

JCAA NEWSPAPER JUNE 2018

Official Newspaper of the *JERSEY COAST ANGLERS ASSOCIATION*

(Published on May 22nd, 2018)

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

JCAA REGULAR MEETING:

Tuesday, May 29th, 2018

Starting at 7:30 PM

385 Herbertsville Rd, Brick

NEXT JCAA BOARD MEETING

Thursday, June 7th, 2018

Starting at 7:30 PM at JCAA Office

**OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER OF THE
JERSEY COAST ANGLERS ASSOC.**
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This publication is printed and mailed one week prior to each regular monthly meeting of the Jersey Coast Anglers Association. One of the prime goals of JCAA is to get accurate information into public hands as soon as possible.

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**JCAA General Membership Meetings are for club representatives and invited guests only. These meetings are not open to the general public. If you would like to attend as a guest, call the President at 908-913-0551 or Tom Fote at (732) 270-9102 before the meeting date to ask permission.**

## 2018 OFFICERS

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| <b>Tournament Dir.</b>     |              |              |

**Committee and Chairpersons listed on last page**

## **IMPORTANT DATES**

**May 29<sup>th</sup>** JCAA General Meeting

**June 14<sup>th</sup>** JCAA Board Meeting

**June 26<sup>th</sup>** JCAA General Meeting

*\*\* No JCAA General Meetings in July & August \*\**

**July 12** JCAA Board Meeting

**August 4<sup>th</sup>** JCAA Fluke Tournament

**August 9<sup>th</sup>** JCAA Tournament Awards Ceremony

## **Outdoor Writer's Workshop Report**

*By John Toth*

The NJ DEP's Division of Fish & Wildlife (F&W) gave a presentation on April 19<sup>th</sup> to members of the press and representatives of the JCAA, NJOA and the NJ Federation of Sportsmen's Club on a number of activities that it is involved with. The purpose of this workshop is to provide communication on what the F&W is doing for the benefit of anglers and hunters in this state so that members of the press can convey this information in their respective papers and that we all can be appraised of its current activities. This Workshop started at 10:00 a.m. and concluded around 2:30 p.m. I will give you only a quick summary of what was discussed.

Al Ivany, Chief, Bureau of Information and Education, opened this Workshop by welcoming us and then he turned it over to F&W Director, Larry Herrighty, who indicated that NJDEP's Acting Commissioner, Catherine McCabe, could not be at this Workshop because of a schedule conflict. We were somewhat disappointed over this development since we all wanted to meet this new commissioner and get to know her and her thoughts on New Jersey's fishing and hunting issues.

**On the Bear Hunt issue** – Director Herrighty indicated that he and his staff gave a detailed briefing to Commissioner McCabe on the population of bears

in NJ and the danger they pose to our residents. Our new governor has indicated that he wants to stop the hunting for bears in our state. The information provided to Commissioner McCabe gives a picture of the consequences involved if the bear population is left unchecked.

**Funding of Marine Fisheries** – this has been, unfortunately, an ongoing issue and the \$1.2 million earmarked for Marine Fisheries, largely through Senator Van Drew efforts, has been removed to fund other budget issues of our state! Director Herrightly is hoping that this funding will be eventually restored in the near future so that he can hire more staff for critical positions.

Assistant F&W Director, Paulette Nelson, was the next speaker and her topic was the Recovering America's Wildlife Act. She indicated that our nation is losing up to 46% of its many birds, forests, habitats and species of fish through pollution, over development and other problems. A Blue Ribbon panel on Sustaining America's Diverse Fish & Wildlife was formed consisting of many organizations including recreational, commercial, manufacturing and retail industries, and state and federal officials to review these problems and offer recommendations for improvement. This panel in 2014 recommended that 1.3 billion dollars be available to help fund the initiatives of our states intended to prevent further erosion of our country's natural resources. This funding would derive from federal royalties on energy and mineral development (approximately 10% of existing royalties) so that no new taxes would be required for this funding. There is currently 12 billion in this account and New Jersey could stand to receive up to 26 million from it. The stumbling block is that New Jersey has to come up with 6 million in matching funds to receive the 26 million. Given our state's money problems, our legislators are not rushing to find the 6 million to receive the matching funds. Legislators have signed on to support this initiative, but none have taken the lead to make it happen as a primary sponsor.

On behalf of the Bureau of Freshwater Fisheries, Ross Shramko, gave the results of the study concerning stocked trout in the Flat Brook River. Despite extensive stocking of this river, **(36,000 trout)** anglers were complaining that they were not catching much trout and Ross indicated that he and his crew could not figure out why this was happening. To compound this problem, the fishing on this river is catch and release! To get a better

understanding of this problem, a total of 40 trout were imbedded with microchips to monitor their movements. Without going into too much detail on this study, it turns out that many of these trout are falling prey to the natural predators around this river, especially the Great Blue Heron and other birds of prey. A number of these microchips were found at the shorelines. Ross indicated at least they have an answer to this problem that seemed unsolvable and even more so, vexing to them!

Sharon Petzinger, Manager of the Non-game Species Program, gave a presentation on her "Songbird Response to Forest Management in Northwestern New Jersey." She explained that our forests need to be managed properly so that birds and other species have a better chance of not only surviving but also increasing in their numbers. She showed pictures of a forest with heavy growth and lack of wildlife, and another one with this same forest that had some clearing to it with removal of a number of trees and dense shrubbery. This better managed forest showed improved wildlife numbers and the return of many bird species that were not previously there.

Liz Jackson and Alana Newmark, both from the Bureau of Information and Education, gave us a presentation on their Hooked on Fishing not on Drugs Program (HOFNOD). The thrust of this program is to get kids/youths involved in fishing and nature activities and not on drugs. HOFNOD has a special emphasis toward inner city kids to introduce them to aquatic resources and also expose them to good role models. HOFNOD is nationally recognized and is not just a local program.

Jeffrey Brust, Research Scientist, gave the final report on Marine Fisheries Administration issues. Jeff reported that F&W now has a new Administrator of Fisheries and that person is Joe Cimino. He has twelve years experience with Virginia's fishing administration and he does not need that much on the job training. Jeff is very excited and happy about his coming on board to help us with our fishery problems.

Jeff also covered the minimum size limit of 83 inches with Mako sharks and that measurement can be possibly adjusted downward with more experience on any recovery of this stock. He also pointed out that recreational anglers are not catching their quota of bluefish (now split as 80% recreational 20% commercial) and the commercial sector is making a case that if we are not using our allotted share, then their quota should be increased at our expense. With regard to fluke, New Jersey is now in its own region

and he said, “We are going to live or die” since we are the only ones that have the responsibility to stay within our given fluke quota. Hopefully, we will not exceed our 2018 quota, but that can be a challenging prospect given our increased seasons to fish for them. For 2019, he indicated that possible new slot ideas for fluke are being considered along with our state being split with lower size limits for the southern part of New Jersey. With New York threatening to go out of compliance over their 2018 sea bass season, this issue was also discussed and Jeffrey said that F&W would fight to keep New Jersey’s sea bass quota from being raided by New York. (days later after this workshop, this became a non-issue with NY being OK with their 2018 sea bass season with additional days added to it). Scup has a 9-inch minimum size and 50 of them can be caught throughout the year.

The lunch for the Outdoor Writer’s Workshop is sponsored by both the JCAA and the NJ Federation of Sportmen’s Club. I always enjoy this Workshop and look forward to attending it next year.

## Fisheries Management & Legislative Report

*By Tom Fote*

### ASMFC Report

Below there are some of the meeting summaries from the ASMFC Spring Meeting. It is interesting to look at what did pass and what didn’t pass. There is also information about the MRIP transition. I did not put in all the summaries but you can go to the ASMFC webpage and get [full summaries](#) and the votes on motions. You can get all the presentations. I know people can’t always listen to the webinars but instead of spending hours searching online to find this information, you can go directly to the ASMFC and get the actual information. The table included in the article about older fish producing more eggs is very small. If you would like a larger copy, just [email](#) me.

### Attack on NJ Quotas

It seems as though New England is constantly pushing the “**so called fact**” that all the fish are headed north and therefore New England

should get the larger quotas. The truth is New Jersey had in place better recording of commercial catches than many of the states north of us. There are many reasons this happened. The most important is some states were hiding the commercial catch to avoid paying taxes. In addition, they wanted to be secretive about their landings. New Jersey has always had a strict system for recording commercial landings, so our data has always been more reliable. Yes, we have global warming and yes, there is some migration of fish to the north but that is not a legitimate reason to just raise quotas for the New England states. Some of the rise of biomass in the north has to do with actually growing the stocks and the year classes for a number of species including sea bass and flounder. When we look at some of the old data including some of the recreational data, we find that on species like summer flounder and black sea bass, when they get older and migrate from inshore to offshore, the bigger fish have a tendency to move north. The number of fish don’t change in the south. In fact, they increase. But the fish that are caught in the northern region skew the data because they are larger fish. If you look at the number of fish in the younger year classes, those numbers could be as great as ever, especially in the stocks that have increased. The states from New York north have decided that New Jersey should be considered a southern state. If the migration is truly going north from North Carolina and Virginia, then New Jersey should be catching a windfall number of fish. New Jersey recreational and commercial industry must be vigilant in keeping an eye on decisions made by the New England Council, MidAtlantic Council and ASMFC as some members try to manipulate data for their state’s benefit.

If the quotas were allowed to grow as they should as we increase the biomass for a stock, we would not have every state arguing for their share of a smaller quota. I have been around long enough to know that there were white papers produced about how we would handle the growing stocks and allocate those increases among the states. The real problem is we are fishing on quotas that are smaller than what we were fishing on when we first started rebuilding the stocks. We need to increase the quotas on black sea bass, summer flounder and some other species.

### MRIP Transition to FES

Kelly Denit (NOAA Fisheries) presented an update on the Marine Recreational Information Program’s (MRIP) transition to the Fishing Effort

Survey (FES). This is the same information that was presented at the NMFS Recreational Summit. Kelly's full presentation should be on the ASMFC webpage. As I said before, this is a breath of fresh air. What Kelly is presenting is that the team working on MRIP transition to FES are looking at the facts and coming up with improved solutions on how we deal with the increasing catch. We need to write letters to the Secretary of Commerce and the Head of NMFS supporting this change. I hear there is some push-back and we should make sure to make our support known. I haven't been as positive about any proposal in a long time.

## ASMFC Meeting Summaries

### SUMMER FLOUNDER, SCUP AND BLACK SEA BASS MANAGEMENT BOARD JOINTLY WITH THE MAFMC (APRIL 30, 2018)

#### *Meeting Summary*

The Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Management Board (Board) and the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) met jointly to consider a number of issues. These include (1) approving a joint Summer Flounder Commercial Issues Amendment Public Hearing Document (PHD) for public comment; (2) a draft discussion document regarding a strategic plan for reforming recreational black sea bass management; (3) draft alternatives for the recreational management framework and addendum for all three species; and (4) preliminary harvest estimates from the February 2018 recreational black sea bass fishery.

#### **Summer Flounder Commercial Issues Amendment Public Hearing Document**

The PHD serves as an abridged version of the Draft Summer Flounder Commercial Issues Amendment, which the Board also approved for public comment. This action proposes potential modifications to the commercial summer flounder fishery, as well as the existing fishery management plan objectives for summer flounder.

This amendment was initiated in 2014 in response to stakeholder feedback received during the Council's visioning project regarding concerns with the current summer flounder commercial management program.

Specifically, the Draft Amendment seeks public input on four issues:

1. **Requalifying criteria for federal commercial moratorium permits to address latent effort in the fishery** – Federal permit qualification criteria have not changed since establishment in 1993. Some stakeholders believe the original permit qualifications criteria resulted in the current number of federal permits being too high relative to recent stock size estimates and resulting quotas. Additionally, given restrictions and stock trends in other fisheries, there is concern that inactive permits may reenter the summer flounder fishery, putting further economic strain on participating vessels. The Amendment offers options to reduce the number of commercial federal moratorium permits based on qualifying criteria.
2. **Modifying commercial quota allocation** – The current commercial allocation was last modified in 1993 and is perceived by many as outdated given its basis in 1980-1989 landings data. Summer flounder distribution, biomass, and fishing effort have changed since then, and some believe the initial allocations may not have been equitable or were based on flawed data; therefore, stakeholders requested evaluation of alternative allocation systems. The Amendment offer a range of options to modify and re-allocate the current annual commercial state by state quota allocations.
3. **Adding commercial landings flexibility as a framework issue in the Council's FMP** – Landings flexibility policies would give commercial vessels greater freedom to land or possess summer flounder in the state(s) of their choice. Although such policies may be more effectively developed by state level agreements, the Board and Council are interested in having the option to pursue broader landings flexibility policies via framework action/addenda in the future if necessary. This action does not consider implementing landings flexibility policies at this time.
4. **Revise the FMP objectives for summer flounder** – Many managers and stakeholders believe that the current objectives have become outdated and could provide more meaningful guidance if updated. Although the revisions to FMP objectives are not

proposed as an explicit set of options in the Amendment, they are provided for public comment.

The Board and Council will determine the public comment period as well as the schedule of public hearings following the June Council Meeting, and notify the public through a joint press release. The Board and Council will consider taking final action on this amendment in December 2018.

### **Draft Strategic Plan for Reforming Recreational Black Sea Bass Management**

A draft discussion document on reforming recreational black sea bass management was developed by the Board Chair and Vice-Chair in response to wide-ranging concerns with the current management program. The draft is aimed at providing a starting point for discussion on the development of a comprehensive reform initiative. At the meeting, the draft was presented and briefly discussed. The Board and Council offered support for continued development of the strategy over the next few months, first, through direct input from members, then through a joint working group process. The draft document, as modified through the initial review process, will be brought back before the Board and Council.

### **Draft Alternatives for the Recreational Management Framework and Addendum**

The Council and Board considered draft alternatives for the Summer Flounder, Scup and Black Sea Bass Recreational Management Framework and Addendum. This action was initiated at the December 2017 joint meeting. After considering the recommendations of the Fishery Management Action Team (FMAT), and the Council's Demersal Committee and a subset of the Board, the Board and Council approved alternatives to include in a draft public hearing document. The draft alternatives include options for conservation equivalency for recreational black sea bass, conservation equivalency rollover, slot limits in recreational fisheries for all three species, and Block Island Sound transit provisions. The transit provision alternatives include two alternative transit zone areas that could apply to recreational fisheries only, or both commercial and recreational fisheries for all three species, depending

on the alternatives selected. The Board and Council considered but chose not to include alternatives for evaluating and modifying recreational management measures based on a comparison of catch to the Annual Catch Limit in this action. A draft document will be presented at the August joint meeting of the Board and Council with final action tentatively scheduled for December 2018.

### **Preliminary February 2018 Recreational Black Sea Bass Harvest Estimates**

Finally, the Board and Council received a report on the preliminary harvest estimates for the February 2018 black sea bass recreational fishery. Virginia and North Carolina were the only states to participate in the fishery, and the total harvest between both states is estimated between 4,826 and 5,206 pounds of black sea bass.

For more information on black sea bass, please contact Caitlin Starks, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at [cstarks@asmfc.org](mailto:cstarks@asmfc.org) and Kirby Rootes-Murdy, Senior Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at [krootes-murdy@asmfc.org](mailto:krootes-murdy@asmfc.org) for more information on summer flounder and scup.

### **BLUEFISH MANAGEMENT BOARD JOINTLY WITH THE MID-ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL (APRIL 30, 2018)**

#### ***Meeting Summary***

The Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) and the Commission met jointly to review and approve the scoping and public information document for an amendment to the Bluefish Fishery Management Plan (FMP) focused on allocation. The Board and Council approved the document for state public hearings, which will be conducted this summer.

The Draft Amendment will involve a comprehensive review of the Bluefish FMP's sector-based allocations, commercial allocations to the states, transfer processes, and goals and objectives. Specifically, the Council and Commission will consider whether modifications to the FMP's goals, objectives, and allocation strategies for bluefish are needed.

Scoping is the first and best opportunity for members of the public to raise concerns related to the scope of



issues that will be considered. The public is encouraged to submit comments regarding the range of potential issues to be addressed in the amendment. In addition to comments on allocation and transfer processes, the Council and Commission are interested in comments on the following topics:

- Fishery productivity
- Ecosystem considerations
- Changes in the fishery
- Changes in distribution of bait fish
- Average fish size
- Changes in availability, effort, and marketability
- Impacts of changes observed over time

The scoping and public information document will be finalized and released in May 2018. State public hearings will occur this summer, with dates and locations to be determined. Additional information and updates will be posted at [this link](#).

For more information, please contact Caitlin Starks, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at [cstarks@asmfc.org](mailto:cstarks@asmfc.org) or 703.842.0740.

## **ATLANTIC STRIPED BASS MANAGEMENT BOARD (MAY 1, 2018)**

### ***Meeting Summary***

The Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board met to provide guidance to the Stock Assessment Subcommittee (SAS) regarding the types of biological reference points (BRPs) to pursue in the 2018 Benchmark Stock Assessment. A Board Guidance Work Group (comprised of Board, Advisory Panel (AP) and SAS members) was established in November 2017 to develop guidance recommendations for the Board to consider. To facilitate recommendation development, the Work Group developed a survey to solicit input from all Board and AP members. The survey asked questions regarding the most important values of a quality and viable fishery and overall satisfaction with the state of the stock and management under Amendment 6.

In general, the survey was unable to identify an overwhelming majority regarding overall satisfaction with the management of striped bass under Amendment 6, nor with the current management

triggers or reference points. That being said, results did indicate that respondents that are not satisfied with the current reference points felt that the spawning stock biomass (SSB) target is too conservative and/or unachievable under current conditions (e.g., environmental conditions or the conditions of predator and prey populations), and that the development of stock-specific reference points were very important to a successful and equitable management program. Results also indicated an interest in revisiting pre-Addendum IV reference points (e.g., SSB and/or fishing mortality (F) levels based during a period when the stock was considered in “good condition”).

Accordingly, the Work Group recommended the SAS develop a range of fishing mortality (F) and SSB reference points, including revisiting the current and pre-Addendum IV reference point approaches, and to clarify the various implications of different reference point values to allow the Board to explore the tradeoffs of management objectives and characteristics of a quality fishery. The Work Group also recommended the SAS strive to develop stock-specific reference points where possible. The AP met via conference call to review the survey results and Work Group’s recommendations, and to develop alternative recommendations if warranted. However, there was similarly no overwhelming majority among the AP regarding overall satisfaction with the management program or reference points, and therefore the AP supported the Work Group’s recommendations.

Following review, the Board tasked the SAS to develop a range of reference points according to the Work Group’s recommendations and explicitly including a biologically-based threshold for F and SSB. Additionally, the SAS will clarify the various implications of different reference point values to allow the Board to explore the tradeoffs of different management objectives and associated risks levels with each set of reference points.

The Board also received a progress update on the 2018 benchmark stock assessment. The benchmark is scheduled for peer-review in November 2018 at the 66th SAW/SARC. The first modeling workshop is scheduled for May 15-17, in Providence, Rhode

Island, and a second modeling workshop will likely be in late summer or early fall.

For more information, please contact Max Appelman, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at [mappelman@asmfc.org](mailto:mappelman@asmfc.org) or 703.842.0740.

**SUMMER FLOUNDER, SCUP AND BLACK SEA BASS MANAGEMENT BOARD (MAY 3, 2018)**

**Press Release**

**Summer Flounder, Scup and Black Sea Bass Management Board Revises Northern Region Recreational Management Measures**

Arlington, VA – Upon the direction of the Commission’s Interstate Fisheries Management Program (ISFMP) Policy Board, the Summer Flounder, Scup and Black Sea Bass Management Board approved revised 2018 recreational measures for the Northern Region states of Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut and New York (see Table 1). Further, the Board initiated new management action for the 2019 black sea bass recreational fishery and tasked the Plan Development Team to develop a white paper to consider the impacts of changes in black sea bass abundance and distribution to the management of commercial and recreational fisheries.

Table 1. Approved 2018 black sea bass recreational measures.

| State                                     | Minimum Size | Possession Limit | Open Season                  |
|-------------------------------------------|--------------|------------------|------------------------------|
| ME                                        | 13"          | 10 fish          | May 19–Sep 21; Oct 18–Dec 31 |
| NH                                        | 13"          | 10 fish          | Jan 1–Dec 31                 |
| MA                                        | 15"          | 5 fish           | May 19–Sep 12                |
| RI                                        | 15"          | 3 fish           | Jun 24–Aug 31                |
|                                           |              | 7 fish           | Sep 1–Dec 31                 |
| CT, Private/Shore                         | 15"          | 5 fish           | May 19–Dec 31                |
| CT, Authorized Party/Charter              | 15"          | 5 fish           | May 19–Aug 31                |
|                                           |              | 7 fish           | Sep 1–Dec 31                 |
| NY                                        | 15"          | 3 fish           | Jun 23–Aug 31                |
|                                           |              | 7 fish           | Sep 1–Dec 31                 |
| NJ                                        | 12.5"        | 10 fish          | May 15–Jun 22                |
|                                           | 12.5"        | 2 fish           | Jul 1–Aug 31                 |
|                                           | 12.5"        | 10 fish          | Oct 8–Oct 31                 |
|                                           | 13"          | 15 fish          | Nov 1–Dec 31                 |
| DE, MD, VA, & NC (North of Cape Hatteras) | 12.5"        | 15 fish          | May 15–Dec 31                |

This action is taken in response to a Northern Region state appeal of the approved 2018 recreational measures under Addendum XXX. The appeal argued the Board’s action under Addendum XXX incorrectly applied technical data and was inconsistent with the Summer Flounder, Scup and Black Sea Bass Fishery Management Plan. After reviewing the appeal, Commission Leadership agreed there was adequate justification to bring portions of the appeal forward to the ISFMP Policy Board.

During the ISFMP Policy Board’s deliberations regarding consideration of the appeal, a potential management program for the 2018 black sea bass recreational fishery was presented to replace the allocations specified in Addendum XXX. The revised management program was developed to meet the needs of the Northern Region without impacting the remaining states, while still constraining harvest to the 2018 recreational harvest limit of 3.66 million pounds.

For more information, please contact Caitlin Starks, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at [cstarks@asmfc.org](mailto:cstarks@asmfc.org) or 703.842.0740.

**WINTER FLOUNDER MANAGEMENT BOARD (MAY 2, 2018)**

*Meeting Summary*

At its Spring Meeting, the Winter Flounder Management Board reviewed a proposal by Rhode Island to implement aggregate weekly limits in the Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic (SNE/MA) commercial winter flounder fishery. The proposal was intended to provide greater equity between state and federally permitted fishermen given directed fishing is permitted in federal waters but there is a 50 lb daily possession limit in state waters. Analysis by the Technical Committee (TC) indicated that there are currently low levels of targeted fishing effort in the SNE/MA commercial fishery by state permitted fishermen. In addition, projections suggested that an aggregate weekly limit could alter fishermen behavior and increase landings in the fishery. Given the SNE/MA stock is depleted and the 50 lb possession limit was intended to achieve the lowest possible fishing mortality, the Board did not approve the proposal for aggregate weekly limits. As a result, a 50

lb. daily possession limit remains in state waters for the SNE/MA commercial winter flounder fishery.

For more information, please contact Megan Ware, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at [mware@asmfc.org](mailto:mware@asmfc.org) or 703.842.0740.

## **INTERSTATE FISHERIES MANAGEMENT PROGRAM POLICY BOARD (MAY 3, 2018)**

### ***Meeting Summary***

The Interstate Fisheries Management Program Policy Board (Policy Board) considered the Northern Region's black sea bass appeal and received reports from the Executive, Artificial Reef and Law Enforcement Committees.

The Policy Board was provided an overview of the Appeal Process and the specifics of the appeal brought forward by the states of Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut and New York regarding the 2018 recreational measures approved as a result of Addendum XXX. During the Board's deliberations, the states, collectively referred to as the Northern Region, presented a potential management program for the 2018 black sea bass recreational fishery to replace the allocations specified in Addendum XXX.

In support of the proposed management program, the Policy Board directed the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Management Board to approve the 2018 recreational black sea bass regulations 2018 as presented, as well as initiate new management action for the 2019 black sea bass recreational fishery and tasked the Plan Development Team to develop a white paper to consider the impacts of changes in black sea bass abundance and distribution to the management of commercial and recreational fisheries (see press release under Summer Flounder, Scup and Black Sea bass Board below for more details).

ASMFC Chair Jim Gilmore provided an overview of the Executive Committee meeting earlier in the week (see Executive Committee meeting summary for more details).

Dr. Lisa Havel provided an update on the Artificial Reef Committee, which met jointly with the Gulf

States Marine Fisheries Commission's Artificial Reefs Subcommittee in February. Both groups discussed the success of the 2017 Artificial Reef Symposium at the American Fisheries Society Meeting in Tampa, Florida. Dr. Havel represented the Commission on the steering committee for the symposium. The groups also discussed the state of historical resource reviews for artificial reef permits, progress on BP-funded reef projects in the Gulf of Mexico, compared state SCUBA diving programs, and were provided a presentation on collecting reef use data using aerial surveys. There was a guest presentation on sea turtle considerations in reef module designs. Each state also provided updates. ASMFC will host the next meeting, which will take place in early 2019. The Committee plans to create a document containing each state's artificial reef monitoring protocols, which can be used to aid in monitoring standardization along the coast. Per the request of the Policy Board, Dr. Havel will work with the Committee to look into artificial reef and recreational fishing potential in the planned wind farms off the Atlantic coast.

Law Enforcement (LEC) Committee Coordinator Mark Robson updated the Board on the activities of the LEC (see LEC meeting summary). Based on a LEC recommendation, the Commission will send a letter of support to NOAA Fisheries to continue funding Joint Enforcement Agreements, which was zeroed out in the 2019 Presidents Budget Request. The Board will also send a letter to NOAA Fisheries asking for continued development on ropeless fishing technologies to address concerns raised by both the LEC and the American Lobster Management Board, and to pursue other actions to protect right whales.

Kelly Denit (NOAA Fisheries) presented an update on the Marine Recreational Information Program's (MRIP) transition to the Fishing Effort Survey (FES). The FES replaces the coastal household telephone survey and provides a more accurate estimates of fishing effort. As part of the transition to FES side-by-side benchmarking occurred where it was found: (1) estimates from the FES are several times higher than those from the CHTS; and (2) on average, the private boat estimates were almost three times higher, and in the shore mode, they were about five times higher. This varied by mode, state, and wave, so in some cases they were higher, and in others they were lower. The Transition Plan was developed by NOAA Fisheries, the states, Councils, and the Interstate Commissions.



The Plan outlined a series of steps necessary to make a smooth transition from the CHTS to the FES: (1) side-by-side benchmarking to compare results from the two surveys, which has been completed; (2) develop and peer review a calibration model to go between the Fishing Effort Survey and the CHTS, which has been completed; (3) adjust the angler intercept survey and develop and peer review a calibration model to go between the Fishing Effort Survey and the CHTS, which has been completed; and (4) re-estimate total catch, which will be incorporated into stock assessments and management decisions. Members of the Board commend MRIP staff for their work on these very important changes to MRIP.

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

## JCAA 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Fluke Tournament

*By Paul Turi, Office Manager*

The JCAA 24th Annual Fluke Tournament will take place on Saturday, **August 4<sup>th</sup>** and the Awards Presentations will take place on Thursday, **August 9<sup>th</sup>** at the Clarion Hotel on Rt. 37 east in Toms River, NJ.

In this edition of our newspaper there is a four-page insert advertising our fluke tournament. Contained within that insert is an application. You can fill that out and either mail or fax it to our office.

Our Eventbrite online registration is now on our website. I would strongly recommend using the Eventbrite site to sign up for the tournament. You will automatically receive a confirmation email and you will have a paid receipt for your records. Soon registrants will be able to download and print their own affidavit/weigh-in slip. Our IT person is now in the process of making that happen. Once it is operational, a registrant will receive a confirming email with a link to a site to download the affidavit/weigh-in slip. If you sign up by mailing in a registration form, an affidavit/weigh-in slip will either be mailed to you or you will receive an email with a link to download and print it. Again, it is highly recommended that registrants sign up using our Eventbrite online registration method. This not

only serves as a receipt, but it saves JCAA manpower in having to manually enter everything into our computer system, print & mail an affidavit/weigh-in slip.

You will also notice on our application form this year instead of having 9 ports we are having 7 regions with 11 weigh stations. This year we have combined the ports Great Bay, Ocean City, Atlantic City, Cape May and Fortescue into the southern region. Each region will have 10 prizes. There will be a \$1200 1<sup>st</sup> place prize for each region and 9 2<sup>nd</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> place merchandise prizes for each region. Therefore, for the southern region there will be one set of prizes for those five combined ports within that southern region.

There will be a \$50 & \$100 calcutta for each region and a \$50 & \$100 calcutta for the overall tournament. We will continue the calcuttas for this year as they have been very popular with a lot of interest and participation.

There will again be a \$50,000 cash prize for the largest fish weighed in over 12lbs by 1/100 of a pound.

Last year in total we paid out over \$60,000 in cash and prizes!!! The overall tournament winner, 10-year-old Dylan Cole, won \$12,881!

The **Grand Prize** Drawing at the Awards Presentations this year will again be a 14' Starcraft boat, a 20hp Yamaha engine and a trailer.

The boat is again being donated to JCAA by **Starcraft Boats** and **Yamaha** again is donating the engine.

Again, we will be having **FREE** food and drink at the Awards Presentations on August 9<sup>th</sup> at the Clarion Hotel. We will have sliders, hot dogs, soft drinks, etc. Yes, **FREE!** So bring the whole family and crew and have some fun and let's load up the banquet hall and make a nice impression for our tournament sponsors!

## Youth Education Report

*By Greg Kucharewski*

### GLOUCESTER NJ HOFNOD CATFISH TOURNAMENT

Gloucester NJ HOFNOD will hold its first annual Ray Curry Catfish tournament / flea market for kids on June 11, 2016 at River Winds in West Deptford, NJ. Robert Johnston is the HOFNOD Gloucester Township director, if you would like to

enter or support this program, please contact Robert @ 856-491-5366, hofnodgt.com or visit [this link](#).

## **2018 NJ HOFNOD YOUTH FISHING CHALLENGE**

The Hooked on Fishing-Not on Drugs Program's Youth Fishing Challenge is a statewide event to promote fishing among youths and their families. The Youth Fishing Challenge will be held on the first of the state's two Free Fishing Days, Saturday, June 9th, when no license is required to fish regardless of age.

Registered youth participants will be eligible to receive prizes for the fish they catch during the event. Youths must be present at the conclusion of the event to be awarded prizes. Those who are lucky enough to catch a trout tagged as part of the "Hook-A-Winner" Program will receive a special prize following the event.

If you are working with a NJ HOFNOD youth fishing group get ready for Saturday, June 9th NJ Youth Fishing Challenge. The object is to get youngsters fishing so please consider how you might like to get kids hooked on fishing. If you would like to volunteer time with a NJ HOFNOD group to support the NJ Youth Fishing Challenge Day, contact Liz Jackson for details:

NJ DEP Division of Fish & Wildlife  
Hooked on Fishing - Not on Drugs  
605 Pequest Road, Oxford, NJ 07683  
908-637-4125 x122  
[www.state.nj.us/dep/fgw/hofnodnj.htm](http://www.state.nj.us/dep/fgw/hofnodnj.htm)

## **NATIONAL FISHING & BOATING WEEK**

NF&BW Free Fishing Day in New Jersey is Saturday June 9, 2018. 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.

Sign up for one of the Youth Fishing Challenges. It's a statewide event to promote fishing among youths and their families. It will be held on the first of the state's two Free Fishing Days, Saturday, June 9, when no license is required to fish regardless of age.

Registered youth participants will be eligible to receive prizes for the fish they catch during the event. Youths must be present at the conclusion of the event to be awarded prizes. Those who are lucky enough to catch a trout tagged as part of the "Hook-A-Winner" Program will receive a special prize following the event. Organizations interested in hosting an event, and individuals interested in volunteering at an event, should complete and submit an application form: Organization/Volunteer Application Form are available online.

Questions can be directed to this email address: [hofnod@dep.nj.gov](mailto:hofnod@dep.nj.gov).

## **EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS**

Summer programs for adults and children at Sedge Island are offered by the Conserve Wildlife Foundation of NJ, and a partner with the NJ DEP in many management, research and educational programs. Programs range from fishing to kayaking to professional development workshops for teachers.

To learn more, visit the CWF's [Sedge Island page](#).

## **VETERAN FISHING & BOATING CHALLENGE JUNE 9TH**

Boating Education and Rescue along with Barnegat Bay Boat Captains will host a Free Fishing and Boating Challenge for Veterans.

The Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 12 "Play HOOK-e" Take a Veteran Fishing program JCAA, and MA Deuce are supporting this worthwhile event for our heroes. The Veteran fishing and boating challenge will be held on Saturday, June 9, 2018. Veterans will be paired with participating boat captains out of Point Pleasant, NJ.

This year, we expanded our "Play HOOK-e" Take a Veteran Fishing free boat trip for veterans to several boats that will take veterans fishing on Barnegat Bay. Many thanks go to Boating Education and Rescue (B.E.A.R.), Mike and Debbie Bennett for organizing this fun fishing day on the water with Barnegat Bay boat captains. Veterans will enjoy a friendly fishing competition among veterans to catch

some early season Bluefish and Fluke in Manasquan River and Barnegat Bay.

Registration begins at 8:00 a.m. at Forsberg's Boat Works, 1692 West End Dr; Point Pleasant, New Jersey 08742. Boats will depart at 8:00 a.m. and return to dock at 1:00 p.m. After fishing we will have a BBQ and bragging rights for the largest fish caught. Boat Captains are welcome to join the fun, win prizes, and have a chance to taste some of Debbie Bennett's homemade ziti. Veterans registered and fishing on assigned boats will be eligible for rods, reels, door prizes and goodie bags. Loaner rods and will be available for veterans that do not have fishing equipment and bait will be provided.

The "Play HOOK-e" Take a Veteran Fishing and Boating Challenge is geared towards veterans struggling with PTSD & TBI but other veterans are welcome to register. The goal is to connect veterans to VA Service Offices/Outreach Centers, NJ Coastal Parks, Outdoor Clubs, Veteran Organizations, and help Veteran men and women take time to heal by utilizing eco-therapy activities with other veterans. Funds realized from the event will be distributed to veteran organizations that actively assist PTSD veterans. To register, please phone Greg at 732-785-9278 or email him at [gkucharews@jcaa.org](mailto:gkucharews@jcaa.org). Registered veterans will receive email instructions about parking and what is needed to have a safe time on the water.

### **PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES FISHING OUTING**

The Newark Bait and Fly Casting Club will hold its first annual fishing charter on the Mi-Jo out of the Atlantic Highlands, NJ for Disabled Veterans on Friday, June 22, 2018.

### **HUDSON RIVER FISHING ASSOCIATIONS MAY YOUTH PROGRAMS**

On June 6th Wayne Geider, HRFA Youth Fishing Instructor will help Englewood special needs students learn about fishing, June 7th fishing with Hackensack middle school children, June 11th Englewood special needs fishing, June 14th fishing with Hackensack middle school children.

## **Mother of cod: We're fishing exactly the wrong fish, scientists warn**

By Ben Guarino, Washington Post, 5/10/2018

The bigger a female fish grows, the more eggs she lays — disproportionately so.

That's the conclusion driven home in a report published Thursday in the journal *Science*. Biologists at Monash University in Australia and the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute in Panama gathered egg data from 342 fish species across the world's oceans.

At the extreme end, the vermilion snapper, *Rhomboplites aurorubens*, had a 400-fold difference in eggs between the littlest and biggest mama fish. A small female snapper lays around 4,000 eggs. A whopper of a vermilion snapper can deposit eggs by the million, study authors Diego Barneche and Dustin Marshall, colleagues at Monash University, told *The Washington Post*.

This research won't come as a surprise to any field biologists who work with fish. Mark Wuenschel, who works at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Northeast Fisheries Science Center and was not a part of this study, said the size effect was so well known it has an acronym among researchers: BOFFFF, for Big Old Fat Fecund Female Fish. But this work is valuable because a BOFFFF's importance is often tough to assess, Wuenschel said — because these fish are fished out of the population.

In 2017, another team of scientists showed that the fishing industry catches the oldest fish at rates higher than the rest of the population. "You don't even need to be overfishing to get those big old fish to go down," said Trevor Branch, a University of Washington professor and an author of the 2017 report, who was not involved with the new study.

The authors of the new research say it contains an important message for the fishing industry. "Most classic fisheries models don't account for the massively disproportionate contribution that larger fish make, yet these are the first individuals to disappear under even a moderate fishing pressure," Barneche and Marshall wrote in a joint email. "So, fisheries scientists, despite the best of intentions, have been using models that inadvertently recommend overharvesting."

Barneche, Marshall and their colleagues used the example of cod, a commercially important fish. Picture a large Atlantic codfish: Her scales glisten and her chin whiskers are long. Her 30-kilogram body (66



pounds) is swollen with eggs. Nearby is a school of her little sisters and cousins. They are pregnant, too. But they are smaller, just 2 kilograms each.

When the big fish spawns, her eggs will outnumber the eggs deposited by 28 small fish, the authors of the new study calculated. Put another way, it takes more than 123 pounds of small cod to lay the same number of eggs spawned by one 66-pound fish.

“It’s simple physics,” said the University of British Columbia’s Tony Pitcher, a fisheries scientist not involved with this study. The longer a fish is, the greater the volume of her ovaries (proportional to her length). Bigger ovaries mean more eggs. That’s been very well known for more than a century, Pitcher said.

Less well known, he said, was the corresponding increase in egg quality. Older females do not simply lay more eggs. Their eggs are richer in fat and bigger in size. Based on the “total energy content” of fish eggs — the number, volume and nutrients — a 66-pound mother of cod is equal to even more fish. Not 28, but 37 little cod, per the new study. “All else being equal, more and better eggs means more fish,” Marshall said.

If an animal’s limb or organ grows out of proportion with the rest of its body, scientists call that allometry. These fish eggs are an extreme example, or “hyperallometry.” Fish biologists “have been advocating for this idea for a long time,” Barneche and Marshal said in their email, “but our contribution was to show that hyperallometry is the rule, not the exception.”

Wuenschel, who noted he is more involved with fish biology than managing fisheries, said maternal effects as described in the paper “have generally been ignored in the past.” But, as data accumulates, fisheries managers take note. “Many recreational species are managed with slot limits,” he said, meaning fish that are either too small or too large must be released.

Some fisheries have started to use egg output as a metric instead of weight, Branch said, particularly on the U.S. West Coast. Because fish in marine-protected areas tend to let fish grow larger, the study authors said that regions of the sea inaccessible to fishing boats could be even more important than predicted.

To Pitcher, the message to fishers was clear: “Don’t overfish large old females.”

