

JCAA NEWSPAPER MARCH 2015

Official Newspaper of the *JERSEY COAST ANGLERS ASSOCIATION*

(Published on January 13, 2015)

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

JCAA REGULAR MEETING:

Tuesday, February 24th, 2015

Starting at 7:30 PM

AT JERSEY COAST SHARK ANGLERS

NEXT JCAA BOARD MEETING

Thursday, March 12th, 2015

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 908-913-0551 or Tom Fote at (732) 270-9102 before the meeting date to ask permission.**  
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Mem. Sec.	John Toth	732-656-0139
Tournament Dir.	Paul Turi	609-660-2126

Committee & Chairpersons listed on last page

IMPORTANT DATES

February 24th JCAA General Meeting

February 26th -March 1st Greater Philly Outdoor Sport Show

March 5th-8th Suffern Show

March 12th JCAA Board Meeting

March 20th -22nd Saltwater Fishing Expo

March 31st JCAA General Meeting

High Roller Raffle

The JCAA High Roller Raffle for 2015 is now ready! Below is a list of this year's prizes. The drawing will be held on **May 26th**, 2015 at the JCAA offices located at 1201 Rt. 37 East, Suite 9, Toms River. JCAA will be selling tickets at our booth at the Saltwater Fishing Expo or you can call the office and we will send you a book.

Support JCAA - Only \$2.00 a Ticket

1. Minn Kota Riptide Trolling Motor RT55/SE/L&D Value **\$670** Donated by Minn Kota
2. 11' Lamiglas Triflex TF11MHSsurf rod/Shimano Spheros SW10000 reel Value **\$520** Donated by Lamiglas and Shimano
3. \$500. Gift Certificate from Fisherman's Headquarters Value **\$500** Donated by Fisherman's Headquarters
4. 6'6" Shimano Trivala TVC-66MH jigging rod/Canyon HS-15 reel Value **\$462** Donated by Shimano and Canyon
5. 11' Tica UEHA93502S surf rod/Tica Samira Longcast SBAT10000 reel Value **\$325** Donated by Tica
6. 5'6" Profile Tuna Stopper TS 520L rod /Shimano Triton TLD 25 Value **\$280** Donated by Profile and Shimano
7. 7' Penn Allegiance 1220S70 rod/Canyon 3500 reel Value **\$200** Donated by Penn and Canyon
8. Standard Horizon VHF Marine Transceiver HX260 H Value **\$170** Donated by Standard Horizon
9. 7' Penn Slammer rod /GT320 reel Value **\$130** Donated by Penn

President's Report

By Paul Haertel

I would like to thank Don Marantz and Tom Siciliano for their many years of service to JCAA. Don stepped down as 2nd VP and Tom stepped down as Recording Secretary. Fortunately both will continue to serve in other capacities. I would also like to welcome Ken Warchal as our new 2nd VP and Mary MeElroy as our new Recording Secretary. Thanks for volunteering!

The striped bass legislation is progressing as anticipated and we will have a 2 fish bag limit with one fish from 28 inches to less than 43 inches and a second fish 43 inches or greater. Tom Fote, Rob Winkel, Edward Markowski and I attended the hearing on the Striped Bass Bill at the Assembly Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee on February 12. I spoke in support of the bill for JCAA Rob for NJSFSC and Ed for NJOA. Tom spoke as the ASMFC Commissioner and surprised me by also discussing summer flounder and other ASMFC issues with the Committee.

The bonus program will continue. Two options are currently being considered, 1 fish at 28" or larger or 1 fish from 24-28". Recently, there has been a lot of misinformation regarding New Jersey's bonus bass program on the internet. I do not recall the exact date but it was about 30 years ago that striped bass were declared a no-sale or gamefish in New Jersey. At that time NJ decided to use its commercial quota for the benefit of its recreational fishermen. This is done because NJ wanted to conserve the bass and was fearful that if we gave up our quota it would be reallocated to other states. The program initially was a trophy tag program but evolved into a bonus bass program where fishermen who have a bonus card are allowed to keep one extra bass over 28". Over the years NJ never came close to filling its allotted quota. In recent years and as far as I know probably for many years, NJ's quota was 321,750 lbs. With the new addendum there was a mandated cut of 25% which results in the quota now being 241,313 lbs. In 2013 NJ harvested only 6,096 lbs. of stripers from its quota of 321,750 lbs. That is a big savings compared to what would have happened if we allowed commercial fishermen to net them. Due to stricter overall regulations, tags will be more in demand than in the past but I don't think we

will harvest anywhere near that quota. Options to tighten up the monitoring of the program are being considered.

At their recent meeting, the ASMFC voted to continue the fluke regionalization plan as it was in 2014. This means that we will once again be in a region with Connecticut and New York. The good news is that the projected harvest along the entire coast was right on target. That means we will not have to reduce our harvest and the regulations will almost certainly remain the same for this year. We will have the same 5 fish, 18" size limit and 128 day season as we did last year. The starting and ending dates for the season will be determined by the New Jersey Marine Fisheries Council in the future. The special program that allows shore based anglers fishing at Island Beach to keep 2 fluke at 16" or greater is likely to continue. It may also be expanded to include areas in southern and northern New Jersey.

The bad news is that the ASMC refused to even consider making Delaware Bay its own region, as JCAA, the New Jersey Bureau of Marine Fisheries and our commissioners on the ASMFC had requested. Tom Fote spoke very passionately in favor of this option while explaining how the many fisheries related businesses in southern New Jersey are suffering due to anglers fishing out of Delaware rather than our state. This is due to the fact that in Delaware the size limit is 16" while New Jersey anglers have an 18" size limit while fishing essentially the same waters of Delaware Bay. This situation is further explained in the JCAA letter to the ASMFC that appears elsewhere in this paper.

Below are three letters JCAA sent this month on three different topics.

JCAA Letter on Summer Flounder Amendment

January 19th, 2015

Mr. Kirby Rootes-Murdy
FMP Coordinator
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 North Highland St.
Suite 200 A-N
Arlington, VA 22201

Kirby,

For many years fluke were managed by state-by-state measures with conservation equivalency. Each state was given its own quota while being allowed to set their own regulations. In 2013 we still had state-by-state quotas but additionally, the ASMFC allowed the projected coastwide underage of fluke to be utilized. Ultimately New Jersey and New York shared this quota. It worked out well in that New Jersey was able to add additional days to its season while New York was able to reduce its size limit.

However, in 2014 regionalization was forced upon us against the will of the vast majority of our fishermen, fishing groups and those who represented NJ on the commission. New Jersey's anglers wanted to stay with state-by-state measures or be made its own region. However, despite that the ASMFC, via a conference call, made exceptions for Massachusetts and Rhode Island allowing them to be their own regions even though that option was not in the addendum. Why were they allowed to do that when NJ was not?

New Jersey was forced into a region with Connecticut and New York. In part this was done because the fluke biomass has shifted further northward. However, even with New York's size limit being reduced to 18" from 19" while New Jersey's was increased from 17 1/2" to 18", New Jersey still caught far more fluke than New York. New Jersey has the most fluke, the most fluke fishermen and the highest percentage of fluke trips to overall fishing trips and yet regulations were adjusted so that New Jersey's projected harvest was lower than some of its past quotas. It certainly seems that NJ should be allowed to be its own region.

Another reason NJ was forced into regionalization was due to a disparity in the regulations in the Raritan Bay area where the commission deemed it was unfair for NJ anglers to have a 2" lower size limit than anglers from NY who were fishing in essentially the same waters. However, instead of correcting the problem all the commission did was to transfer the problem to Delaware Bay. In 2014 NJ anglers had to abide by an 18" size limit while DE anglers fishing the bay were allowed to keep fluke that were just 16". This was unfair to the anglers of southern NJ and many of our fishing businesses there lost revenue as people opted to fish out of DE instead.

While you can say that with regionalization in 2014, we had a projected harvest for each state as opposed to quotas or target quotas, it certainly appears to be a reallocation of quota. It seems that a portion of New Jersey's quota was reallocated to New York. Additionally though, fish from other states were also reallocated to our region. The projected harvest was substantially increased for Connecticut and New York while at the same time New Jersey's projected harvest was decreased.

Then low and behold the MRIP numbers came out and showed that New Jersey over fished its projected harvest but since Connecticut and New York under fished theirs, our region is Ok. The data also showed that the coastwide quota was slightly exceeded but that may be neutralized by a slight coastwide quota increase for 2015. Now, it appears that NJ is being forced to stay in the regionalization plan or face significant cuts under state-by-state measures. Still, it initially seemed that even with regionalization, NJ would come out of this OK as our region underfished its projected harvest. One would think that therefore, we would at least have very similar regulations to what we had in 2014. However, there are several options that would change the structure of the regions and rumor has it that New York is pushing for a 18.5" size limit so that our region's season could be extended to 153 days, 25 days more than last year. An increase of the size limit to more than 18" will not be tolerated by the vast majority of anglers in NJ. In fact the majority of anglers in NJ may prefer returning to a 17 1/2" size limit.

JCAA is on record as favoring state-by state measures with conservation equivalency. However, for 2015 we will only favor that option if it can be done without forcing us to have significantly stricter regulations. More specifically, we do not want a higher size limit, smaller bag limit or shorter season than we had in 2014.

Therefore of the various regionalization plans, **we favor Option 5A**. It is the fairest option not only to NJ but to other states as well. This option would have Delaware Bay as its own region and it could act as a transitional area between regions to the north and south of it. Perhaps Delaware Bay could have a 17" size limit while the region to its south could have a 16" size limit and the region to the north of it could have an 18" size limit. A 1" difference between any regions is far more acceptable than a 2" difference. **Having a**

neighboring region with any more than a 1” less restrictive size limit is totally unacceptable. Further having Delaware Bay as its own region should have minimal impact on the other regions. For example, if the option to split NJ in half were chosen, there would likely again be a 2” gap between the regions. This would pit northern NJ anglers against those in southern NJ. Northern NJ as well as other states within that region would then likely have to sacrifice fish to accommodate southern NJ.

In closing we would like to urge the ASMFC to thoroughly review the pros and cons of each option and be as fair as possible to all the states. Lastly, we would like to thank you for allowing us to comment on this matter.

Sincerely yours,
Paul Haertel,
President of Jersey Coast Anglers Association

JCAA Letter on Sand Mining on Important Fishing Grounds

February 12, 2015
Robert Martin, Commissioner
NJ DEP
401 E. State St.
7th Floor, East Wing
P.O. Box 402
Trenton, NJ 08625-0402

Re: Manasquan Inlet to Barnegat Inlet Storm Reduction Project

Dear Mr. Martin,

According to the Environmental Assessment published relative to this plan, sand will be mined from two areas that are acknowledged in Article 5.6.3 as ***Prime Fishing Areas***, Borrow Area B and Borrow Area F. Borrow Area B is a small lump just outside of Manasquan Inlet inshore of the Axel Carlson Reef. Area F is a large lump known as Manasquan Ridge. Both of these areas have been very popular with fishermen for decades due to their fish holding structure and their proximity to the Manasquan Inlet.

Article 6.5.2 states that “prior to construction, further coordination with the NJ Division of Fish and

Wildlife and NMFS will be required to develop a plan to minimize impacts to these ***prime fishing areas***.” What response has been received from those entities? I don’t think they would approve if they considered the importance of these two locations.

The recreational angler is constantly being bombarded with restrictions in fish size, possession limits and reduced lengths of seasons. Now we are being faced with a proposal that will destroy historical fishing structure. It’s hard for us to understand why the DEP would ever consider mining these prime fishing areas. Surely, there are other areas to consider for sand mining for this project that are not as important to the fishing community.

JCAA is strongly opposed to the mining of borrow areas B and F and requests alternative locations be utilized.

Please advise.

Sincerely yours,
Paul Haertel,
President of Jersey Coast Anglers Association

JCAA Letter on Seismic Blasting

February 11, 2105
John Gray, Deputy Chief of Staff
New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection
Mail Code 402
401 E.s State St., 7th Floor East Wing
Trenton, NJ 08625

Mr. Gray,

The Jersey Coast Anglers Association (JCAA) is an association of saltwater fishing clubs with thousands of members that has been protecting our ocean as one of its main goals. The JCAA is deeply concerned about the seismic testing that is scheduled to occur during summer of 2015 and we strongly request the assistance of your department to stop this testing from occurring. There are many reasons why this testing should be stopped, but I will enumerate some of them and they follow:

1. Why is this testing really needed? A very good and sound rationale for it has never been advanced or explained! Checking the ocean

structure for conditions related to climate change millions of years ago? Incredulous! When our club members heard of this explanation, it was met with derision!

2. Why were there no public hearings on this seismic testing last year? By a stroke of luck, the ship doing it last year experienced mechanical problems and had to cut short its testing, giving us a chance to challenge it for this year. As of this date, we have not learned the number of days this testing occurred last year. Why the lack of transparency on this issue?
3. This testing is scheduled to occur in the summer and that is a peak time for all types of fish to be in our nearby waters. Why schedule this testing during this peak fishing timeframe! The blasting of our waters with incredible loud sounds will not induce fisheries to stay in our waters and their disappearance will have a negative economic impact on both recreational anglers and commercial fishermen who rely on their presence for their business. Tackle shops, hotels, gas stations and other businesses will be negatively affected by the loss of business when anglers experience the absence of our fisheries. It does not take long for the word to get out among anglers that fishing is severely off its normal levels.
4. Finally and most importantly, the loud pounding of noise on ocean whales, dolphins (which we already know have their own sound systems) and other fisheries will certainly be disrupted for them and also their health. Save these fisheries and stop ocean testing!

Respectfully submitted,
Paul Haertel, President
Jersey Coast Anglers Association

NJ Saltwater Recreational Registry Program / NJ Volunteer Angler Survey

The NJBMF reported that many of our fishermen have failed to register in the NJ saltwater recreational registration program. Registration is

mandated by law for most of our anglers and it is free so please register. Failure to do so can result in having a fish disqualified as a record or from a tournament and there is a possibility of being issued a summons as well.

Don't forget to register or re-register with the NJ Saltwater Recreational Registry Program for 2015. You can start re-registering now for 2015. You can register or renew your registration for 2015 by going to www.saltwaterregistry.nj.gov. If you do go fishing please consider filling out the NJ Volunteer Angler Survey to help the Bureau of Marine Fisheries better manage our resources by going to this [link](#).

You can also check regulation changes, get current advisories, check launch ramp and park locations, report violations, as well as fill out the NJ Voluntary Angler Survey now on your smartphone or tablet with the new Official NJ Fishing, Hunting & Wildlife [application](#)!

Fisheries Management & Legislative Report

By Thomas Fote

Summer Flounder

I always think that I cannot get more outraged at members of the ASMFC Summer Flounder, Scup and Black Sea Bass Board.

But they succeeded at this last meeting. We went to public hearings with a new addendum (Addendum XXVI) to the Summer Flounder, Black Sea Bass and Scup Plan to address the 2015 fishing year for summer flounder. There was sparse attendance at most of the hearings but when it came to the options, the number of people supporting some relief for the Delaware Bay situation was close to 50%. Remember, that the problem in Delaware Bay was caused by the actions of this same board last year over the objections of New Jersey. New Jersey was placed in a region with New York and Connecticut. NMFS sent the regional director to support a proposal that would address a perceived disparity in the size of fish that were being harvested recreationally in New York and New Jersey's waters. With the support of the US Fish and Wildlife Service, New Jersey was forced into this regional district with no regard for problems that would be created for those who fish in Delaware

Bay. This caused New Jersey's Delaware Bay fishermen to fish at 18 inches for a 128 day season. At the same time the new regions allowed Delaware anglers to fish at 16 inches with a 365 day season.

This had a devastating effect on the tackle stores, party and charter boat industry in 2015. Instead of coming to Fortescue or other New Jersey ports along Delaware Bay, the Pennsylvania anglers went to Delaware.

There was an option in the plan in the addendum that would have corrected this problem and given some relief to the New Jersey anglers that fish in Delaware Bay and the businesses that rely on all the anglers who fish in Delaware Bay. There was a motion made for an option that would not address the problems in Delaware Bay. Adam Nowalski, the Legislative proxy for Assemblyman Bob Andrzejczak, made the motion to amend the original motion and provide relief for these anglers and businesses in Delaware Bay. No one would second the motion. Because Adam and I both represent New Jersey, I was not allowed to second the motion. I turned to the people sitting next to me who represent the Fish and Wildlife Service and NMFS, both of whom ignored my plea and would not second the motion. I asked the regional director who created this problem in 2014 to advise his representatives to help solve the problem they created in Delaware Bay. There is no evidence that he did anything to support a solution, showing his total disregard again for the Delaware Bay anglers and New Jersey as a whole.

Where do we go from here? New Jersey needs to work on collecting the economic impact data. We also need to lay the groundwork so we have a second to the motion in 2016. After my blistering speech, accusing everyone of total disregard for New Jersey, several commissioners expressed their regret. I told them they were a day late and a dollar short. But I will be depending on them to correct this error in 2016. The bottom line is New Jersey's anglers will have the same basic regulations as last year.

Black Sea Bass

Now, in 2015, we are still failing to address problems I recognized and brought to the attention of ASMFC, the MidAtlantic Marine Fisheries Council and NMFS in 1994. In 1994 we began to draft a plan to regulate black sea bass. I pointed out that the data we had was so bad that any plan would have

negative consequences in the future. The three groups all agreed and said they would correct the problem. The last five years we have not been able to fully harvest the approved quota. Would you want to guess why? We still have the lack of credible fisheries data that would be necessary to use the models appropriately. We have not done anything in the last 20 years to get more reliable fisheries data since there is no funding. What NMFS has done is create new models to handle the bad data. The Scientific and Statistical Committee of the MidAtlantic Council places a penalty on the finished stock assessment by reducing the allowable quota. This has cost both the commercial and recreational fishery untold hardship in recent years. In 2015 it is no different with an additional 33% reduction. Anyone who spends any time on the water can tell these models make no sense. We are not catching black sea bass in New Hampshire and Maine because the stock size had increased throughout the expanding range. Because of the lack of good data, we are not registering the actual size of the black sea bass stock. The SSC continues to use a precautionary approach in response to the lack of data. By underestimating the stocks, the SSC forces us to go over the faulty quota every year. We have proven that creating new models to deal with bad data is not a solution to this problem. I see nothing in the future to correct this problem, again due to a lack of funding for better stock assessment data.

ASMFC 2015 Winter Meeting Summaries & Press Release

ASMFC Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Board Continues Summer Flounder Recreational Regional Management for 2015 & Approves State Plans for 2015 Recreational Black Sea Bass & Scup Fisheries

Alexandria, VA –The Commission's Summer Flounder, Scup and Black Sea Bass Management Board approved Addendum XXVI to the Summer Flounder and Black Sea Bass Fishery Management Plan, continuing adaptive regional management for the 2015 recreational summer flounder fisheries. The approved regions are Massachusetts; Rhode Island; Connecticut through New Jersey; Delaware through Virginia; and North Carolina. The Addendum provides the option for the Board to extend the

adaptive regional management approach into 2016 through Board action.

Addendum XXVI was initiated to consider a continuation of regional management approved in Addendum XXV. Both addenda address concern that summer flounder management measures under state-by-state conservation equivalency were not providing recreational fishermen along the coast with equitable harvest opportunities to the resource. The adaptive regional management approach is designed to respond to changes in resource availability and effort in the fishery. The Board decided to continue 2014 management measures for the 2015 fishing season.

For black sea bass, the Board approved the methodologies used by the states of Massachusetts through New Jersey to establish their minimum size, bag limits, and season lengths to achieve a 33% reduction in the 2015 recreational harvest levels from the 2014 harvest level. The 33% reduction is required in order to achieve but not exceed that 2015 recreational harvest limit.

For scup, the Board approved the maintenance of 2014 recreational management measures for the 2015 fishing season, with the exception of Connecticut which will increase its size and possession limit to be consistent with the other states' private and for-hire fisheries. States will finalize their regulations over the next couple of weeks for the recreational summer flounder, black sea bass, and scup fisheries.

Addendum XXVI will be available on the Commission website by the end of February. For more information, please contact Kirby Rootes-Murdy, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at krootes-murdy@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

ASMFC Atlantic Striped Bass Board Approves State Implementation Plans to Reduce Harvest

Alexandria, VA – The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board approved Addendum IV implementation plans and conservation equivalency proposals for all the states and jurisdictions. The implementation plans, which were reviewed and approved by the Technical Committee, contain state-specific management options that achieve a 25% reduction in harvest from 2013 levels for the coastal fishery and 20.5% reduction in harvest from 2012 levels for the Chesapeake Bay fishery. Given the

wide range of options being considered, the Board recommended neighboring states and jurisdictions work together to implement consistent management measures, especially on shared water bodies. This recommendation was also supported by the Commission's Law Enforcement Committee. Additionally, the Board reminded states there is greater certainty in the percent reductions of simple management measures (i.e., changes in bag or size limits) relative to more complex measures (e.g., slot/trophy fish and mode-specific options).

The Board also tasked the Technical Committee with expanding the exploration of stock-specific reference points to include the other producer areas, such as the Delaware Bay and the Hudson River stocks, in addition to the Chesapeake Bay. The Board will review progress on the stock-specific reference points at its Spring Meeting in May.

States and jurisdictions must have final measures for implementing Addendum IV in place by the beginning of their 2015 fishing seasons. For more information, please contact Mike Waine, Senior Fishery Management

Atlantic Menhaden Benchmark Assessment Finds Resource Not Overfished and Overfishing not Occurring

For Immediate Release, 2/4/15
Press Contact, Tina Berger, 703.842.0740

Alexandria, VA – The 2015 Atlantic menhaden benchmark assessment indicates the resource is not overfished nor experiencing overfishing relative to the current maximum spawning potential (MSP) based biological reference points. Population fecundity, a measure of reproductive capacity, is estimated to be 71% higher than the target value (100 trillion eggs). Additionally, total fishing mortality is estimated to be 0.27, below both the fishing mortality threshold (2.98) and target (1.03). The Atlantic Menhaden Management Board approved the benchmark stock assessment for management use.

“The assessment findings bring good news regarding the status of the Atlantic menhaden resource and sets the stage for the Board to begin to discuss how it wants to move forward in sustainably managing Atlantic menhaden. This discussion will include Board management objectives that address the needs of the reduction and bait fisheries as well

as the ecological services menhaden provides as an important prey species,” stated Board Chair Robert Boyles from South Carolina. “The assessment results are different from prior assessments and this is in large part due to the tremendous efforts of stakeholders, and state and federal scientists to improve upon both the data and modeling approaches used in the assessment. We are grateful for their hard work and dedication in advancing our understanding of the Atlantic menhaden stock status.”

Atlantic menhaden is harvested by both commercial reduction and bait fisheries. From 2010 to 2012, reduction fishery landings averaged 172,600 metric tons and are substantially lower than historical levels. Conversely, total bait landings have been increasing in recent years, averaging about 52,900 metric tons during 2010-2012, with peak landings of about 63,540 metric tons in 2012. In 2013, landings for both fisheries were reduced by 20%, consistent with the requirements of Amendment 2.

Through the consideration of new and existing datasets and the exploration of alternative model configurations, significant changes were made during the 2015 assessment to address the issues identified with the 2010 assessment. Below are a few of the major changes that led to significantly different assessment results.

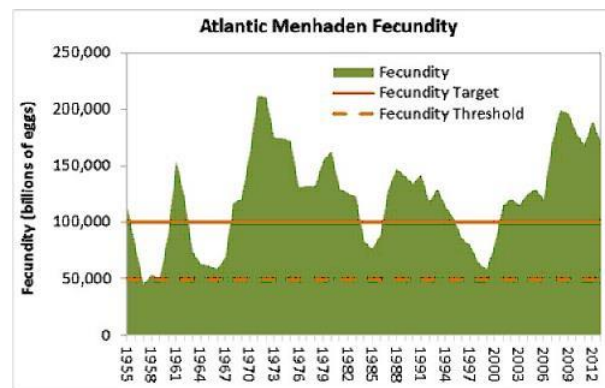
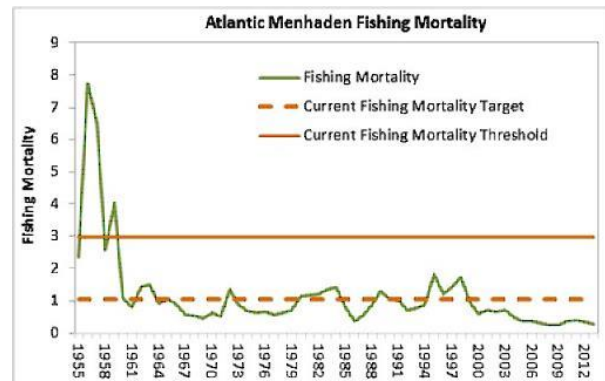
Using new datasets, maturity at age was corrected, resulting in a higher estimated proportion of mature fish at ages 1, 2, and 3. This higher proportion of mature fish at the earlier ages resulted in a stock that had higher reproductive potential (i.e., increased fecundity) than previously estimated.

Two composite adult indices of relative abundance were created using nine new standardized fishery-independent indices that spanned a much broader spatial scale. This was a significant improvement from the 2010 benchmark assessment that used one Chesapeake Bay fishery-dependent pound net index to characterize adult abundance for the entire stock.

Dome-shaped selectivity for all fishery fleets was used to account for the fact that larger sized individuals were observed in multiple fishery-independent surveys than captured by the bait and reduction fisheries during the entire history of sampling. This ultimately results in more fish at older ages because the larger fish are not being captured by the fisheries.

All these improvements combined led to significantly different assessment results. A more detailed description of the stock assessment results is available on the Commission’s website at http://www.asmfc.org/uploads/file/54d26f852015MenhadenStockAssessmentOverview_Feb2015.pdf.

Following the acceptance of the assessment, the Board tasked the Technical Committee with conducting a thorough review of the peer review findings and performing projections that explore different constant harvest scenarios based on the results of the assessment and the current stock status. The Board will review the projection analyses at the Commission’s Spring Meeting and further deliberate on management objectives that address the needs of the reduction and bait fisheries as well as the ecological services menhaden provides. The final assessment and peer review will be posted to the Commission website the week of February 9th, www.asmfc.org, on the Atlantic Menhaden webpage. For more information, please contact Mike Waine, Senior Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at 703.842.0740 or mwaine@asmfc.org.



Getting JCAA Alerts

People I meet have many questions about JCAA and fisheries management and the JCAA Fluke Tournament. I always ask if they read the current JCAA newspaper. Or I ask if they are on the JCAA email list for frequent updates. Too many of them say no to both. At the risk of sounding like a broken record, there is considerable effort put into every JCAA newspaper and all the email alerts. If you don't read them, all that time and energy doesn't have much payoff. If I don't have your email address, you miss the alerts entirely. If you want to be on the email list, go to the JCAA webpage (www.jcaa.org) and click on the word "subscribe" about half way down the page. Or send me an email and I will add you to the list. All I need is your name and email address. This list is confidential and is never shared with anyone outside of JCAA. What is also disappointing is that every club does not have a representative on the email list. This is something your club can remedy easily. Just send me an email at tfote@jcaa.org and say you are the club representative.

NJ Outdoor Alliance Report

By John Toth

On behalf of the JCAA, I attended the New Jersey Outdoor Alliance (NJOA) meeting that was held on January 29th and the following issues were discussed:

Brandon Muffley, New Jersey's Marine Fisheries Administrator, was the guest speaker and Brandon gave an update on the status of our fisheries and related issues that affect them. Most of this meeting was dominated by saltwater fishing issues.

Striped Bass - To comply with the Atlantic States Management Commission's (ASMFC) plan to reduce the striped bass harvest by 25%, the size and bag limits for the 2015 striped bass season is expected to be one striped bass at 28 inches to possibly 42 or 43 inches and another bass at 42 or 43 inches and above. The ASMFC at its February 4th meeting will make a final review of this proposal and vote on it. Once approved, the size and bag limits for striped bass need final approval by New Jersey's legislators. The bill to enact the changes to the striped bass regulations will be sponsored in the Senate by Senator Jeff Van Drew and in the Assembly by

Assemblyman Bob Andrzejczak. The NJOA organized a caucus in Trenton with NJ's legislators on December 18th to inform them of a number of issues that are important to us with special focus on their fast-tracking the legislation we need to have our striped bass season open by early spring. A motion was made for the NJOA to approve the new bass regulations for 2015 and the vote was for approval.

Bonus Tag Program - there will be one and its details are still in the discussion stage. Brandon also reported that the Bonus Tag program also provides his office with important information on striped bass data and this information is used by the Bureau of Marine Fisheries in its discussions with the ASMFC on striped bass management issues. There was also discussion about opening up striped bass fishing in bays and rivers, but opening it up would result in the ASMFC further reviewing its impact on our 2015 striped bass quota, resulting in a delay of the striped bass season opening.

Fluke - A recent Addendum from the ASMFC outlined several options for managing fluke for the upcoming 2015 season. None of these options are final, but their release by the ASMFC is to obtain comments from the angling community. New Jersey used to have its own quota for fluke, but it was placed into a "region" concept along with New York and Connecticut on an experimental basis primarily so that NY and NJ would have the same size limit. It appears that NJ has to stay within the region along with NY and Conn., otherwise, its size limit will go to 18 1/2 inches or more due to NJ anglers exceeding their quota. Under the regionalization, NJ can receive some of the underutilized quota from NY and Conn. to maintain its present 18 inch size limit. However, under regionalization, if NY opts to have an 18 1/2 inch size limit to extend the fishing season, NJ would have to have the same size limit since states in regionalization have to have the same size and seasons.

Another issue discussed was Delaware having a 16 inch size limit under regionalization and NJ anglers having 18 inches causing many NJ anglers to go to Delaware for the lower size limit causing the charter/party boat industry in southern NJ to suffer. There were recommendations made that Delaware Bay could have a 17 inch size limit with the region to its south having a 16 inch size limit.

Island Beach State Park - There was a fear that the experimental 16 inch size limit for Island Beach

State Park would result in a huge catch of fluke, but that fear did not occur. Only 176 short fluke (16 inches to less than 18 inches) were measured and tagged at the park's checkpoint. Information was also collected on 271 fish through angler interviews. Not all of these 271 fish were fluke.

(Update since this NJOA meeting - the ASMFC voted at its February 4th meeting that all of New Jersey will have an 18 inch size limit for fluke; bag limit and season to be determined).

This writer asked Brandon if we will ever see a **17 1/2** inch size limit for fluke in 2015 or in the near future and received a negative response.

Al Ristori (columnist for the Newark Star Ledger) asked Brandon Muffley "what happened to the sea robins" since very few were caught in 2014. Brandon said it was a mystery.

Sea Bass - Looks like NJ will have a 33% reduction for its sea bass quota in 2015 even though overfishing is not occurring and sea bass is not overfished (**meaning the population is healthy and we are not harvesting too many sea bass to negatively affect the population in the long term**). The real problem with this fishery is that fishing management do not have a good measurement of sea bass stocks, they take a very cautious approach and keep cutting back the quota even though it is not necessary. What is real is that the party/charter boat industry is unnecessarily hurt by these cut backs that jeopardize their livelihoods (one of the reasons listed by the Doris Mae that recently went out of business in Barnegat).

Registry - The purpose of the registry is receive the telephone number and the address of anglers so that they can be contacted to provide input on how many fish they caught and this information is used to help develop the status of fishing stocks and the quotas that can be set for them. There are an estimated 600,000 to 1,000,000 saltwater anglers in NJ and while many signed up for this registry when it first came on board, only 202,000 anglers have signed up for it in 2014. The lack of participation by NJ anglers in the registry not only provides less data that can be used for evaluating fish stocks, but the federal government bases grants on the number of anglers in our state and the lower participation of anglers in it is jeopardizing the ability of our state in getting these grants. **Brandon made a strong plea for NJOA to**

get the word out that NJ's anglers need to be registered. Better enforcement was felt to get the word out that anglers should be registered.

Intercepts - Our state is going to take over the intercept program from the federal government of checking anglers on the numbers of fish that they caught and this information will be used to help our state in developing the quotas that should be set for its fisheries. Our Bureau of Marine Fisheries is in the process of setting this up in 2015 and will begin hiring/training of staff for this purpose. With staff properly trained and supervised for these intercepts, there is a high expectation that we will finally have some accurate data that can be used to develop the future quotas for our fisheries. Our state is mandated to do at least 887 intercepts for 2015.

Traps Off the Reefs - At the January 9th meeting of the NJ Marine Fisheries Council meeting, a compromise solution was officially announced that the two inshore reefs, Axel Carlson and Sandy Hook, would have 16% and 19% respectively restricted to commercial trappers and the rest of the reefs to recreational anglers. A new reef will be built for recreational anglers to make up for the space lost to commercial anglers on the two reefs. This compromise will be up for a 60 day comment period and after all comments have been received and addressed, this new regulation will be in effect by June. Brandon emphasized that letters should be sent to DEP commissioner, Robert Martin thanking him for resolving this issue that has defied resolution for so long. Why do this? Most likely commercial trappers are going to send in a lot of negative comments on the reef issue and Commissioner Martin would have a much harder time defending the reef compromise if the responses from the commercial side far exceeds the comments from the recreational sector.

Menhaden - the stocks of these fish appear to be improving.

Blackfish - the stocks of these fish are not improving and an increased size limit may be coming.

Weakfish - a new stock assessment is coming, but stocks seem to be improving in some locations, but still spotty.

Winter Flounder - stocks are still in bad shape and no changes to regulations are being considered.

Funding for the Division of Fish & Wildlife is still an ongoing problem and there are renewed concerns about the aspects of the Marine Fisheries budget being reduced for the 2016 budget cycle. Brandon is working on a strategic plan to better utilize the staff in his bureau to address budget issues.

The NJOA is planning to have a Clay Shoot at Hudson Farms in Andover, NJ and this clay shoot provides the NJOA with a significant part of its treasury. It is important that *all* NJOA member organizations recruit their members to support this event either by participating in the clay shoot or becoming a sponsor of it. More details to follow on this May 17th shooting event.

Membership Report

By John Toth

With the beginning of the New Year, club memberships are due for payment and invoices have been mailed to member clubs. Club dues still remain at \$50, and sponsorships of \$50, \$100, \$250 and \$500 are available for publication in this newsletter and would be very much appreciated. Please completely fill out not only the Dues and Sponsorship form, but also the Club Survey form so that we can update information about your club and our mailing list.

Please send in your payments to our address: JCAA, 1201 Route 37 East, Suite 9, Toms River, NJ 08753.

The JCAA has recently received club dues from: Friends of Island Beach State Park, Village Harbour Fishing Club, Shore Surf Club, and dues and Sponsorships from: Fish Hawks (\$300), Bradley Beach Surfcasters (\$100), Jersey Coast Shark Anglers, (\$500), Manasquan River Tuna Club (\$500), and the Manasquan Fishing Club (\$250).

Thank you all for sending in your 2015 dues and sponsorships in such a timely manner!

If there are problems with the JCAA sending newsletters to the wrong addresses or to the wrong club members, please let me know so that corrections can be made. I can be reached at (732) 656-0139 or at tothjohn@verizon.net.

As always, **Thank You**, for your continued support of the JCAA!

Youth Education Report

By Greg Kucharewski

JCAA YOUTH EDUCATION AWARD NOMINATIONS

The JCAA Youth Education Committee is accepting nominations for the 2015 Youth Education Award. It takes the support of many volunteers to bring successes to the fishing community but sometimes individuals and sport-fishing organizations go above and beyond to make the future of fishing better for our youngsters. Criteria: Promoting NJ Hooked on Fishing Not on Drugs (NJ HOFNOD), Certified HOFNOD instructors, number of fishing or aquatic education events, JCAA lending library usage, and creativity for promoting youth fishing events. There are many fishing clubs, organizations and individuals providing opportunities for youngsters to learn about fishing. Some of these individuals and groups go unnoticed, please take the time to write (250 words or less) so they can be recognized. Submit your nominations in writing at the JCAA May meeting or email the JCAA Youth Education Committee, gkucharews@jcaa.org.

NJ HOFNOD ASSISTANCE NEEDED

Help is needed for the Cumberland County NJ HOFNOD 4H program. Joe Haase needs two NJ HOFNOD Certified Volunteers to co-lead the program with him. He has about 50 or more youth interested in participating, an indoor meeting location on the water, and supplemental resources. His program is weekly and will begin April 2015. Please visit www.hofnodcc.org for more information and how you can assist with this program. If you can assist please phone 732-785-9278. To receive more information about becoming a NJ HOFNOD volunteer/facilitator, please contact Liz Jackson, NJ HOFNOD Program Coordinator, at 908-637-4125 x122 or by e-mail at liz.jackson@dep.nj.gov

BRICK HIGH SCHOOL FISHING CLUB

We are assisting the Brick High School Fishing Club with two after school fishing trips. The tentative dates are March 11, at Brick Beach and March 26, at the Point Pleasant Inlet.

During the months of February and March students will also discuss NJ HOFNOD, fish anatomy, and learn about NJ freshwater/saltwater rules and regulations. The JCAA Youth Education Committee will supply hand-outs for the fishing events and lesson plans.

KIDS FISHING DERBY

Newark Bait and Fly Casting Club annual Kids Fishing Derby is held each year at Echo Lake Park in Mountainside, N. J. and is free for children 16 years of age and younger. Adults may enter for a nominal charge.

The Derby runs for three weeks starting from April 11 and going through May 2, 2015. The registration booth is located at the gazebo on the lower lake and registrations will be accepted from 8:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M. on the first Saturday of the derby only. Children that have registered will receive a gift bag at the derby location up until 2:00 P.M. on first Saturday of the derby.

Prizes for the derby will be awarded at the Newark Bait and Fly Casting Club's meeting on June 2, 2015 at 8:00 P.M. For additional information email info@nbfcc.org.

NEWARK BAIT & FLY CASTING CLUB YOUTH FISHING SEMINAR

The JCAA Youth Education Committee will support the Newark Bait and Fly Casting Club's Free Youth Fishing Seminar by providing a "Guess the Fish" activity by Don Marantz. Members of the Newark Bait and Fly Casting Club host the event at the Kenilworth VFW 33 South 21st street Kenilworth, N.J. The seminar is scheduled for 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, March 3, 2015 and it's always a lot of fun for the youngsters. The NJBBA will also support the youth fishing night with a surf fishing program, provide informational hand-outs, and photo session for the youngsters to display a Striped Bass and Bluefish replica. Tim Burden, Paul Harris and other members from NJBBA will assist.

Children and their families are welcome to come and enjoy a night of fun fishing activities and refreshments. We always enjoy working with the membership of this club because they are devoted to teaching the joys of fishing to our young people.

SPRING LAKE KIDS FISHING CONTEST

The Trout Contest for Kids is sponsored by the Shark River Surf Anglers, on Saturday, April 4,

2015, 8 a.m. till 1:30 p.m. at Spring Lake, NJ. The contest is FREE and open to children fifteen years old and under. Hundreds of young anglers are expected to circle around Spring Lake waiting for the start of the contest. Don't forget to get there early, otherwise you must park along the side streets of Spring Lake and walk a great distance to find a spot to fish. Every year, the Shark River Surf Anglers spend a lot of time and energy to make this event a success. Children are also welcome to help stock Spring Lake on Saturday, March 28 2015, 9:30 am. Come out and enjoy some fishing fun, catch big fish, and win prizes. For more information phone: 732-492-6936 or visit the Shark River Surf Anglers' [website](#).

HOFNOD WORKSHOPS/TRAINING

Mark Gintert the Executive Director for the Future Fisherman Foundation just listed their HOFNOD Training on-line through their [website](#). The course comes with a HOFNOD instructor's manual and an access code to watch the training for a 30 day period.

We also suggest taking the NJ HOFNOD workshop to have a better understanding of how the program works in New Jersey. NJ HOFNOD is coordinated by Liz Jackson, HOFNOD Coordinator DEP Fish & Wildlife, please contact Liz to learn more about the benefits of becoming a NJ HOFNOD instructor:

Phone: 908-637-4125 x122

e-mail: liz.jackson@dep.nj.gov

HOOKED ON THE HUDSON

Save the date Saturday, May 9, 2015, the Hudson River Fishermen's Association will host the 30th Annual Hooked on the Hudson, at Ross Dock, Palisades Interstate Park.

Hudson Riverfront located immediately north of the George Washington Bridge in Fort Lee, New Jersey. For detailed directions check njpalisades.org. Please go to the Hudson River Fishermen's Association's Web site www.hrfsnj.org for more information. Volunteers for the Annual Hooked on the Hudson always do a fine job of making sure everyone enjoys a day of fishing fun.

JCAA NEWSPAPER ARCHIVES

JCAA has archived all of our newspapers on our webpage since 1995. When postage was less expensive, we used to send many newspapers to clubs and organizations. The cost to print and mail to individuals is probably more than the cost of an associate membership. We are counting on you to access the newspaper online. If you want the alert when it is posted, just sign up with the directions included below. If you missed the last 2 newspapers, there are articles about the summer flounder and striped bass regulations. It is important that you understand all factors that will impact on the final decision. You can find any topic for the past 20 years. The most surprising part is the similarity across the decades, with problems being repeated again and again. Catch up and be more informed. You should also sign up for the ASMFC Mid-Atlantic and NOAA releases. These are all free.

HIGH ROLLER

RAFFLE

MAY 26

SIGN UP FOR

JCAA ALERTS

At www.JCAA.org