

NEW JERSEY MARINE FISHERIES COUNCIL

**Galloway Township Public Library
Jimmies Leeds Road
Absecon, New Jersey
May 7, 2009**

In Attendance were: Chairman Gilbert H. Ewing, Jr.
Councilman Erling Berg
Councilwoman Eleanor Bochenek
Councilman Patrick Donnelly
Councilman Edward Goldman
Councilman Richard Herb
Councilman John Maxwell
Councilwoman Frances Puskas
Councilman Joseph Rizzo
Councilman Barney Hollinger

Also in attendance representing the Division of Fish and Wildlife:

David Chanda, Director
Thomas W. McCloy, Administrator, Marine Fisheries Adm. (MFA)
Brandon Muffley, Chief, Bureau of Marine Fisheries
Mark Chicketano, Captain, Bureau of Law Enforcement
Jeffrey Brust, Research Scientist, MFA
Mike Celestino, Principal Biologist, Bureau of Shellfisheries
Linda Barry, Assistant Biologist, MFA
Jen Resciniti, Technician II, Bureau of Marine Fisheries

Mr. McCloy read the compliance with the Sunshine Law. Notice of meeting was filed with the Secretary of State on April 16, 2009. Chairman Ewing reminded everyone of proper conduct for the meeting. Minutes from the January 2009 and March 2009 meetings were approved.

Law Enforcement Report

Captain Chicketano presented the Law Enforcement Report.

District 7 Highlights: April – May 2009

Recently tautog have moved inshore with fishermen catching many fish. On 4/25/09 a Conservation Officer (CO) was patrolling Barnegat Light State Park when he observed two fisherman near the end of the jetty which is approximately one mile from the lighthouse, making it very difficult to remain unnoticed. The CO concealed his uniform with a long jacket and proceeded to walk to the fishermen to conduct an inspection. One of the fisherman was in possession of two legal-sized tautog. The CO then began searching the jetty rocks for evidence of other fish when he discovered a black bag hidden in the rocks. This bag contained 18 tautog measuring less than 14 inches. The

fishermen with the two legal tautog admitted to catching all of the fish. A summons was issued to the individual for possession of 18 sub legal tautog and a mandatory court date is set next month.

A CO had received some complaints of summer flounder being kept during the closed season at the Keansburg Fishing pier. On 5/13/09, while responding to complaints of illegal crabbing along the Arthur Kill in Carteret, the CO inspected some fishermen. Upon inspecting one fisherman's cooler, the CO observed a 17 inch summer flounder. The fisherman caught it at the Keansburg Pier and then decided to try a little fishing in the Arthur Kill. A summons was issued for possession out of season.

A CO inspected the FV Sea Tractor, a scallop dredge vessel in Point Pleasant. This vessel has a federal general category scallop permit which allows up to 400 pounds of shucked scallops per day. After the crew finished off loading its catch of 400 pounds, the CO asked the captain if there were any more fish or scallops on board. The captain said there was not. The CO boarded the vessel and inspected all the fish holds and containers. He discovered a bag of shucked scallops in a covered fish tote. The bag weighed 21 pounds and was seized. The scallops were donated to the Food bank of Monmouth and Ocean Counties. A case package was submitted to the NMFS office in Wall. A summary settlement will be issued for the scallop overage of 21 pounds.

While patrolling the Manasquan Inlet in Manasquan a CO observed a diver's flag on the Point Pleasant side. The CO thought it peculiar that the flag did not move for approximately 15-20 minutes. Normally, the flag is attached to the diver and moves with them. The CO proceeded to the Point Pleasant side of the inlet. When he arrived a spear fisherman had emerged from the water near the flag. The flag was not attached to the fisherman. The CO asked the individual if he had any fish. The fisherman replied that he caught a tautog, however his friend who was still in the water had it in his possession. The CO asked why he did not have the flag attached to him and the fisherman said that it was too much of a bother. The CO instructed this fisherman to sit and wait for his diving buddy up on the sea wall and away from the water. The CO hid in the rocks in wait for the buddy. Approximately 10 minutes later, the buddy surfaced near the sea wall and the CO immediately approached him and instructed him to raise his bag. This fisherman's bag contained one tautog and one sub legal striped bass. The CO instructed him to stay above water and retrieve the dive flag. Attached to the flag was a bag containing three tautog and one sub legal striped bass. The season was currently closed for tautog. These individuals were both issued summonses for each tautog possessed out of season and for sub legal striped bass. The CO had apprehended the same two individuals who are Pennsylvania residents, in November 2007 for similar violations. Their "M.O." is to tie off their fish to the dive flag and exit the water and go to their vehicles to change clothes. If the coast is clear they then retrieve the flag with attached fish bags.

On 5/14/09, a CO received a call from one of his many informants in reference to individuals keeping tautog in the Point Pleasant Canal. The season is presently closed. The CO found two individuals fishing under the Route 88 Bridge and set up surveillance. He observed one individual catch four tautog and place them in a bucket hidden nearby in

weeds. The CO then proceeded with an inspection and asked the fishermen if they had caught anything. One fisherman replied they caught some, but they were all small and were thrown back. The CO then retrieved the bucket which contained nine tautog. The one fisherman caught all nine fish and was issued a summons for all fish and a mandatory court date is pending.

District 8 Highlights: MAY 09

A CO presented a lecture on wildlife law enforcement for a Wildlife Management Class at Stockton College. The lecture included the role law enforcement in the management of wildlife, specifically NJ Fish and Wildlife, Bureau of Law Enforcement's mission and activities protecting the State's resources. The CO's presentation included information on the Division of Fish and Wildlife's Marine Enforcement Unit and its participation in the National Marine Fisheries Service Cooperative Enforcement Agreement; aka JEA Program.

On March 27th, a CO apprehended a Delaware Bay commercial gill net fisherman for the use of more nets than he was licensed for. The CO observed the fisherman tend the three additional nets he had set illegally in Mannington Meadows area of Salem County. In addition, the fisherman didn't have his nets properly marked as required by regulations. The CO issued the appropriate charges.

On Sunday April 26th a CO responded to a complaint about individuals taking clams from a leased clam lot without the leaseholder's permission. Upon arrival, a CO observed two men harvesting clams from the lot at the end of Radio Rd in Great Bay in Little Egg Harbor Twp. After briefly video taping the harvest activity, the CO ordered the men to come ashore for inspection. The individuals discarded their illegally harvested clams on their way in. CO obtained a driver's license from one man but the other man was without valid ID. As CO attempted to confirm the identity of the second individual, he fled into the adjacent marsh. With one individual secured, the CO contacted Little Egg Harbor Police for assistance. He was able to positively ID the individual who fled with help from LEH PD. The second individual remained hidden on the marsh for over an hour due to several outstanding arrest warrants. Following the brief manhunt, Little Egg Harbor Police took the second individual into custody as he walked along Radio Rd in only his underwear. The CO issued both individuals summons for harvesting clams on Sunday, harvesting clams without a shellfish license, invasion of leased shellfish grounds, and interference with Conservation Officer. In addition, the CO filed the appropriate criminal charges for Eluding Officer and Obstructing Administration of Law to the second individual who was held for a \$5000.00 warrant issued out of Trenton; which was the reason for his flight from the CO.

On April 27th CO's set up surveillance of "day" scallop vessels docked at Cold Spring Fish and Supply CO. in Cape May. CO observed a man place several bags of shucked scallops taken from vessels docked there into a cooler in the trunk of his Honda Accord. As the individual put the last of four bags of scallops into the cooler, the CO's moved in for inspection. The CO's determined that two vessels; FV Lucky Star and FV Capt Alec, landed the scallops. All of the scallops had been landed in shell, unshucked and had not

been counted as part of either vessels landing. The unshucked scallops were placed on a third vessel, FV Ruby S, which had not sailed. The scallops placed on the FV Ruby S were subsequently shucked by the owner of the Honda Accord, who is normally a crewman on the FV Ruby S. Both the FV Lucky Star and the FV Capt. Alec had landed and already sold their daily trip limit of 400lbs to Cold Spring Fish and Supply. The additional scallops recovered from the cooler in the Honda Accord put both vessels over their limit and in violation of Federal Regulations. In addition, both vessels had falsified their Fishing Vessel Trip Reports to conceal the overages landed. The FV Capt. Alec was found to have landed 21 lb. over their trip limit. Officers seized and auctioned off their overage. The FV Lucky Star was found to have landed 55lbs over their trip limit. Officer's seized and auctioned off their entire landing of 455lbs.

The CO's are completing the case packages documenting both vessel's violations for the submission to and prosecution by NMFS.

On May 1st CO's, responded to a complaint received by Trenton Dispatch regarding the illegal harvest of striped bass from the "T" jetty in Atlantic City. After making observations of the areas near the boardwalk, officers observed the suspect vehicle as it left the area. Based on the information received, officers believed the vehicle was headed to a local establishment such as a market or restaurant where the fish were to be sold. At 0100 hrs officers eventually stopped the 1995 Mercedes Benz at the 7 mile mark on the Atlantic City Expressway as it was actually returning to Philadelphia. Upon inspection of the vehicle officers recovered 14 striped bass in a cooler in the trunk of the vehicle. The driver took responsibility for all of the fish. 10 of the fish measured less than 28 inches and 12 were possessed in excess of the legal possession limit. The appropriate summonses were issued for the violations. On 5/15/09 the defendant plead guilty and agreed to pay a penalty of \$1000.00.

On April 28th, a CO boarded and apprehended recreational fishing vessel "Sushi Bar" illegally harvesting tautog from Cape May Inlet. Based on information he received in 2008, the CO conducted surveillance of the vessels activity and boarded it on its return to Breezee Lee Marina in Cape May. The owner and his wife were each issued two summonses for the possession of 5 tautog over the possession limit and 3 undersize tautog.

On May 11th, a CO conducted an inspection of the party/charter vessel Miss Avalon as it returned from an offshore black sea bass trip. The CO apprehended three patrons total and issued 4 summonses for violations of the black sea bass size limit and the tautog size and possession limit. A fourth patron slipped away from the vessel abandoning his cooler containing 20 undersized black sea bass, eight tautog which were undersized and possessed during the closed season. In addition, the cooler contained a 2009 issue of the Marine Digest detailing the current marine regulations. Fortunately the individual wrote his name and address on the top of the cooler. The CO was able to obtain the full identification for this patron and will be issuing him four summonses for the documented violations.

While on boat patrol in Clam Creek in Atlantic City, a CO observed the Charter Vessel Miss Atlantic City return from an offshore black sea bass trip. When the vessel docked the CO tied up his patrol vessel along side the charter boat and conducted an inspection of its patrons. Despite the chaos, the CO was able to apprehend two individuals for violating the black sea bass size and possession limits.

Legislative Report

There was no Legislative Report at this time.

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) Report

Mr. McCloy brought Council's attention to a few highlights from the ASMFC meeting that is wrapping up in Virginia.

Winter Flounder Management Board

There was discussion on prohibiting possession of winter flounder because of the Federal Interim Rule, which deals with the Ground Fish Plan in New England that took effect on May 1st. That rule prohibits possession in the EEZ for both commercial and recreational fisheries. Anyone possessing a federal groundfish permit are not allowed to retain any winter flounder from the Southern New England/Mid Atlantic (SNE/MA) winter flounder stock. The Commission developed an addendum to compliment this plan for the SNE/MA Stock Area. After numerous failed motions a motion was passed to allow a recreational 2 fish possession limit and a commercial possession limit of 50 lbs of winter flounder. The implementation date is November 1, 2009.

Dr. Donnelly asked if this maintains the same recreational season and Mr. McCloy responded in the affirmative. Mr. Rizzo asked if the weight was per day. Mr. McCloy responded yes the commercial weight limit is 50 pounds per day.

Mr. Rizzo suggested a Winter Flounder Committee meeting should be held to discuss how to deal with the ASMFC addendum.

Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board

As mentioned at the last meeting, there was a motion to begin an addendum to increase the commercial quota, which failed.

There was also motion to develop a draft addendum to allow commercial rollovers of quota a state hadn't taken. This motion to develop such a draft passed.

The Technical Committee (TC) looked into the recreational size combinations previously discussed and confirmed that the combinations stated were equivalent to the 2 fish @ 28 inches. Mr. McCloy suggested to Council that NJ consult with our neighboring states to reach an agreement to adopt uniform regulations. Any changes will be for next year and will have to go through the Legislature first.

Menhaden Management Board

The Board will develop an addendum to extend the harvest cap on the Chesapeake Bay Reduction Fishery for three more years. Currently it is set to expire in 2010; the extension will go to year 2013.

Summer Flounder, Scup and Black Sea Bass Management Board

The TC presented a report to the Board concerning their evaluation of slot limits and mandatory regional management for the recreational summer flounder fishery. In both these cases the TC recommended not to implement either of these programs until the stock is rebuilt. However, their recommendation did not postpone a motion to develop an addendum for a mandatory regional program. The motion failed.

River Herring Management Board

The Board did adopt Addendum 2 to the River Herring Plan, which says states will have to close recreational and commercial fisheries unless they can prove all their river herring runs are sustainable. New Jersey does not have sufficient information regarding river herring, so it is likely NJ will have a moratorium in 2012.

Spiny Dogfish & Coastal Sharks Management Board

Most states are not in compliance with the shark provisions in the ASMFC plan which were supposed to be in effect in January 1, 2009. The Board approved a new compliance date of February 2010.

American Lobster Management Board

The Southern New England Stock appears to be in poor shape. There may be an addendum in the near future to address stock status.

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (MAFMC)

Mr. Goldman brought Council's attention to Handout 3b and reminded everyone that the full report for MAFMC could be viewed online.

The MAFMC met on April 14 to 16, where they took action to move forward with a scoping document for Amendment 1 to the Spiny Dogfish Management Plan based on recommendations from the Joint Dogfish Committee. The Council also agreed to write to the Secretary of Commerce requesting that he grant the Mid-Atlantic and New England Councils joint management authority for smooth dogfish.

A scoping session for the Omnibus Annual Catch Limits (ACL)/Accountability Measures (AM) Amendment was conducted to solicit public comments on the actions the Council could consider in addressing the new requirements for ACLs and AMs. This Amendment will affect all Council managed species except *Loligo* and *Illex* squid as these species are exempt from the National Standard 1 requirements.

The Squid, Mackerel and Butterfish Committee met to review management alternatives to be considered and analyzed for Amendment 11 to the Atlantic Mackerel, Squid, and

Butterfish FMP. The Council voted to delay forwarding Amendment 11 to the NMFS until June.

The Council addressed and discussed the preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Statement and initiation of a scoping document for Amendment 5 to the Monkfish FMP. Amendment 5 would bring the Monkfish FMP into compliance with the National Standard 1 guidance.

An update on the NMFS' Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) was given and details may be found at "countmyfish.noaa.gov."

The Council voted to request that the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (SAFMC) include an alternative in proposed Amendment 18 for a northern snapper grouper management until for deep-water species to be managed by the Mid-Atlantic Council in consultation with the SAFMC.

The Northeast Fisheries Science Center (NEFSC) gave a report to the Ecosystems and Ocean Planning Committee regarding NEFSC prey-predator relationship studies. The Committee decided it would explore associated environmental issues in-depth at the June Council meeting.

The Bycatch/Limited Access Committee received a presentation regarding British Columbia's groundfish fishery management practices and by-catch reduction efforts through initiation and adoption of limited access privilege programs (LAPPs).

Mr. McCloy brought Council's attention to Handout #9 concerning the MAFMC motion to request the SAFMC include an alternative in proposed Amendment 18 to its Snapper Grouper FMP for a northern Snapper Grouper Management Until for deepwater species to be managed by the MAFMC in consultation with the SAFMC as Mr. Goldman reported. Mr. McCloy asked Council to see what information they can find out from their constituents as to whether there is a commercial or recreational fishery for these species off NJ and to pass the information onto Mr. Himchak.

Mr. McCloy brought Council's attention to Handout #4 regarding NMFS Interim Rule which became effective May 1, 2009. These interim regulations will likely be extended for an additional 185 days to remain in effect for the entire 2009-fishing year until Amendment 16 is implemented on May 1, 2010.

Dr. Donnelly referenced Handout #9 and the change in the minimum size limit of haddock to 18 inches. He indicated that NJ's size limit is 21 inches and asked if it could be changed. Mr. McCloy indicated that was possible if the Council wished to pursue it.

Shellfish Council Reports

Delaware Bay Section

Mr. Hollinger presented the Delaware Bay Shellfish Council Report. The 2009 Direct Market Harvest season started on April 6, 2009. He indicated that an intermediate transplant that commenced during the week of April 6th was slated to continue for three weeks.

Atlantic Coast Section

Mr. Maxell presented the Atlantic Coast Shellfish Council Report. He indicated that this section's Leasing Committee had met on May 4, 2009.

Committee Reports

Mr. McCloy indicated there have been requests for eel, commercial summer flounder and scup committee meetings, and now winter flounder. He asked Council to prioritize which committee the Council would like to hold first.

Chairman Ewing commented he would like to see a committee meeting for striped bass, due to recent options on size limits discussed. He indicated that any changes would be a legislative item so it should take some priority.

Mr. Rizzo commented that if we are going to set up committees based on a priority timeline, then he could wait for an eel committee meeting. He suggested winter flounder be addressed first considering the date the plan must be submitted is June 15, 2009.

Chairman Ewing asked for Council's opinion:

Dr. Donnelly commented that there may be more committees that will have to be set up first.

Chairman Ewing postponed the committee timeline decision until new business.

Regulatory Updates

Mr. Muffley presented the Council with an update on the 2009 Regulatory Proposal, which is still under legal review and he hopes to hear something soon to move this proposal forward.

Mr. Muffley brought Council's attention to Handout #5, a signed copy of the Notice of Administrative Change changing the summer flounder recreational season from May 24 through September 7 to May 23 through September 4, with a possession limit of six fish and changing the black sea bass recreational minimum size limit from 12" to 12.5". These changes will be published in the NJ Register by mid May 2009.

Mr. Goldman commented that he wanted to clear up any confusion regarding black sea bass being overfished. Results of the new assessment methodology with data through

2007 indicate that overfishing is occurring. In addition, although stock biomass is above the threshold reference point (not overfished), it has not yet reached the rebuilding target biomass (currently 92% of target). The increase in size limit is intended to decrease fishing mortality and allow stock rebuilding to the target biomass.

Mr. McCloy brought Council's attention to Handouts #6a and 6b in regards to a potential change in Commercial Black Sea Bass Seasons/Quotas. The fisherman submitted a proposal to consolidate the quota allocation from seasons 2 –4 into a single season that would run from April 16 through December 31 (provided the quota is not harvested, at which time the season will be closed), and maintain the current trip limits (1,000 pounds at 1 trip per week or 500 pounds at 2 trips per week).

Mr. McCloy advised Council that if a motion develops to take some action on this proposal Council should take public comment prior to vote.

Chairman Ewing commented that he was not inclined to open up discussions of changes to fisheries every 6 months after all the discussion and time that has already gone into making regulations to suit the industry.

Dr. Donnelly, disagreed with Chairman Ewing in that he is a firm believer in the committee process and that it is the Council's job to help the industry whenever they need it, even if that means we have to make multiple changes. However, Dr. Donnelly does have a concern with the amount of time needed to make these new changes and to receive responses back from the rest of the industry.

Dr. Donnelly made a motion to have a Black Sea Bass Committee Meeting to open up discussion with all that is involved. Ms. Puskus seconded.

Mr. Rizzo asked Mr. Wagner his timeline for these changes to go into effect. Mr. Wagner answered there is only 2 weeks left of fishing.

Mr. McCloy reminded Council that changes such as these are not instant and that after the Committee meeting, it still has to come back to the Council and then a Notice of Administrative Change must be processed. The notice usually takes about 3 weeks.

Ms. Puskus asked if Council's meeting in July was enough time.

Mr. McCloy responded potentially, unless Council wishes to hold a special meeting prior to the July meeting.

Chairman Ewing opened the floor up to public comment on the black sea bass issues.

Public Comment

Mr. Wagner understands the time constraint but is looking for a change this year because he does not want to see the fish die that are left in the pots during the season closure. He

constantly hears that the Council is for the resource first then the fisherman. He questioned why there has to be a committee meeting first, then back to the Council for a vote.

Ms. Wagner commented that first she would like to see this happen to protect the resource. Consolidating the seasons will allow fisherman to reach the quota and then go home with less loss to the resource due to closures. The second reason is that this will allow for the State to take full advantage of NJ's quota, thereby ensuring that NJ doesn't lose out if by some chance there is a coastwide closure. It also helps keep the markets at competitive prices. The last reason for a this temporary fix is that if sea bass are on the rebound, then next year there will be increased quotas.

Mr. Scott supports this change Mr. Wagner presented to Council.

Mr. J. Lovgren indicated that combining Seasons 2 & 3 would be acceptable to the trawlers, just as long as Season 4 remained.

Ms. Berko expressed concern about the proposal if it couldn't be revised back to the current regulations.

Mr. Harris opposes making this a temporary change if it is not possible to change it back. Mr. McCloy replied that he couldn't guarantee that until speaking with the Department attorneys. Mr. Harris feels that question must be answered before making any changes.

The Council's motion to have a Black Sea Bass Committee meeting to discuss this issue passed.

Ms. Bochenek asked if an emergency Council meeting should be set up now. Chairman Ewing felt that it was better to wait until after the Committee Meeting is held to make that decision.

Old Business

Mr. McCloy brought Council's attention to Handout #7 on the MRIP. He indicated that the NMFS has offered to attend various stakeholder meetings to update constituents on the progress of the program.

Mr. Goldman indicated that questions arise as to who pays for these regional surveys. The federal government is responsible for funding these surveys. (Mr. Goldman's comments were relative to the use of regional surveys instead of the mandatory registry).

Mr. McCloy indicated that the federal rules established the region in the NJ area, to be Maine to Florida. Since most of the states in this region have licensing programs it is unlikely they will all be joining together to do a survey in lieu of a registry.

Mr. Herb commented on the current registry issues. The federal registry begins in 2010 but is not a major concern because there is no fee (until 2011) for the fishermen and no cost to NJ. He indicated that the critical issue is funding NJ marine fisheries resource management. He cited the tautog example where NJ had to have more stringent regulations due to the lack of sufficient data to argue otherwise. The current NJ legislation for a “free registry” will do nothing for correcting the funding situation. He also referenced other previously discussed funding options indicating that the only one with merit was a saltwater fishing license with the funds dedicated to marine fisheries management. If the funding issue isn’t resolved soon NJ is going to lose more fish to the other states.

Dr. Donnelly asked if Mr. Herb was hearing support for a saltwater license.

Mr. Herb responded that fishermen are concerned about funding and if there is a free registry it won’t keep NJ from losing fish.

Chairman Ewing commented that NJ fishermen buying non-resident licenses in NY and Delaware are contributing to the demise of NJ fisheries by enhancing those state’s ability to collect more information to use against NJ.

Director Chanda responded that although no one wants to pay additional fees, they would accept it if it goes to management of the resources.

Mr. Hollinger commented that there would be a fee with the federal registry program. It is a matter of who gets the money and how it is handled to support the resource.

Director Chanda commented that the federal sportfish money the Division receives is contingent upon protection of fishing license revenue. If the license money is used for anything other than fisheries management, NJ would lose its federal sportfish funds.

Chairman Ewing commented that if the State has a registry whether it is free or not, as long as it complies with the federal registry there will not be a federal charge for the state anglers.

New Business

Mr. Goldman received a letter from Captain Harvey Jeninsen requesting the use of the ribbon part of the fluke as bait, and asks this to be changed in the regulations. Dr. Donnelly commented that this has already been brought up and is considered to be a significant change in the regulations. He would like to see it be implemented in the 2013-2014 Multispecies Package.

Mr. Muffley brought Council’s attention to Handout #8. It is a news release that describes the 8 million cubic yards of dredge rock from NY Harbor that will be deployed at nine NJ reef sites to construct fisheries habitat.

Dr. Donnelly asked about the status of the stainless steel subway car deployment. Mr. Muffley said that NJ is no longer deploying any subway cars at this time and is continuing the investigation of those already on NJ reef sites. Other states have observed similar problems.

Public Comment

Mr. Wagner commented that he would like to see a change in the crab dredge season by taking the first two weeks from the front and adding it on to the end on the season. He also suggested not to waste any more money investigating subway cars that he asserted were doomed from the start.

Mr. McFarland (Cape May Party/Charter Boat Assoc – CPC) expressed concerns about finding a stable funding source for fisheries management. The CPC is forming a coalition of organizations that support implementation of a saltwater license to work together to get it done. He reiterated Director Chanda’s comments about how the federal money received for management was a big deterrent to misappropriation of license revenue. He also commented that a “free registry” (current NJ bill) would be meaningless if NJ didn’t have any fish to catch because NJ cannot protect our allocation due to lack of funds. He encouraged those favoring a saltwater license to contact him at www.fishingnj.com

Mr. McClintoch commented on his support for a license program.

Mr. Haber supports the fishing license issue.

Mr. Meimbresse supports a license indicating it is the only way to ensure the survival of NJ fisheries.

Mr. Nowalsky supported a free or nominal fee registry but not a license. He agreed the State must give more funding to marine fisheries.

Mr. Chanda commented that the NJ Outdoor Alliance and a few other groups donated money last year to hire professionals to go to Trenton and get more money from the State’s general appropriation for Division funding. As a result the budget was only cut by \$2 million. He was not optimistic that seeking an appropriation for marine fisheries would be successful.

Mr. Cottrell expressed concerns of fyke fishing for winter flounder in Barnegat Bay. With the 50lb trip limit it won’t be worth fishing. He encouraged Council to consider other options prior to changing the regulations.

Mr. Brindley expressed his concern about latent permits in the summer flounder fishery. He requested to be included in the Committee discussion.

Mr. J. Lovgren addressed the latent permit issue and asserted that a lot of these were obtained with falsified landings data and that this hurts the people who are dependent on this fishery. He requested a committee on fluke to discuss this more and find a way to categorize these permits based on usage.

Mr. Rizzo asked Mr. DiDomenico his impression of the ASMFC Winter Flounder Board action.

Mr. DiDomenico responded that the best thing to do is to continue to work with Rutgers on the tagging program, take better records of landings, and work with DEP to collect as much data as possible.

Mr. McCloy asked about prioritizing committee meetings. Priority was given to sea bass, winter flounder and summer flounder.

Next Meeting is July 9, 2009.

Meeting adjourned.