Donated by Penn
Fishing



2nd Place Prize Winner Stephen Marroletti



4th Place Prize Winner John Connahan



5th Place Prize Winner Anthony Grassi

President's Report

By Mark Taylor

As summer is ending for all the students that will be going back to school. Some of us have had a rough fishing season so far. I have been talking to a lot of individuals that are saying that fishing this year has not been as good as last year. For example, spring striped bass, fluke (summer flounder), seabass. Everyone has their own ideas about the cause, but we need to look more toward the environmental changes, food source availability, etc. There needs to be more scientific studies done to really find the causes. We all need to be aware of things that are happening around us. I am hoping that the rest of the year turns out better.

I would like to remind all club representatives that there is no General Meeting in August but there will be a September meeting. Even though there are no meetings, it is the time of the year when clubs should think about a nomination for the JCAA Sportsperson of the Year. This will be an outstanding event held on **November 10th at the Captain's Inn in Forked River** and one not to miss. There will be more details in articles in the newsletter and on JCAA Facebook Page.

JCAA had their Heavy Hitters Tournament on August 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th. Even though fishing was slow there were individuals that were able to catch some nice fish. Paul Haertel will have more information in an article in this newsletter. Congratulations to all the winners and thanks to all that participated.

JCAA has a new office in Wall Township. We are still getting things ready by a small group of individuals, but we can use more people. If you are available to help, give me a call on 732-245-9445. Hopefully, everything thing will be ready for JCAA to hold possibility hold something there. I am still playing on the idea of what we can do, I will keep you posted.

I have received the contracts for next year's shows that JCAA has a booth. If you are available to volunteer your time to work, one of the days at these shows for JCAA please call me at (732) 245-9445. The two shows are Atlantic city Boat Show February 26th – March 2nd and Saltwater Fishing Expo March 14th – 16th.

JCAA is still looking for more individuals to get more involved with JCAA at all diverse levels. Let me know if you are interested at 732-245-9445.

Important Dates to Remember

- **November 10th** – Annual JCAA Sportsperson of the Year Dinner

Get Involved, unite as a community so the future of recreational fishing as we know it will not be gone.

Important Information: The next general membership meeting is scheduled for **September 24th** at 7:30pm and will be held in person at 385 Herbertsville Rd., Brick, NJ 08724. (Hybrid Meeting).

No August General Membership Meetings.

JCAA Heavy Hitters Fluke Tournament Results

By Paul Haertel

The Jersey Coast Anglers Association's Heavy Hitters Fluke Tournament began on 8/1 and concluded on 8/4. The weather was not as good as many would have liked and the ocean temperatures were very cold. That resulted in generally poor fluke fishing though there were a few good catches. Kevin Cole of Newton, NJ was the big winner with a 5.82lb fluke that he weighed in at Atlantic Bait and Tackle. Kevin won a Yamaha 9.9 HP 4-stroke engine and cash for his first-place fish. He also swept the 1-fluke and 3-fluke Calcuttas. Congrats to Kevin and the other winners listed below. Thanks to all those who participated along with our sponsors and weigh-in stations.

Largest Fluke

1st - Kevin Cole 5.82 lbs *

2nd - Adam Schechter 5 lbs

3rd - Robert Pagliuco 4.86 lbs

4th - Keith Scaglione 4.79 lbs (caught by Jon Lasser)

5th - Tom Lichnak 4.53 lbs

** Also won all 4 fluke Calcuttas (1-fish 5.82 lbs, 3-fish 13.4 lbs)*

Largest Seabass

Adam Schechter 2 lbs

Fisheries Management & Legislative Report

By Tom Fote

Summer is almost over. A couple of meetings took place this summer. I was not able to listen in on the MidAtlantic summer meeting, but I was able to listen to the ASMFC Striped Bass Meetings. I have been on many MFAC calls on climate resiliency and on the recreational committee. On the 27th, I will have a MAFAC meeting with a letter to send to NMFS. That will be available in the next newspaper.

We have not had a general meeting all summer. At the next general meeting on September 25th, we will be discussing issues that the general membership will need to vote on. We would like all of the club representatives to attend our general meetings so you can voice your opinions. The article I wrote last month which I have reprinted this month is titled JCAA NEEDS YOU. I did not get one response. Mark Taylor and I would like to hear from the club reps and make sure they are receiving the newspaper. Again, my email is tfote@jcaa.org. Please send me an email and let me know if there is any reason you are not attending the general meetings. Is there a way we can make this work better for you? JCAA is not Tom Fote's or Mark Taylor's organization. We are an organization of clubs. Without our participation we do not have the information to move forward on many issues. We have many members who are not young anymore. Without younger members JCAA will go the way of RFA, CCA chapters and other organizations that try to work for recreational anglers and the environment. We are as strong as you make us with your participation. I could not make some of the recent meetings and there was no one to attend in my place. Let us know what it will take to get you involved.

I hate to be a pessimist when it comes to fisheries management regulations but there is not much good news coming from the Councils, Commission or NMFS. I will discuss striped bass in the next section but what is true of striped bass is true for other species. The loss of habitat in the last 40 years, the influx of endocrine disruptors into the system and the environmental damage from climate change on the producing areas are creating the perfect storm. I think JCAA should run a workshop and invite some of the experts but without a commitment of participation from

our member clubs, I don't think we can do that. That is something I need to hear about from you. I will be more than happy to plan this meeting, but I need your help. Give me a call if you are interested, (732) 270-9102.

Joint Meeting of MAFMC & ASMFC

I could not attend this meeting because of other commitments. I have not received a release from the MAFMC or ASMFC in time for this copy of the newspaper. Here are the motions that were listed on the MAFMC Web Page. I did read the Monitor Committee report, and they were not suggesting any change in the bluefish and summer flounder. Of course, they will look at the catch figures for 2023 and projections for 2024 at the December joint meeting and make any necessary changes.

August 14, 2024

Scup Specifications Review

Council and Board motion:

Move to revise the 2025 specification for scup, such that the commercial ACL=ACT= 26.85 million pounds (12,181 mt) and the commercial quota=19.54 million pounds (8,863 mt). The Recreational ACL=ACT=14.46 million pounds (6,559 mt) and the RHL=12.31 million pounds (5,585 mt).

Council: Beckwith/Farnham (Motion carries by consent)

Board: Kaelin/Kane (Motion carries by consent)

Motion carries

Black Sea Bass 2025 Specifications

Board only motion:

Move to suspend the joint management process rules for the Board to take action on the 2025 black sea bass specifications.

Gilmore/Clark (10/1/0/1)

Motion carries

Council and Board motion:

Move to adopt the following status quo specifications for black sea bass for 2025:

- The recreational ACL = ACT = 9.16 mil lbs., with an RHL of 6.27 mil lbs. The commercial ACL = ACT = 7.50 mil lbs., with a commercial quota of 6.00 mil lbs.
- The commercial in-season closure buffer is 5%.
- No changes to the other commercial measures which can be modified through specifications.

Board: Gilmore/Clark (9/3/0/0)

Council: Luisi/Lennox

Motion carries for the Board only (Council proceeds with substitute motion)

Council only motion to substitute

Move to substitute to adopt the following specifications for black sea bass for 2025:

- The recreational ACL = ACT = 7.31 mil lbs., with an RHL of 4.46 mil lbs. The commercial ACL = ACT = 5.98 mil lbs., with a commercial quota of 4.78 mil lbs.
- The commercial in-season closure buffer is 5%.
- No changes to the other commercial measures which can be modified through specifications.

Pentony/Duval (10/5/4)

Motion to substitute carries

Council only motion (as substituted):

Move to adopt the following specifications for black sea bass for 2025:

- The recreational ACL = ACT = 7.31 mil lbs., with an RHL of 4.46 mil lbs. The commercial ACL = ACT = 5.98 mil lbs., with a commercial quota of 4.78 mil lbs.
- The commercial in-season closure buffer is 5%.
- No changes to the other commercial measures which can be modified through specifications.

Motion carries (16/3/1)

Recreational Measures Setting Process Framework/Addenda

Council only motion:

Move to approve the draft range of alternatives as presented today.

Pentony/Neill

Motion carries by consent

Striped Bass Update

I have included the Striped Bass Management Board report. If you listen to the meeting online at the ASMFC webpage, you can find out how the board is feeling the pressure to be more restrictive. The problem is we are trying to manage what is going on in the Chesapeake Bay by just managing catch and not dealing with the real problem of the impact of climate change on the spawning areas. We also have not convinced the public that striped bass fishermen need to be more responsible in dealing with catch and release mortality. A lot of the fish you think look fine when you release them are eventually dead. There are many mitigating factors beyond your own behavior. These

are water temperature, air temperature, water salinity, size of the fish, length of time for the fight, and the number of fish caught and released. The only thing we are doing right now is putting ridiculous slot limits that do not accomplish ASMFC's goal. I listened to the discussion at the board meeting but was unable to ask a question or make a comment since they did not open the meeting to the public.

Let's look at how we rebuilt the stocks when they collapsed in the 70's. In the 70's they didn't collapse from climate change or endocrine disruptors. They collapsed because we were overharvesting fish. There was a huge amount of commercially harvested striped bass that were never reported. There were a lot of recreational anglers selling fish that was also not recorded. So we had a good year class coming up in 1982 and it was decided that we would protect this year class until a majority of the female population was sexually mature. We kept raising the size limit every two years by 2 inches to protect that year class. When we opened the fishery, we had raised the size limit up to 36 inches and that meant most of the females spawned at least once. We also have never proved that just because big fish have more eggs are they actually more viable than the young healthy females. The slot limit does not do that. We could be actually harvesting the fish that are most likely to spawn. What the commission should do is choose the year classes they want to protect and start raising the size limit to protect those fish. During the 70's, 80's there were not as many striped bass fishermen. So the pressure on the stocks was less regardless of the regulations. The catch and release mortality began to increase because of the huge availability of fish to just catch and release. Because the regulations on other species became so restrictive, anglers moved to striped bass. We have been restricting the catch for the last 10 years dramatically but there hasn't been any increase in recruitment because we can't control what is happening in the producing areas. As I have stated before we need to do more to find out what is really impacting recruitment in Chesapeake Bay and see if there are new producing areas that will take up the slack. We need to act on the real problems and not just cut back on recreational harvest. That is not working. As you will see in the report, even though I am no longer on the commission, I have replaced Lou Bassano as striped bass advisor. Lou was the NJ advisor for striped bass since 2002 and did an excellent job. Some people forget that Lou put in the striped bass gamefish bill that JCAA worked to get passed in the NJ legislature.

Without his bill there would be no gamefish status in NJ. This will give Lou more time for striped bass fishing, and we all wish him well.

JCAA Needs You

Since we have gone to a totally digital newspaper, we are getting less feedback about the articles. We need to know if you are reading them, what you think, and what issues you would most like us to cover. Please let your clubs know that individuals need to go to the webpage and subscribe to get a copy. We want to keep everyone informed and we don't know how well this is working. I also know that we don't have all the columns we used to have – like the Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Report. We have not found replacements to attend meetings and share what is happening. Let me know if you would like to volunteer for a specific species or issue. If you have suggestions or want to volunteer, send me an email at tfote@jcaa.org. If you want to subscribe, go www.jcaa.org.

Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board

August 6, 2024

Meeting Summary

The Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board met to review the draft Fishery Management Plan (FMP) Review and state compliance for fishing year 2023; consider initial recommendations from the Board Work Group on recreational release mortality; provide guidance to the Technical Committee (TC) on responding to the 2024 assessment if a reduction is needed to achieve stock rebuilding; receive an update on winter tagging; and consider two nominations to the Advisory Panel.

The Board approved the Striped Bass FMP Review for the 2023 fishing year and state compliance reports. In 2023, all states implemented management measures and monitoring programs consistent with the FMP and 2023 Emergency Action. The Board also discussed the Plan Review Team's (PRT) recommendation to conduct a review of the commercial tagging program. The PRT noted the review is not necessarily intended to change the program requirements, but instead intended to review how state programs are operating and identify issues states have encountered, including input from the Law Enforcement Committee. The Board agreed with this

recommended review and tasked the PRT with moving forward, acknowledging the review would not occur until Commission and State staff time permits following the 2024 stock assessment and associated tasks.

The Board received a report from the Board Work Group (WG) on recreational release mortality with WG recommendations on stock assessment tasks and public scoping. In May 2024, the WG was established to address tasks related to no-targeting closures, gear restrictions, stock assessment work, and public scoping. The WG presented two recommendations for the Board's consideration. First, the WG recommended the Board task the TC with calculations during the 2024 stock assessment to determine how decreasing recreational release mortality could contribute to any potential reduction needed to achieve rebuilding. The Board agreed with the WG recommendation and tasked the TC as outlined by the WG. If a reduction is needed to achieve rebuilding, the TC will calculate how low the release mortality rate would need to be to achieve the reduction, and separately, the reduction in the number of live releases needed to achieve the reduction. The TC will also calculate the reduction associated with potential no-targeting closures, comprised of a reduction in live releases and a reduction in harvest, if a reduction is needed to achieve rebuilding. The TC will also identify tradeoffs of implementing no-targeting closures at different times of the year with different assumed release mortality rates. Second, the WG recommended the Board extend the timeline for conducting a public survey on recreational release mortality. The WG supports the use of an online survey to gather public input on release mortality, but notes the need to take time to gather input from survey design experts and the Advisory Panel to ensure the survey is well-designed. The Board agreed with the WG recommendation and supports continued development of the survey for review at the 2024 Annual Meeting.

The Board received a progress update on the 2024 stock assessment update, which will be presented at the 2024 Annual Meeting. The Board also provided guidance to the TC on potential management measures to consider if the assessment indicates a reduction is needed to achieve stock rebuilding, in which case the Board could adjust management measures via Board action (i.e., no addendum process). Regarding how a potential reduction should be allocated between sectors, the Board is interested in a range of options from no reduction for the commercial fishery, to

different percent reductions for each sector based on contribution to total removals, to equal reductions for both sectors. Regarding the types of recreational options to consider, the Board is interested in a variety of measures, including a dynamic slot limit that would change year-to-year and mode split options. Some Board members noted seasonal closures may be one of the few viable options given the current restrictive slot limits, but some Board members expressed concern about consideration of seasonal closures through Board action. There was also a request to consider whether the recreational reduction should aim slightly higher than the required reduction given uncertainty, and a request that the 2024 assessment provide projections out to 2034 to capture the impact of recent low year classes as they mature and contribute to spawning stock biomass beyond the 2029 rebuilding deadline.

The Board received an update on the 2024 Striped Bass Cooperative Winter Tagging Cruise coordinated by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Striped bass have been tagged through the program since 1988, and the current hook & line survey has been in place since 2011. Over time, sampling locations have shifted northward from the coast of North Carolina up to the coast of Maryland, Virginia, and New Jersey in some years. In 2024, 38 striped bass were tagged. This low number was partly impacted by weather delays in 2024.

Finally, the Board approved Tom Fote representing New Jersey and Will Poston representing the District of Columbia to the Atlantic Striped Bass Advisory Panel. For more information, please contact Emilie Franke, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at efranke@asmfc.org.

Motions

Move to approve the Atlantic Striped Bass FMP Review for the 2023 fishing year and state compliance reports.

Motion made by Mr. Luisi and seconded by Mr. Hasbrouck. Motion approved by unanimous consent.

Move to approve Tom Fote representing New Jersey and Will Poston representing the District of Columbia to the Striped Bass Advisory Panel.

Motion made by Mr. Abbott and seconded by Mr. Cimino. Motion approved by consent.

Atlantic Menhaden Management Board

August 6, 2024

Meeting Summary

The Atlantic Menhaden Management Board met to review a report from the US Geological Survey (USGS) on osprey data in Chesapeake Bay, receive a progress report on the ecological reference point (ERP) benchmark stock assessment, and discuss possible changes to Chesapeake Bay management.

In response to a request from the Board, USGS staff presented a summary of the latest information regarding osprey abundance, spatial and temporal distribution, dietary demands, and timing of fledge in the Chesapeake Bay region, as well as ongoing research and information gaps. Osprey data comes from two primary sources: the North American Breeding Bird Survey and the eBird database. Long-term trends show significant population growth from both a continental and regional perspective. Since 1966, osprey abundance has shown a 299% increase in North America, a 587% increase on the Atlantic coast, and a 1,801% increase in Chesapeake Bay. However, since 2012, eBird data estimates show declines in some areas around Chesapeake Bay, particularly in the lower Bay where local reproductive rates have declined sharply since 1975 to below the population maintenance level. There are numerous pressures that may affect osprey reproduction, including food availability, habitat loss leading to greater levels of inter- and intraspecific competition, disease, algal blooms, inexperienced breeders, environmental contaminants, and water depth and clarity. Additionally, abundance indices in other Atlantic and Pacific coast states show similar plateauing and short-term declines since 2012. Osprey diet composition varies by salinity in different regions of the Bay with menhaden being the second-most consumed species in the higher salinity areas, including the lower Bay. More information is needed to explore the relationship between osprey abundance trends and trends in prey species, fish community composition shifts, and other high trophic level feeders. Ongoing research in Chesapeake Bay seeks to compare the availability of osprey prey, including menhaden and other fish species, between current and historical populations.

The Board received a progress report on the ERP benchmark stock assessment. The ERP Workgroup has had discussions with USGS about the

inclusion of additional data on piscivorous birds and has scheduled a workshop for November 2024. The ERP benchmark stock assessment and single-species stock assessment update are both scheduled to be presented to the Board at the 2025 Annual Meeting.

The Board discussed initiating an addendum to consider seasonal closures to purse seine vessels larger than 300 gross tons within the Chesapeake Bay to support the dietary needs of menhaden predators during critical points of their life cycles. Ultimately, the Board established a work group to gain additional information and evaluate different options of precautionary management in Chesapeake Bay, and the workgroup will provide a report to the Board at the Annual Meeting.

For more information, please contact James Boyle, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator at jboyle@asmfc.org.

Shad and River Herring Management Board

Press Release: August 6, 2024

River Herring Benchmark Stock Assessment Finds Populations Remain Depleted at a Coastwide Level Though Some Rivers Show Signs of Improvement

Arlington, VA – The River Herring Benchmark Stock Assessment finds the coastwide populations of both alewife and blueback herring (collectively referred to as river herring) are depleted relative to historic levels, with the habitat model indicating that overall productivity of both species is lower than an unfished population before the occurrence of any habitat modifications (e.g., dams or human alterations to the environment). The depleted determination was used instead of overfished and overfishing because of the many factors that have contributed to the declining abundance of river herring, which include not just directed and incidental fishing, but also habitat loss, predation, and climate change.

In terms of recent trends, there is no clear signal for either species across the coast. Even within the genetic stock-regions, trends in abundance and mortality differed from river to river, with some rivers showing increasing trends and low mortality rates, and others showing flat or declining trends and total mortality rates above the reference point. Although very few significant trends overall were detected since the adoption of [Amendment 2](#) in 2009, the majority of indices of abundance for both alewife and blueback

herring are likely to be higher now than they were in 2009. However, half of the blueback populations and 65% of the alewife populations have a high probability of being above the total mortality reference point, indicating total mortality on adult fish was too high. Total mortality is the removal of fish from a population due to both fishing and natural causes.

The northern New England region shows more positive trends and a higher probability of abundance in the most recent years being greater than in 2009. It is unclear why that is the case, especially as the more northern regions also have higher probabilities of being above the total mortality reference point. States in the northern New England region have conducted extensive habitat restoration and dam removal, but so have states further south, and they have not seen the same degree of positive trends in run counts and indices. In addition, states in the northern stock-region have also accounted for the majority of directed catch in recent years, while states in the Mid-New England, Southern New England, and Mid-Atlantic stock-regions have closed their fisheries. Genetic analysis indicates most of the ocean bycatch around Cape Cod and Long Island Sound was of alewife from the Southern New England stock-region and blueback herring from the Mid-Atlantic stock-region, two areas that have had more negative trends in recent years despite habitat restoration efforts and directed fishery closures.

The assessment includes two proof-of-concept approaches to develop biologically-based caps on bycatch in ocean fisheries. The data-limited methods produced estimates of bycatch caps that were lower than the current coastwide bycatch estimates and lower than the current caps in the Atlantic herring and Atlantic mackerel fishery. However, more work needs to be done on the data-limited bycatch cap approach, including consulting with the Mid-Atlantic and New England Fishery Management Councils on risk levels and how to implement species-specific caps in fisheries where the bycatch monitoring includes American and hickory shad as well as river herring. The assessment also recommended exploring species distribution modeling to identify hot spots of river herring bycatch that could be avoided with time-area closures as an alternative or complement to in-season monitoring of river herring bycatch.

No management action was taken given the continued coastwide harvest moratorium for states without an approved Sustainable Fishery Management Plan, as required by Amendment 2. Additionally, the

New England Fishery Management Council is early in the process of drafting Amendment 10 to the Atlantic Herring Fishery Management Plan, which is proposing the development of measures to reduce river herring bycatch in the federal fishery.

A more detailed description of the stock assessment results, as well as the Benchmark Stock Assessment and Peer Review Report will be available on the Commission website, www.asmfc.org, on the [Shad & River Herring webpage](#). For more information, please contact James Boyle, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at jboyle@asmfc.org.

Understanding the Omega Protein / Cooke, Inc. Lawsuit

By Paul Eidman

A recent lawsuit unveiled in federal court in Manhattan accuses a foreign company named Cooke, Inc. of committing a significant fraud against the American people. The lawsuit alleges that Cooke, along with partners Omega Protein and Alpha Vessel Co, violated US laws by falsely claiming eligibility for a government program reserved exclusively for US citizens. This program is governed by laws known as the Jones Act and the American Fisheries Act (AFA). Key Points of the Lawsuit:

- **Deceptive Ownership:** When Cooke acquired Omega Protein in 2018, they allegedly deceived the US government. They transferred their fishing boats to a Delaware-based company. This company was supposed to be mostly owned by a US citizen named Seth Dunlop, but in reality, Dunlop is claimed to be a frontman. Cooke, a non-US entity, still controlled the company, which violates the AFA.
- **Breaking the Law:** The lawsuit asserts that Cooke and Omega Protein hid these facts from the Department of Transportation. This is a serious breach of the AFA, which requires honest disclosure of vessel ownership and control. Violations can lead to fines up to \$154,000 per boat per day and the loss of fishing rights in US waters, potentially totaling up to billions of dollars.
- **Importance of the Lawsuit:** This legal action is crucial because it exposes attempts to exploit US laws for profit from American natural resources. Holding Cooke accountable aims to prevent future violations and safeguard America's oceans and fishing grounds.

From a recreational fishing perspective, this lawsuit is significant because it emphasizes the need for fair practices in managing US fisheries. Allegations suggest Cooke's actions may have unfairly benefited a foreign entity, jeopardizing the sustainability of US fisheries. This impacts domestic fishermen, including recreational anglers who rely on healthy fish populations and fair access to fishing areas.

If successful, the lawsuit could profoundly influence how US fisheries are regulated, setting a precedent for strict enforcement of laws like the AFA. This could deter others from breaking US regulations for financial gain and ensure responsible management of American marine resources.

In conclusion, the allegations against Cooke, Inc. underscore the importance of transparency and adherence to US fishing laws. This ensures that American resources are sustainably managed for the benefit of all, including recreational fishermen.

New Guidelines for Synthetic Testing Could Save Horseshoe Crabs and Boost Atlantic Ecosystems

By Paul Eidman

The Horseshoe Crab Recovery Coalition (HCRC), which includes over 50 conservation and healthcare organizations, is celebrating a significant win for marine life and coastal ecosystems. The U.S. Pharmacopeia (USP) has officially recognized a synthetic alternative to horseshoe crab blood for bacterial endotoxin testing in the biomedical industry. This move is seen as a crucial step toward reducing the pressure on horseshoe crab populations along the Atlantic Coast.

As stewards of our coastal waters here in New Jersey, we welcome this news. By leaving more horseshoe crabs in the water, we hope to see improvements in our local ecosystems. The broader adoption of these alternatives could lead to fewer horseshoe crabs being harmed, benefiting not only the crabs but also the broader marine environment.

For years, horseshoe crabs have been harvested for their blue blood, which is essential for the *Limulus* amoebocyte lysate (LAL) test used to ensure the safety of medical devices and injectable drugs. However, this practice has taken a toll on horseshoe crab populations, impacting not only the crabs but also shorebirds like the Red Knot, which rely on horseshoe crab eggs during

their long migratory journeys. Additionally, many of our local forage fish, like Killifish, and gamefish, such as Weakfish and Fluke, feast upon these eggs.

The new standard, known as Chapter 86, promotes the use of recombinant Factor C (rFC), a synthetic alternative that does not require horseshoe crab blood. Major pharmaceutical companies like Eli Lilly have already been using rFC since 2016, demonstrating its effectiveness. This shift is expected to help conserve horseshoe crabs, supporting healthier ecosystems and ensuring the survival of species like the Red Knot.

Leaders in the industry and government, including Representative Frank Pallone and Senator Cory Booker from New Jersey, have championed the adoption of synthetic testing alternatives. Pallone emphasized the importance of keeping horseshoe crabs in their natural habitats, where they play a crucial role in the local ecosystem and serve as a food source for migratory birds.

The HCRC and other organizations are now urging the biomedical industry to fully embrace these synthetic alternatives, which are not only safer and more reliable but also eliminate the need to harvest horseshoe crabs. This transition is seen as a win-win for both human health and the environment.

As Elizabeth Baker from the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine put it, "The many advantages to using non-animal approaches to test for endotoxins make this policy change a no-brainer." With the new USP guidelines in place, there is hope that more companies will follow suit, reducing the ecological impact of biomedical testing and helping to restore balance to Atlantic ecosystems.

Rare Incident in Offshore Wind: What Recreational Fishermen Should Know

By Paul Eidman

This summer was supposed to be a breakthrough for offshore wind in the U.S., especially with large-scale projects like Vineyard Wind off the coast of Massachusetts. Instead, the industry faced an unexpected challenge when a turbine blade broke and washed debris onto Nantucket beaches, causing concern among local communities, including recreational fishermen.

While this incident has garnered attention, it's important to put things into perspective. Offshore wind is a burgeoning industry in the U.S., and like any new

venture, it's not without its challenges. However, the turbine blade failure is a rare event and not indicative of a widespread issue. The company responsible, GE Vernova, has already identified the cause—"insufficient bonding" in the blade's manufacturing—and is taking steps to ensure it doesn't happen again.



For those who spend time on the water, whether fishing or surfing, the sight of turbine blade debris can understandably raise concerns. However, it's worth noting that this is the first such failure at a U.S. offshore wind farm. Vineyard Wind, a key project in the region, has taken immediate action to address the issue. The federal Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement has also stepped in, halting further construction until the situation is fully understood and resolved.

While the breakage happened at an unfortunate time—during peak summer—it's important to remember that offshore wind projects like Vineyard Wind are crucial for the future of clean energy. These projects are designed to reduce our reliance on fossil fuels, improve air and water quality, and ultimately benefit the environment, including the marine ecosystems that many fishermen rely on.

The pushback against offshore wind from some political figures, including former President Donald Trump, adds another layer of complexity to the situation. But the broader context shows that offshore wind is a key component of national efforts to combat climate change and move towards a more sustainable energy future.

For recreational fishermen, the takeaway is that while this incident is unfortunate, it is being handled with the seriousness it deserves. The companies involved are committed to resolving the issue and ensuring the safety of both the marine environment and the people who enjoy it. As offshore wind continues to grow, it will provide new opportunities and challenges, but the long-term benefits are clear.

So, while it's natural to be concerned, it's equally important to stay informed and understand that this incident is an exception, not the norm. Offshore wind remains a vital part of our energy future, and with continued diligence, it can coexist with our cherished marine activities.

Protect Our Oceans: Stop Industrial-Scale Menhaden Fishing

By Paul Eidman

Menhaden are crucial to marine ecosystems, serving as a primary food source for whales, dolphins, birds, and popular game fish. These small but mighty fish support the health and balance of our ocean's wildlife and are vital for recreational fishing and ecotourism.

However, industrial-scale fishing is removing hundreds of millions of menhaden annually from the Atlantic Ocean. This excessive harvesting threatens the delicate balance of marine life and the economic activities that depend on a healthy menhaden population.



The New York-New Jersey Bight has become a critical feeding area for Humpback whales and striped bass, making the protection of this region even more urgent. Alarming, the menhaden fishing industry is now traveling more than 300 miles to target fish off these coasts, disrupting local ecosystems and endangering these vital species.

We call on Commerce Secretary Raimondo to immediately enact emergency regulations to prohibit industrial menhaden fishing in the New York-New Jersey Bight from Cape May to Montauk until science can prove that damage is not being caused. Governor Hochul, Governor Murphy, and any elected official who cares about sustainable fisheries and healthy ecosystems must weigh in strongly in support of this request.

By signing this petition, I stand with Menhaden Defenders in their call to end reduction fishing. Menhaden are too valuable to take in such large

numbers for salmon farms, inexpensive pet food, and foreign profit. This practice must end before it is too late.

Link to petition: [Take Action — Menhaden Defenders](#)

Key Developments in Chesapeake Bay Menhaden Management: A Step Forward

By Paul Eidman

Today's ASMFC Menhaden Board meeting garnered significant attention, with 163 advocates tuning in to learn about potential changes in Chesapeake Bay management. The meeting's highlight was a motion from Maryland to implement time and spatial closures for the reduction fishery within the Bay—an unexpected move, given Maryland's usual stance on conservation. The motivation behind the motion became clear: local pound net fishermen are struggling to catch menhaden.

A compelling presentation from the USGS on the Chesapeake Bay's osprey population fueled the discussion. The study revealed that many osprey nests are failing, and while multiple factors are at play, the depletion of menhaden is a major concern. This data propelled Maryland to move forward with its proposal.



It's not just Chesapeake Bay that's facing challenges—osprey nests all over New Jersey have been failing this year as well. It has become abundantly clear that Omega Protein's continued decimation of mature bunker stocks, both in the Chesapeake and off New Jersey, must be factored into the management of the menhaden harvest.

Following intense debate, including attempts to delay or indefinitely postpone the motion, a commonsense proposal by Ms. Colden of Maryland was unanimously approved, with only Rhode Island abstaining. Ms. Colden emphasized the need for caution, noting that while much about the Bay's ecosystem remains unknown, the concentrated harvest

of menhaden is a serious issue, especially as predator demands increase with the rebuilding of overfished stocks like striped bass.

The meeting's outcome offers new hope for the Chesapeake Bay. Let's all remember that the Bay is the largest estuary (read nursery) on the East coast and desperately needs to be treated with love, care and caution. At one point, more than 75% of all the striped bass on the coast came from here and now, if it wasn't for the Hudson River Striped bass stocks doing well as of late, we would be in a very terrible place.

The Chesapeake Bay is that important!



The establishment of a workgroup dedicated to menhaden management is a crucial step toward understanding the impacts of removing vast quantities of fish from such a concentrated area. This group will also address bycatch and work toward more informed, precautionary management practices.

We call upon all advocates in the fight for menhaden to rally behind the newly established workgroup and support the push for science-based management of these vital forage species. Our commitment is to educate our community and ensure that every voice is heard in shaping the future of menhaden management.

The path forward is clear, and with united effort, we can drive real change for the Chesapeake Bay and beyond.

JCAA Membership Report

By John Toth

It is hard to believe that it is August already and where did the summer go? A number of clubs have still not paid their membership dues, so please do so since we are already well into 2024. Please make your checks payable to the JCAA and mail them to the Camp Evans address. Send your dues to:

Jersey Coast Anglers Association
c/o Info Age
2201 Marconi Road
Wall Township, NJ 07719

Youth Education Report

By Greg Kucharewski

I have received checks from these clubs as payment for their membership dues and sponsorships: **Spring Lake Live Liners – \$100, Hi-Mar Striper Club – \$500, Raritan Bay – \$50, Manasquan Fishing Club – \$300, Salt Water Anglers of Bergen County – \$100, Sunrise Rod & Gun Club – \$50, Seaside Heights Fishing Club – \$100, Menhaden Defenders – \$100, Surf Kings – \$50, Newark Bait & Fly Casting – \$100, New Jersey Beach Buggy Association (NJBBA) – \$300, NJ Council of Diving Clubs – \$50, Hudson River Fishermen’s Association (HRFA) – \$100, Delaware River Shad Fishermen’s Association – \$100, Fish Hawks - \$100, Bradley Beach Surfcasters - \$150, Shore Surf Club - \$50, Forked River Tuna Club – \$250, Beach Haven Marlin & Tuna Club – \$100, Belmar Fishing Club – \$50, and the Bay Head Shores Fishing Club – \$50.**

I have also received sponsorships and purchase of JCAA raffle tickets from individuals and associations: **Paul Shafer – \$200, Jon Brunetti – \$100, Bill Browne – \$100, L. Raymond Humpreys – \$135, Keith Kurek – \$10, Adam Pieseki – \$85, Michael Revesz – \$100, Barnegat Animal Clinic – \$60, Linda & Chris Jewell – \$210, Gene & Susan Geld – \$60, Fortesque Caption’s Association – \$10, Paul Olsen – \$50, Joe Palumbo – \$500, Brian Dunn – \$20, Willis Frantz – \$25, and Joseph Bernadinelli – \$25.**

If you are still interested in having a presentation to your club, please contact me at my email address or phone number mentioned below. To schedule a presentation, I need to know the date, time, and address of your club meeting and a contact person to coordinate with. I have been contacting clubs to schedule a presentation and I would appreciate your getting back to me at your earliest convenience.

Our next JCAA General Membership meeting be on **September 24th, 2024**, and it will be held as an in-person meeting at the Shark Anglers Building in Herbertsville and by ZOOM starting at 7:30 p.m.

I can be contacted at tothjohn@verizon.net or at (732) 656-0139 if you have any questions.

NJBBA YOUTH FISHING

The New Jersey Beach Buggy Association will host the 29th Annual surf fishing contest for children on Saturday, September 14th at Island Beach State Park (IBSP). The FREE EVENT is for youngsters 16 yrs. old and younger. Registration starts at 7:30 am at the first swimming area, “OBA-1”. The kids will receive an event t-shirt and a grab bag full of goodies after attending 5 Learning stations. “Prizes will not be given out before the awards ceremony. Fishing starts at 10 am, any fish caught could be a winner. When the 3-hour fishing period ends, everyone returns to OBA-1 for a FREE lunch. Please contact Ken Hollins at: njbbawebmaster@gmail.com for more information.

LAKE JULIANNA FISHING DAY

Mr. Vito Cardinale and Randy Johnson, along with their family and friends hosted the 8th Annual “Play HOOK-e” Veterans, Children with Disabilities and Active-Duty Military Fishing Day on August 24, 2024. All participants enjoyed a fun day at Ponderosa Estates Farm, Millstone, NJ to catch and release fish at Lake Julianna.



Don Marantz, Event Chairperson, stated we had over 600 participants to enjoy the festivities at Lake Julianna. Corporal Philip A. Reynolds Detachment Marine Corps League, Freehold, NJ provided a Color Guard and John Rinhart started the afternoon ceremonies. Casey Sky Noon sang the National Anthem and Guitar’s 4 Vets played songs for the crowd. The Vietnam Veterans of America Shore Area Chapter 12 presented Don Marantz with an Eagle of

Brotherhood Award for being a founder of the event. New Jersey State Police provided K-9 demonstrations and assisted throughout the day.



More than 60 volunteers were available to support children and veterans that came to the event. Veterans attending the event also helped youngsters cast a line. Participants had the use of loaner fishing rods and reels, rigs, and Spring Lake Freezer Bait Company made sure there were plenty of worms for catching fish. "NJ Hooked on Fishing Not on Drugs" Karen Byrne NJ Fish and Wildlife setup all the loaner rods and reels with volunteers and prepared bait.



Mr. Cardinale and his family and friends served food to everyone in attendance. at the BBQ. We thank our gracious hosts and all the volunteers, food handlers, and merchants to make the 8th Annual Play HOOK-e KWTGF and Take a Veteran Fishing Day a remarkable success. We regret we are not able to mention all the business names and contributors at this time.

JERSEY COAST SHARK ANGLERS VETERAN FISHING TRIP A GREAT SUCCESS

During August, the membership of the Jersey Coast Shark Anglers provided funds for a Play HOOK-e from PTSD fishing trip aboard the Miss Michele out of Point Pleasant. Karen Noe and Michele Kohler helped organize the trip that was co-hosted by the Vietnam

Veterans of America. We thank the membership of JCSA for their continued support for our disabled veteran community and all the volunteers that made this trip possible.



2024 JCAA YOUTH EDUCATION AWARD

We already have a nomination from Hi- Mar Striper Club for 2024. There is still time to send nomination into the JCAA Youth Education Committee.

Youth Education Award Criteria: Promoting "Hooked On Fishing Not On Drugs (HOFNOD)," Certified HOFNOD instructors, number of fishing or aquatic education events, JCAA lending library usage, and creativity for promoting youth fishing events. Submit your nominations in writing and email to gkucharews@jcaa.org. Please view the JCAA website for the next general membership meeting.

NJ FREE FISHING DAY

NJ's second Free Freshwater Fishing Day will be Saturday, October 2024 when no license is required to fish regardless of age.

This fall, think about becoming a HOFNOD instructor. New Jersey HOFNOD facilitator workshops are hosted by the DEP Division of Fish and Wildlife. It is well worth the time to learn creative aquatic activities to teach youngsters the importance of becoming environmental stewards. This workshop is a great learning experience. 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.

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Tagging Study

Rutgers University is studying the migrations of summer flounder. If you catch a tagged fish, please report it by calling 856-391-7652.

RECORD THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION

- Tag ID #
- Date Caught
- Location Caught
(Approximate Latitude & Longitude Preferred)
- Fish Length
- Water Depth
- Health and Condition of Fish

Any angler that reports a tagged fish will be entered into a raffle for awards.

Tag ID #

RUTGERS TAGGING RESEARCH 05933

Phone #

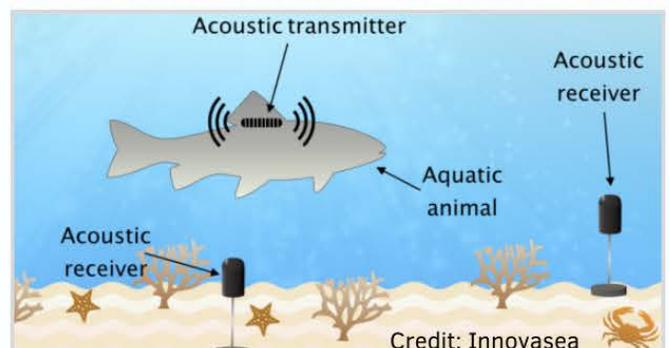
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Some fish have surgically implanted acoustic transmitter tags and an external ORANGE anchor tag. Release of these fish is highly encouraged to allow long-term tracking.

RUTGERS TAGGING RESEARCH 07982



Questions?

Contact: Dr. Douglas Zemeckis
(zemeckis@njaes.rutgers.edu, 732-349-1152)
Contact: Chase Wunder
(chase.wunder@rutgers.edu, 443-553-1801)

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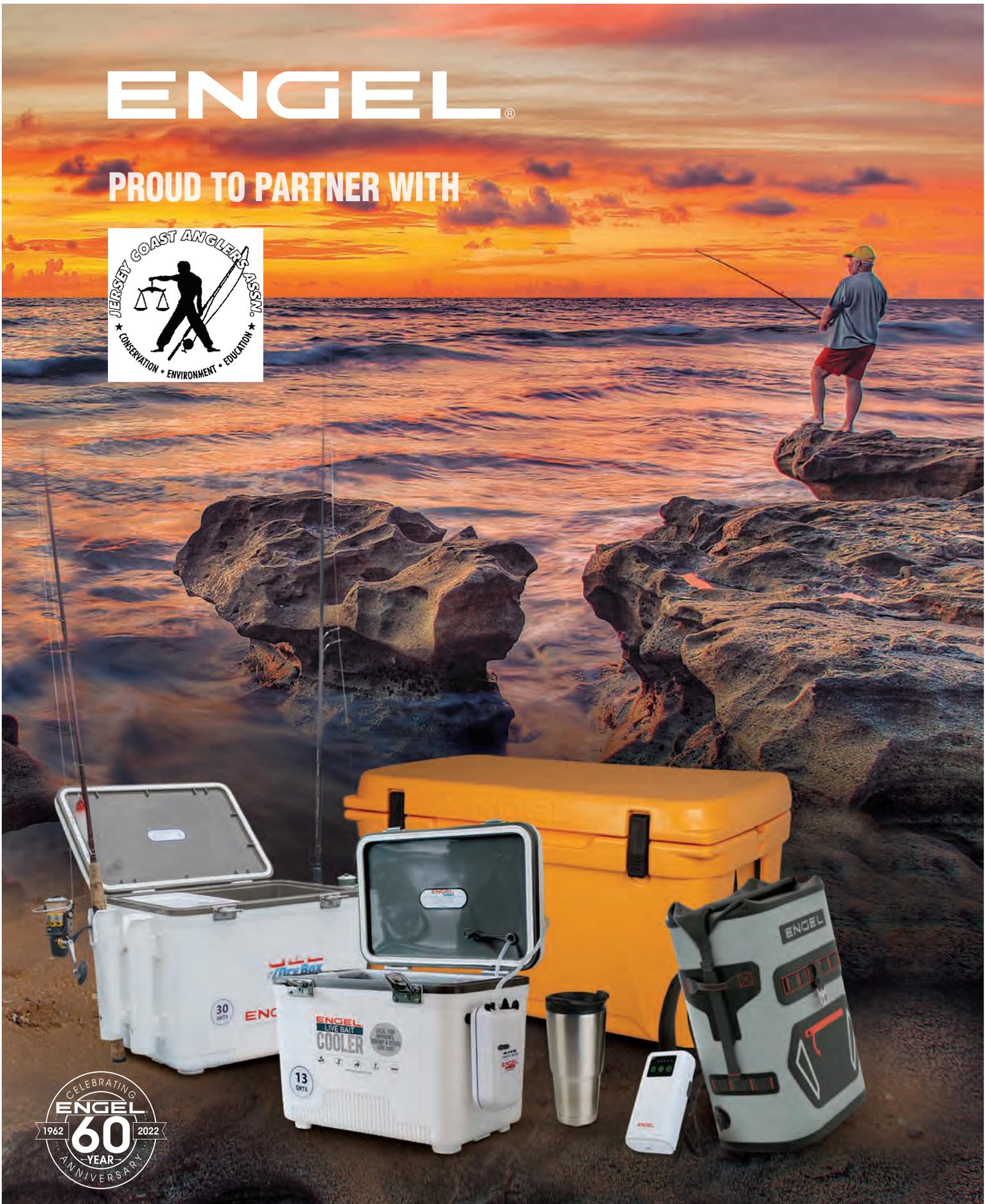
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Membership is now free! Sign up as an Associate Member and receive monthly JCAA News that gives you the most up-to-date news about Fisheries Management and Environmental Issues. If you would like to support the goals of JCAA, please contribute if you are able. Look for the [Subscribe](#) button on the JCAA home page or complete application below.

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City _____

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Ph. # _____

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Office Manager	Paul Turi	732-506-6565 jcaa@jcaa.org
Access: (North)	George Browne	732-674-7060
Access: (South)	George Browne	732-674-7060
Blackfish	Paul Haertel	973-943-8201
Blue claw Crab	Bill Browne	732-504-9344
Blue Fish	Al Marantz	732-859-0020
Habitat	Paul Eidman	732-614-3373
Fluke	Paul Haertel	973-943-8201
Forage Fish	Paul Eidman	732-614-3373
Highly Migratory Species	Eric Engard	609-913-2281
Science & Research	Bruce Freeman	732-793-7871
Seabass	Paul Haertel	973-943-8201
Sponsorship	Frank Richetti	732-477-3120
Striped Bass	Paul Haertel	973-943-8201
Ways & Means	Don Marantz	908-347-1434
Webmaster	Phil V. Celmer	jcaa@jcaa.org
Youth Education	Greg Kucharewski	732-840-9197

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