



# The Reel Deal

Newsletter of the NJ Chapter of the RFA

[www.rfanj.org](http://www.rfanj.org)

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 1

MARCH 2010

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### MARCH 4-7

WORLD FISHING &  
OUTDOOR EXPOSITION,  
Rockland Community  
College, Suffern, NY

### MARCH 13

STRATHMERE FISHING  
and Environment Club  
Special Meeting, Strath-  
mere Firehouse, Strath-  
mere, NJ

### MARCH 19-21

SALTWATER FISHING  
EXPO, Garden State  
Exhibit Center, Somerset,  
NJ

### APRIL 13-15

MID-ATLANTIC FISHERY  
MANAGEMENT COUNCIL,  
Sanderling Resort & Spa,  
Duck, NC

## RECREATIONAL FISHING ALLIANCE NJ CHAPTER

Capt. Adam Nowalsky  
Chairman

Howard Owens  
Vice Chairman

Herb Moore Jr.  
Legislative Chair

Jim Winn  
Membership Chair

Karen E. Wall  
Secretary/Media Chair

Maria Dowd  
Treasurer

RFA-NJ  
PO Box 3080  
New Gretna, NJ 08224  
888-JOIN-RFA

## United We Fish Rally Huge Success



More than 20 federal lawmakers joined several thousand fishermen from around the country next to the US Capitol on February 24 in a three-hour standing elbow to elbow rally supporting national fisheries reform.

The first reports from journalists on the scene tabbed attendance at between 3,000 and 5,000 with fishermen standing elbow to elbow at Upper Senate Park in Washington, DC.

**SEE RALLY, PAGE 3**

## Sea Bass Regulations Remain in Limbo

Citing a required 66 percent reduction in landings, the Mid-Atlantic Fisheries Management Council (MAFMC) voted in December for a 2010 coastwide black sea bass

season of only the months of June and September.

Efforts and testimony by RFA-NJ board members prior to and at the meeting resulted in the

Council also voting to reconvene their Science and Statistical Committee (SSC) to consider revising the recommended quota resulting in these draconian reductions.

**SEE SEA BASS, PAGE 3**

## TALE OF THE SCALE



Vinny Makfinsky and son Mikey with Mikey's first bluefish!  
Do you have a photo to share? We need RFA members' photos! Send your photo with a brief summary to [media@rfanj.org](mailto:media@rfanj.org)

## If we don't fight now, when?

For years, fishermen in New Jersey and up and down the coast have made sacrifices to rebuild our fisheries. Despite having ended overfishing for all stocks in the Mid-Atlantic region, we continue to experience tightening regulations on our fishing efforts.

Fishermen are uniting to say "Enough!" and the recent United We Fish rally is but one example of the wide-ranging and growing effort save our future as fishermen.

Options for NJ's fisheries regulations are limited by the federal management process. If we don't enact change at the federal level, NJ's anglers will continue to be denied access to rebuilt and healthy stocks.

While there are many groups claiming to represent NJ anglers, the RFA is the *only* organization lobbying full-time on your behalf at a national level in Washington, DC, as well as back at home in Trenton.

My thanks to the board mem-



### Chairman's Corner

Capt. Adam Nowalsky  
[chairman@rfanj.org](mailto:chairman@rfanj.org)

bers of the RFA-NJ who have been volunteering their time in recent months in laying the groundwork for a successful RFA-NJ chapter. I thank current RFA members for your continued support.

I look forward to new members joining us in the fight to safeguard the rights of New Jersey's saltwater anglers. *If not now, when?*

## Meet the RFA-NJ Board of Directors

The RFA's New Jersey chapter (RFA-NJ) has officially been reactivated, with a new slate of officers for 2010.

Capt. Adam Nowalsky was unanimously chosen by the RFA-NJ board of directors to lead the chapter as 2010 Chairman. Capt. Nowalsky is also vice president of the Beach Haven Charter Fishing Association and a founding member for the Save the Summer Flounder Fishery Fund.

Vice Chairman for the RFA-NJ chapter is Howard Owens of Passaic County. Owens fishes extensively in the NY Bight and Raritan Bay region.

RFA-NJ also welcomes Monmouth County's Herb Moore back into the fold. The former chief legal counsel for RFA's national office was voted by the Board to be RFA-NJ's Legislative Chair.

The Fisherman Magazine's Karen Wall was tabbed Secretary and Media Chair, while Atlantic County's Maria Dowd will handle the responsibilities of Treasurer.

Longtime RFA volunteer Jim Winn of Gloucester will continue his work as Membership Chair.

Rounding out the 2010 RFA-NJ Board are Capt. Tony Bogan, Nick Cicero, Capt. Chris Gatley, Ed Goldman, Greg O'Connell, Chris Pezska, Tony Spinelli and Capt. Fran Verdi.

Visit our website, [www.rfanj.org](http://www.rfanj.org), for updated information on what we're doing or information on how to join the RFA.



“We need flexibility to be able to thrive,” Schumer promised the crowd, while charging federal bureaucrats with failure to recognize the impact of their decisions on working families. “We need to start caring about our fishermen as much as our fish.”

The bipartisan unity seen in the crowd between commercial and recreational fishermen was well-reflected on stage, as one by one Democrats and Republicans took to the microphone in support of their coastal constituents. Sen. George LeMieux (R-FL) encouraged fishermen to visit their legislators, telling them “we’ve got to change this law.” LeMieux said the federal fisheries law was “keeping you out of work, it’s keeping the tackle

shop out of work, it’s keeping the hotel out of work, it’s keeping the restaurants out of work.”

Rep. Frank Pallone (D-NJ), a longtime champion of coastal issues with a proven track record in protecting the ocean environment has been a champion of the Flexibility in Rebuilding American Fisheries Act legislation in the House (HR 1584), and praised the fishermen for coming to DC with their concerns.

“There is nothing more important than grass roots,” Pallone told demonstrators. “The science is broken and what they are doing is wrong,” Pallone said of how catch limits are determined. “We need flexibility ... that’s the only way we’re going to make some changes around here.”

HR-1584 recently picked up three additional co-sponsors due in large part to the February 24 rally, while S-1255 gained another three supporters. The lobbying effort in DC by RFA staffers in support of these bills will continue.

## RALLY from page 1

“An incredible success,” said Jim Donofrio, executive director of the Recreational Fishing Alliance (RFA) and one of the key organizers of the historic rally. Carrying signs and banners with the messages “I Fish, I Vote” and “Reform Magnuson Now,” most participants came by chartered bus from points up and down the down coast. “This was better and bigger than we ever thought,” Donofrio said.

Leading off the rally was an impassioned opening speech by Senator Charles Schumer (D-NY), lead sponsor of Senate Bill 1255, the Flexibility in Rebuilding American Fisheries Act.

“Shame on the Magnuson-Stevens Act,” Schumer said. MSA as currently written denies fishermen access to healthy and rebuilding stocks due to arbitrary, time-specific deadlines.

---

## SEA BASS from page 1

In early January, the SSC did reconvene and recommended an upwardly revised quota. Even with this increase (and subsequent approval by NOAA Fisheries), the 2010 required reduction remains at 44%. As of this writing, there are 2 different proposals for the 2010 season. The Atlantic States Fisheries Management Commission (ASMFC) recently recommended that states enact a season of May 22-Sept. 12 in their waters. A week later, the MAFMC recommended a season of May 22-Aug. 8, Sept. 4-Oct. 4 for federal waters. The disconnect between state and federal waters will prove troubling to both anglers and enforcement.

Final federal 2010 black sea bass regulations will not be promulgated until later this spring. Landings data from MRFSS for 2009 is not yet available for the September – October time frame.

Estimated landings of black sea bass during this period are currently projected to have been DOUBLE THE 2008 LANDINGS DURING THE SAME PERIOD. The weather after Labor Day 2009 was among the worst recorded, and a closure of federal waters was in effect for most of October. The RFA is continuing to fight the use of those projections in calculating the required reduction in landings for 2010. NOAA Fisheries will be publishing a proposed rule later in March, with a final rule not likely for a month (or more).

# United We Rally, United We Fish

