

JCAA NEWSPAPER OCTOBER 2011

Official Newspaper of the *JERSEY COAST ANGLERS ASSOCIATION*
(Published on September 20th, 2011)

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

JCAA REGULAR MEETING:

Tuesday, September 27th, 2011

Starting at 7:30 PM

At Brick Plaza at 270 Chambers Bridge Rd

NEXT JCAA BOARD MEETING

Thursday, October 13th, 2011

Starting at 7:30 PM at JCAA Office

OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER OF THE JERSEY COAST ANGLERS ASSOC.

1201 Route 37 East, Suite 9, Toms River, NJ 08753

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

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.

Anyone wishing to reproduce any part of this newsletter has the permission of the JCAA and the authors. Wherever possible, please credit the JCAA Newsletter as your information source.

~~~~~  
**JCAA General Membership Meetings are for club representatives and invited guests only. These meetings are not open to the general public. If you would like to attend as a guest, call the President at (732) 929-2591 or Tom Fote at (732) 270-9102 before the meeting date to ask permission.**

## **2011 OFFICERS**

|                            |                |              |
|----------------------------|----------------|--------------|
| <b>President</b>           | Eileen Smith   | 732-899-2681 |
| <b>1<sup>st</sup> V.P.</b> | Joe Puntasecca | 908-913-0551 |
| <b>2<sup>nd</sup> V.P.</b> | Don Marantz    | 609-259-6368 |
| <b>Treasurer</b>           | Doug Tegeuder  | 732-341-5674 |
| <b>Rec. Sec.</b>           | Tom Siciliano  | 609-296-3774 |
| <b>Cors. Sec.</b>          | Paul Turi      | 609-660-2126 |
| <b>Mem. Sec.</b>           | Bruce Smith    | 732-695-3431 |

**Tournament Dir.**

**Committee & Chairpersons listed on last page**

## **IMPORTANT DATES**

**September 27<sup>th</sup>** JCAA General Meeting

**September 29<sup>th</sup>** Menhaden Hearing in Toms River

**October 2<sup>nd</sup>** Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament

**October 11<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup>** ASA Summit New Orleans

**October 13<sup>th</sup>** JCAA Board Meeting

**October 27<sup>th</sup>** JCAA General Meeting

**November 7<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup>** ASMFC Annual Meeting

**November 10<sup>th</sup>** JCAA Board Meeting

**November 13<sup>th</sup>** JCAA Dinner

**January 12<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup>** Garden State Sportsmen Show

**February 1<sup>st</sup>-5<sup>th</sup>** Atlantic City Boat Show

**February 11<sup>th</sup>** NJ's Salt Water Sportsman Magazine's National Seminar

**March 16<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup>** Saltwater Expo

## **President's Report**

*By Eileen Smith*

I hope all of our members experienced a safe and successful summer. Now that fall is here, let's turn our focus on the many important issues ahead.

Attention member Clubs: Our first meeting of the fall is September 27th, 2011 at 7:30PM located at 270 Chambers Bridge Road, Brick, NJ.

Please bring with you a written nomination for at least one member of your club that is worthy of being this year's JCAA sportsperson-of-the-year. This is a great way to say thank you to a person in your club that goes above and beyond helping in the community.

Our next fundraiser will be our Sportsperson-of-the-Year dinner, which will be held November 13, 2011 at the Crystal Point Yacht Club in Point Pleasant, NJ. This is a wonderful evening to share fishing stories from the summer, honor our sportsperson-of-the-year and hear our keynote speaker on a fishing issue that is important to all of

us. There will be door prizes, Chinese auction and silent auction prizes. Tickets are \$75.00 and \$600 for a table of ten, so get a group together and come and have a good time. See Paul Turi's article below for more details.

Also remember, it is not too late to sign up for the Governor's Surf fishing tournament being held on Oct 2, 2011 at Island Beach State park. This is a great family event. The Tournament is sponsored by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Division of Fish and Wildlife, Division of Parks and Forestry, New Jersey Federation of Sportsmen's Club, Jersey Coast Anglers Association and the New Jersey Beach Buggy Association.

**Help Wanted:** We are currently accepting applications for next year's JCAA annual fluke tournament director's position. If you like people and have great computer skills, this is the job for you. Applications can be sent directly to JCAA.org. See John Toth's article below for further details.

## **Sportsperson-of-the-Year Dinner** *By Paul Turi, co-chairman*

Mark your calendar for **November 13th**, the night of the Jersey Coast Anglers Association annual Sportsperson-of-the-Year Awards Dinner. Now is the time to buy your tickets. It is one of our major JCAA fundraisers. It takes place on Sunday, November 13, 2011 from 4:00-9:00 p.m. at the beautiful Crystal Point Yacht Club, RT. 70 & River Rd, Point Pleasant, NJ. We will honor this year's and past years' recipients of the JCAA "Sportsperson-of-the-Year" award. Past honorees include legislators, environmental leaders, outdoor writers and other worthy recipients.

As of this writing we do not yet have a keynote speaker. As soon as we secure a speaker I will let everyone know in a future issue of our paper.

At our September general membership meeting we will be taking nominations for this year's sportsperson of the year and selling tickets. So, if you or your club would like to nominate someone as this year's honoree, please present a short biography, no more than 100 words, as to why you or your club feels this person should receive this year's award.

Individual tickets are \$75 each and tables of 10 are \$600, which is a \$150 savings. This gala

event will accommodate 300 supporters and friends for a semi-formal sit-down dinner with choice of entrees and cash bar. There will also be a cocktail hour prior to dinner. So get a group together from your club or organization and come to the dinner and have a great time. Don't forget your significant other and treating him or her to an evening to remember at the beautiful Crystal Point Yacht Club. Enjoy an excellent three-course meal, Door Prizes and share stories of fishing and bid on one of the many fantastic theme baskets on display.

This year due to economic conditions it is difficult obtaining donations from the different vendors who have helped us in the past. We are in desperate need of prizes for this year's dinner. We need prizes in value of at least \$25.00 or more. We need door prizes, Chinese auction and silent auction prizes.

Every club and their members patronize different bait and tackle shops up and down the coast. If each club solicited a donation from the shops that their members patronize on a regular basis, I am sure these shops will help us out as many of them have in the past. Jersey Coast doesn't have the manpower to solicit these shops ourselves. It would be greatly appreciated if your club could solicit these different shops for us and obtain a prize.

In addition to fishing & boating equipment, we do need prizes for the many women who are in attendance at the dinner. Many clubs have a women's auxiliary. It would help us out a lot if the women solicited prizes from stores they frequent on a regular basis also.

If you obtain a donation, please make arrangements with either myself or someone from Jersey Coast to have these prizes picked up. We need these prizes well in advance of the November 13th dinner.

I can be reached at **(609) 660-2126**. **Dan Miller** will be co-chairing the event and tickets for the dinner can be obtained by calling Dan at **(609) 641-7821**.

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

# Fisheries Management & Legislative Report

By Thomas Fote

## Menhaden

The date for the Menhaden Hearing has been set. I have included a couple of newspaper articles to give you more information. You can also go to the <http://www.asmf.org/> and click on the heading Breaking News to read Draft Addendum V to Amendment I to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Menhaden.

Last month I stated it is amazing to me that it has taken this long for us to actually set coastwide quotas on menhaden. Since that has not changed, I am including last month's column for your information.

We have seen the stock drop precipitously in the last 50 years. This has had a dramatic impact not only on the menhaden but on all the species that depend on menhaden as a forage species. For the Atlantic Coast, menhaden is one of the most important species in the ocean. We all know when menhaden are abundant. Striped bass, bluefish, weakfish, tuna and others are caught around the menhaden schools. When the menhaden disappear from an area, all the species we target disappear with them. To suggest this stock is in good shape when we have no year class distribution is ridiculous. All other fishery management plans I deal with require good age class distribution. The reduction fishery makes up the majority of the catch. It harvests 1, 2 and 3 year old menhaden. Menhaden can live up to 11 years. We do not see older fish in the stock assessment. Menhaden was once abundant from Maine to Florida. Huge amounts were harvested for the reduction plants in every state along the coast. Now there is only one reduction plant along the East Coast and the amount they are harvesting is small in relationship to what they harvested when the stocks were healthy. This addendum is a step in the right direction. There will be opposition from the commercial harvesters of menhaden. They have had free reign with no restriction on this stock for years and they will fight to maintain the status quo. I expect this will take until at least 2013 but this is a fight we cannot afford to lose. Otherwise, we will continue to see problems with the fish, marine mammals and birds that depend on them for forage.

Just because there is an addendum on the table does not mean action will be taken. You need to keep the pressure on your Governor and your Commissioners to pass the Addendum.

NJ Menhaden Hearing  
September 29, 2011; 7:00 PM  
Township of Toms River  
33 Washington Street, L.M. Hirshblond Room  
Toms River, New Jersey  
Contact: Peter Himchak 609.748.2020

## Striped Bass

Below are two interesting articles on striped bass. There is both good and bad news. New York has finally taken a step in the right direction by making striped bass in the Hudson River a no-sale fish. As a former New Yorker who was a member of the Striped Bass No-Sale movement in New York, I am hopeful this action will extend through the rest of the state. The bad news is that North Carolina punted. They had an opportunity to deal with the by-catch issue that will continue this winter but they took no action that will impact this year's fishing season.

It has been interesting for me to watch the coalition that has formed to discuss the problems with striped bass. I always look for the hidden agenda and my concern is that one of the states in the forefront of this discussion to reduce the recreational catch is doing this to oppose the movement in their state to make striped bass a no-sale fish. The state agency is trying to convince the Governor and legislators to not move forward on no-sale but instead rely on management issues that are suggested as an addendum to the striped bass management plan. We all agree that there are serious problems with the Chesapeake, especially in Maryland, with water quality issues and a lack of forage species. But for a state to use this to undercut the groups working for no sale is inappropriate. One issue has nothing to do with the other.

I am looking forward to the data in the latest turn-key stock assessment. I am also looking forward to the peer reviewed stock assessment in 2012.

## Shad and River Herring and the Lack of Foundations to Fund the Right Projects

There is an article below about Rhode Island's removal of a dam on the Pawtuxet River. This removal is an example of the ongoing projects to remove the dams that cause barriers to fish

spawning migrations. Fish ladders serve a purpose when removing a dam is not feasible but in no way are as good as actually removing the dam. Every state should have a system in place to evaluate all the dams to determine their impact on anadromous species spawning migrations. All you need to do is read books like The Founding Fish by John McPhee's that deals with the history of shad since colonial times to know that the dams are a major negative impact. We can only do so much with fisheries management. Habitat restoration is essential for species like shad and river herring. The ASMFC and the Council systems do not have the authority to manage the environment, only to make recommendations and comment on these issues. As a participant within this system for more than 20 years, this problem is extremely frustrating.

We see problems like the dams that inhibit the recovery of many stocks but lack the authority to do anything about it. We can't tell a power plant they must erect cooling towers to end the killing of fish and their eggs. We can't tell the states to design better sewer systems to deal with endocrine disruptors that are having a negative impact on the sexual development of fish. It seems the only thing we can do is restrict commercial and recreational harvests.

I was very disappointed when I looked at grants funded by Walmart, PEW, Dodge and other foundations. Some of these grants focus on restricting the ability of fishermen to fish but never get to the underlying problems. They punish the people who are sometimes the least cause and ignore the factors that have the greater impact. When we look at the source of funding that provided the original money, we sometimes see that the big polluters are where the big funders got their money. I looked at Walmart's quote *"Within the Marine Conservation initiative the foundation also works to create economic incentives for ocean conservation. The foundation supports projects that reverse the incentives to fish unsustainably that exist in "open access fisheries" by creating catch share programs. In addition, the foundation's grantees work with major seafood buyers to encourage improvements in fisheries sustainability through partnerships with fishermen and by encouraging fisheries to apply for certification by the Marine Stewardship Council."* It truly disappoints me that they never mention the recreational anglers that spend their money at Walmart and not to just buy tackle. There are many

areas they could have helped but did not think about doing.

I have yet to be successful in getting some of these foundations to help fund research that would look at the underlying habitat and environmental issues.

### **ASMFC Meeting Week**

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission will meet in Boston November 6 – 10. The agenda is below. The agenda is full and many important subjects are included. You can periodically check the ASMFC webpage since the agenda may change. The fisheries management plans that will be up for discussion can be found under "Breaking News". If you read these documents and send your commissioners your comments, you can be represented at the meeting. You must read the plans first and comment directly on the proposals that are under consideration. Sometimes I get emails from people who have not done their homework. While their comments may be valid and I am pleased they have taken the time to contact me, we can only work with the plans that are listed for consideration at a specific meeting. It is important that your comments focus directly and specifically on the options listed in the plans.

## **ASMFC 70th Annual Meeting**

### **Preliminary Agenda**

November 6-10, 2011

### **Preliminary Agenda for the Commission's 70th Annual Meeting in Boston, Massachusetts**

The preliminary agenda is subject to change. The agenda reflects the current estimate of time required for scheduled Board meetings. The Commission may adjust this agenda in accordance with the actual duration of Board meetings. Interested parties should anticipate Boards starting earlier or later than indicated herein.

*The agenda may also be viewed at <http://www.asmfc.org/70thAnnualMeeting.htm>.*

#### **Langham Hotel**

250 Franklin Street  
Boston, MA  
Phone: 617.451.1992

#### **Sunday, November 6, 2011**

2:00 – 5:30 PM Registration

6:00 – 7:00 PM Welcome Reception

#### **Monday, November 7, 2011**

7:00 AM – 1:00 PM Registration  
 8:00 – 10:30 AM Atlantic Herring Section  
 10:45 AM – 12:30 PM American Lobster Management Board  
 1:00 – 5:00 PM Law Enforcement Committee  
 1:00 – 5:00 PM Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership Steering Committee  
 1:45 – 3:00 PM American Lobster Management Board  
 (continued)  
 2:30 – 4:00 PM Registration  
 3:15 – 5:30 PM Meeting with Massachusetts Marine Fisheries Advisory Commission  
 6:00 – 9:00 PM Reception at UMASS Club

**Tuesday, November 8, 2011**

7:00 AM – 1:00 PM Registration  
 8:00 – 10:00 AM Law Enforcement Committee (continued)  
 8:00 – 11:00 AM Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board  
 8:00 AM - Noon Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership Steering Committee (continued)  
 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program Coordinating Council  
 11:15 AM – 1:00 PM Legislators/Governors Appointees Luncheon  
 12:30 – 5:30 PM Management and Science Committee  
 1:15 – 3:15 PM Tautog Management Board  
 2:30 – 4:00 PM Registration  
 3:30 – 5:30 PM Action Plan Workshop  
 6:00 – 9:00 PM Dinner on Odyssey

**Wednesday, November 9, 2011**

8:00 – 9:30 AM & Horseshoe Crab Management Board  
 8:00 AM – Noon NEAMAP Board  
 8:30 AM – Noon Habitat Committee  
 9:45 – 10:45 AM South Atlantic State/Federal Fisheries Management Board  
 10:30 AM – 12:30 PM Registration  
 11:00 AM – 12:15 PM Atlantic Menhaden Management Board  
 12:30 – 1:30 PM Captain David H. Hart Award Luncheon  
 1:45 – 3:00 PM Atlantic Menhaden Management Board (continued)  
 3:15 – 3:45 PM Business Session  
 3:45 – 6:15 PM ISFMP Policy Board

**Thursday, November 10, 2011**

7:00 – 8:30 AM Executive Committee  
 8:45 – 10:45 AM Shad & River Herring Management Board  
 11:00 AM – 12:30 PM Winter Flounder Management Board  
 12:30 – 1:00 PM Buffet Lunch for Commissioners and Proxies  
 1:00 – 3:30 PM ; Spiny Dogfish and Coastal Sharks Management Board  
 3:45 – 4:15 PM ISFMP Policy Board (continued)  
 4:15 – 4:45 PM Business Session (continued)

**New Bass Law Aids Hudson Fishermen**  
 By Ken Moran  
 New York Post, August 31, 2011

In what could be a huge help to the striped bass fishery, it is now illegal to commercially fish for bass in the Hudson.

Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo, a good striped fisherman in his own right having grown up recreational fishing on the Sound, announced he has signed a law to prohibit the taking of striped bass from the Hudson River for commercial purposes, extending a ban that has existed since the 1970s.

"This law benefits both public health and the vibrant recreational fishing industry that is an important part of the local economies along the Hudson River. I thank Sen. [Mark] Grisanti and Assemblyman [Thomas] Abinanti for sponsoring this legislation," Cuomo said.

The law prohibits the taking of striped bass for commercial purposes from the Hudson River located between the George Washington Bridge and the federal dam in Troy.

Striped bass fishing is a popular recreational fish, and the Hudson River is New York's main spawning ground for bass, attracting many fishermen each year. Because of PCB contamination, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation currently bans consumption of fish from approximately 40 miles of the Hudson from Fort Edward downstream to Troy and also bans most commercial fishing in the entire river.

The New York State Department of Health also advises children and women of childbearing age against eating any fish from the Hudson River. The legislation further ensures that striped bass with possible PCB contamination are not commercially sold, while also helping maintain the striped bass population in the Hudson River for recreational fishing.

"As a major tourist draw and popular fishing destination, the Hudson River benefits local towns and villages as well as recreational anglers. With PCB contamination still evident among striped bass in the Hudson, it is important that we extend the ban on commercial fishing to protect public health and the striped bass population," Grisanti said.

Said Abinanti, "Fishing for striped bass in the Hudson River has been a favorite pastime for New Yorkers for decades and with this signing Gov. Cuomo is ensuring striped bass populations are protected for recreational use only. Extending this ban will continue to protect New Yorkers from the sale of potentially contaminated fish and allow anglers to continue to enjoy the striped bass fishing experience." ken.moran@nypost.com

## **Striped Bass Trawling Ban Rejected but Fisheries Board Orders Future Rules Imposing Limits**

Star News, September 8, 2011

The N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission decided Thursday not to adopt sweeping changes to the state's striped bass fishery rules for the coming season, but significant modifications might be coming in the next couple of years.

In the wake of a high-profile fish kill earlier this year in which a large number of stripers were discarded from a trawling vessel off the Outer Banks, the nine-member commission has been mulling rule changes, including whether to allow commercial hook-and-line fishing and prohibit trawler fishing for stripers, among other proposals.

But after a vigorous debate in a meeting room at the Holiday Inn Brownstone in Raleigh, the commission adopted rules for this year, while setting the framework for more significant changes down the road.

For the upcoming striped bass season, the commission adopted recommendations from Commissioner Mikey Daniels, a commercial fisherman.

The beach seine fishery will open Dec. 1 and remain open until that gear's quota is caught. Beach seine fishermen will also be able to accept overages from trawl and gill net fishermen.

The gill net fishery will open Jan. 1 and remain open until the quota is reached, with a limit of 50 fish per vessel. Transfers are legal, including vessel-to-vessel exchanges at sea.

Finally, the trawl fishery will open no later than Jan. 15, or immediately after the gill net fishery closes. During open season, fishing will be allowed Monday through Thursday with a 100-fish-per-vessel limit. Overages can be transferred to other vessels.

Meanwhile, the commission directed the Division of Marine Fisheries to develop a limited-entry system for commercial fishermen proposed by Commissioner Anna Beckwith for a future season, perhaps the 2012-2013 season.

Beckwith's plan would limit access to fishermen with a history of catching ocean striped bass. Her proposal would make the state's entire quota available to all gears – beach seine, gill net and trawl – with each gear managed by seasons and trip limits. Transfers would be allowed between permit

holders at any time at sea or on the dock. Beginning in the second year, permit holders could also use hook and line, or rod and reel, as acceptable gear. Waiting a year would give the state time to enact the necessary legislative changes. Her plan would prohibit the sale of striped bass from for-hire trips, among other provisions. Beckwith said her plan was devised to manage the fishery for the next five to 10 years. She argued that the commission often puts off changes that would better protect ocean resources. "We keep pushing things back and back and back," she said.

But Commissioner Bradley Styron, a commercial fisherman, said he believes the state must tread lightly. "Adding another fishery and shoving things down people's throats is not the way to do it," he said. The division will bring a limited-entry proposal back to the commission for a final vote at a future meeting. With competing interests in the commercial and recreational fishing industries, and even inside each sector, changes to fishing regulations are often complex and controversial.

On the striped bass issue, several advisory committees from different parts of the state came up with conflicting recommendations on how the fishery should be managed. Commissioners also heard from Coast Guard Lt. Jeffrey Padilla, who noted a problem with fishermen catching striped bass illegally in federal waters – more than three miles offshore – then throwing them overboard when they see a Coast Guard vessel approaching. He said it's difficult to enforce the laws in those situations, without direct evidence that a violation was committed.

"You show up and there's signs that there's been fishing, but there are no fish," he said. "It's very frustrating. It's very difficult to basically catch somebody in the act."

He also said enforcement activities are limited by limited resources, but that the Coast Guard is "going to do what we can" to catch violators.

Meanwhile, Beckwith was elected vice chairwoman of the commission, which swore in three new members: recreational fisherman Chris Elkins, scientist Allyn Powell and recreational fisherman Joe Shute.

## **Pawtuxet Falls Project is Biggest Dam Removal Job in R.I. History**

The Providence Journal, August 11, 2011

The sound of cascading water competed with the cacophony of a hydraulic jackhammer on Wednesday as workers began restoring the Pawtuxet Falls to the way they were in Colonial times.

Bit by bit and chunk by chunk, the 150-foot concrete dam spanning the Pawtuxet River between Warwick and Cranston started to succumb to a project to clear the way for fish that have historically migrated up waterways across Rhode Island.

It's been a long time since river herring, American shad and other so-called anadromous species, which live in salt water but breed in fresh water, have had much of a chance of getting past the dam to spawn upstream. "This was a natural falls before there was any kind of dam here," said Thomas Ardito, policy director for the Narragansett Bay Estuary Program.

Ardito called it the largest dam-removal project in the state's history, one that should play a small role in relieving flooding that has chronically plagued the Pawtuxet watershed. Arthur Zyro, with SumCo Eco-Contracting, navigates past a section of the dam on the Pawtuxet Falls where pieces of concrete were removed.

As Ardito spoke, a worker at the controls of an excavator on the river's edge aimed a jackhammer at one of the multiple sections of the dam, creating a din in the usually serene Pawtuxet Village. But it was music to Ardito's ear. His group has spent nearly 10 years seeking funding, partners and the necessary permits to undertake the \$600,000 project.

"It's surreal," he said. "It's a real milestone we've got them here working." The first time a dam was built at the site was in the 1700s to power a grist mill. In the 1870s, the City of Providence acquired the wooden dam at the site as part of a project to tap the river for drinking water. Then, in 1924, the Providence Water Supply Board replaced the wooden dam with the concrete one that remains today.

It's that dam, located in the village center below the stone bridge on Post Road, which has provided entertainment for young and old for generations.

"We used to go over there and catch buckies," said Richard Harrigan, 75, standing atop

the bridge Wednesday afternoon and pointing to waters just below the dam where they would catch the herring. Harrigan came from his home in Coventry to meet his brother, Robert, 78, to watch the demolition of a childhood landmark. They remember buying a beverage from the old soda fountain across the street and then drinking it atop the bridge and watching the water spill over the dam.

"I've seen my brother with half boots walk all the way across," said Richard Harrigan, shaking his head in disbelief. While some people have resisted the loss of the dam, the brothers are accepting of the change. Because it will help the fish, "I think it will be better," Robert Harrigan said.

The Bay estuary program, one of 28 across the country established under the Clean Water Act, purchased the dam from the Providence Water Supply Board for \$1. It teamed up with the Pawtuxet River Authority and Watershed Council to remove the structure.

While it may be the largest dam-removal project, it's not the first. There have been numerous efforts around the state in recent years to eliminate river obstructions and to build fish ladders and fish ways to restore historic spawning runs, according to Philip Edwards, a biologist with the state fish and wildlife division.

Similar efforts are under way on other rivers in Rhode Island, including the Blackstone, Ten Mile and Woonasquatucket. Last year, in Richmond, the centuries old Lower Shannock Falls dam on the Pawcatuck River was removed. A fish ladder is being built upstream at Horseshoe Falls dam and plans are being made to take down the Kenyon Millpond dam, farther upstream from there.

"It's a very exciting time," said Edwards. "A lot of them have been years and years in the planning and now they are coming to fruition." While fish ladders are quite valuable, removal of obsolete dams, where possible, is the best alternative. In the case of Pawtuxet Falls, removal of the dam will "open up miles and miles of riverine habitat for anadromous fish," he said.

While the primary funding for the project is aimed at helping migratory fish, the work will also provide other benefits, Ardito said. On a broader scale, it will boost the entire ecosystem by reestablishing a stronger link between Narragansett Bay and the Pawtuxet River watershed. Water quality is expected to improve. And with the increase in populations of migrating fish, more food will be

available for the large fish and birds that prey on them. That could help boost numbers of fish valued by commercial and recreational fishermen.

Also, the removal of the dam will result in the lowering of the river by up to 3½ feet upstream. That is expected to reduce the potential for flooding after heavy rains, but Ardito cautioned that it won't prevent the kind of historic flooding that devastated vulnerable neighborhoods across Rhode Island in 2010, including commercial and residential areas along the Pawtuxet.

The lowering of the water level will expose several feet of sediment along the banks of the river. During numerous public meetings on the project, concerns were raised about possibly polluted sediments being exposed, especially contaminants from the former Ciba-Geigy chemical plant. But Ardito said that subsequent testing found that levels of contaminants were typical of urban settings and that there was no "chemical signature of Ciba-Geigy at all."

Even so, the project will include planting of grasses and vegetation along the newly exposed river banks, which accounts for a considerable share of the cost of the project, Ardito said. But for those most familiar with Pawtuxet Falls, it's the removal of the dam that will be most noticeable, a painstaking task that will take SumCo Eco-Contract of Salem, Mass., from one to three weeks to complete. When it's over, some of the larger rocks will probably be exposed and there's a good chance that there will still be rapids, Ardito said. When tide from the Bay is low and upstream waters are reasonably high, "there's going to be a lot of white water, we think," he said.

## **ASMFC Moves Toward Cut in Menhaden Harvest**

### **Proposal would be First to Limit Catch Along the Coast**

By Karl Blankenship

Chesapeake Bay Journal - September Edition

For the first time, fishery managers are poised to limit the amount of Atlantic menhaden that can be caught along the East Coast.

The small oily fish has been the center of a heated dispute for more than a decade, with recreational anglers and environmentalists contending that commercial harvests were leaving too few menhaden - a major source of food for striped bass and other species - for other fish to eat.

Measured by weight, the menhaden fishery is by far the largest in the Chesapeake, with about 85,000 metric tons caught in the Bay last year.

The industry has long countered claims of overfishing by pointing to stock assessments showing that the East Coast stock was in good shape. But that changed last year, when a new assessment concluded that overfishing had taken place in 2008, and that fishing levels had approached that mark in 32 of the previous 54 years.

In August, the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, which sets policy for species that migrate along the East Coast, proposed a revision to its menhaden management plan that could sharply cut menhaden catches and opened the plan for public comments.

"It was our most noteworthy progress to date at ASMFC on menhaden," said Bill Goldsborough, senior fisheries scientist with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, and one of Maryland's representatives on the commission. "We really haven't managed the menhaden fishery anywhere near the extent to which we have managed our other coastal fisheries."

The proposal would require that at least 15 percent of the spawning stock potential be allowed to survive to reproduce. In 2008, the ASMFC estimates that only 8 percent of the spawning stock had survived. If approved, the change could require significantly reduced harvests. Had the 15 percent threshold been applied to the 2010 catch, it would have reduced landings by 23 percent, from a total coastwide harvest of about 227,000 metric tons to 174,332 metric tons.

In 2006, the commission limited the amount of menhaden that could be caught in the Chesapeake Bay, but if it adopts the change at its November meeting, it would be the first time the ASMFC has acted to reduce the menhaden catch along the entire coast. The action would also change some of the focus on the menhaden fishery. Until now, most of the attention has been on Omega Protein, which operates the reduction fishery based in Reedville, VA. It nets large numbers of menhaden, which are taken to its factory where the fish are "reduced" into a variety of products, from dietary supplements to pet food.

Any new limits would affect not only Omega's reduction fishery, but also the growing menhaden bait fishery that takes place all along the coast, supplying fish for commercial and recreational fishers. Omega spokesman Ben Landry said the

ASMFC's proposal will make commission members and others aware that the impact of any new restrictions would be more widespread than many realize. "The target is no longer squarely on Omega," Landry said. "Other people are going to be really affected by this, and it's not just fishermen that leave the dock every day and go fish for menhaden. It is the lobstermen, the crabber that depends on menhaden for bait."

Indeed, the draft amendment to the ASMFC's management plan cautions that a reduced catch will directly affect employment at Omega's Reedville plant, and that the bait fishery would be impacted, as well as recreational anglers who use menhaden as bait. In 2010, the reduction harvest caught about 183,000 metric tons; the bait harvest took about 44,000 tons.

ASMFC is expected to act on the proposal at its November meeting. If it approves the change, it will only be the first step of the process to change menhaden management. The next step would be approving management actions to meet those harvest levels. Those could include, among other actions, limiting the number of trips and pounds that could be caught per trip; restricting the type of gear used in the fishery; closing certain areas during certain times of the year; or setting a total catch quota.

In addition, the commission would need to figure out how to divide the allowable catch between the reduction and bait fisheries. That process would take much of next year, which means actual changes in the fishery would likely not take place until 2013, said Bob Beal, director of the ASMFC Interstate Fisheries Management Program. Exactly what such changes would mean for the Bay is also unclear. Right now, the ASMFC restricts Omega's total catch in the Chesapeake to 122,740 metric tons a year. But that restriction is set to expire after 2013. "The managers will have to make a decision whether to extend that cap, or to replace it with a different management program," Beal said.

Although they are not eaten by humans, menhaden have been the focus of one of the region's most heated fisheries debates over the last decade with conservation and recreational fishing groups contending that ASMFC management efforts have allowed too many menhaden to be harvested.

For years, ASMFC stock assessments had found the population to be in good shape, but the most recent assessment, which took into account new information, showed that overfishing had taken

place in 2008 and in many years in the past. It also showed the population had been at persistently low levels for the last decade.

But the assessment model showed that fishing in 2008 exceeded the threshold by just 0.004 percent, and that while overfishing had taken place frequently in the past, it had not happened between 1999 and 2007. Because of that, Landry said he hoped the ASMFC would factor in more recent information before it ultimately sets catch limits. "If this is truly a historic event, you are going to want to do it right, and not do it using just 2008 data if you have data from 2009, 2010 and 2011 available to you," Landry said. "I think that is going to be our major push going forward." He said the industry is supporting menhaden surveys along areas of the coast which have not historically been examined to come up with a more complete population estimate. Goldsborough, though, said the low numbers of menhaden reported in the stock assessment confirms the view of conservationists that there are simply too few menhaden to go around.

If the proposed 15 percent threshold were applied to past years, he said, it would show that overfishing was taking place in 52 of the past 54 years. "What we all suspected all along - at least those of us on our side of the ledger - is finally becoming apparent in the science," he said.

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission will be taking public comments on the draft amendment to its Menhaden Fishery Management Plan through Nov. 2. The draft is available on the commission's website, [www.asmfc.org](http://www.asmfc.org) Public hearings are scheduled in states along the coast in September and October. Dates will be available on the commission's website when they are set.

## **Case for Menhaden Conservation**

By Bill May

Carroll County Times, 9/10/2011

Anyone concerned with the health of Chesapeake Bay, or indeed the health of the fishery of the entire East Coast, needs to pay attention to the current state of menhaden. Small, bony and oily, menhaden (bunker) are usually not consumed by humans - at least directly. But menhaden are the forage base for striped bass, bluefish, cod, sea trout, bonito, tuna, haddock, halibut, mackerel, swordfish,

king mackerel, summer flounder and numerous other predator species to the point that renowned 19th-century ichthyologist G. Brown Goode stated that people eating Atlantic saltwater fish consume "nothing but menhaden." (Since menhaden are used to bait crab and lobster pots and "reduced" (boiled, dried and ground) menhaden are used for fertilizer, as feed for chicken, pigs and cattle and as fish oil supplements, they are a significant factor in nearly any human diet.)

A 2001 article in "Discover" magazine by H. Bruce Franklin dubbed menhaden "The Most Important Fish in the Sea," the title of the widely-quoted article and subsequent book, and a label that has caught on among both the scientific and lay communities. Franklin also proclaims that vast schools of filter-feeding menhaden filter the water, promoting growth of healthful subaquatic grasses and limiting the spread of algae blooms.

Menhaden, are one of 23 species managed by The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC), a deliberative body of 15 Atlantic coast states formed in 1942 and chartered by the United States Congress in 1950 with the mission "To promote the better utilization of the fisheries, marine, shell, and anadromous of the Atlantic seaboard by the development of a joint program for the promotion and protection of such fisheries, and by the prevention of physical waste of the fisheries from any cause.

In 2006 AFMFC established a Chesapeake Bay cap for the menhaden reduction fishery. After years of unsuccessful attempts to consider further limits, ASMFC voted on August 2 to publish for public comment a range of options for rebuilding menhaden stocks. Draft Addendum V to the Atlantic Menhaden Fishery Management Plan, raises the overfishing threshold while proposing new rebuilding targets. The public has an opportunity until November 2 to comment at hearings and/or through written comments. The ASMFC will formally adopt the new population targets and fishing limits in November, after which it will develop appropriate management measures, e.g., quotas and allocations, for review and adoption in early 2012.

Now for the hard part.

This is a serious and complex issue. It's not just the usual commercial versus recreational brawl over who gets the most fish. The major players in this debate will be Omega Protein and their

generations of employees in Reedville and powerful political allies in Virginia, Texas and nationally plus menhaden bait fishers along the Atlantic coast versus individual fishermen, the sport fishing industry and an array of national and regional conservation groups including the Maryland and Virginia Coastal Conservation Associations (CCA), Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) Greenpeace, Nature Conservancy, Menhaden Matter, National Coalition for Marine Conservation and Maryland Saltwater Sportsman's Association.

Omega Protein, based in Houston, Texas operates a reducing plant in Reedville, Virginia, which is also the base for its fleet of ten ships and eight spotter planes. Menhaden, travelling in huge schools, are located by the planes, then a pair of netting ships deploy purse nets that capture as much as 50,000 pounds of menhaden at a time to be vacuumed into awaiting factory ships. Last year, according to ASMFC, Omega Protein's Reedville fleet took an estimated 200,000 tons of menhaden, 80 percent of the catch along the Atlantic, operating largely in Virginia-controlled portions of Chesapeake Bay up to 3 miles offshore and limited portions of North Carolina. The other 20 % was harvested for bait, primarily by Maryland, New Jersey and New England watermen.

The more one reads on this issue the more claims, counterclaims and different sets of statistics are encountered. However, certain threads emerge:

- Menhaden populations are extremely difficult to measure, but the preponderance of evidence shows populations have declined precipitously in the last 30 years, and reproductive capacities appear dangerously depleted.
- Suggested causes are debated but include declining water quality, overfishing or both. In any case, limiting the harvest is a logical proposed solution that may or may not prove effective.
- Menhaden filtering capacities appear, from several studies, to be vastly overblown. Menhaden cannot eliminate Chesapeake "dead zones."
- In Cutting the menhaden harvest can be expected to cause economic pain along the northeast and mid-Atlantic in a climate of harsh economic times and contentious political debate.
- A crash of the menhaden population would be disastrous ecologically in terms of predator fish and bird populations and economically, crippling both the commercial and sport fishing industries.

Numerous studies have shown sport fishing has many times the economic benefit of commercial fishing operations.

There are a number of websites providing further information:

- Atlantic States Marine Fisheries - [www.asmfc.org](http://www.asmfc.org)
- Chesapeake Bay Foundation - [www.cbf.org](http://www.cbf.org)
- Coastal Conservation Association of Maryland - [www.cca.md.org](http://www.cca.md.org)
- Omega Protein - [www.omegaprotein.com](http://www.omegaprotein.com)
- Chesapeake Bay Ecological Foundation - [www.chesbay.org](http://www.chesbay.org)

Personally I agree with Jay Odell, Director of the Nature Conservancy's Mid-Atlantic Marine Program: "It's impossible to imagine that reducing the menhaden stock so much has not had some negative impact. Fisheries scholars differ on exactly what the cause and effect of the different changes are. But menhaden sit at the very base of the food chain, and scientists around the world are saying they need to be managed more conservatively." My comments to ASMFC will agree with CCA MD that the moderate and reasonable option of establishing a 15% Minimum Spawning Potential (MSP) (Option 2) as the overfishing threshold and that their other suite of target and management options be adopted.

Study and speak up, folks. This is a critical issue. Go to [afsmc.org](http://afsmc.org) and see "Public Input" then see "Draft Amendment V...Menhaden." Read the proposed amendment then comment via email to [tkearns@asmfc.org](mailto:tkearns@asmfc.org).

## New JCAA Fluke Tournament Director Position Open

The JCAA is seeking a person who will manage its JCAA Fluke Tournament in 2012. This person in this position will promote the tournament with press releases, interacting with tournament sponsors to obtain prizes and recognition in promotional materials, handle promotional mailings to anglers concerning the tournament, distribute promotional material to tackle shops and port locations, enter tournament applicants in the JCAA's data base and be responsible for the overall management of the tournament for its successful result. This position requires the following skills:

- Effective writing skills
- Computer expertise skills with Microsoft Office
- Good verbal skills
- Experience dealing with the public
- Ability to be a self-starter to complete tasks.
- Organizational abilities to prioritize tasks
- Prior experience in managing an event is desirable

The JCAA Fluke tournament will take place in June of 2012. This position **requires** the applicant to work part time starting November 1st and attend Board and General meetings. Starting in April the position becomes almost full time. It becomes full time throughout the month of May 2012 and part of June up to the Awards Ceremony in the Golden Nugget in Atlantic City on June 15<sup>th</sup>. (Salary ranges from \$3,000 up to \$5,000 with possible bonuses dependent on the Tournament Director's ability to increase the number of anglers entering the tournament.)

The JCAA is now accepting resumes for this position. All resumes should be sent to JCAA Board member John Toth by October 1, 2011 at the following address or at his email: [tothjohn@verizon.net](mailto:tothjohn@verizon.net).

John Toth  
24 Kings Mill Road  
Monroe Township, NJ 08831

## Electronic Press Releases, Alerts and the JCAA Newspaper By Joseph Puntasecca

We recently upgraded our e-mail alerts, press releases and monthly e-mailing of the *JCAA Newspaper*. You may have noticed a new look and feel to the last few *Press Releases* and *Alerts* we sent out. If you don't already receive our monthly newspaper electronically or you don't receive our *Press Releases* and *Alerts*, you can sign up to receive them at [www.jcaa.org](http://www.jcaa.org). Just click on the *subscribe* link near the top of the page.

On the *Registration* screen just enter your e-mail address. The system will ask you to confirm your e-mail address and you can then select your areas of interest. You can select to receive our monthly newspaper electronically or to receive press

releases or notices on environmental issues. We will also be updating our alert categories in the future and will notify you via e-mail and in the monthly newspaper.

You don't have to worry about spam, the contact information you submit to us is secure and is never sold or shared, and if you so choose you can opt-out at any time.

## Highly Migratory Species Report

*By John Koegler*

### **NMFS Bluefin Tuna Management Debacle!**

NMFS 2011 report for the HMS bluefin tuna fishery up to July 31 is shocking. One category on giant bluefin tuna reports landing data that I had not noticed before. The largest yearly US quota is assigned to the general category. This quota for decades has been used by fishermen choosing the commercial general category that permits the sale of the giant bluefin. NMFS report from January 1 to July 31 has such a major increase in harpoon landings that it shocks me.

Rod and reel landings were 418 tuna averaging 272.4 pounds each. Most of these rod and reel caught tuna in recent years have been landed by North Carolina boats. In the past there has been only a few fish landed by other categories by this date in the fishing season. This year the surprise is the general category harpoon category numbers.

Harpooning bluefin from the bow of any boat takes special skills and a boat specially rigged with a super long pulpit. The harpooner throws or shoots a harpoon dart usually attached to a large float that the tuna tows until it is exhausted and then landed, just like in the movie JAWS. Some harpoon boats use specialized gear that includes an electrified harpoon. A high voltage electric charge is applied to the harpoon cable resulting in the tuna being paralyzed as soon as harpooned. The tuna's sale value is greatly increased. The tuna's body has not been contaminated by excessive byproducts of the tuna's long tough fight to exhaustion.

The above procedure had been primarily used by specialized boats. This report states 276 bluefin harpooned and landed in the general category boats. The commercial harpoon category reported 208 tuna. The rod and reel category reported 418 bluefin tuna, compared to the 484 bluefin total reported by the two harpoon categories combined. This is a huge major

shift in gear success. Some general category boats report using harpoons when the exhausted tuna enters the final few minutes of their battle. The stated reason is to keep the quality of the bluefin high so the tuna is not torn by a gaff or series of gaffs. I assume that this does not make the rod and reel hooked bluefin a harpoon caught tuna.

The smaller reported bluefin average size is 266.8 pounds each. This smaller size had been traditionally a by-catch from the North Carolina January February recreational bluefin rod and reel fishery.

NMFS rules had at one time stated that commercial harpoon boats could not land fish in other categories like the general category. This is a major increase in gear specific landings. The harpoon category requires such highly specialized equipment that I cannot imagine rod and reel boats rigging their boats to use harpoons as their primary fishing gear.

Anglers reserved quota had always been all bluefin tuna under 235 pounds, a size that belonged exclusively to the angler rod and reel category. With a reported average size of 266.8 pounds, this size limit is no longer being observed. Even worse it is believed that bluefin tuna do not spawn until they are over 235 pounds.

Clearly, landings of this smaller size bluefin results in a decrease in spawning age bluefin. Is this not a change in the fishery that should be stopped immediately, assuming that the supposed intent of ALL fish conservation plans is that the species spawn at least once before being landed? Clearly, and without any question, changes to the harpoon category and general category must be made immediately if this species is to survive.

Everyone understands that the reason US fishermen bluefin conservation will never work is because ICCAT members have for 35 years refused to observe or impose ICCAT's rules on their fishermen. With ICCAT nations refusing to follow the rules what value is there in the US fishermen conserving the bluefin tuna in the US areas? As soon as the bluefin leaves US waters or sooner bluefin are targeted and sold by all the other ICCAT member nations! Is NMFS intent to keep their members employed or to achieve conservation rebuilding goals? After 35 years I guess we know that answer.

Why should US fishermen continue to accept tough US rules when NMFS/US has YET to get the

rest of the world to observe or enforce any ICCAT rules? US fishermen have waited for 35 years for results. At what point does observing US bluefin tuna rules have any value for US fishermen? The US is a major financial supporter of ICCAT with US payments. If there is no value in belonging to ICCAT, why should US support US/NMFS in any way or continue to be a member?

What is the traditional understanding of the term insanity? Insanity is when you keep doing the same thing year after year and expect that there will be a different result! 35 years of US management insanity is more than enough.

## **Youth Education Report**

*By Greg Kucharewski*

### **GOVERNOR'S SURF FISHING TOURNAMENT**

The 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament will be held Sunday, October 2, 2011 at Island Beach State Park, New Jersey. Don't miss it! This family fun event is the largest surf-fishing tournament along the East Coast. The J.C.A.A. Youth Education Committee will coordinate fishing and aquatic education programs for children and their families during the surf-fishing tournament and before the awards presentation. Featured programs will include "Distance Casting" by The Shore Surf Club and "Catch a Fish" by the J.C.A.A. Anglers can also enjoy a variety of informational booths that support the Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament. Special arrangements are made for handicapped anglers. Balloon tire equipped beach wheelchairs are available for anglers with disabilities. Volunteers will be on hand to assist any anglers with special needs who want to fish on tournament day. For further information and/or to make arrangements for a handicapped angler, please contact Greg Kucharewski at 732-840-9197.

### **2011 JCAA 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. The JCAA Youth Education Committee is accepting nominations for the 2011 Youth Education Award.

All nominations will be reviewed for the following criteria: Promoting "Hooked On Fishing Not On Drugs (HOFNOD)", Certified HOFNOD instructors, number of fishing or aquatic education events, materials used from the JCAA lending library, and creativity for promoting youth fishing events. Please submit your nominations by October 25, 2011. Submit your nominations in writing to JCAA Youth Education Committee, [gkucharews@aol.com](mailto:gkucharews@aol.com)

### **HOFNOD TRAINING & TRAVEL OPPORTUNITY Press Release**

The Future Fisherman Foundation and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission have announced a regional training seminar for all parties interested in aquatic education training. The site of this year's event will be Camp Ocala, located at 18533 NFS 535 Altoona, Fl. 32702. This seminar is open to not only teachers from around the state but also 4H leaders, Boy/Girls Scout leaders, FFA personnel and anyone interested in getting students involved with aquatic education. Learning the principles of such successful programs as Hooked on Fishing Not on Drugs will be the focus of this two-day seminar. "The intent of this seminar is to give everyone a good working knowledge of aquatic education and instill confidence in them to train others in their respective organizations," F3 Executive Director, Mark Gintert, commented. "We also intend to show them a host of other available resources and the "next steps" for their programs once they get established." Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission will also be participating in this event, which will cover a wide variety of topics including biology, habitat, conservation, equipment operation and life skills. "The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission is always interested in finding ways to reach out to, not only schools, but other organizations who deal directly with students across the state," commented the FWC's Angler and Aquatic Education Coordinator, Steve Marshall. "This event will bring together a diverse group who share the same goals of getting students involved with the great outdoors and learning to be stewards of Florida's aquatic environments," echoed Marshall, who will also help lead the seminar. A travel stipend is available for participants through a Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation (RBFF) grant making the cost minimal. Visit [www.futurefisherman.org](http://www.futurefisherman.org) for more information.