

JCAA NEWSPAPER MAY 2019

Official Newspaper of the *JERSEY COAST ANGLERS ASSOCIATION*

(Published on April 22nd 2019)

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

JCAA REGULAR MEETING:

Tuesday, April 30, 2019

Starting at 7:30 PM

385 Herbertsville Rd, Brick

NEXT JCAA BOARD MEETING

Thursday, May 9th, 2019

Starting at 7:30 PM at JCAA Office

OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER OF THE JERSEY COAST ANGLERS ASSOC.

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JCAA Newspaper Publisher Tom Fote

JCAA Newspaper Editor Paul Turi

This publication is printed and mailed one week prior to each regular monthly meeting of the Jersey Coast Anglers Association. One of the prime goals of JCAA is to get accurate information into public hands as soon as possible.

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**JCAA General Membership Meetings are for club representatives and invited guests only. These meetings are not open to the general public. If you would like to attend as a guest, call the President at 908-913-0551 or Tom Fote at (732) 270-9102 before the meeting date to ask permission.**  
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President	Mark Taylor	732-245-9445
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Cors. Sec.	Paul Turi	609-660-2126
Mem. Sec.	Kyren Dooley	609-713-7712
Tournament Dir.		
Committee and Chairpersons listed on last page		

IMPORTANT DATES

April 30th JCAA General Meeting

May 9th JCAA Board Meeting

May 18th IBSP Fun Day

May 19th Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament

May 28th JCAA General Meeting

June 15th JCAA Fluke Tournament

June 20th JCAA Tournament Awards Presentation

June 30th JCAA General Meeting

No General Meeting in July & August

July 9th-12th ICAST

July 11th JCAA Board Meeting

JCAA 25th Anniversary Fluke Tournament June 15th

By Paul Turi, Tournament Director

This year will be the **25th anniversary** of the JCAA Fluke Tournament. When we started this tournament 25 years ago, we held the tournament in the middle of June every year. For our anniversary tournament this year we have decided to move the tournament back to June. The tournament will be held on Saturday, June 15th and the Awards Presentations will be held on Thursday, June 20th at the Clarion Hotel in Toms River, NJ.

The Fluke Tournament committee felt this is the right thing to do. It will level the playing field for the bay fishermen and especially for fishermen in south Jersey who get the fish early.

Also, when we started this tournament 25 years ago, this was a more family-oriented tournament. The 1st place prize has always been \$1200. In the last five years we have gravitated towards a more money-oriented tournament, but the biggest prize has always been the boat, motor and trailer door prize drawing.

The tournament is for everyone, the family-oriented fisherman who likes to fish with maybe his spouse or spouse and children and the big money fisherman who wants to win a lot of money. It attracts

the novice to the “sharpie.” It’s \$150 to enter the tournament and you can have up to six fishermen with six lines in the water. Split six ways it’s \$25 per man to fish and have a shot at winning either the \$1200 1st place prize or one of the other nine prizes for each region. We estimate that the average boat has four fishermen on board which split four ways would be \$37.50 per man. And remember, you don’t have to buy into the calcuttas. You have the option to opt out of that category or maybe you’d like to add one or more of the calcuttas; the choice is yours. But one thing I would do is definitely enter the Big Fish \$50,000 prize category. That to me is a no-brainer. You never know when you’re going to drop your line in the water and hit that big guy in the head. We’ve all been there and done that at one time or another; just dumb luck. Basically, it’s \$25 for insurance. As we saw last year, a fisherman caught a fish over 12lbs. but was not entered in the Big Fish category.

As I also said in last month’s column, last year we combined Great Bay, Ocean City, Atlantic City, Cape May and Fortescue into one region with one set of 10 prizes for that region. We could no longer continue to pay out all the prize money for those five ports individually. We do not have a 1st place prize sponsor for any of those five ports who is willing to donate the \$1,200 1st place prize. Last year we only had three sponsors who donated the \$1200 1st place prize for their regions/ports: Fisherman’s Headquarters for the LBI region, Liberty Landing Marina for the Jersey City region and South Harbor Marina in Waretown for the Barnegat Bay region. JCAA has to payout the \$1200 1st place prize money for each of the other regions.

Again, there were a few people in the Southern Region who were not happy with combining those five ports into one region. Here are the entries by region for each port in the southern region so you understand why we had to do it.

Manasquan Region	43 entries
Sandy Hook Region	41 entries
Barnegat Bay Region	35 entries
Shark River Region	25 entries
Long Beach Island Region	18 entries
Jersey City Region	18 entries
Southern Region	43 entries

- Great Bay (16)

- Ocean City (15)
- Cape May (9)
- Atlantic City (3)
- Fortescue (0)

As you can see, not one of those five ports in the Southern Region brings in enough entries to justify paying out the \$1,200 for the 1st place prize money and also any money we have to spend on any of the 2nd thru 10th place prizes we have to purchase if we don’t have a sponsor.

Jersey City only had 18 entries last year but Liberty Landing Marina donated the \$1,200 1st place prize. Long Beach Island only had 18 entries but Fisherman’s Headquarters has been donating the \$1,200 1st place prize money for as long as I can remember and I’ve been with JCAA 21 years.

So, since we are celebrating our 25th Anniversary this year, we have decided to move the tournament back to June.

For our fluke tournament over the last five years we have been paying out over \$60,000 in money and merchandize prizes. Starcraft Boats, Yamaha Motors and Yacht Club Trailers have donated a boat, motor and trailer and you don’t even have to catch a fish to win the prize. We give it away in a raffle drawing at our awards presentations.

We also offer \$50,000 for the largest fish over 12lbs. **Someone is going to win that \$50,000!**

So, if you want to help recreational fishing in NJ, help JCAA help you and the other 1,000,000 fishermen in NJ by getting involved and fishing in the tournament this year.

President’s Report

By Mark Taylor

JCAA will be having its Annual High Roller Raffle drawing on May 9th at 7:30PM. If you had stopped by one of the shows or flea markets that JCAA was at and purchased a ticket or two, JCAA and the people of the recreational community thank you for your support. If you haven’t got any tickets time is running out and if you have tickets that were mailed to you get them back to the JCAA Office. I would like to take the time to mention all the people, Companies or originations that donated for this raffle: Capt. Mike Placko "Sign Me Up Charters," Fisherman's

Headquarters, Grumpy's Tackle, Canyon Reels, Tony Maja, TICA, Shu Fly, Costa Del Mar, ICOM and JCAA. Thank you all for your generous donations.

JCAA will have a table at the Liberty Landing Marina's 2019 Vendor Spotlight and Swap Meet Event on May 11th. I will be there promoting the JCAA 25th Annual JCAA Fluke Tournament and talking to all the people that stop by the table for any of the questions they may have. Mark the date in your calendar and plan on attending, it will be an event not to miss. I would like to thank Liberty Landing Marina for continuing to be a 1st Place Port Sponsor for Jersey City.

It's that time of the year to start thinking about entering the 25th Annual JCAA Fluke Tournament. The Tournament date is June 15th with and Award Ceremony on Thursday, June 20th in Toms River. Waste no time and get your entries in and make sure you get in all the categories that you want to. See the rules and more information about the fluke tournament in this newsletter and on our website. Hope to see you all either at the weigh-in stations or the awards ceremony. Displayed outside at the Awards Ceremony we will be giving away to a lucky winner a brand new StarCraft Boat powered by a Yamaha Outboard and sitting on a Yacht Club Trailer. These are amazing companies that come through for JCAA and the recreational community every year. I am looking forward in continuing to work together for years to come.

As a person of the recreational community it is your responsibility to be up on all the topics and species regulations that concerns our resource that we all love so much. As always there a lot going on with all the species every year. The Fluke (Summer Flounder) and Seabass regulations should be completed for this year as I am writing this column. Check out NJ Division of Fish & Wildlife website for the latest. There will be major discussion on Striped Bass and other species yet to come. JCAA will have people at the meetings as they are scheduled and we will get the information out through our newsletter, website and Facebook page. Stay in touch with the correct information as it becomes available here at JCAA. We all need to step up and get involved to protect our sport for the future.

I have been at some of the member clubs to speak. If you would like me or an officer to speak at your club, please send an email to

mtsport64@aol.com and in the subject put "Speak at Club."

The next JCAA General Meeting is May 28th at 385 Herbertsville Road, Brick NJ, 08724. Make sure you mark your calendar. Remember, JCAA is always here for you, but we need more people to get involved to help protect the future of our fisheries.

Fisheries Management & Legislative Report

By Tom Fote

Summer Flounder

My friend Al Ristori, who has an archive of every fishing document that ever came into his possession, gave me a letter from 1977 when Al served on the Mid-Atlantic Fisheries Management Council. It deals with summer flounder. As he gives me more of these documents, I will share them with you. It is interesting to note how much larger the recreational catch was in relationship to the commercial catch at the time this was written. I have seen this in other earlier documents as well. The change occurred when NMFS began estimating the recreational catch. They have finally admitted their error. The summer flounder article in the April issue of the JCAA Newspaper explains in great detail. Hang on, it is going to be a bumpy ride.

Striped Bass

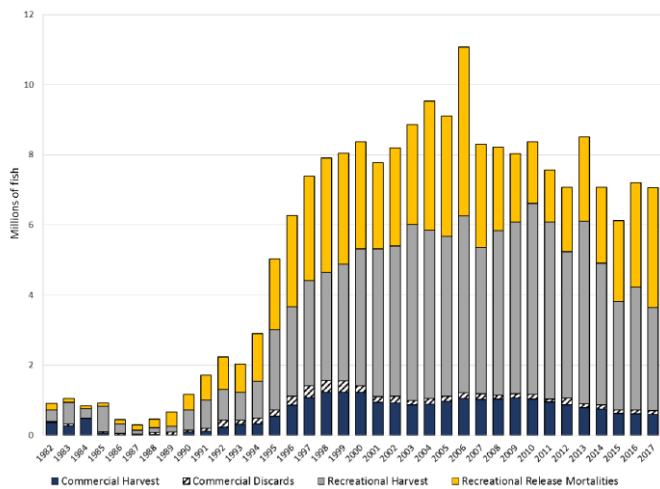
I would imagine many of you will be listening in during the striped bass board meeting by webinar. It should be an interesting meeting. It has come to my attention that there will be people calling for emergency actions, addendums or amendments. I wrote an extensive article on striped bass that was in the March JCAA Newspaper. I have put an excerpt below but the entire article is available on the JCAA webpage.

Although I covered catch and release in the article, this became more relevant as we begin discussing how we will manage striped bass. The segment of the community that supports catch and release thinks no one should take home a fish to eat. They blame those who want to eat fish for the so-called collapse of the fishery. There are others who just want to catch a trophy fish and who don't believe anyone should take a fish unless it is trophy size. The

third group of anglers are those who want to go fishing and bring home a striped bass to eat. These anglers may fish just a few times a year.

Recently a friend told me he caught over two hundred fish on a single trip but didn't keep any. I pointed out that he should remind his listeners that he killed at least 16 fish according to the catch and release data. Being proud that you don't keep a fish ignores how many fish you kill, especially if you are a daily angler. The occasional angler who takes a fish home to eat may catch a few but it is unlikely they are killing more than 16 fish in just their few yearly trips. It is also my experience that catch and release anglers will fish even when there are only small fish to throw back. This is a greater problem in the summer when the weather and the water are warm, the salinity is often lower and the mortality numbers rise.

Look at the table below. The number of harvested fish has been reduced in the last three years but the catch and release mortality has continued to rise. The information I have received about 2018 show an even greater drop in harvest. When you are killing double the number of fish by catch and release mortality than by catching for dinner, we need be clear about where the problem lies. Every angler needs to look at the problems we are causing for striped bass from every possible angle and be willing to change our own habits. If we want to maintain the very conservative targets, everything should be up for discussion. I will recommend an amendment rather than an addendum to deal with a change this dramatic.



Striped Bass: Where Are We Headed

(excerpt from JCAA March 2019 Newsletter)

By Tom Fote

1995 Regulations

To understand today's discussion, you need to understand the regulations that were put in place in 1995. I have been at the striped bass board meetings since 1986. At that time the public was not allowed to ask questions and neither were ASMFC Commissioners who were not state directors. In 1989 the discussions began about how to re-open the fishery since many of the states along the east coast had a total moratorium on fishing for striped bass but the stocks had begun rebuilding. The 1989 year class was one of the best in striped bass history and pushed the 3-year average high enough to allow for the resumption of the fishery. During the discussions at the striped bass board meeting and with the advice of the technical committee, the board debated all day long about whether or not to open the fishery with 2 fish at 24 inches in the Chesapeake Bay and 2 fish at 34 inches along the coast recreationally and with the same size limit commercially with quotas. Before the board broke at 9:30 PM the audience was asked for comment. I was pushed to speak for the audience and asked the board for an opportunity to speak before the vote the following day. The board agreed and we went to sleep. The next day they opened the meeting at 8:30, made a motion to open the fishery at 18 inches in Chesapeake Bay and 28 inches along the coast. That motion was passed in 45 minutes without public comment. At 1:00 they asked for our comments and I was again the spokesperson. I said, "You don't give a damn what we have to say but you will in the future."

Because of that board meeting the community was excited to be more involved and began attending more striped bass meetings. There were no longer 5 or 6 of us in the audience but more often 30 or 40. The ASMFC commissioners began hearing from the recreational anglers and the process began to open. By the time the 1995 amendment was being drafted, the recreational sector along the coast had developed a stronger voice. There were not only ASMFC commissioners from the states who were speaking at board meetings. The 1995 amendment was an example of our participation. It was designed to have a quality fishery and the base year was the year that we

declared the fishery recovered, the highest point we had seen since we started the striped bass emergency act in the early 80's. The referent points, unlike other fisheries, were made more precautionary. I was one of the three NJ ASMFC Commissioners making those striped bass management decisions.

In 1995 the participation in the striped bass fishery was different than it is now along the coast. But so was every other fishery. It is important to understand what was happening in 1995. We were still benefitting from the large number of big striped bass that were protected during the moratorium that was in place from the 80's through the early 90's. Many of the states had not opened the fishery to 2 fish at 28 inches along the coast and put in seasons that were more conservative than required. There was also a smaller group of anglers. Most striped bass fishermen were like me, we didn't talk about catching fluke, black sea bass or tautog. Our 24/7 talk was about striped bass fishing. The seasons were open all year for black sea bass, fluke, scup and tautog. Summer flounder had a 10 fish bag at 14 inch size limit and no closed season. Most of the people I fished with or knew didn't like striped bass for dinner and fished for other species for food. There were not as many striper fishermen in general, even fewer who were taking striped bass home to eat. That was part of the big increase in the number of private, party and charter boats targeting striped bass. The 1995 amendment was good based on the era for which it was written. It allowed for a fantastic fishery on big fish throughout the 90's and into the early 2000's.

The New Fisheries in the 2000's

Because of the concerns of the MidAtlantic Fisheries Management Council and ASMFC, there was a dramatic change in the way we manage fisheries jointly. We kept raising size limits and shortening seasons and cutting bag limits. Anglers who fished for their tables had fewer opportunities to bring fish home. There were periods of time that striped bass and bluefish were the only fisheries without closed seasons. Anglers discovered they were spending a great deal of time, effort and money with little to show for it if their target was fluke, black sea bass or tautog. So it was the natural move for many private, party and charter boats moving into the striped fishery, especially since it was open year-round. The abundance allowed for novices to

meet with success. All you had to do was snag a bunker and you were a striped bass fisherman. The pressure on the striped bass population resulted in fewer trophy fish being caught. In the 90's the hook and release mortality rate was greater than the number of fish we were taking home to eat. By the 2000's we began putting more pressure on the stocks. Because people were taking more fish home to eat and the hook and release mortality increased because more fish were being hooked and released, the stocks actually began to change and there were fewer big fish available. This is the natural progression for a recovered fishery. The question is whether or not this is sustainable.

Hook and release mortality has always played a big role in the striped bass stocks. In 2017 and 2018 the hook and release mortality exceeded the number of fish anglers were taking home to eat. The catch and release fishermen generally turn a deaf ear when we talk about catch and release mortality, denying they contribute to the problem with the stocks. In the late 90's a friend of mine from NY, one of the leading striped bass conservationists, and I were having a discussion about striped bass management. We were discussing the two fish bag limit allowed to charter boats in NY. Since he had become a catch and release fisherman after many years of fishing, he thought they should only be allowed a one fish bag limit even though at that time there was no problem with the stock. I suggested he consider the angler who took two fish home. This angler may make 5 trips a year on a charter boat. If the angler is lucky enough, he/she kills 10 fish to take home to eat. The angler probably caught and released a few other fish on those 5 trips. We agreed the angler releases 30 fish on those trips. With 8% mortality, the angler has killed 2.4 fish in his releases for an estimated total of 13 striped bass he/she killed that year. The catch and release angler who was fishing almost every day, lands hundreds of fish in a season. I suggested that once this angler catches 160 fish, he/she should stop because the catch and release mortality is 12.8 fish. Since a dead fish is a dead fish no matter if it is a catch and release or kept fish. The angler on the charter boat is more likely to be using heavier tackle, fishing in the spring and fall when the water is cold and in saltwater. These factors lower the catch and release mortality. The higher the water temperature, the greater the catch and release mortality. The lower the salinity of the water, the greater the hook and release mortality. A study by Maryland showed the higher the air temperature, the greater the hook and release mortality. So the year-

round angler probably has a higher hook and release mortality due to the climate issues since he is fishing a lot more. For example, if you are fishing in a river where the water is fresh or brackish, the water temperature is high, the air temperature is high and you are using light tackle so the fight is longer, the catch and release mortality is extremely high. The studies again prove this is true. Catch and release anglers need to consider these factors before they blame other anglers who take a few fish a year for the table for problems with the stocks. We each need to put ourselves in other's shoes before we condemn them and put our own homes in order.

Where Are We Now

We have a striped bass fishery that has expanded. Unlike the 90's striped bass is important to the party and charter boats. It has also grown increasingly important to all the private owners who cannot fish for fluke, tautog or black sea bass in closed seasons or with the increasing size limits. The science tells us that the present spawning stock biomass is more than high enough to produce the highest young of the year in Chesapeake Bay. In spite of the skepticism I received when I said the spawning stock biomass was high enough to produce the highest young of the year when we were discussing the last addendum, the facts proved I was correct. The 2011 year class was the 4th highest in history of the young of the year. The 2015 year class was the 8th highest in the young of the year index in the over 70 year history. The hook and release mortality was going down but has increased in the last few years. It is also a fact that we are never returning to the way the recreational fishery operated in 1995 or the 2000's. This is the first benchmark stock assessment in which we are using the adjusted recreational catch numbers which show an increase in both catch and participation from the methods we historically used.

There are also things that are affecting fish populations that have nothing to do with fishing pressure. The water quality of the Chesapeake Bay and the warming of the waters inside the bay and elsewhere are just two of them. Then there is added pressure on the harvest of the forage species that striped bass count on. NJ beach replenishment has impacted many species. I can list many more but these are things that we cannot control through fisheries management.

Management Choices

The ASMFC will be focusing its attention on what we do in either a new addendum or amendment. What we decide will have a huge impact on the recreational fishing industry, the anglers and the states. These decisions should be made thoughtfully and deliberately. They need to include all stakeholders and look at the long-term consequences on what we do. All options should be on the table and be discussed with the general public. In the mission statement of ASMFC it states that we are managing fisheries to be sustainable. That means different things to different people. Below I am listing some of the options that are available to us. I have not taken a position on any option at this time since I need more information and a discussion about the long-term impact of each of the options on the fishing community. There are more that may come up for discussion.

1. Season closures – We could close the fishery when the highest hook and release mortality takes place.
2. Size limits – We could raise the size limits though that might raise the hook and release mortality as anglers continue to fish until a legal fish is caught.
3. Education – We could work with anglers to lower the hook and release mortality.
4. Research on poaching – We need a better handle on the amount of poaching and better law enforcement especially in areas like Raritan Bay and the EEZ.
5. Changed reference points – This could allow us to continue fishing as we do now since we would identify the stock as sustainable at a lower number.
6. A combo of options or others now mentioned here

The Impossible Dream

It might be easier to get 10 striped bass together to agree on management issues than to get 10 striped bass fishermen to agree. I am always an optimist and realize that compromise is essential to deal with the needs of many. All of us are going to have to give a little to make this work. No one will be totally satisfied. I haven't dedicated 40 years of my life to striped bass management to give up now. But I am also not going to manage this fishery for just one sector of the recreational community. I have not been paid by anyone or any group in all the years I been doing these many jobs. Since I am a 100% disabled veteran and retired military officer, I did not need to get paid. I always have seen this as continuing my service.

1977 MAFMC Letter on Summer Flounder

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council
Room 2115 Federal Building
North & New Streets
Dover, DE 19901
Telephone 302-647-2331

David H. Hart John Bryson
Chairman Executive Director

Elliot Goldman
Vice Chairman

Mr. Anthony S. Taomina, Director
Marine and Coastal Resources
Department of Environmental Conservation
Building #40
State University of NY Stony Brook, NY 11794

December 30, 1977

Dear Tony:

As a follow-up to our discussion last week, I would like to further explore with you, and the other State Directors in the Mid-Atlantic Region, two concerns of mine. They are the relationship between Council prepared plans and resource management in territorial waters and the State-Federal Program's interest in flounder management. Since the latter item pertains to State-Federal, I'm directing this correspondence to you as Chairman of the Northeast Marine Fisheries Board and we can proceed from there.

Within a month or so, the staff will begin some preliminary spadework on the preparation of a management plan for fluke in keeping with a schedule laid out for us by the Council. Commercially, about 64% of the fluke harvested in 1976 (24 million lbs.) were caught in the Fishery Conservation Zone. In 1976, it is estimated that another 39 million pounds of fluke were taken by recreational fishermen--while just where the fish were caught is not documented, I suspect that at least 80% came from territorial waters. If this is true, any

plan prepared by the Council would control less than a third of the total catch of fluke.

The conclusion from the above is that management of fluke appears to be a State responsibility and is a good candidate for the State-Federal Program. Nevertheless, the Council has set fluke as a priority management target and has every right to pursue management of any species in the Fishery Conservation Zone regardless of how small the catch is from the Zone in proportion to the total catch. Just how effective management of only a small fraction of the total resource would be is another matter which leads me to believe that some better method of coordination on fishery plans is needed. This could be accomplished by more active State participation under the EJ contracts or through some formalized linkage between the Council and the State-Federal Program with supplemental funding.

For fluke, and we might also want to consider other flounders, I would like to see some kind of partnership set up between the states and the Council for the preparation of the plan. It would make no difference who took the lead as long as certain guidelines are followed and the plan is prepared in a timely fashion. Before the staff gets too far along on the plan, I would like to learn more about the Board's interest in flounder management (which was reported in minutes of previous Board meetings and confirmed by Mr. Street, of North Carolina, at a recent Council meeting) whether or not the Board agrees that joint management with the Council is desirable, and, whether or not the State-Federal Program has the capability to undertake such planning activities recognizing manpower and funding limitations and the burden of the existing Program initiatives.

The relationship between the Council and the states on plans already prepared by the Council is another area of concern but is probably beyond the purview of the Council. The Secretary of Commerce, through NMFS, implements and carries out the plans. I know that NMFS is working with the states (funds for supplemental enforcement, etc.) to execute the plans. The extent of this support and coordination by WFS, its adequacy, and the role of the Council and the Board in the exercise is not very clear.

Paramount in the issue is how will fishing and catch from state waters be handled relative to plans prepared by the Council for the Fishery Conservation Zone. The Mid Atlantic Council has prepared plans on clams, mackerel and squid which allegedly cover the "range of the resource". From a standpoint of

U.S. domestic recreational and commercial catch, about 85% of the clam catch, 60% of the mackerel catch, and 20% of the squid catch in 1978 will come from the Zone and be controlled by the Council's plans. What happens in state waters to these resources will have a bearing on any Council plan and the objectives it sets out-to accomplish.

While I recognize that some of the problems facing us may be difficult to resolve, I think a concerted effort should be applied to finding answers. Looking ahead, some kind of attention should be focused on making Council and state management of common resources more compatible. By mid-1978, we will be re-evaluating existing plans for potential amendments in 1979. I would like to see the states become more active in the amendment process so that hopefully when the existing plans are revised, the new documents will bring more into line state and Council management of the entire resource. What role, if any, would you think the Marine Fisheries Board could or should play in this effort? (and other members of the Board.)

Best wishes for the New Year. Sincerely,
Donald G. Birkholz

cc: David Hart
William Gordon
Frank Grice
Ralph Abele
Russell Cookingham
William Wagner
Robert Rubelmann
James Douglas
Irwin Alperin

Draft Agenda for the ASMFC Spring Meeting: April 29 – May 2

Monday, April 29

1:00 – 5pm American Lobster Management Board

Tuesday, April 30

8:30 – 10am Atlantic Herring Management Board

10:15am – Noon Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board

Noon – 1:00pm Lunch (On Your Own)

1:00 – 2:30pm Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board (continued)

12:30 – 5:00pm Law Enforcement Committee

2:45 – 3:15pm Coastal Sharks Management Board

3:30 – 5:00pm Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP) Coordinating Council

5:30 – 7:00pm Annual Awards of Excellence Reception

Wednesday, May 1

8:00 – 10:30am Executive Committee

8:00am – Noon Law Enforcement Committee (continued)

10:45am – 12:15pm Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Management Board

12:15 – 1:15pm Lunch (On Your Own)

1:15 – 2:30pm Business Session

2:45 – 5:15pm Horseshoe Crab Management Board

Thursday, May 2

8:00 – 9:45am Interstate Fisheries Management Program Policy Board

9:45 – 10:00am Business Session (continued)

10:15am – 12:15pm South Atlantic State/Federal Fisheries Management Board

[Click here](#) for complete online agenda.

JCAA Statement on Offshore Drilling

Press Conference Statement, 3/22/2019

I am speaking to you today as a board member of the Jersey Coast Anglers Association and as a small business owner of Reel Therapy fishing charters right here in Monmouth County. I fish these waters right behind us.

In addition to JCAA's mission to protect recreational fishing, we have also always had a commitment to

protecting the marine environment from any negative impact. Anglers continue to see the impacts of global warming and what it is doing to many of our gamefish and related species. We have always supported renewable energy and are actively involved in the responsible development of offshore wind power for this very reason.

Drilling for oil or natural gas along any state on the East coast represents a clear and present danger to our fisheries. Drilling for oil or natural gas near the coast of New Jersey puts critical economic drivers at risk and we strongly oppose Seismic testing, natural gas and oil exploration or drilling of any kind.

New Jersey is the home of one of the largest saltwater recreational fishing industries in the nation, it supports over 16,000 jobs and generates nearly \$1.5 billion dollars in statewide economic impacts.

Our concerns are shared by generations of fishermen along the New Jersey shore, especially those, like mine, whose livelihoods depend on clean coastal waters; and by the small businesses that rely on tourism to earn a family wage and to create jobs.

The risks are far too great to open our coasts to drilling. Giving short-term gains for the oil companies represents permanent loss for the fishing community.

The thought of an oil spill along our coast is terrifying and would put our Jersey shore and many fishermen out of business permanently. Protect our coast, protect our fish and KILL THE DRILL TODAY!

Thank you,
Capt. Paul Eidman

2019 Fluke and Sea Bass Regulations Finalized

By Paul Haertel

At their meeting on 4/16/19 the New Jersey Marine Fisheries Council voted to change the fluke season by one day from what it was in 2018. This was done so that the season could open on the Friday before Memorial Day Weekend. This year's season will begin one day earlier and end one day earlier. No other changes were made to our fluke regulations

and our sea bass regulations will remain exactly the same as they were in 2018. Below are the 2019 regulations:

Sea Bass - 10 fish at 12.5" from 5/15 – 6/22, 2 fish at 12.5" from 7/1 – 8/31, 10 fish at 12.5" from 10/8 – 10/31 and 15 fish at 13" from 11/1 – 12/31

Fluke – A season from 5/24 – 9/21 with 3 fish at 18" for all marine waters except 3 fish at 17" for Delaware Bay and tributaries and 2 fish at 16" for Island Beach State Park.

Request Governor Murphy to Sign Public Access Bill

By John Toth

In 2015, the Hackensack Riverkeeper won an appeal of the NJ DEP's Public Access Proposal since it would have stripped back protections for the Public Trust Doctrine. This Doctrine, an ancient concept from, even Roman times, held that a government body holds tidally lands in trust for the public to use and enjoy. In short, our beaches belong to everybody to use, not just for a few individuals.

Shortly after this appeal, Senator Bob Smith, head of the Senate's Environmental and Energy Committee, convened a task force in 2016 to help the legislature develop a Public Access Bill which would codify and strengthen state obligations to the Public Trust Doctrine. This task force was comprised of members from various organizations and led by the American Littoral Society and the NY/NJ Baykeeper. I was a member of this task force representing the JCAA, NJOA and the Salt Water Anglers of Bergen County. I attended three task force meetings in Trenton during 2016 and these meetings were often contentious at times with the municipalities and business groups resisting more public access to our beaches. Approximately 40-50 people were in attendance at these meetings and all of them were advancing their special interests that added to this contention. Senator Smith held a number of public hearings to determine what should go into this new access bill and almost after three years of meetings, emails and phone calls, our legislature finally approved a final Public Access Bill (S) 1074 that is now waiting for the Governor Murphy to sign.

George Browne, JCAA's Access Chairman, has also been deeply involved in this access issue and

has seen firsthand how municipalities have tried to restrict access to beaches by restricting or reducing parking spaces, putting up gates or fences by access areas that have been used by surf anglers for many years or even asking anglers to buy beach tags to surf fish.

George wrote the text for the **Call to Action** article that appeared in a recent JCAA Email Blast urging anglers to contact Governor Murphy to sign bill (S) 1074. George has supplied Governor Murphy's both mailing and email address information along with other useful information you can use in your communication to the Governor.

Beach access for us anglers has been an ongoing problem for many years and one that is resistant to change. This is probably our best opportunity to make to change things around so that we don't see gates or fences blocking anglers to fish on our state's beaches. Please take the time to contact the Governor using the following information supplied by George for us.

I want to Thank George for helping all of us in trying to improve access for our recreational community. I also want to thank Ken Warchal for preparing the Call To Action Email blast for the JCAA that will certainly be helpful in gaining Governor Murphy to sign Bill(S) 1074.

Call to Action Email Blast

The NJ Senate and Assembly passed Senate Bill S1074 (the public access to certain public trust lands bill) on March 25, 2019.

- The bill will create one set of NJ DEP regulations that will be enforceable to prevent towns from blocking or limiting public access except in very specific circumstances.
- Many user groups (including anglers) worked to draft this bill and get it passed.
- The vote was unanimous in the NJ Senate and the NJ Assembly had an almost 90% yes vote.
- To date Governor Murphy has not signed the bill.
- There are other groups (such as shore towns) who are opposed to this bill and would like to see it die on the Governor's desk.
- We need this bill signed into law to protect our right to access to the ocean, bays, and tidal rivers.

IN ORDER TO GET THE GOVERNOR TO SIGN THE PUBLIC ACCESS BILL WE NEED TO HAVE HIM HEAR OUR VOICES. YOU ARE BEING ASKED TO DO ONE OF THREE THINGS IN ORDER TO BE HEARD.

1 - Send an Email – To submit an email, go to [this link](#). Consider using the following wordage for the email: *I am asking that you sign Senate Bill S1074 into law. NJ has a long history of protecting the rights of the public to access the ocean, bays, and tidal rivers through the public trust doctrine. In direct violation of the public trust doctrine, we have seen towns in NJ arbitrarily adopt local ordinances that are intended to block public access. NJ needs a single set of regulations that can be uniformly applied to protect our rights. S1074 will allow the DEP to create regulations to do that that.*

2 - Call the Governor's Office at (609) 292-6000 – When they answer, simply tell them you are asking the Governor to sign S1074, the public access bill. You do not have to leave your name.

3 - Write a Letter - If you want to write a letter here is the address

Governor Phil Murphy
125 W State St
Trenton, NJ 08608

For your letter, you can use the bullet points from above and add:

- New Jersey's tourism industry generated \$38.2 billion in 2016. That amounts to 6.5% of the entire state economy.
- Tourists use New Jersey's ocean beaches as well as the bays and tidal rivers for recreation which requires public access.
- New Jersey's recreational saltwater anglers annually spend over \$300 million on bait & tackle.
- In total, when boats and other fishing related equipment are added to what anglers spend each year in NJ, recreational fishing produces over \$2.4 billion in sales and income.
- Recreational saltwater fishing employs 15,000 people.

Youth Education Report

By Greg Kucharewski

NJ HOFNOD

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 Hooked On Fishing-Not On Drugs, Youth Fishing Challenge is Saturday, June 8, 2019. It is being held on the first of the state's two Free Fishing Days, Saturday, June 8, when no license is required to fish regardless of age. ["Hook-A-Winner" Program](#) will receive a special prize following the event. For more information and to register your group location visit this link: [Youth Fishing Challenge](#).

NATIONAL FISHING & BOATING WEEK

NF&BW Free Fishing Day in New Jersey is Saturday June 8, 2019. 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 the Youth Fishing Challenge. 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 8th, 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 the HOFNOD email: hofnod@dep.nj.gov.

HIGH SCHOOL SURF FISHING TEAM COMPETITION

Don't forget to register early for the High School Team Competition for Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament on Sunday, May 19, 2019. How does the High School Fishing Team Competition work? Five school-age students that are part of a formal fishing club or members of a NJ "Hooked on Fishing Not on Drugs" group or a non-formal angling group can register for the Governor's Annual Surf Fishing Tournament. Each High School will participate as a team with no limit to the number of anglers per each school. There must be one chaperone, 21 years or older, for every 5 high school students. Chaperones are not eligible to fish and must remain with their high school students during the entire Tournament. All angling team members will receive a t-shirt for registering.

GSFT committee members feel the expanded opportunity for youth angling groups to fish the GSFT will create more excitement and recognition for young anglers on tournament day. For more information about New Jersey High School Team Surf Fishing, please visit [this link](#).

28TH ANNUAL GOVERNOR'S CUP

Get ready to enter the largest surf-fishing tournament along the Jersey Shore. This year, it will be bigger and better than ever. The 28th Anniversary of the Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament will be on Sunday, May 19, 2019. Don't miss a day of family fun! Pick up a brochure about the tournament at Island Beach State Park or at your favorite tackle dealer.

Remember, admission to the park is FREE for the tournament. We would like to remind our physically challenged anglers that there is an area at OBA 1 with beach wheelchairs available. The JCAA Youth Education Committee is helping novice and physically challenged anglers at the Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament. World Jeep – Chrysler – Dodge - Ram, Shrewsbury, NJ will assist physically challenged anglers with a NEW 4x4 VIP vehicle to transport anglers that will be fishing the reserved area in front of OBA 1. Team World Jeep Chrysler will

also be available to answer questions about 4x4 beach maintenance and fluids.

Members of the Vietnam Veterans of America (Chapter 12) and volunteer anglers from various fishing clubs will also assist physically challenged anglers. If you know a disabled veteran or angler that would like to fish the tournament please phone Greg K at 732-785-9278 or send an email to gkucharews@jcaa.org.



GLOUCESTER NJ HOFNOD CATFISH TOURNAMENT

Gloucester NJ HOFNOD will hold its Ray Curry Catfish tournament for kids on June 8, 2019 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, or visit [this link](#).

HUDSON RIVER FISHING ASSOCIATIONS MAY YOUTH PROGRAMS

- **May 4th**, Hooked on the Hudson at Ross Dock;
- **May 15th**, Special Needs Children of Bergen County, Wheelchair children;

- **May 16th**; Special Needs fishing Bergen County at Englewood;
- **May 18th**, Waterford, NY children fishing. Please visit their [website](#) for more information.

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 [webpage](#).

PLAY HOOK-e TAKE A VETERAN FISHING

On Saturday, May 4, 2019, 9:00 am till 2:00 pm, Mr. Vito Cardinale, President Cardinale Enterprises LLC, will host the 2019, Third Annual Take A Veteran Fishing Day at Lake Julianna, Ponderosa Estates Farm, Millstone Township, NJ 08535.

"Play HOOK-e From PTSD" is the theme for disabled veterans that will attend the third annual FREE Play HOOK-e Take A Veteran Fishing Day. The goal of the fishing day at Lake Julianna is to provide a chance to go fishing for disabled PTSD veterans and to relax while enjoying the peaceful surroundings of Lake Julianna with other veterans. To register and receive directions for this free event, please phone Greg@ 732-785-9278 or send an email to gkucharews@jcaa.org.

NEWARK BAIT AND FLY CASTING CLUB

Play HOOK-e at the 2nd Annual NB&FCC Disabled Veterans Fishing Trip will be on the Mi-JO II and will be leaving the dock at 7:00 A.M. and returning approximately 2:00 P.M. on Friday, June 21, 2019. The Mi-Jo II is located on the long dock behind the restaurant/restrooms upon entering the municipal parking lot. Lunch and drinks will be provided for Veterans (bagels, subs, salads, etc.). Note that this is a rain or shine trip so everyone should be prepared. Contact Rich MacDonald at 973-204-4073 or email him at rich@nbfcc.org to make a reservation. Note that reservations will be limited to 30 veterans.