



The Reel Deal

Newsletter of the NJ Chapter of the RFA

www.rfanj.org

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 2

APRIL 2010

UPCOMING EVENTS

APRIL 13-15

MID-ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
Spring meetings
Duck, NC
Agenda at www.mafmc.org

APRIL 22/24

EARTH DAY cleanups at various sites. Help out!

MAY 3-6

ATLANTIC STATES MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION Spring Meetings, Alexandria, VA
Agenda at www.asmf.org

MAY 13

NJ MARINE FISHERIES COUNCIL, Atlantic County Library, Galloway

MAY 14-16

JERSEY SHORE BOAT SALE & EXPO, Lakewood

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

Keep It Free!

NJ Assembly Votes For Free Saltwater Fishing Registry



An angler fishes the Hudson River at Liberty State Park in Jersey City

With nine months to go before New Jersey's saltwater anglers could be forced into paying for a federal saltwater registry program, the state's full Assembly approved a bill (A823) to create a free, state-run saltwater angler registry in New Jersey.

The vote by the New Jersey Assembly clears the way for Senate discussion regarding the companion bill S1122.

The legislation would meet new federal requirements mandating that the contact information of individuals who engage in recreational fishing within coastal waters be collected in a database.

SEE FREE, page 3

NJ Recreational Shark Fishery Avoids Moratorium

New Jersey shark fishermen have gotten a reprieve from the federal government with news that the state will be given more time to conform to management measures. The decision means that New Jersey's shark season can begin as normal for those who specifically target mako, thresher and blue sharks, which is ex-

ceptional news for New Jersey's struggling recreational fishing industry.

New Jersey had been facing a moratorium on shark fishing this year for being out of compliance with 22 rules governing 40 species of coastal sharks, which was essentially due to a lapse in paperwork processing through

Trenton. Having been given until July 30 by NOAA to comply, the DEP has devised a plan to come into compliance by July 19.

The plan includes filing the new rules with the Office of Administrative Law, publishing them in the New Jersey Register, hosting a public comment period and other measures.

SEE SHARKS, page 2

Safeguarding the rights of New Jersey's anglers

It's All About Representing Your Interests

Last month we featured a "Meet the RFA-NJ Board of Directors" article. It has been my pleasure to work with this diverse group of individuals representing all aspects and regions of New Jersey's recreational fishing community.

Providing representation for boat and land-based anglers, for-hire and non-for-hire sectors, the northern part of NJ's coastline to the south and around to Delaware Bay, inshore and offshore, the chapter has done a phenomenal job of taking positions that support all of the state's anglers, no matter how or where you fish.

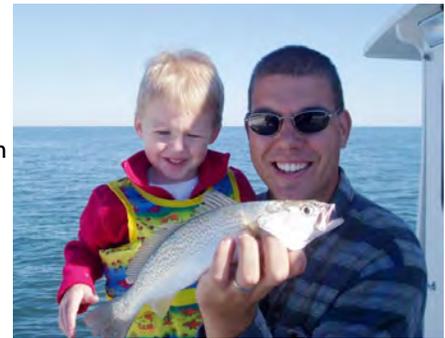
That balance will be the backbone of our success moving forward.

You may wonder how the Board assumes a position on an issue. It really

isn't hard to understand upon examination of the RFA mission statement – Safeguard the rights of saltwater anglers; protect marine, boat and tackle industry jobs, and, ensure the long-term sustainability of our nation's fisheries. These are the metrics we use in determining a position.

When assuming a position on an issue, we have to be able to justify how that position meets the mission statement, and when the answer is yes to does it meet all three parts, it becomes easy to decide where we stand.

I, and the rest of the Board, look forward to continuing to meet the needs of New Jersey's saltwater anglers by taking positions that meet the RFA mission statement. With your continued



Chairman's Corner

Capt. Adam Nowalsky

chairman@rfanj.org

support through membership and donations, we can turn those positions into realities.

SHARKS from page 1

According to the DEP, as long as all the planned deadlines for public comment and input are met, the federal fisheries service has indicated that New Jersey will not face a moratorium.

"I am pleased that NOAA's interactions with Amy Cradic and other New Jersey officials will allow the shark fishing season to open as planned," said Andrew Winer, NOAA's Director of External Affairs. "We understand that this is an important issue for anglers and tackle shops in New Jersey, and NOAA is committed to improving its relationship with the recreational fishing community by working in cooperation with state officials and organizations such as RFA."

"The RFA-NJ Chapter sent a letter to Gov. Christie shortly after he assumed office advising him of the need to respond to this issue," state chapter Chairman Capt. Adam Nowalsky said, explaining how damaging such a closure would be to the Jersey Shore economy "because of its impact on a number of very high profile shark tournaments that are held up and down New Jersey's coast in the early summer -- tournaments that help generate income for New Jersey's fishing industry."

The RFA-NJ is grateful to the efforts of the Christie Administration and federal officials at NOAA for helping expedite the compliance efforts on behalf of New Jersey's saltwater fishermen.

NJ Weighs Lottery for Fish & Wildlife Programs Funding

Resolutions pending in the NJ Assembly and Senate would authorize creation of a new state lottery to help fund conservation programs, including fish and wildlife and particularly marine fisheries.

Assemblyman Nelson T. Albano's ACR119 and Sen. Jeff Van Drew's SCR93 propose state Constitutional amendments authorizing the creation of the lottery. If passed in both houses, the resolutions would let voters decide whether to amend the state constitution to allow state lottery monies to go towards the funding of state conservation programs like agriculture, fish and wildlife, and marine fisheries, in addition to endangered or nongame species.

NJ ranks last in per angler funding on the Atlantic coast, with the Bureau of Marine Fisheries receiving an appropriation of less than \$2 million annually. The RFA recently testified at state budget hearings, lobbying for an increased appropriation.

RFA executive director Jim Donofrio cited an economic report conducted by Southwick and Associates for the Northeast Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies in 2002 that estimated that a conservation lottery in New Jersey could generate more than \$76 million in annual revenue. The same report determined that a New Jersey saltwater fishing license at maximum would generate less than \$7 million a year.

RFA-NJ Launches Website

The RFA-NJ recently launched a new website, www.rfanj.org. Our on-line home's features include news and event information, ability to sign-up for our e-mail list, links to join/renew memberships, the ability to make a donation directly to the RFA-NJ chapter, and links to current regulations and fisheries management bodies. Visit www.rfanj.org today, and be sure to pass the link on to all your friends!

WE WANT YOUR PHOTOS!

Have a photo of a great catch that you would like to share with your fellow RFA members? Email it to media@rfanj.org and we'll include it in an upcoming newsletter!



RFA-NJ Fights for Surfcasting Access in Cape May

Many New Jersey surfcasters gasped when the headline "As Coast Guard shuts down Loran, site of Cape facility eyed for piping plover nesting" ran in the January 20, 2010 of the Atlantic City Press.

The closing of the Loran tower has muddled the future of Two-Mile Beach, as the Coast Guard is considering vacating the property. Given the opportunity, the federal Fish and Wildlife Service has stated interest in obtaining the land for beach nesting birds. Howard Schlegel, manager of the Cape May National Wildlife Refuge, stated "If the Wildlife Service gets the property, the beach would be closed from April 1 to September 30 for the piping plovers."

RFA-NJ has taken action to maintain surf fishermen's right to access Two Mile Beach. In a letter to U.S. Rep. Frank LoBiondo, the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation, RFA-NJ said: "As one of the leading groups representing land-based anglers in NJ, we wanted to bring this issue to your attention...Any pending property transfer should not impose additional access restrictions for

land-based fishermen, regardless of which entity assumes responsibility of the property...The stated closure period would be excessive and inconsistent with management practices used for other beaches within the state."

RFA-NJ is confident that Two-Mile Beach and the Cold Spring Inlet Jetty can be managed to be both protective of threatened and endangered species while also providing access to land-based anglers.

Rep. LoBiondo wrote: "Over the past decade, I have been pleased to work with the New Jersey RFA, the Coast Guard and the Fish and Wildlife Service to maintain access to the Cold Spring Inlet Jetty for fishermen. It is no secret that the jetty is one of the best land-based fishing spots in South Jersey. As the Coast Guard determines the future of its Two-Mile Beach property, rest assured I remain committed to preserving access to the jetty for fishermen."

RFA-NJ looks forward to working with Rep. LoBiondo going forward and fighting for continued access for New Jersey's land-based fishermen.

FREE from page 1

As of 2010, most anglers fishing in New Jersey coastal waters are required to register with the federal government in an effort to improve data collection. NOAA has said they may begin charging anglers up to \$25 apiece to register with the federal system, unless states come up with their own system of gathering angler information. Both A823 and S1122 have been written specifically to allow New Jersey to apply for "exempted state designation from the federal registration requirements," while also stating that the

DEP shall not charge a fee for the required registration program.

"This is the right thing to for the coastal anglers who fish in New Jersey," said Capt. Adam Nowalsky, chairman of the Recreational Fishing Alliance's New Jersey chapter (RFA-NJ).

Nowalsky, who was among several RFA representatives who testified before the Assembly on the issue, noted the stance of advocates of a saltwater license. "What has happened is people have taken the issue with regard to insufficient funding for marine fisheries in New Jersey and the need for a registry and mixed the

two together." New Jersey ranks last out of the Atlantic coastal states in appropriating less than \$6 per angler on an annual basis; others, like North Carolina, invest more than \$40 per angler.

"Sen. Van Drew said it best when testifying for this bill in committee, that fathers and sons, brothers and sisters, friends and family should all be able to wet a line without worrying about lining someone's pockets," Nowalsky said.

For more information about the federal registry's requirements, go to www.rfanj.org and follow the "Saltwater Registry" link under "News & Events."