

# JCAA NEWSPAPER MAY 2011

Official Newspaper of the *JERSEY COAST ANGLERS ASSOCIATION*

(Published on April 20th, 2011)

**Monthly Meeting Room Brick Plaza at 270 Chambers Bridge Rd**  
**"WORKING FOR MARINE RECREATIONAL ANGLERS"**

## JCAA REGULAR MEETING:

**Tuesday, April 26th, 2011**

**Starting at 7:30 PM**

**At Brick Plaza at 270 Chambers Bridge Rd**

## NEXT JCAA BOARD MEETING

**Thursday, May 12th, 2011**

**Starting at 7:30 PM at JCAA Office**

## **OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER OF THE JERSEY COAST ANGLERS ASSOC.**

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**JCAA Newspaper Publisher Tom Fote**

**JCAA Newspaper 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 (732) 929-2591 or Tom Fote at (732) 270-9102 before the meeting date to ask permission.**

## 2011 OFFICERS

|                            |                |              |
|----------------------------|----------------|--------------|
| <b>President</b>           | Eileen Smith   | 732-899-2681 |
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| <b>2<sup>nd</sup> V.P.</b> | Don Marantz    | 609-259-6368 |
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| <b>Tournament Dir.</b>     | Tim Burden     | 732-279-3177 |

**Committee & Chairpersons listed on last page**

## **2011 High Roller Raffle**

It is now time for the JCAA High Rollers 2011 Raffle. We have put together a terrific selection of rods and reels and other prizes for a raffle that will be drawn on April 26, 2011. This is a major fundraiser for the JCAA. The 8 prizes are listed below with a value of over \$3,391.00. Tickets will be two dollars each and Club Representatives can get books of tickets to sell by attending a JCAA meeting. If you would like to buy raffle tickets call the JCAA office. Raffle ticket books will also be mailed along with entries for the 17<sup>th</sup> Annual JCAA Fluke Tournament. When your club representative brings them to your club, please help with your purchase. Without your continued support we cannot function as an organization in protecting the marine resource and angler's rights.

- 1) Shimano Tallus TLC-58 HRSA Rod-Tiagra 30W LRSA Reel  
Value \$688 *Donated by JCAA*
- 2) Minn Kota Riptide Trolling Motor model RT 55/SE/L&D  
Value \$550 *Donated by Johnson Outdoors Inc.*
- 3) \$500 Gift Certificated to Fishermen Headquarters  
Value \$500 *Donated by Fishermen Headquarters*
- 4) Tony Maja Bunker Spoon Rod w/ Shimano Tekota 800 Reel  
Value \$470 *Donated by BarnegatFishinHole.com*
- 5) Lamiglas IC 70 MH Rod with Canyon Reels HS-15  
Value \$459 *Donated by JCAA*
- 6) Lamiglas TFX7650 CT Rod with Shimano Torium 20 Reel  
Value \$424 *Donated by JCAA*
- 7) Shakespeare Ugly Stik BWLB 1100 M Rod-Penn 320GT2 Reel  
Value \$160 *Donated by JCAA*
- 8) Shakespeare Ugly Stik BWSL 2200 M Rod-Sportfisher Fin-Nor FS50 Reel  
Value \$140 *Donated by JCAA*

**Total Value \$3,391**

**Note:** The winning tickets will be drawn at the April 26th meeting so make sure you get your tickets in before the meeting.

## IMPORTANT DATES

April 26<sup>th</sup> JCAA General Meeting

May 12<sup>th</sup> JCAA Board Meeting

## President's Report

*By Eileen Smith*

The JCAA Fluke Tournament is in full swing. Mark your calendars for June 11th which is the date for the tournament. We have ten ports this year thanks to the people involved that worked hard. Find four friends and come enjoy a great day at sea. With these ten ports you will be just around the corner for competition. The ports are Jersey City, Shark River, Barnegat Bay, Great Bay, Cape May, Sandy Hook, Manasquan River, Long Beach Island, Ocean City and Fortescue. We are looking for more volunteers to help making this major fundraiser a great success. If you can volunteer a few hours, contact me or the JCAA Office. You can read more on this in the newsletter or visit the website.

The High Roller Raffle has been in full swing and coming to an end. The drawing is April 26th at our regular monthly meeting in Brick so get your raffle tickets in before that meeting starts. As usual the items that are in the raffle are of great quality. So I would like to thank all those people that supported JCAA in this fundraising event by taking a few chances. Good luck to those that entered and congratulations to all the winners.

We are keeping an eye on issues as they arise and to get the updated information to you as fast as possible. The Presidents of each of the member clubs should make sure that their delegates attend the regular monthly meeting so they can bring this information back. There are things that come up between meetings so you need to be put on the JCAA Email Alert. To get on this list you need to send an email to [tfote@jcaa.org](mailto:tfote@jcaa.org). When you send the email put in the subject JCAA Email Alert List and in the body of the email your name and the name of your club.

As I mentioned in past newsletters, the Newspaper Committee is looking for clubs to send in a 500-word description about your club including

who you are and what you do. Send it in by e-mail to [jcaa@jcaa.org](mailto:jcaa@jcaa.org) with the stipulation that we will be using these highlights in the order that they are received and they will be published in the JCAA newsletter. So send in a description and promote your club and possibly get new members that live or fish in your area.

## The 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Fluke Tournament - June 11th

*By Tim Burden*

Past JCAA Fluke Tournament winners and participants are already sending in their entry forms. These savvy anglers are cashing in on the **money-saving \$120 early registration fee** and putting that \$30 savings towards more Fluke Tournament t-shirts, hats, or the Tournament Day bait and gas. Don't be wasteful of your hard-earned cash, ***apply early and save money***. The early tournament fee of \$120 is good only up to June 4<sup>th</sup>. Any entries received after June 4th have the late tournament fee of \$150. Keep that extra \$30 cash in your pockets - register early. Having sharp hooks isn't the only way to cash in on June 11th.

The t-shirt orders will be going out shortly and it's best to order them now with your early entry to be assured of having them. Keep in mind there will be limited sizes available at the Trump Marina Awards Ceremony because year over year more anglers pre-order the t-shirts with their mailed entries. To see this year's collectable t-shirt and hat, go to our web site, [www.jcaa.org](http://www.jcaa.org). Additional tournament entry forms and t-shirt order forms are also available online for your friends and family. Do them a favor and print some up for them. Or email them the link and they can do it for themselves.

Great news and new for this year is the opportunity for online tournament registration. We anticipate having Pay Pal up and running early this month, so visit our website for a quicker and easier registration.

The NJMFC's proposed 2011 fluke regulations allow an earlier start of the season which gives anglers thirty-five more days to fish before this year's June 11<sup>th</sup> tournament date. That means more time on the water to find that honey hole and hone one's skills at bagging that big fluke, to which, I'm guessing, will allow greater opportunities at winning

any one of the 120 port prizes, including the **\$1,200 first place cash prize at each of the ten ports**. Here are the ports to choose from: Jersey City (Liberty Landing Marina), Sandy Hook (Gateway Marina & Yacht Sales), Shark River (Fisherman's Den), Manasquan River (Clark's Landing Marina), Barnegat Bay (Southwinds Marina), Long Beach Island (Fisherman's Headquarters), Great Bay (Great Bay Marina), Ocean City (Fin-Atics), Cape May (Jim's Bait & Tackle), Fortescue (Higbee's Marina).

Port prize winners do not have to be present at the **June 17th Award Ceremony at Atlantic City's Trump Marina** to claim their prizes. Prizes can be picked up at the JCAA office in Toms River. Numerous port prize winners didn't show up at the Awards Ceremony last year. But not showing up also meant they didn't cash in on the chance to win any of the door prizes nor last year's Grand Prize.

This year's **Grand Prize is between \$5,000 & \$10,000** (based on 500+ entries). And the only way to win this bundle of cash is to be registered with the tournament committee members at the **Trump Marina Grand Ballroom on Friday night June 17<sup>th</sup>**. You or at least one member of your crew must be present to win the Grand Prize or door prizes. What's more, you don't have to catch a fish to be eligible for these prizes.

The Fluke Tournament Committee is working hard at making the JCAA's largest fundraiser of the year a success. We need your help to accomplish this success. It's important to know that Fluke Tournament proceeds supports JCAA's mission to protect the rights of the recreational anglers. Helping us to help you enjoy recreational fishing is making a difference. What we do together helps to make a difference for our families, our children, and our future generations.

If you have any questions, call 732-506-6565 or visit the web site at [www.jcaa.org](http://www.jcaa.org) for additional information, complete rules, links to sponsors, and additional entry forms.

## Fisheries Management and Legislative Report

*By Thomas Fote*

### Pots Off the Reefs

Reef Rescue asked JCAA, New Jersey Outdoor Alliance and other interested groups to meet

and reinvigorate the pots off the reefs campaign. We all agreed that this campaign must move forward immediately. This is an election year and our representatives will be eager for our votes. You will be hearing more from Reef Rescue in the upcoming weeks. The Senate bill is S221 and the Assembly bill is A1152. On Monday, March 21<sup>st</sup>, the full Senate passed bill S221 by a vote of 31 yes and 4 no. The bill must now go before the Assembly. Please respond to any action alerts from Reef Rescue and help us move this bill through the Assembly and to the Governor's desk.

The Assembly bill has not been posted by Assemblyman Nelson Albano for a vote in the Assembly Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee. Please contact Assemblyman Albano, particularly if you are in his district. Assembly Speaker Sheila Oliver has the power to tell Assemblyman Nelson Albano to post the bill in the Assembly Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee for a vote. Please contact her and let her know that you want her to tell Assemblyman Nelson Albano to post this bill for a vote in his committee and then post it for a full vote in the Assembly. Tell her that the Senate has shown the way and we will be judging the Assembly on its action on this bill. Below is a letter that JCAA is sending to Speaker Oliver and all New Jersey Assemblymen/women. It is crucial that you write Assembly Speaker Sheila Oliver and your own Assemblymen/women immediately. All Assemblymen/women need to hear from everyone. Please use the letter below to Assembly Speaker Sheila Oliver and the cover letter to your assemblymen/women as a guide in creating your own letter.

To find the appropriate addresses, go to <http://www.njleg.state.nj.us/>. You can find the names and addresses of your legislators. You can also check their votes on important legislation. JCAA, Reef Rescue and other member organizations will keep you posted. For more information go to Pots off the Reefs at <http://www.njreefrescue.com/> or at <http://www.jcaa.org/> newspaper archives.

### Letter to Assembly Speaker Sheila Oliver

Dear Speaker Sheila Oliver:

JCAA is writing to request your support for Assembly Bill A1152/S221 which prohibits the use of traps on artificial reefs. You need to tell Assemblyman Nelson Albano to post this bill for a

vote in his committee so you can post it for a full vote in the Assembly. This bill was passed by the full Senate on Monday, March 21<sup>st</sup> by a vote of 31 yes and 4 no. Now is the time for the Assembly to pass this legislation. JCAA wants this legislation passed before you leave for summer recess. JCAA and the fishing clubs throughout New Jersey will be watching your actions on this matter and we will be judging you and the Assembly on its action or inaction. Our members and 800,000 New Jersey anglers are in support of this issue. Your action will matter to us in the upcoming election.

New Jersey's artificial reef system is one of the nation's most successful reef building programs. Though it occupied just 0.3 percent of the sea floor off New Jersey's coast, a 2000 study by the state's Division of Fish and Wildlife revealed that 20 percent of New Jersey's recreationally landed fish come from the state's 15 reefs. As more and more severe fisheries restrictions are placed on the more than 800,000 New Jersey anglers and the more than 500,000 out-of-state anglers who fish New Jersey's waters, the reef sites have become even more important to the state's recreational anglers. In the case of summer flounder, aka fluke, the reefs are the best opportunity for most recreational anglers who target fluke to catch one that meets the new minimum size of 18 inches.

This fishing effort provides a tremendous trickle-down economic effect in both shore and inland communities, as these anglers support marinas, boat liveries, bait and tackle stores, fuel stations, restaurants, convenience stores, sporting goods stores, toll highways, hotels/motels, real estate rentals, etc. These considerations add \$4 billion to New Jersey's economy, \$150,000 in sales taxes, and provide for 37,000 jobs.

At issue here is the very legality of the use of traps on the artificial reef sites. According to the state-approved 2005 Artificial Reef Plan, the intent of the reef sites is for "hook-and-line" angling activities. Continuing to allow fixed gear on the reefs is in complete disregard for this Department of Environmental Protection-approved measure.

Furthermore, the continually increasing use of fixed gear for commercial fishing purposes on New Jersey's reef system may directly violate federal law. For more than 20 years, the administration of the reef program has been funded by Dingell-Johnson Sport Fish (Wallop-Breaux) Restoration Funds. These funds are derived from an

excise tax on recreational fishing purchases, and as a "user pay, user benefit" program, federal law requires that these funds be used to benefit recreational fisheries. Under 50 CRF 80.14 and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Federal Assistance Toolkit, Part 521, Section 2.9 lists ineligible activities for the use of these funds, with paragraph C specifically disallowing their use for "*Providing services or property of material value to individuals or groups for commercial purposes or to benefit such individuals or groups.*" Violation of these rules is subject to repayment of funds.

The majority of states that have artificial reef programs, including New York, Virginia, South Carolina, Georgia and Florida, have identified traps as incompatible with their reef programs and no longer allow traps on their reefs. Furthermore, this action has been supported federally by classifying reefs in federal waters for a number of those states as Special Management Zones (SMZs), restricting the use of traps on those sites.

The issues are clear and the precedent has been set: Traps are not compatible with the purpose or the laws governing New Jersey's artificial reefs. JCAA looks forward to your support in enforcing this mandate and voting for Bill S221 and A1152. If you have any questions, please contact our legislative chairman, Tom Fote, at 732-270-9102 or [tfote@jcaa.org](mailto:tfote@jcaa.org).

Sincerely,  
YOUR NAME

### **Letter to Your Assemblyman/woman**

Dear \_\_\_\_\_ (Your Assemblyman or woman):

We are asking for your support for A1152. The attached letter to Assembly Speaker Oliver states the reasons this bill is crucial to the recreational fishing community. We are asking you to let Speaker Oliver know that you support this legislation and want it voted on in the Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee and then posted for a vote by the entire Assembly. We are asking you to also contact Assemblyman Albano, Chairman of the Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee to request his immediate action to post this bill. Jersey Coast Anglers Association, our member clubs and the 800,000 recreational anglers want this legislation passed before the summer recess. Since

the Senate has passed this bill in three sessions and the Assembly has refused to post this bill for a vote, we clearly know that the problem is in the Assembly. We will be watching and hold you accountable for your action or inaction.

Sincerely,  
YOUR NAME

### **ASMFC Meeting, March 21 - 24**

The total summary of all the actions with all the votes and motions is located at <http://www.asmfc.org/>. I am going to cover some of the board meetings in my report but I would recommend that you go the ASMFC web page and read the whole summary. If you want to get the press releases and summaries as soon as they are available, sign up at the web page. Tina Berger at the ASMFC does an excellent job of getting a great report out in a timely manner.

I think there was a real problem with this ASMFC meeting week. There are only 3 weeks of meetings this year instead of the usual 4. This means a big time gap between the November and March meetings. There is an even larger gap between the March and August meetings. I am very happy they are returning to 4 meeting weeks next year. The other problem was scheduling two important addendums for the last day. This means everyone was in a rush to go home and a major mistake was made. I will discuss the details in the individual meeting reports. I will be sending a letter to the Commission recommending we do not hold board meetings with major addendums on the final day. Black sea bass is a perfect example.

### **Striped Bass**

The Board voted to proceed with an addendum that could reduce the striped bass fishery by 40%. The summary is below. I received some questions about New Jersey's vote against this addendum at this time. I discussed this with two experienced members of the technical committee. They both said this was an action we shouldn't be taking at this time and they recommended waiting for at least the turnkey assessment this year or more likely the benchmark assessment in 2012.

I have been very precautionary on striped bass for many years. But I have learned many lessons sitting on the striped bass board at various times for the past 20 years. Many times we have

acted too quickly with preliminary data rather than waiting for the triggers outlined in the plan. New Jersey changed the regulations when we thought we needed to restrict the harvest of larger fish. Later data showed this was an unnecessary action. At the same time a decision was made that we didn't need to protect the larger fish, we needed to end the slot limit of 24" to 28" and one over 28". This particular slot limit was well received by the recreational community in New Jersey and did protect the larger fish. Last year, on all my striper trips, I could have only come home with one fish because all of the fish caught were above the 24" to 28" limit. This would have been true on many of the boats, especially in Raritan Bay. When this option was taken away, it made for many unhappy recreational anglers who are conservation minded. It forced them to fish at 2 fish over 28", killing the larger fish. If we are considering protecting the spawning stock, why do some states have slot limits that force you to take the second fish over 40 inches. This, again, is forcing you to target the larger fish.

I think my first concern is that we start going through a process for a new addendum before we are sure it is necessary. That means we send confused messages to the public. The very conservative striped bass fishermen will be concerned if we don't do something and the anglers who want fish to eat will be upset if we further restrict them unnecessarily.

My second concern is what happened with tautog. We started an addendum to deal with illegal fishing and ultimately did nothing except further restrict the recreational catch. My concern here is that we started an addendum on striped bass to restrict both the Chesapeake Bay and coast-wide recreational and commercial fisheries. The only thing that will happen is a further restriction on the recreational catch along the coast. We won't take any action in Chesapeake Bay or on any component of the commercial fishery.

My ultimate concern is that we are not dealing with the problem. At the same time Maine and New Hampshire were opening up a dirty small mesh fishery on sea herring that will have a by-catch on river herring and shad, two of the main food that draw large striped bass into the bays and estuaries, they are the most vocal complainers about the lack of striped bass. You can't have it both ways. The biggest problems with the striped bass stocks in the Chesapeake Bay are environmental degradation and

lack of forage species. Maryland has complained for years about a lack of menhaden for the striped bass to feed on in Chesapeake Bay. I have discussed the environmental problems in the Chesapeake with many environmentalists and it is clear that this is a major issue. Fisheries officials in Virginia and Maryland know what needs to be done but have no control over the agencies that could make this happen. I frequently get reports from a variety of sources documenting the spread of disease in the Chesapeake Bay striped bass.

The Hudson River and Delaware River stocks are doing much better. The ASMFC needs to use the available data and develop additional studies to show the contribution of the Hudson and Delaware Rivers to the coastal migratory stocks. We know from earlier studies that the Chesapeake Bay stocks make up the largest migratory component of the striped bass stocks especially in the northern reaches of the range. The Hudson River stocks were shown to be less far-ranging in their migration in earlier tagging studies. Since the Delaware stock has only recovered since the Clean Water Act forced the oxygen block from the Delaware River, we don't have current data.

The most depressing part is that the states have no money and are cutting the budgets of the fisheries agencies again and again. The federal government is cutting NMFS stock assessment funding and I can't see any money available from the Fish and Wildlife Service. The current House of Representatives seems intent on diverting money from EPA which will make the problem even worse. No promises about big fish can be kept without the habitat to support them. If you want to catch striped bass, or more importantly you want your children to catch striped bass, you need to support full funding for the remediation of the Chesapeake Bay and every other bay and estuary that provides nursery areas and forage species for all fish.

The good news was the approval of Connecticut's proposal to use their unused commercial fishery in a way that is similar to New Jersey. Their emphasis will be on providing an opportunity to children to harvest striped bass in areas that are not normally available.

### **ASMFC Striped Bass Meeting Summary**

Alexandria, VA – The Commission's Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board has initiated development of Draft Addendum III with

the goals of reducing striped bass fishing mortality (F) up to 40% and further protecting spawning stock when it is concentrated and vulnerable. The addendum was initiated in order to allow managers to promptly respond to the results of the stock assessment update in the fall if necessary. Provisions of the addendum, if passed, could be implemented prior to the start of the 2012 fishing year.

Connecticut submitted a proposal to implement the transfer of the annual commercial quota of 23,750 pounds to a "bonus" recreational fishery. The fishery would allow the harvest of 4,025 striped bass (sizes 22 -27.9 inches) in the Connecticut River and provide marginal predator control to help rebuild blueback herring stocks. The Technical Committee recommended approval of the proposed regulations. The Advisory Panel members were mostly supportive of the proposal, but did not reach a consensus agreement. The Management Board approved the proposal.

### **Black Sea Bass**

Procedurally this meeting was a disaster. When an addendum has gone to public hearing, a crucial action before any discussion takes place is to go through the public hearing information. All important details from each state's public hearings is shared with the entire committee and audience. We also received an advance set of written comments to review. Unlike the Tautog Board, none of this was done. We went directly to a motion by Massachusetts that was never the subject of public hearing. I can understand why Massachusetts wanted to get this motion on the table quickly since the increased catches at the northern end of the range is one of the problems. The studies show that black sea bass are similar in their migratory patterns to summer flounder. As we increase the size limit in the southern range, there are more fish within the allowable size limit migrating north and available for catch. New Jersey kept asking for a detailed explanation for the numbers being used in the Massachusetts proposal but we were never given a clear answer. The Massachusetts proposal penalized New Jersey even though we were not responsible for the overage. Without any public hearing or supporting documentation, the Massachusetts' proposal was approved. To rub salt in the wounds, the Chairman refused a request for public comment before a vote on this proposal. Usually the excuse is we already reviewed the public hearing documents.

That excuse was not available so they just denied the request. This is why we shouldn't have board meetings on important addendums at the end of the day when everyone is anxious to get to the airport. That's how mistakes are made and this one was a tragic example. Fortunately, this is only a one year option and we will be vigilant.

The real problem here is we are still fishing on a black sea bass quota that was established for a stock that was being overfished, overfishing was taking place and the stock was not recovered. None of this is true since the stock assessment says this is a recovered stock, overfishing is not taking place and is not being overfished. The Mid-Atlantic Marine Fisheries Council, in all of their reports, treats black sea bass as a success story since on paper it looks good. The fishermen don't see a success story but a horrible example of fisheries management that does not allow them to fish on a recovered stock. This problem is created when we allow the SSC to have arbitrary rules and the final say.

#### ***Press Release***

#### **ASMFC Black Sea Bass Board Establishes State Shares and Specifies Required Reductions for 2011 Recreational Fisheries**

Arlington, VA – The Commission's Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Board approved state-by-state shares for the 2011 black sea bass recreational season in order to mitigate potential disproportionate impacts to an individual state(s) that coastwide measures may cause. The 2010 regulations resulted in a preliminary estimated harvest of 2.98 million pounds, approximately 1.15 million pounds above the 2010 target. Given that the 2010 regulations were not effective in staying within the target, coastwide harvest will need to be reduced by 37% to achieve, but not exceed, the 2011 target of 1.78 million pounds.

Under state-by-state shares the following states will need to reduce harvest by the identified amount: Massachusetts (43%), Rhode Island (37%), Connecticut (37%), New York (39%), New Jersey (40%), and North Carolina (37%). Over the next two months, states will need to submit their proposed recreational measures to meet the required reduction for technical review and Board approval. The states of Delaware, Maryland, and the Commonwealth of Virginia, whose combined harvest represent less than three percent of the coastwide total, are not required to meet any harvest reductions and have committed

to maintaining 2010 measures (25 fish, 12.5 inches TL minimum fish size, and an open season from May 22 to October 11 and November 1 to December 31) for the 2011 fishery.

These required reductions apply to state waters for the 2011 fishing season only. Recreational measures for the 2012 fishing season will be coastwide unless the Board decides to change that through future management action.

For more information, please contact Toni Kerns, Senior FMP Coordinator, at [tkerns@asmfc.org](mailto:tkerns@asmfc.org) or 703.842.0740.

#### **Tautog**

If you want the summary for tautog, go to the webpage because I can't bring myself to even discuss it. This is a perfect example of intending to correct a serious problem, doing nothing about the original problem but making sure you restrict the recreational catch. This addendum was designed to deal with the illegal catch but actually did nothing about that problem. Instead, we began looking at the recreational catch and decided to reduce it based on MRFSS data that we know is flawed. The ASMFC approved a base year when, according to MRFSS, New Jersey had its lowest catch ever. They have not addressed this problem of poor data. And we are being penalized because of it.

#### **Menhaden**

I think the ASMFC finally took a step in the right direction. The ASMFC summary states: "The Commission's Atlantic Menhaden Management Board initiated a draft addendum proposing an interim biological reference point of 15% maximum spawning potential (MSP) with the goal of increasing abundance, spawning stock biomass, and menhaden availability as a forage species. The MSP approach identifies the fishing mortality rate necessary to maintain a given level of stock fecundity (number of mature ova) relative to the potential maximum stock fecundity under unfished conditions. In this case, a 15% MSP would equate to a fishing mortality rate threshold required to maintain approximately 15% of virgin stock fecundity. The current MSP level is 9%. The draft addendum will also include a suite of management measures to achieve 15% MSP."

With the concern about a lack of forage species for striped bass and other species, menhaden is a perfect place to begin solving the problem. This



is a species that at one time was abundant from Maine to Florida and had year classes that went to 10 and 11 years old, not the 3 and 4 year classes we see now. Will we start to see some true management of Menhaden?

## **Update on Reef Rescue Pots Off the Reef Bill**

*By John Toth*

The struggle to get the Pots Off The Reef bill (A-1152) continues in full swing with Reef Rescue Chairman, Pete Grimbilas leading the charge with the NJOA, JCAA and other organizations to get this bill finally passed. The Senate has already passed this bill (S-221) but it needs to be first heard in Assemblyman Albano's Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee before it can be brought to the Assembly for a vote. Assemblyman Albano is reluctant to bring this bill to a vote in the committee he controls. Due to his stalling to post this bill in his committee, Pete Grimbilas has held a protest by Albano's Cape May office on April 9<sup>th</sup> with approximately 60 anglers in attendance. Two more protests by Albano's office are scheduled by Pete Grimbilas for April 23<sup>rd</sup> and April 30<sup>th</sup> at the District 1 Legislative Offices located at 21 North Main Street, Cape May Court House, beginning at 10:00 a.m. The protest on the 30<sup>th</sup> will be followed by a rally for recreational anglers.

To see the first two of Reef Rescue videos on the Pots Off The Reef Struggle, go to [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=at\\_t\\_40-V1c](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=at_t_40-V1c). These videos show the traps that are causing the reef damage and has people explaining the problem. Get involved in getting the traps off the reefs by attending the protests and rally in Cape May and other related information.

Additionally, since the artificial reefs have been inundated with commercial gear, Dr. John Organ of the US Fish & Wildlife Service recently announced the end of funding for New Jersey's artificial reef program. He announced his decision in a letter to New Jersey's Department of Environmental Protection Commissioner, Bob Martin. The conflicts with commercial gear on the reefs violate the Sport Fish Restoration Act which provides for federal funding of the artificial reef program. The reefs are supposed to be accessible to the public and not be used almost exclusively by

commercial anglers. The Asbury Park Press Article on this is below.

Following the notification that the federal government was terminating the funding, Assemblywoman Alison Little McHose (R-Sussex, Morris and Hunterdon) called for an immediate hearing on bipartisan legislation that would bring New Jersey in compliance with federal rules.

This is an election year and Pete Grimbilas has said **this is the time** to get the Pots Off the Reef Bill passed and he has requested all recreational anglers to help him achieve this goal for the benefit of all of us.

## **New Jersey Outdoor Alliance Report**

*By John Toth*

On behalf of the JCAA, I attended a March 28<sup>th</sup> meeting of the New Jersey Outdoor Alliance (NJOA) and the following issues were discussed.

Pola Galie reported on the NJOA's Conservation Foundation Sporting Clay Tournament that will be held on July 18<sup>th</sup> at the Hudson Farm in Andover, NJ. More details about this tournament can be found at NJOA's website at [njoutdooralliance.org](http://njoutdooralliance.org).

Jerry Natale reported on the Somerset Fishing Show and thanked everyone who helped him staff the NJOA booth at times when he could not do it. The JCAA had a booth next to the NJOA and when NJOA members were not available to staff it, JCAA members crossed over and worked at the NJOA booth. Jerry expressed his appreciation for JCAA's help with his booth.

Glen Arthur (New Jersey Divers) gave a report on the upcoming sinking of the USS Radford, a huge battleship to be used as a new artificial reef. The battleship is expected to be sunk in May and it will be accessible at an equidistant point for saltwater anglers and divers from New Jersey, Delaware and Maryland. All three states contributed funds to prepare the Radford for sinking, such as drilling holes in the ship and removing items from it that can injure divers.

Pete Grimbilas, Chairman, Reef Rescue, reported that a protest by NJOA members will be held by the Cape May Court House on April 9<sup>th</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup> and on April 30<sup>th</sup> to bring media attention to Assemblyman Albano's lack of support for bringing the Pots Off The Reef bill (A-1152) to his



Agricultural and Natural Resources committee for a vote. The protest on April 30<sup>th</sup> will culminate with a rally at a site to be determined. Council members were asked to bring this information to their membership so that they could participate in these protests and the rally planned for April 30<sup>th</sup>. The companion legislation for the “Pots Off The Reef” bill has already passed in the Senate. We now need to have the bill to be first heard in Assemblyman Albano’s Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee and once it successfully comes out of it, the bill would then go to the Assembly for a vote. (More information on the Pots off The Reef Bill and protests planned for Cape May can be found at [www.njreefrescue.com](http://www.njreefrescue.com)).

Discussion then turned to the lack of funding for the Division of Fish & Wildlife (DFW). In addition to receiving less money for its budget, the DFW has to pay rent for its facilities and pension costs for its staff members. Other NJ state agencies do not have to pay these types of costs. The NJOA is concerned about these costs and other issues that are having a negative effect on the effectiveness of the DFW. A committee of NJOA members is being formed to continually monitor and provide direction to the NJOA on how to address these ongoing issues.

## **Feds End Funding for New Jersey’s Artificial Reefs**

by Dan Radel  
Asbury Park Press, 4/13/2011

Dr. John Organ, of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), announced the end of funding for New Jersey’s artificial reef program due to gear conflicts on the reefs. He announced his decision in a letter to New Jersey’s Department of Environmental Protection Commissioner Bob Martin.

The conflicts on the reefs violate the Sport Fish Restoration Act (SFR), which provides federal funding for the artificial reef program.

In his letter to Commissioner Martin, Organ said, “I am terminating all further SFR funding for the artificial reef program in New Jersey, effective the date of this letter (April 12, 2011). Funding can be restored when appropriate action is taken to eliminate the conflicts that currently interfere with recreational fishing on these reefs.”

“The state has to comply with the policy of the Sport Fish Restoration Act’s intended use, and

that is for sport fishing, not commercial fixed gear, such as pots,” Peter Grimbilas, chairman of Reef Rescue, said. “The state was warned that this could happen and it did.”

Grimbilas, who has been involved with Reef Rescue for years, has already been spearheading protests outside the office of Assemblyman Nelson T. Albano in Cape May Courthouse.

Albano has become the focal point in the fight to get the pots off the reefs because he is the chairman of the Assembly’s Agricultural and Natural Resource Committee.

Assembly Bill A-1152, which makes removal of commercial gear on the reefs mandatory, has been stalled in that committee and it must be put up for a vote and passed before it can be voted on by the full Assembly. The companion bill, S-221, has already been passed by the full senate.

Grimbilas led a demonstration last Saturday and has two more planned for April. “We’re demonstrating the democratic process in hopes of gathering more momentum and attention to the issue,” Grimbilas said.

Grimbilas said Reef Rescue will intensify their efforts to get word out to the public on this issue and he hopes to get the bill through before legislature breaks for the summer.

“Clearly, the trappers and potters with fixed gear on the artificial reefs are responsible for the termination of funding. For years, Reef Rescue, the NJOA, and other outdoor organizations, have warned legislators and policy makers that New Jersey has not conformed to the grant objectives of the Federal Sport Fish Restoration Program,” Anthony P. Mauro, Sr., chairman, of the New Jersey Outdoor Alliance said in a statement.

Angler Lou Falcone, who made the trip down from Piscataway, was among last week’s protesters. He fishes out of Waretown on private boats and uses the Barnegat Light, Garden State North and South reefs most often. “We lose lot’s of rigs on the reefs because of commercial gear. Recreational fishermen who regularly use the reefs are going to want this bill to go through,” Falcone said.

Assemblywoman Alison Littell McHose, R-Sussex, Morris and Hunterdon, is a co-sponsor A-1152 which would limit commercial fishing on New Jersey’s artificial reefs. “The loss of this funding is going to have a tremendous negative impact on a lot of people,” explained McHose.

“Not only will it hurt our state’s tourism industry and businesses such as tackle shops and charter and party boats, but it’s unfair to the 800,000 recreational anglers and divers who will suffer because state lawmakers failed to take appropriate action to protect the reefs and much needed federal dollars for the program.”

Five states along the Atlantic coastline have brought their reef programs into compliance with federal regulations including Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, Virginia and New York. Delaware is in the process.

Reef Rescue will hold two more protests at the District 1 Legislative Offices at 21 North Main St., Cape May Court House. They are scheduled for April 23 and 30 at 10 a.m. The April 30 demonstration will be followed by a rally.

## Fluke Regulations for 2011

*By John Toth*

I went to an April 7<sup>th</sup> meeting held at the Galloway Township Library in Absecon organized by our NJ Marine Fisheries Council to hear public comment on the four options that were proposed by them to be our new fluke regulations for 2011. The room was packed with boat captains, tackle shop owners, and fishing club representatives like myself. I have been to a number of these types of meetings and discussion often becomes very heated and divisive over which option should be our new fluke regulation for the upcoming year. **The vote for option # 2 was totally unanimous with not one vote going to another option!** The approved option sets our 2011 fluke season to start on May 7<sup>th</sup> and end on September 25<sup>th</sup>, a minimum size of 18 inches and a bag limit of 8 fish. This option (which I voted for on behalf of the JCAA) provides for the longest fluke season (142 days) and it was strongly endorsed by the party/charter boat industry and tackle shops. I did a very rough count of the votes that were cast for this option and approximately 60 were cast.

While the vote for Option # 2 was unanimous, some anglers said that they were torn about going for Options # 3 and #4 which called for a lower size for the first fish caught, 17.5 and 17 inches respectively. However, both of these options have a downside of sharply curtailing the fishing season to 108 and 93 days respectively, and this big

disadvantage outweighed its attractiveness. Some of the anglers in the more southern part of our state who fish the bays and have difficulty in catching an 18 inch fluke expressed the opinion that a smaller size limit should be considered for them.

A lot of the information to develop our fluke quota for 2011 was based on volunteer angler survey information and this data is far more superior than the figures supplied by MRFSS (Marine Recreational Fishing Statistics Survey) which has proven to be very inaccurate. This inaccurate data has caused all types of problems for us like closing down black sea bass seasons, even though these stocks are considered to be rebuilt. JCAA Board member, Tom Siciliano, at this meeting implored anglers to send in the data on the fluke that they catch to the website: [www.njfishandwildlife.com/marinesurvey.htm](http://www.njfishandwildlife.com/marinesurvey.htm).

Brandon Muffley of the Bureau of Marine Fisheries said that it was this information on summer flounder supplied by anglers in the volunteer angler survey that allowed the Division to explore options to allow a single “slot” fish in the fluke regulations for 2011. It is this hard data from anglers that gives our Marine Fisheries some of the information it needs to build a strong case for a better fluke season not only for 2011, but also for years to come.

Note: In my confirming this website with Brandon Muffley in a telephone conversation, he informed me that giving data on the number of summer flounder that are **discarded because they do not reach 18 inches is very important**. MRFSS counts **only** the number of summer flounder that are retained by anglers that are **18 inches** or more. By knowing the number of smaller fish that are caught, Brandon can use this information to get a better picture on the condition of our fluke stocks. He can also possibly use it to also build a better case for getting approval for a smaller minimum size for fluke and even a better quota for fluke for 2012.

**TO GET EMAIL ALERTS &  
TOURNAMNET INFO GO TO  
THE JCAA WEB &  
SUBSCRIBE**

## **New Sea Bass Regulations Imminent**

*By Paul Haertel*

**Sea Bass Committee Chairman**

With regard to sea bass, regulations had always been developed and then approved by the MAMFC. Therefore, each state was required to have basically the same regulations. The regulations were also the same for state and federal waters. However, for this year only, the MAMFC is allowing the ASMFC the authority to approve regulations for state waters as they do with fluke. The ASMFC developed several options including regional and state-by-state regulations with quotas based on landings from the last one year, three years or five years. Unfortunately for New Jersey, the ASMFC chose the state-by-state approach with this year's quota being based only on last year's landings. This is very unfair to New Jersey anglers because we are now being forced to reduce our catch by 40% from last year. Other states such as Massachusetts and New York are now being allowed quotas that significantly exceed their five-year average landings while New Jersey is being forced to fish significantly below its five-year average landings. The ASMFC voted in favor of this option despite strong protests from all three of our commissioners.

It is now up to the NJMFC to develop regulations for the 2011 season which will result in the mandated 40% cut. For the time being, the NJMFC has voted only to postpone the start of our season from 5/22 to 6/4. Our council is composed of a dedicated group of individuals who try their best to satisfy the majority of anglers. Unfortunately, their hands are tied and they are being forced to develop various options which include a shortened season, reduced bag limits, increased size limits and various combinations thereof. The methodology our state intends to use in developing these options has been approved by the ASMFC and specific options will be either approved or disapproved in the near future. Once this occurs, the approved options will become available to the general public. Our state will be holding a sea bass committee advisors meeting on 4/27 that I plan on attending on behalf of the JCAA. Member clubs are encouraged to choose their preferred option once they become available. This will allow our association to have a position on this

at the NJMFC meeting on 5/5. Regulations are expected to be set at that time. The meeting is at 4PM at the Galloway Twp. Public Library located at 306 East Jimmie Leeds Rd., Galloway, N.J. Public comment will be accepted at the meeting just as it was at the April meeting when the fluke regulations were set.

## **Highly Migratory Species**

*By John Koegler*

### **Bluefin Tuna Super Debacle**

In most fishery management plans a reasonable degree of common sense with an honest fishery management intent results in the regulations and rules they impose. Obvious and deliberate mistakes that fail to correctly fix the problems caused by the new regulations are quickly fixed. But as always NMFS HMS division wins an Oscar when it comes to their totally absurd choices that correct problems they created.

In the Federal Registry published on March 14, 2011 NMFS wrote a proposed rule, Vol. 76, no. 40, on FR pages 13583 to 13592. NMFS proposed a list of rules that, in my opinion, are one of the worst proposed rules ever written. But this is nothing new considering the long history of NMFS biased bluefin tuna fishery management regulations for recreational and the for-hire businesses.

### **Longline Quota Theft**

The HMS division's proposed rule steals 160 mt of ICCAT quota from the other bluefin tuna categories. NMFS proposes that longline estimated dead discards be stolen from the base US quota before any quota is assigned to the other categories.

Their proposed rule steals 160 mt of quota from other categories so the longline fleet does not suffer any loss of fishing opportunity in 2011 and 2012. NMFS makes this theft even worse by supporting the incidental longline landings of bluefin tuna in the NED sector by transferring an additional 25 mt yearly incidental quota in future years from the US base quota.

### **A Little History**

NMFS has known for a long time they had a major bycatch and dead discards problem with longline gear. This problem was most severe in the offshore area known as North East Distant gear restricted area (NED).

NMFS approved in November 2003 an experimental longline fishery designed to identify the gear changes required in longline fishing gear that would address and reduce their incidental catch of non-target species. NMFS selected a small number of designated longline boats to keep some giant and small medium bluefin in the NED zone to compensate these longliners for NMFS unpaid research project. Their fishing ended when a 25 mt bluefin landing discard limit was reached. When reached NMFS would close the fishery.

However, when the longline research experiment was completed and the NED was reopened with gear changes, NMFS failed to again impose their 25 mt bluefin landing tuna limit that would automatically close this longline fishery. The result was a totally open NED fishery subject only to NMFS BFT longline trip limits of a few BFT per longline trip but with zero limits on dead BFT discards. For several years NMFS mistake was covered by quota transfers from an excessive US reserve and other categories of uncaught bluefin quota.

By the late 2000's the NED BFT dead discards became so huge that they could no longer be covered by NMFS quota transfers. To solve this problem NMFS proposed a new rule that was printed in the FR 13583-13592 on March 14, 2011. The 2010 longline BFT discard estimates were not yet available. So NMFS used their 2009 estimates of 160 mt as a proxy for 2010. In a TV soapbox western this is called closing the corral gate after the horses have departed.

Future ICCAT Western Atlantic quotas were proposed to be reduced by a set-aside 25 mt to US landings and 15 mt to Canada to cover NED longline dead discards before any individual country's ICCAT quota was allocated.

NMFS proposed rule gives surface longliners a free pass, increases longline quota allocation and forces all other categories to lose part of their quota to cover it.

Is this an acceptable solution to the other fishermen and the coastal communities that depend on other categories' bluefin tuna landings for their income and survival? NMFS proposed new rule does not pass a common sense smell test!

NMFS new rule also proposes to:

1. Reinstates pelagic longline target catch requirements for retaining BFT in the NED gear restricted area. (See above)
2. Amends the Atlantic bluefin tuna possession at sea and landing regulations to allow removal of tuna tail lobes on tunas. Yellowfin and bigeye tuna must have a length of more than 27 inches from the tail fork to the forward edge of the cut to be cut in this manor. See FR page 13587.
3. Permits the transfer at sea for Atlantic tunas.
4. Covers a new rule mandating the use of new lighter gauge circle hooks only when fishing in the Gulf of Mexico. NMFS estimates these lighter circle hooks break and release 56.5 % of larger bluefin tuna hooked incidentally in this PLL fishery. See FR page 13587 for exact wording.

The proposed comment period has been extended to 04/28/2011.

- Label your comments by identifying them as "0648-BA65."
- Fax your comments to 978-281-9340, Att. Sarah McLaughlin
- Mail them to:  
Sara Mclaughlin, HMS Division (F/SF1)  
NMFS 55 Great Republic Drive , Gloucester,  
MA 01930
- Submit electronic submissions to Federal eRulemaking Portal:  
<http://www.regulations.gov> with the above name and address.

## **Youth Education Report**

*By Greg Kucharewski*

### **WINTER FLOUNDER FISHING**

During the early spring, there are a number of places to try your luck fishing. Try the following locations for winter flounder: Point Pleasant Canal, Bay Avenue, Pinebluff Ave., and by the bridges. Manasquan Inlet - both sides are productive and the Mantoloking bridge area. Shark River Inlet and Barnegat Inlet. You might also hook into a Striped Bass if you are using worms, but fresh clams work well for both species. Cut the clams into small strips and use a small hook. Winter flounder have a mouth about the size of a Cheerio.

## **FREE FISHING DAYS IN NEW JERSEY**

National Fishing and Boating Week, June 11 - 12, 2011: Free Fishing Days in New Jersey are Saturday & Sunday, June 11 & 12, 2011. Residents and non-residents may fish the public waters of New Jersey without a license or trout stamp. All other regulations apply. For those anglers just starting out, the Division of Fish and Wildlife offers many programs and classes to advance from beginner to expert. The Pequest State Trout Hatchery in Oxford, Warren County offers free fishing programs. Pequest offers a Natural Resource Education Center with a variety of exhibits and displays on wildlife, a butterfly garden, picnic areas and hiking trails. There is also a handicapped-accessible fishing site along the Pequest River. Last year the JCAA Youth Education Committee coordinated fishing and aquatic education programs for the week-long celebration of National Fishing Week. This year we will be working with disadvantaged students in Monmouth County. Member clubs that wish to conduct a National Fishing Week program can phone 732/785-9278 and we will guide your organization through the process. Phone if you have questions and please record your event. Let the JCAA Youth Education Committee know how many National Fishing Week participants supported your program. For more information about National Fishing Week check out their link: <http://www.rbff.org/page.cfm?pageID=46>

### **NJ WATERSHED SEMINAR** **PRESS RELEASE:**

Ever wonder how you can determine if your local stream is healthy or polluted? Are you already a stream monitor but want to expand your toolbox of skills? Do you wonder what data your watershed group can gather to help better protect or restore streams in your communities? Or are you new to the water world and just curious of what insects and critters live in your local stream and want to get involved protecting them? Then Stream School is for you! Topics covered: Physical and Biological Aspects of Stream Ecology and the River, Continuum Concept Considerations for Designing a Biological Monitoring Program that Fits Your Goals, Biological Sampling Techniques, Demonstrations, and Hands-On Training, Macroinvertebrate Identification and Taxonomic Keys, Regional Resources and Networking Opportunities, Good Times Along the Scenic Delaware River - the longest stretch of Special Protection Waters in the

nation, designated because the macroinvertebrates collected showed a healthy River! This two-day interactive classroom and field workshop will help participants learn about stream health by examining the critters that live there year round and call it home. You will learn how to collect and count these critters and turn that information into a health report for your local stream. You will receive effective methods to take action with this information to protect your stream if it is healthy or document harm and pollution to help clean it up if it is not. Date & Time: May 4 & 5, 2011, 8:45am - 4:00pm. Featured Stream: Wickecheoke Creek - a C1 stream of New Jersey. Location: Historic Prallsville Mills along the Scenic Delaware River 13 miles north of Trenton, Route 29, Stockton, NJ. Presenters: Stroud Water Research Center & The New Jersey Watershed Watch Network. To register go to: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/njstreamscool2011>.

Registration is open until April 30, 2011. Cost is \$15 per attendee. Check payable to Delaware River Mill Society. All proceeds will go to the Delaware River Mill Society. No food or drink will be offered at this training. Please bring lunch or there are lunch "take out" options in the local area. For more information contact: Danielle Donkersloot at 609-633-9241 or [danielle.donkersloot@dep.state.nj.us](mailto:danielle.donkersloot@dep.state.nj.us)

### **NJ WILD OUTDOORS EXPERIENCE**

We received information from the New Jersey Wild Outdoor Expo Coordinator about supporting the NJ Wild Outdoor Experience event on September 17 and 18, 2011, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily. The event will be held at the Colliers Mills Wildlife Management Area in Jackson Township, Ocean County. The Wild Outdoor Expo is hosted by the NJDEP Division of Fish and Wildlife, Division of Parks and Forestry, the Green Acres Program and the Conserve Wildlife Foundation of New Jersey. If anyone is interested and would like to volunteer to support this worthwhile event, please phone 732/785-9278 by the first week in June 2011. The Expo helps people connect with the natural world by providing a unique blend of conservation ideas.

**Share Your Fun**  
**Take Someone New**  
**Fishing**