



JERSEY COAST ANGLERS ASSOCIATION
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January 2025

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sandel@otterstedt.com
www.otterstedt.com

Charles (Chuck) Santoro
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Jersey Coast Shark Anglers 2025 Tournament Schedule

Kids Fishing Fever - TBD
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For information go to www.jcsa.org

Forked River Tuna Club 2025 Tournament Schedule

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Tuna Tournament - TBD
Tournament Rain Date - TBD

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In Memory of Bruce Wagner
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A Saltwater Anglers Club

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www.FISHHAWKSNJ.com

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Point Pleasant Fishing Club, rmazz1428@gmail.com
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New Jersey Beach Buggy Association
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Saltwater Anglers of Bergen County
Louis Schott, Galloway Twp
Schuyler Tuna Fishing Club
Seaside Heights Fishing Club
Richard Secare, West New York, NJ
Shore Aquatic Club, Sea Girt, NJ
Silverton Fishing Club, Toms River, NJ
David Strom, Jr., West Orange, NJ
South Jersey Saltwater Anglers
Surf Kings Fishing Club
Douglas Vitale In Memory of Bruce Vitale Women's
Surf Fishing Club of NJ, www.wsfcnj.org



New Jersey Beach Buggy Association

PO Box 511, Seaside Park, NJ 08752
Buggy Membership Info: Ken Hollins 732-814-7021
www.NJBBA.org

Fighting for Beach Access & Conservation Since 1954



Manasquan Fishing Club

PO Box 513, Manasquan, NJ 08736

Meetings held first Friday of the month at 7:30pm
Manasquan Woman's Club, 62 Main Street
www.manasquanfishingclub.com

JCAA NEWSPAPER JANUARY 2025

Official Newspaper of the *JERSEY COAST ANGLERS' ASSOCIATION*

(Published on January 1st, 2025)

"WORKING FOR MARINE RECREATIONAL ANGLERS"

JCAA REGULAR MEETING

January 28th, 2025, 7:30pm

Jersey Coast Shark Anglers Building
385 Herbertsville Rd, Brick, NJ 08724

or via Zoom, for link contact:

tothjohn@verizon.net or mtsport64@aol.com

NEXT JCAA BOARD MEETING

Thursday, January 9th

OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER OF THE JERSEY COAST ANGLERS ASSOC.

c/o Info Age, 2201 Marconi Road
Wall, NJ 07719

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

Publisher Tom Fote, 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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2024 OFFICERS

President	Mark Taylor	732-245-9445
1st V.P.	Steven Machalaba	908-588-1426
2nd V.P.	Don Marantz	908-347-1434
Treasurer	Doug Tegeder	732-575-2661
Rec. Sec.	Karen Noe	732-245-2751
Cors. Sec.		
Mem. Sec.	John Toth	732-656-0139

Committee and Chairpersons listed on last page

IMPORTANT DATES

January 9th JCAA Board Meeting

January 25th Salt Water Sportsman Seminar Series

January 28th JCAA General Meeting

February 13th JCAA Board Meeting

February 25th JCAA General Meeting

February 26th-March 2nd Atlantic City Boat Show

March 13th JCAA Board Meeting

March 14th-16th NJ Saltwater Fishing Expo

March 26th JCAA General Meeting

President's Report

By Mark Taylor

The first JCAA General Membership Meeting of YR2025 is January 28th, at 385 Herbertsville Rd., Brick, NJ 08724. I would like to thank the Jersey Coast Shark Anglers (JCSA) / Riviera Beach Boat Club (RBBC) for the use of their facility to hold our monthly meetings for the past years and years to come. They have a great facility. If you live in the area and are looking to join a fishing club, check out the JCSA/RBBC. It is extremely important that the member clubs have their representatives attend the General Membership Meetings which will be held in person and zoom. If you belong to a recreational fishing club that is not currently a member of JCAA, you need to contact the membership secretary John Toth at once. A lot of valuable information will be discussed throughout the year the individuals of clubs should be aware of. I listed the dates below and you should mark your calendars now to hold the date.

YR2025 JCAA General Membership Meeting Dates:

- January 28
- February 25
- March 25
- April 29
- May 27
- June 24

- July 29 – No Meeting
- August 26 – No Meeting
- September 30
- October 28
- November 25
- December 30

Election of JCAA Officers:

At the January 28th meeting, member clubs in good standing will be voting on who will be the leaders elected to JCAA Board that would lead this outstanding association for YR2025. If you are interested in being one of the leaders a nomination can, be made that night, JCAA is always looking for new motivated and dedicated individuals to step forward and get more involved to keep this / your Association going. If interested in becoming a JCAA Officer call or text Don Marantz at (908) 347-1434. This is an extremely important meeting to attend.

End of Year Support Donations:

We thank you for your support in 2024! Without it we could not have accomplished all our objectives during this year.

There are ongoing costs associated with trips that are required for JCAA volunteers to represent anglers at fishing-related meetings in Trenton and Washington, DC, and other locations throughout the country. Of course, there are other costs associated with office rental space, mailings, and other hard costs to keep an association like the JCAA in business. While the JCAA staff is made up of volunteers. The JCAA is a 501(c)(3) organization and donations that are given to it are eligible for tax deduction purposes. The year 2024 is rapidly ending and during this time period individuals and businesses often make contributions to charities and organizations that provide a tax deduction benefit.

Please consider providing a donation to the JCAA. Your donation will help us to fight for and protect the fishing rights for all recreational anglers who fish in New Jersey. You also benefit since your donation can be used to reduce your tax 2024 or 2025 assessment. If your company provides a matching donation, you may be able to double your contribution.

Please make your check out to the Jersey Coast Anglers Association and mail it to C/O Info Age, 2201 Marconi Road, Wall NJ 07719.

ASMFC – Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board Meeting:

As YR2024 ends and the start of YR2025. As many of you that fish for Striped Bass should have known that the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC – Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board) Meeting was held on Monday December 16, 2024 (10am to 2pm). This meeting was to set the regulations for both Commercial and Recreational for 2025. This meeting had a lot of discussions by the commissioners and a few different motions made which assumed all the time of the meeting. A motion was finally passed that NJ will continue with the same regulations for YR2025. This topic is far from over because this will be an extremely hot topic all YR2025 for the regulations for YR2026. We as the recreational Community cannot wait until the last minute to start talking about it. JCAA had an emergency zoom meeting on Tuesday December 17th, to discuss what came out of the ASMFC – Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board Meeting. JCAA's Striped Bass Committee will be reviewing all the data from ASMFC as well as other sources that are available and will be meetings to discuss it. The Chairperson of the JCAA Striped Bass Committee is Past President Paul Haertel. I know he and the committee will do an excellent job. If you are interested in being on the committee, contact Paul Haertel (732-943-8201) or anglerpmh@aol.com.

Introductory Fisheries Science for Stakeholders (IFISSH) course for 2025:

For many of you that do not know, there are diverse ways you can educate yourself with topics that pertain to the marine environment. One fantastic way is the zoom online seminar course program that is ran by Douglas Zemeckis, Ph.D. who is the County Agent II (Associate Professor) of Marine Extension Agent for Ocean, Atlantic, and Monmouth Counties, County Extension Department Head (CEDH) - Ocean County. This program ran through the Cooperative Extension of Ocean County Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station - Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey. The course is called Introductory Fisheries Science for Stakeholders (IFISSH) course for 2025. It is on Tuesday evenings (6:30 - 9:00 PM) from February 4 – April 8. Each night has a different remarkably interesting topic. They are Course Introduction and Fisheries Biology, Fisheries Biology,

Fisheries Oceanography and Atmospheric Science, Climate Change Impacts on Fish and Fisheries, Fisheries-Independent Data, Fisheries-Dependent Data, Social and Economic Issues in Fisheries, Introduction to Stock Assessments, Fisheries Management and Offshore Wind Energy and Fisheries. There is a minimum cost of \$40, but the wealth of information from scientists is well worth it. Check out the informational notice included in this newsletter for more information or [download the flyer](#), you will not be disappointed.

Show Season:

JCAA will have a booth at three fishing/boat shows next year:

- **Saltwater Sportsman National Seminar Series** January 25th (Resorts Hotel and Casino, Atlantic City, NJ)
- **Atlantic City Boat Show** February 26th – March 2nd (Atlantic City Convention Center, Atlantic City, NJ)
- **Saltwater Fishing Expo** March 14th – 16th (New Jersey Convention and Exposition Center, Edison, NJ)

We need volunteers to work at the booths. I am asking the clubs to ask their membership if anyone would volunteer their time. I am looking for individuals to volunteer 4-hour shifts for JCAA at the booth promoting JCAA which is your Association. I will be emailing the show schedules with time slots that need to be filled. By volunteering a shift, JCAA pays for your entry into the show for that day. These shows are important to be at, talk to individuals that fish in our waters and keep them informed. Anyone that can volunteer please contact me at (732) 245-9445. I would like to get the list of volunteers done early.

Get Involved, unite as a community so the future of recreational fishing as we know it will not be gone.

JCAA is always looking for more individuals to get more involved with JCAA at all diverse levels. Let me know if you are interested at (732) 245-9445.

Important Information: The Next General Membership Meeting is scheduled for **January 28th** at 7:30pm, held in person at 385 Herbertsville Rd., Brick, NJ 08724 with a zoom meeting invite (Hybrid Meeting).

2025 Introductory Fisheries Science for Stakeholders (IFISSH) Course

To All,

Registration is now open for the 2025 **Introductory Fisheries Science for Stakeholders (IFISSH)** course offered through Rutgers Cooperative Extension.

This course is open to everyone who is interested in New Jersey's marine fisheries. The course's objective is to educate stakeholders of New Jersey's commercial and recreational fisheries so that they will better understand and make progress on issues impacting these industries, including the science, management, and responsible stewardship of fishery resources.

Ten classes will meet via Zoom webinar on **Tuesday evenings (6:30 - 9:00 PM) from February 4 through April 8**. Each class will include a mixture of presentations with Q&A and open discussion. Please see the attached flyer for additional details including a list of topics and confirmed speakers.

Please visit [this link](#) to **register** and submit program fee payment (\$40/person) **by January 31**.

If you have any questions, then please contact me via email (zemeckis@njaes.rutgers.edu) or phone (732) 349-1152, or contact Dina Baudo, Administrative Assistant, RCE of Ocean County: dbaudo@co.ocean.nj.us | (732) 349-1152.

Happy Holidays!!...IFISSH course registration makes a great last-minute holiday gift!

Best Wishes,

Douglas Zemeckis, Ph.D. | County Agent II
(Associate Professor)

Marine Extension Agent for Ocean, Atlantic, and Monmouth Counties

County Extension Department Head (CEDH) - Ocean County Cooperative Extension of Ocean County

Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources

New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

1623 Whitesville Road, Toms River, NJ 08755, USA

zemeckis@njaes.rutgers.edu | (732) 349-1152 (Office)

Fisheries Management & Legislative Report

By Tom Fote

It has been an interesting month. I will cover striped bass later. I have included in my report two “oldies but goodies”. One is Working Together and the other is The Problem with Emails. I updated working together in 2019 before the pandemic. Before the pandemic I noticed that comments back and forth were getting nastier, following politicians which is always bad news. Unlike politicians, anglers have common interests, the environment, building sustainable fisheries and allowing participation by all anglers both rich and poor. We disagreed in a respectful manner. There were the outliers, and they still are the ones who hide behind their computer and say whatever they want about someone else. They were the exceptions in 2019. After hearing the vitriol in emails sent to some of the commissioners about striped bass, the nastiness has become the rule rather than the exception. I have a thick skin as a Vietnam veteran and a green beret I was called all kind of nasty names in airports or marching in Veterans Day Parades. Thankfully that time is gone and soldiers are treated with more respect. But we are now following the examples of politicians, attacking one another constantly. This has got to stop. I respect anglers more than I respect politicians since we usually work together for the greater good. But we have lost the ability to look at the other person’s opinion and thinking about why they have that opinion. I find we also have gotten more about how we handle fisheries, just thinking about what is good for me rather than what might be good for all of us. When I saw some of the comments people sent other people, I was in tears. The comments were so selfish and so nasty that it was worse than some of the comments I heard after Vietnam. Anglers, take a good look at yourself. Are you contributing to this negative atmosphere? Are you hiding behind your computer screen and saying things you would not say to someone’s face?

Striped Bass Report

I put the public comments by me and by Nick Cicero below. In my last newspaper I discussed hatcheries and what they could mean for striped bass management. In my public comments I discussed what would be

necessary to restart this program as it existed in the 70’s and 80’s and how we would need to find the funds.

After I did a shortened version of this at the striped bass board meeting, I listened to the discussion. I have never seen the board debate 2 motions simultaneously without amending one motion to the other. It was an interesting process. In the end, because of the hard work by Adam Nowalski, NJ’s Legislative Proxy, the board actually went in the right direction. They went back to the amendment process rather than an emergency action. It was the only way we could have the time to really evaluate what happened in ’24 and what will happen in ’25 given all the changes we have made in the management of striped bass. The board, through the presentation of the technical committee, proved that the possibility of any of the three options making a difference had no statistical difference. Adam, through his eloquence, gave the board the backbone to do the right thing. We will now go through the addendum process and put regulations in place for 2026 with the information from 2 years of management with the new rules. What is going on with the young of the year in the Chesapeake Bay has nothing to do with the size of the spawning stock biomass. Every commissioner around the table knows this is true but they wanted to show they were doing something. What we need to do is acknowledge and deal with the existing problems in the Bay with water quality, temperature and recruitment. We might have to do what we did in the 70’s when we had hatcheries contribute to the male population. Read my public hearing document below for more information. I put the agenda for the winter meeting here. There will be a striped bass meeting, but we will have just preliminary scoping information. The timeline for this addendum will be finalizing it at the annual meeting in 2025. JCAA had a meeting on striped bass, and it was the most well attended meeting in a long time. You need your club reps to start attending these meetings if you have ideas about what we should do about striped bass. We need to work together and allow discussion of all ideas before JCAA takes a public position.

Public Comment on ASMFC Draft Addenda

There is a draft document for public meetings talking about how we manage bluefish and other species. The [link for the document is here](#). New Jersey’s meeting will be January 28th. Again, it is important to get involved and attend these meetings. We will need the input from your club as JCAA develops a position.

Working Together: An Editorial by Tom Fote

(Reprinted from February 2011 Newsletter)

If you read the JCAA Newspaper Archives, you will find several articles about working together. Almost every year we seem to have this conversation. I am disappointed that these articles do not seem to have the intended impact. To my dismay, the in-fighting and general lack of civility continues in the interactions of many groups. I work with both the environmental and fisheries communities and I find individuals and organizations in each community that view their role as competitive rather than collaborative. There is this feeling that the only way to be successful is to succeed at the expense of someone else. There are those who think they should be the only organization representing recreational anglers. They believe their solutions are the only solutions to the problems we face. While we may disagree, we need to recognize there are multiple reasonable points of view around an issue. There are very diverse members to the recreational community and each member has a unique point of view.

When I first began working with JCAA, I realized we were unique in our commitment to a democratic process. Member clubs vote to establish JCAA positions. Although we work for consensus, sometimes it is majority rule. Controversial issues may be debated over a number of meetings before a final position is adopted. Once a position is adopted, JCAA speaks in one voice. Everyone has ample opportunity to make their point and provide as much evidence as possible. The wonderful thing about JCAA is that most often the dissenters respect the majority and remain active in JCAA to discuss the next issue that confronts us. Everyone realizes that there are many issues that require our attention. We will agree on most, compromise on some and agree to disagree on others. That's how a democracy works. There was never a "gag order" in place. Even though a position was adopted, member clubs retained the right to speak in opposition publicly. Because of that history, JCAA has always maintained that democratic commitment when we collaborate with other organizations. We will not be a member of a group or coalition that refuses to have an open democratic process for developing positions. JCAA belongs to New Jersey State Federation of

Sportsmens Clubs, New Jersey Outdoor Alliance, Marine Fish Conservation Network and American Sportfishing Association. Each of these organizations respects the democratic process and allows for discussion, presentations and disagreement before a position is reached. In every organization we have, at times, disagreed, stated our disagreement passionately and then respected the majority vote with the understanding that JCAA retained the right to develop its own position and move forward. We never resigned because we didn't win a vote. We never personally attacked members of these organizations because we didn't win a vote. And we stayed so we could participate in the next discussion, continue to make our points, and over time, revisit areas of disagreement. Democracy is a messy process but that is where our commitment lies.

In the late 80's to early 90's we reached out to groups throughout the coast trying to build consensus on many issues including making striped bass a gamefish. We were able to bring groups with different agendas to the table to work on important issues. The strength of our numbers really gave us more clout. JCAA realized that our role was mainly in New Jersey and we needed to network across a wider area. We helped other states organize their recreational associations and clubs because we saw them as partners not competitors. This worked for many years but began to deteriorate when some people began resorting to personal attacks on individuals and other organizations as a way to enhance their own standing, at least in their own eyes. Initially we kept our meeting discussion private to encourage an honest exchange of ideas. When people began to take advantage of that privilege and use information in a negative way, particularly in the press, the trust began to erode. No longer could we honestly share opinions and respectfully disagree if our words would be used against us once the meeting was over. That open dialogue produced many wonderful ideas and I learned a great deal about the issues. I truly miss that free flow discussion.

The first thing we need to do is to respect the right of each organization to exist. We need to argue the positions and stay away from personal attacks. This is not a war. These organizations have similar goals and we are generally on the same side of issues. The goal cannot be to destroy other organizations or people with whom you disagree. The discussion may continue endlessly but we need to respect the right to disagree. We need to stop thinking that any one of us knows the exact right thing to do in any situation. That level of

arrogance is not productive and keeps us from considering other alternatives that may well have merit.

In my younger and feistier days, I was known to occasionally cross the line and go to war over issues. It hurt some relationships and I regret that to this day. I also regret the loss of information and counseling and sometimes friendship from these individuals. One of New Jersey's outstanding legislators gave me some good advice. This former state senator and I had been in a heated argument about Menhaden at the Council meeting. After the meeting, he took me aside, put his hand on my shoulder and said, "Young man, we had a real heated argument in there. You got a little hot. So you know what we are going to do now, young man?" I said no. He said "We're going to go have a drink and talk. Mark my words, Tom, we will be on the same side of an issue down the road and need to work together." My older and wiser self realizes every day how true those words were and how valuable that advice has been.

JCAA will continue to work with everyone who wants to work with us. However, our commitment to the democratic process is not negotiable.

The Problem with Emails: An Editorial by Tom Fote

(Reprinted from March 2011 Newsletter)

A few years ago, I wrote some articles about working together. Last month I again called for a positive working environment. One of the issues we need to address again is emails. When I first addressed this issue, I was talking about how we communicate with one another or small groups who are copied an email. The world has changed again. We now have face book, you tube, and list servers that can send to thousands at once. This means we need to use even more caution in what we send or post. The growing tendency is to respond to an email or post immediately without giving the tone or content of your message any thought. Frequently people's post or email becomes personal rather than a reasoned debate about the issue. People will often say something in an email they would never say to someone's face. It is hard to look someone in the eye and repeat some of the things I see in emails. If you feel that strongly, it takes courage to confront someone directly. It seems easier to hide behind a keyboard than have a face-to-face conversation. I am

calling on everyone to consider a phone call or a personal conversation in lieu of an email or post. At the very minimum, emails should go directly to the person involved and not be sent out to an entire list.

Don't hit reply to all. We are losing an audience because people are disgusted with these back-and-forth arguments. List serves are meant for facts and alerts. They are not for personal arguments or a boxing ring. Emails should be kept to the facts regarding the issues, not the personalities. There is room for personal opinion, not personal attacks. The "attackers" often agree on most of the issues but sometimes want to go to war to denigrate the other person and their organization for their purposes. I know many of these people and know what appears in the emails is only a detail, not the real issue. We need to understand that this "infighting" only empowers those with whom we don't agree at all. They enjoy that we "divide" so they can "conquer".

Atlantic Striped Bass Board Initiates Addendum to Consider 2026 Management Measures

ASMFC Press Release, December 17, 2024

Arlington, VA – The Commission's Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board has initiated Draft Addendum III to consider recreational and commercial management measures for 2026 to support rebuilding the stock by 2029. Options will consider a range of reductions for the recreational and commercial fisheries. Recreational reductions will consider season and size limits that take into account regional differences, including no-harvest and no-targeting closures. Final action is planned for no later than October 2025 with implementation in early 2026.

"We want to thank the thousands of members of the public who took the time to provide thoughtful comments ahead of this Board meeting," said Board Chair Megan Ware from Maine. "We understand that many will be disappointed in the Board's decision to initiate an addendum versus taking immediate action. However, after deliberating for more than three hours about the path forward, the Board came to the conclusion that the best course of action is to proceed with an addendum which will allow for clarity on 2024 removals and additional analyses."

The action responds to the results of the [2024 Stock Assessment Update](#), which indicates the resource

remains overfished but is not experiencing overfishing. Short-term projections estimate an increase in fishing mortality in 2025 due to the above average 2018 year-class entering the current recreational ocean slot limit combined with the lack of strong year-classes behind it. This action is intended to increase the probability of rebuilding the stock by adjusting subsequent 2026 management measures to ensure the stock is on the necessary rebuilding trajectory.

At the meeting, the Board considered two possible paths forward. The first was to take immediate Board action to reduce fishing mortality in 2025. The second was a longer, more comprehensive process given one of the primary options being considered is seasonal closures, which represents a new management approach for the Board. Ultimately, the Board chose the second path by initiating an addendum that would provide the Board more time to develop a fuller suite of management options, allow for the incorporation of full 2024 fishery removals data, and afford the public with a more robust opportunity to provide input. The Board noted preliminary data indicate the current measures implemented through Addendum II are on track to reduce 2024 removals from 2023 and 2022 levels. The Board also recognized the importance of the thousands of public comments submitted for this meeting and the upcoming public input through the addendum process on 2026 management measures.

For more information, please contact Emilie Franke, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at efranke@asmfc.org.

Tom Fote's Public Comment at the December Striped Bass Board Meeting

I am writing these comments as a striped bass advisor from New Jersey. My history with striped bass goes back to the mid-seventies, going to ASMFC striped bass board meetings since the early 80's. Since December 1991 I served 24 years as a Governor's Appointee Commissioner and 6 years as a proxy for the Legislator Commission ASMFC ending in June 2023 watching the ups and downs for this fishery. After listening to the webinar, I was not surprised with the information presented. There has been poor recruitment for the last five years and the spawning stock biomass is still big enough to produce the highest young of the year. But because we changed the targets a few times in the past few years, we are not reaching some imaginary target.

We shouldn't be making the same mistakes over and over again. We have made drastic cuts in both the commercial and recreational fishery under the emergency actions without going through an addendum process. This has had a dramatic effect on both the recreational and commercial fishing industries. These cuts do not address the problem of why we are having poor recruitment. We are still managing in the old method of looking at charts, tables and projections that are based on assumptions with the best available data. The data we are using does not take into account the reasons we are having poor recruitment. It is not fishing pressure. We know that because the facts tell us that this size biomass can produce high young of the year classes. We need to address the problems that actually exist.

1. The water temperature in Chesapeake Bay has risen dramatically in the last 20 years. We know with other species that this temperature change is having dramatic impacts on young of the year.
2. There are other environmental factors in Chesapeake Bay that have not been corrected. The increase in species like the blue catfish that are feeding on the young has an impact. So do other invasive or introduced species.
3. Numerous studies looking at the effects of endocrine disruptors and other estrogen mimickers in the water have caused problems with the sexual development of male species.

Being an agent orange vet, it came to my attention that the chemicals we have introduced to the system we are feminizing male fish. I started reading the studies in the late 80's and attending scientific workshops on the impact of chemicals in the water. The first study I will quote is a study done on small mouth bass in the Potomac River. A number of the male small mouth bass were having sexual developmental problems, and some were actually trying to lay eggs. There was a study in Boulder Colorado on white suckers. Above the sewer plant there were 46 females and 38 males. Below the sewer plant there were 110 females, 10 males and 10 with both sexual organs. Dr. Anne McElroy, NYSG Research Scientist, Stony Brook University, studied winter flounder in Jamaica Bay. I spent my early years fishing in Jamaica Bay by the outflows with raw sewage. There were also landfills leaching into Jamaica Bay. She found that instead of the normal ratio of female to males, 10/1, 11/1 and 12/1, just the opposite of what it is supposed to be. I

was collecting studies like this, and I have about 40 studies that I can share.

We know the size of the spawning stock biomass are females. The older and larger fish are generally female. When you are looking at 36 inch or larger fish the assumption is that the overwhelming majority are female. We don't know the population of males in Chesapeake Bay, and we don't know the health of that stock. Nobody has been studying if there are sexual abnormalities in the male striped bass in Chesapeake Bay. The other situation in Chesapeake Bay is we are fishing on smaller fish because they were assumed to be male fish. Most female fish are moving from Chesapeake Bay to the ocean before they are large enough to be harvested. The commercial and recreational fisheries are then targeting male fish in the bay.

Because of the lack of science on what is happening with the male fish I cannot go down the same path of further restricting the ocean fishery. The ocean fishery for the most part is not fishing on the male fish, and we need the science to know exactly what is happening. Maybe we need to protect male fish as much as we protect female fish.

Listening to the last board meeting I need to correct two comments that were made. First, one of the commercial fishermen complained that they were feeding the masses while recreational anglers were just playing with the fish. I wanted to point out that most recreational anglers like to take home fish for their families to eat. We have not allowed them to do that by putting in the current slot limits. You are forcing these anglers to catch a lot of fish before they can get one to take home to eat. This raises the numbers of catch and release mortality. Second, it was also said that commercial fishermen only catch 10% of the fishery. That is by weight but not by number of fish. You are comparing a size limit of 36 inches commercial fish in Massachusetts with 18-inch commercial fish in Chesapeake Bay. For every commercial fish landed in the ocean the ratio is probably 8/1 for the fish in Chesapeake Bay. The Chesapeake Bay commercial fishermen may be catching less poundage, but they are catching a lot more fish, with most of them being males.

We need more research to find out what is going on and what are the real reasons for the lack of recruitment in Chesapeake Bay. **That is why at this time I support status quo.**

What I also support is that we need to review what the hatcheries were doing in Maryland, Virginia, New York and North Carolina doing the rebuilding

period. Many people at this table were not here in the 70's and 80's when these hatcheries were in operation. Those programs were shut down in Virginia and Maryland when those fisheries were declared recovered. Those fish were raised to 2 inches and every one released from the hatchery was tagged. By being raised to 2 inches in a pristine environment, those striped bass were not subject to the impact of pollution in their early development. Also, at 2 inches they were able to escape many of the predators that gobbled them by as fry and eggs. I have attached a couple of articles on hatcheries currently operating in North Carolina.

In closing, to do hatcheries or get the necessary research on the problems with low recruitment, it will cost money. The crisis in the 80's made Congress work in a bi-partisan way. It was Congressman Walter Jones from North Carolina, Congressman Studds from Massachusetts and Senator Chafee Senior from Rhode Island that put in the bills to fund the research through the Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service. We need that kind of bi-partisan work again.

Nick Cicero's Public Comments at the December Striped Bass Board Meeting

I'm the sales manager of the Folsom Corporation, the largest wholesale distributor of fishing tackle in the Northeast with offices and warehouses in both New Jersey and Florida. We employ over 240 people; Healthy fisheries and equitable public access to those populations are the lifeblood of our livelihood. Just last week we hosted our annual Dealer Show in Atlantic City hosting over 120 independent fishing tackle retail businesses. Striped bass, their record abundance in some locations and low numbers in others was a frequent topic of conversation. Dealers from different areas compared notes on their summer businesses, with some reporting lackluster stripers fishing in once popular areas while others speaking of incredible populations of all sizes of stripers, with the frequent mention of huge numbers of feeding stripers surface feeding among bluefin tuna schools, often up to 25 miles offshore!

For actively engaged stakeholders in this fishery, it's clear that locations where striped bass historically were observed in the past – or perhaps not – are much different today. What we have heard through all of the group discussions was that the striped bass population was changing in distribution and

historical geographic density. For those areas that experienced poor fishing, the most frequently voiced comments echoed both concern for the population and questions regarding the reasons for the changes, while businesses lucky enough to be located in areas of higher striped bass density are enjoying fantastic fishing and brisk business.

Every dealer expressed concern for the proposed regulatory changes as outlined, and how those changes would address the challenges the stripers population now faces. Most questioned the wisdom of reducing angler harvest when the most glaring issue is not necessarily the building of spawning stock biomass (SSB) but the young of the year (YOY) production. The folks we speak to on a regular basis – the retailers and the anglers alike – would like to see more of regional and federal commitment to understand the environmental challenges in spawning estuaries

We heard repeatedly from dealers in every location that they are observing more frequent catch and release practices among their clientele, and they universally questioned the accuracy of the angler harvest data through MRIP. Additionally, almost everyone questioned indicated that the ability to harvest a slot stripers is a very important factor to a significant number of customers. Harvest was mentioned as particularly important to entry level anglers and those of lower income.

What we heard most often from the group was that they are concerned that making regulation changes without science-based facts will do nothing more than placate a highly vocal minority, eliminating much of the diverse input that our retailers hear from their customers who are not part of clubs and well-funded advocacy groups. Our small businesses - along with each and every employee in my company - are highly invested in striped bass, and the successful ongoing health of the population! We all want what's best for the species.

Remember, this is not about a hobby; this is a culture in our community and a livelihood! Mortgage payments, college tuition for our kids, food on our tables. We need answers to questions that range from, can the Chesapeake be restored to its historic prominence, or is significant spawning and recruitment going on in other more northern and cooler tributaries? Furthermore, why are migration patterns changing so dramatically within the striped bass fishery? Clearly, these are not questions that can be answered over the three business days allowed for public comment, but they're important for the future health of this fishery.

In a nutshell my observation is that the coastal striped bass fishery is robust and the recent changes in the slot limit are successfully controlling increases in angling mortality. The new spawning stock biomass projections that account for continued poor recruitment are also showing significant rebuilding by 2029. We believe the reference point level is too high and while we support the well-intentioned aspirational goals, we are concerned that it causes the public to view our current population in an alarmingly negative light.

Reducing our harvest days will not fix poor recruitment, which is our single biggest challenge. History indicates that spawning success and stock size have no real relationship to each other. Clearly the SSB is more than big enough to produce abundant YOY populations if conditions were hospitable to successful spawning and fry survival. Coincidentally, we are at a 30-year low on mortality rate in the striped bass fishery, 21 days prior to the 1995 anniversary of the heralded conservation victory of the rebuilding of the striped bass stock. As it stands today, we're only about 10 million pounds away from the celebratory mark, with a growing SSB population and a historically low mortality rate.

In our view, the most critical problem with the current stripers population is the continued lack of successful recruitment, which one might compare to a low automobile gas tank. Keeping in mind that in the past some rather small SSB numbers produced record year classes, the proposed regulation changes seem to us to be an automobile tire change that aspires to fill the gas tank; regrettably, one has nothing to do with the other.

Management designed to placate hysteria has no place in any successful fisheries management strategy. The most recent fast-tracking of the regulatory process through implementation of emergency actions while denying reasonable public comment periods is a most alarming situation; it's become a dangerous precedent that must be curtailed for the good of the fishery. The very fact that the proposed regulatory changes presented to the public on December 5, which most clearly imposes a greater hardship on some states in a geographic region while others sacrifice far less, shows how broken the current process of striped bass management has become. Such punitive, fast-tracked measures have huge socioeconomic impacts which regrettably will not be realized by ASMFC, its Board and the Technical Committee until it's too late.

As members of the American Sportfishing Association (ASA), we at the Folsom Corporation

support the ASA position, to keep the current recreational measures for striped bass the same in 2025. As ASA has capably noted on behalf of our industry and our customers, “new stock projections show that the current management measures are working to control fishing mortality and achieve rebuilding by the 2029 deadline. The new projections include lower recruitment assumptions to account for the ongoing scenario of poor recruitment coming out of the Chesapeake Bay. Any changes to the 2025 season at this point may lead to a less equitable opportunity for recreational anglers and cause undue harm to the sportfishing industry.”

Nick Cicero
Sales Manager, Folsom Corporation
Mahwah, NJ

ASMFC Preliminary Agenda 2025 Winter Meeting

February 4-5, 2025

The agenda is subject to change. Bulleted items represent the anticipated major issues to be discussed or acted upon at the meeting. The final agenda will include additional items and may revise the bulleted items provided below. 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.

Tuesday, February 4

9 – 10:30 a.m. American Lobster Management Board

- Progress Update on American Lobster Benchmark Stock Assessment
- Jonah Crab Data update
- Lobster Conservation Management Team Reports for Areas 2 and 3 (respond if necessary)

10:45 a.m. – Noon Spiny Dogfish Management Board

- Consider Draft Addendum VII to Reduce Sturgeon Bycatch for Final Approval
- Set 2025/2026 Specifications

Noon – 1 p.m. Lunch Break

1 – 2:30 p.m. Horseshoe Crab Management Board

- Consider for Public Comment Draft Addendum IX on Multi-year Specifications for Male Only Harvest of Delaware Bay-origin Horseshoe Crabs
- Review Adaptative Resource Management Subcommittee Recommendations Regarding Input on Changes to Reward/Utility Functions
- Review and Populate Advisory Panel Membership
- Elect Vice-Chair

2:45 – 4:45 p.m. Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board

- Discuss Stock Assessment Schedule
- Review Timing of 2027 Benchmark Stock Assessment and Board Discussion on Whether to Conduct 2026 Assessment Update
- Board Guidance on Scope of Draft Addendum III for 2026 Measures

Wednesday, February 5

8 – 10 a.m. Executive Committee

- Review White Paper on Board Voting and Virtual Meeting Standard Operating Practices and Procedures
- Future Annual Meetings

Salt Water Sportsman National Seminar Series Returns to Atlantic City

Series Presented by Bass Pro Shops & Mako Boats

The ***Salt Water Sportsman National Seminar Series*** brings its 2025 New Jersey edition to Resorts Hotel & Casino in Atlantic City on Saturday, **January 25th**. Hosting the 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. event will be **George Poveromo**, Host of *George Poveromo's World of Saltwater Fishing* on Discovery. **Nick Honachefsky**, a noted writer, author, TV personality and New Jersey fishing authority, will co-host. Joining Poveromo and Honachefsky in Atlantic City will be:

- **Captain Tim Smith** - Innovative southern New Jersey pro who specializes in targeting tunas and

other pelagics at the inshore/mid-grounds and canyons, with *Bodacious Sportfishing!*

- **Captain Brian Williams** - Innovative Ocean City-based pro who specializes in fishing the local backwaters for striped bass, with *Badfish Fishing Charters!*
- **Captain Mike Frank** - Noted inshore/near shore pro and specialist at targeting trophy fluke, drum and sea bass!
- **Captain Steve Palmer** – Renowned Beach Haven offshore and bottom-fishing authority and owner of the *Miss Beach Haven* party boat, *Outer Limits* charter boat and *Jingles Bait and Tackle!*
- **Captain Roderick Palmer** – Innovative near shore and canyon tuna pro, and a trophy fluke and blackfish specialist!
- **Captain Tom Daffin** - Premier trophy striped bass, fluke, wreck and offshore fishing authority with *Fishin' Fever Sportfishing!*
- **Captain Wayne Cecero** - Legendary back bay pro and specialist at targeting trophy fluke, blackfish and striped bass!
- **Captain Dante Soriente** – Renowned authority on fishing for tunas from New Jersey through New England and noted trophy tog specialist, with *Magic Tail Outfitters!*
- **Melissa Toro** - Authority on fishing South Jersey's back bays and a specialist at catching fluke and blackfish in and around the waters of Atlantic City!
- **Captain David Wicker** – Veteran king mackerel, bottom-fishing and marine electronics specialist!
- **Captain Alan Wenzel** - Islamorada, Florida Keys, authority on offshore live-baiting, trolling, conventional, and deep-drop bottom-fishing!

"The National Seminar Series has become the nation's longest running and most popular educational course on recreational marine angling tactics and techniques," says Poveromo. "This is year number 38 for the tour. The backbone to its success has always been the vast amount of cutting-edge and pertinent how-to information on catching more and bigger game fish within the waters of the respective Seminar Series stop. This information is explained in great detail by some of the very best saltwater anglers, and each session is

backed by elaborate visuals that include video bytes, technical- and action-oriented images and on-stage demonstrations. One can't help but to walk away from the seminar with numerous new tricks and techniques, regardless of their experience level".

Courses for the January 25 seminar will encompass the how-tos and where-tos of catching the regions inshore, near shore and offshore saltwater game fish.

The Seminar Series kicks off at 9:00 a.m. and will conclude by 3:00 p.m., with a one-hour break at noon. Considered to be the best bargain in sportfishing, a seminar series ticket is only \$65.00.

The ticket price covers five hours of instruction from the best pros in the business, a course textbook, a one-year subscription or extension to Salt Water Sportsman, one Roff's Ocean Fishing Forecast Analysis, Star brite boat care products, bottle of OrPine Wash & Wax, a \$10.00 discount card off any purchase of \$75.00 or more from Bass Pro Shops and chances to win thousands of dollars' worth in door prizes! The grand prize at the conclusion of the New Jersey seminar is a Florida Keys fishing trip with one of several premier Florida Keys guides. The super grand prize, to be awarded two weeks after the conclusion of the 2025 series, is a new Mako Pro Skiff 17 cc!

At the conclusion of the seminar, an After Seminar Party will be held inside the Bass Pro Shops in Atlantic City. Beginning at 4:00 p.m. and concluding at 7:00 p.m., seminar participants and a guest of their choice can enjoy socializing with many of the seminar faculty, Poveromo included. There will be complimentary food, soft drinks and music.

How to Register – To register, purchase tickets, or learn more about the seminar, please visit the site at www.nationalseminarseries.com.

About the Salt Water Sportsman's National Seminar Series: In its 38th year, the Salt Water Sportsman National Seminar Series is the nation's longest running and most popular educational seminar on recreational marine angling. Featuring George Poveromo, SWS's Editor-At-Large, and Host of "George Poveromo's World of Saltwater Fishing" on the Discovery Channel, Poveromo will take the stage at each location, along with teams comprised of Salt Water Sportsman editors, nationally recognized anglers and some of the region's top guides. Their job: Cover in explicit detail the how-tos and where-tos of catching the most popular game fish within a specific Seminar Series region, along with the latest rigging and fishing techniques.

JCAA Membership Report

By John Toth

The following is the final list of clubs that have paid their dues and sponsorships for 2024. Please check to see if my information is correct and let me know if I am in error with it. I can be contacted at (732) 656-0139 or at tothjohn@verizon.net.

- Bay Head Shores Fishing Club - \$50
- Beach haven Marlin & Tuna Club - \$100
- Belmar Fishing Club - \$50
- Berkeley Stripper Club - \$100
- Delaware River Shad Fishermen's Association - \$100
- Fish Hawks - \$150
- Bradley Beach Surfcasters - \$150
- Forked River Tuna Club - \$250
- Fun Under the Water - \$100
- Hi-Mar Stripper Club - \$500
- Hudson River Fishermen's Association (HRFA) - \$100
- Manasquan Fishing Club - \$300
- Menhaden Defenders - \$100
- NJ Beach Buggy Association (NJBBA) - \$300
- Newark Bait & Fly Casting - \$100
- NJ Council of Diving Clubs - \$50
- Raritan Bay - \$50
- Salt Water Anglers of Bergen County - \$100
- Seaside Heights Fishing Club - \$100
- Shore Surf Club - \$50
- Spring Lake Live Liners - \$100
- Sunrise Rod & Gun Club - \$50
- Surf Kings - \$50
- Village Harbor Club - \$50

I have also received sponsorships:

- Paul Shafer - \$200
- Jon Brunetti - \$100
- Bill Browne - \$100
- L. Raymond Humphreys - \$135
- Adam Piesecki - \$85
- Michael Revesz - \$100
- Barnegat Animal Clinic - \$60

- Linda & Chris Jewell - \$210
- Gene & Susan Geld - \$60
- Paul Olsen - \$50
- Joe Palumbo - \$500
- Eric Fistler – Bi-State Shad Fishing Contest - \$250

Invoices for payment of JCAA Club Membership dues will be mailed to your club during January 2025.

Have a Happy Holiday and the Best for the New Year!

Youth Education Report

By Greg Kucharewski

NJ HOFNOD 2025 LEADER TRAINING

If you would like to become a certified NJ HOFNOD instructor, please attend the next leader training workshop. For more information about NJ Hooked on Fishing Not on Drugs leader training please contact Liz Jackson, NJ HOFNOD Coordinator:

- Phone: (908) 637-4125 x122
- Email: liz.jackson@dep.state.nj.us
- or register [here](#) for the next 2025 NJ HOFNOD leader training

TOMS RIVER FISHING INDIANS

NJBBA is doing a great job with the Toms River Fishing Indians. Please see their Facebook page at [this link](#).



SURF FISHING TOURNAMENT

This year the Governor's Surf Fishing tournament is scheduled for **Sunday, May 18, 2025**. Veterans that register must check the veteran box to win the veterans category. The veteran who wins will be asked to prove their veteran status by showing a government issued ID or copy of DD 214. For, early registration, [click here](#). Early registration will end April 19, 2025.



FISHING AND BOATING SHOWS

Be sure to visit the JCAA booth at upcoming fishing and boating shows. Stop by and meet our team. They can answer all your questions about saltwater fisheries management and pending regulations. You can also ask questions about flea markets that will be held in the spring of 2025. Don't forget to support the high school fishing flea markets that help our youngsters learn about fishing.



EARLE FISHING PIER

We thank Sean Moley, Pier Fishing Instructor, for all his time and hard work to keep our veterans learning about fishing at the pier. Sean's report: Veterans are patiently doing some late season Toggling at Earle pier. While the official season draws closer to the end, there's hopes of late stripers runs and possible winter species to be found. Regardless, the camaraderie is great year-round. Look for Jim, Steve, and Sean to see what's happening or to simply shoot the breeze. There are 25 passes that will be issued March 1, 2025. Qualifications are active duty, retired or any disability percentage rated by the VA. Loaner rods and reels are available. Contact Sean at (732) 895-6032.

DISABLED VETERANS – FREE MOBILE SPORTFISHING PERMIT

We remind all eligible disabled veterans to apply for an IBSP 2025 Mobile Sportfishing Permit to drive on the beach. Veterans must provide the following: Form DD 214 Honorable Discharge, Valid NJ Driver License and Registration, Veterans ID Card proof of service-connected disability. If you plan to fish on the beach, you must [register](#) for a Free NJ Saltwater Recreational Registration Card. It is suggested new beach drivers take a beach safety driving course. NJBBA offers a beach driving course at [this link](#). For more information about permits and hours contact: Island Beach State Park, (732) 793-0506. [Visit VVA Chapter 12](#) for Play HOOK-e veteran news and discounts.

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Become a JCAA sponsor and help our cause. As you can see by our newspaper many of our member clubs are also JCAA sponsors. If your club is not contact us today to become one. With all the new battles we are engaged in, we need to raise more funds in order to be effective. Become a sponsor now and help us to continue the fight.

Individuals can join JCAA as an Associate Member

Membership is now free! Sign up as an Associate Member and receive monthly JCAA News that gives you the most up-to-date news about Fisheries Management and Environmental Issues. If you would like to support the goals of JCAA, please contribute if you are able. Look for the [Subscribe](#) button on the JCAA home page or complete application below.

JCAA Associate Member Application

Date _____ New Renewal

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If contributing, please make check payable to JCAA

COMMITTEES & CHAIRPERSONS

Legislative	Tom Fote	732-270-9102
Operations Manager		
Office Manager	Karen Noe	jcaa@jcaa.org
Fluke Tournament		
Access (North)	Paul Novello	609-203-4812
Access (Cntrl+South)	Greg O'Connel	609-204-0220
Blackfish	Pat Donnelly	732-295-1755
Blue Claw Crab		
Bluefish	Al Marantz	732-859-0020
Habitat	Pat Donnelly	732-295-1755
Large Pelagic		
Forage Species	Capt Paul Eidman	
Striped Bass	Paul Haertel	973-943-8201
Science & Research	Bruce Freeman	732-793-7871
Website	Philip V. Celmer	jcaa@jcaa.org
Youth Education	Greg Kucharewski	732-840-9197

If you would like to receive JCAA Email alerts email your Name, Club, if you belong to one, and your interest to tfote@jcaa.org or just go to the JCAA site and [subscribe](#) from there.

Meetings:
1st Tuesday
of month
7:30 PM

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