

The Decision Makers: Fisheries Management Councils And Commissions—Who Are These People, Anyway?

By Paul G. Scarlett, Principal Fisheries Biologist

By now, any saltwater recreational enthusiast who pays attention to fishing regulations realizes the days of unrestricted harvest of marine resources are over. Fishing for every major saltwater species in New Jersey, and every Atlantic coastal state, is controlled by some combination of a season, size limit or possession limit. Although these regulations seem to be getting more restrictive, more numerous and more confusing, perhaps just as confusing are the numerous references to decision making councils and commissions that fishermen see in regulatory proposals, news releases and newspaper and magazine articles. Have you ever wondered where the people come from who comprise the commissions and councils that in large part decide your fishing future? Do they know anything about fish and fishing? How were these groups established, what do they do and where do they get their authority? Read on and become acquainted with the New Jersey Marine Fisheries Council, the Atlantic State Marine Fisheries Commission and the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council.

The New Jersey Marine Fisheries Council was created by the Marine Fisheries Management and Commercial Fisheries Act; an act passed by the New Jersey State Legislature to provide an organizational framework to permit New Jersey to more effectively manage marine fisheries in state waters (all estuaries and the ocean within 3 miles of the coast). The council is comprised of eleven members, nine of whom are appointed by the governor. Of the nine governor appointees, four must represent and be knowledgeable of the interests of recreational fishermen, two must be active commercial fin fishermen, one must be an active fish processor, and two represent the general public. The remaining two members of the council are the chairperson of the Atlantic Coast and Delaware Bay sections of the Shellfisheries Council. They are required to be active shellfishermen. In fact, nine of the eleven members of the council are required to be fishermen, just like you. Sure, some are commercial fishermen and some have a background in clamming or oystering, but they are all fishermen nonetheless. Because they are fishermen, they want to catch fish as much as you do. They are, however, in the unenviable position of making some hard decisions regarding allowing some fish to be caught, but not so many that the future of the resource is placed in jeopardy. These decisions are made at numerous meetings throughout the year, attended by council members on their own time—they do not get paid. At these meetings, the council performs the duties assigned to them, including contributing to the preparation and revision of fisheries management plans and recommending new or revised rules pertaining to saltwater fishing. Most importantly, the council can disapprove any marine fisheries regulation proposed by the Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Protection. That

means that a season, or a size limit or a possession limit isn't so until the New Jersey Marine Fisheries Council says it's so.

Intertwined with the workings of the New Jersey Marine Fisheries Council are fisheries management plans developed by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC). The ASMFC, a consortium of the fifteen Atlantic coastal states from Maine through Florida (including Pennsylvania), established under an interstate compact consented to and approved by the United States Congress, is required to prepare and adopt coastal fishery management plans to provide for the conservation and management of fishery resources within state waters. This requirement was mandated by the United States Congress via the Atlantic Coastal Fisheries Cooperative Management Act. The purpose of the act is to support and encourage the development, implementation and enforcement of effective interstate conservation and management of Atlantic coastal fishery resources. More importantly, the act requires that Atlantic coastal states monitor the resource and implement and enforce specified measures of coastal fishery management plans prepared and adopted by the ASMFC. Failure to do so can result in a complete closure of a fishery. This means that if the ASMFC requires states to reduce harvest of a particular species, states must take action to comply. Any state that does not comply can be entirely closed, both commercially and recreationally, for the harvest of that species. In order to prepare coastal fishery management plans, the ASMFC establishes various committees staffed by fisheries administrators, fisheries biologists, state legislators and fishermen to assess the resource, develop management strategies and oversee implementation. Again, it is important to understand that fishermen from every Atlantic coastal state are involved in the decision making process.

The Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (MAFMC) is one of the eight regional councils established by the United States Congress via the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. The goals of the act are to prevent overfishing, rebuild overfished stocks, insure conservation of fishery resources, facilitate long-term protection of essential fish habitats and realize the full potential of the nation's resources. One of the purposes of the MAFMC is to prepare and implement fishery management plans which will achieve and maintain the optimum yield from each fishery. It includes representation from the States of New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia and North Carolina and has authority over fisheries which occur predominately in the Atlantic Ocean greater than three miles seaward of these states (federal waters). The MAFMC is comprised of 21 voting members, 13 of which are appointed by the United States

Secretary of Commerce. At least one of these appointees must be from each participating state. In addition, membership includes the principal state official with marine fishery management responsibility and expertise in each state, who is designated as such by the governor of the state. Currently, New Jersey has four representatives on the MAFMC. One is the aforementioned state official, but the remaining three representatives are fishermen.

It may seem that the three regulatory groups discussed above all do the same thing, and in a large part they do. Why then are they necessary? Fisheries that occur in New Jersey state waters are managed in part by the New Jersey Marine Fisheries Council. Marine fish stocks however don't understand and respect state boundaries. A fish in New Jersey today can easily be in another state by tomorrow. It makes little sense to institute conservation measures to protect fish in one state, only to have those fish swim to another state where they could be over-harvested. This is where the ASMFC comes in. By mandating uniform management strategies throughout the Atlantic coastal states, the ASMFC insures that inshore fish stocks are conserved regardless of state boundaries. The states and ASMFC only have authority to manage fisheries out to three miles offshore in state waters. Fish stocks also don't recognize the boundary between state and federal waters, while other fisheries occur only in federal waters. The MAFMC acts to insure that fish stocks in federal waters are not over-harvested.

Although these regulatory bodies are different, they cooperate very closely to develop similar management programs in both state-versus-state and state-versus-federal waters. They do have one very important thing in common: they all are made up of or have representation from your fishing community. So who are these decision makers? In part, they are fishermen just like you!

If you would like to find out more about public participation in fisheries management issues, check out the following websites:

New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife—
www.njfishandwildlife.com

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission—
www.asmfc.org

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council—
www.mafmc.org

New Jersey's Clean Vessel Act—An Effective Tool in the Challenge Against Non-Point Source Pollution

By Russ Dodge, Office of Information & Education

The New Jersey Division of Fish & Wildlife's mandate to exercise responsible stewardship over the creatures that inhabit the state's land and waters can be expanded to help ensure these creatures are not harmed by man's encroaching upon and despoiling wildlife habitat.

For those creatures living under or around the water, man-made pollution can often be a matter of life or death, especially when that pollution includes *Escherichia coli* (fecal coliform bacteria). Non-point source pollution which affects our marine and aquatic life is that pollution which can not be directly traced nor easily ended.

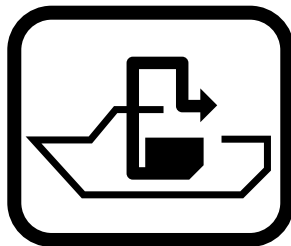
In 1992 the United States Congress passed the Clean Vessel Act (CVA) which was aimed at preventing pollution from a specific non-point source of pollution, the discharge of boat sewage. Over the years, boat sewage dumped into coastal waters has been found to contaminate shellfish and swimming beaches.

New Jersey's Clean Vessel Act, made possible through funding by the federal CVA program, has a primary goal of reducing overboard sewage. It is, and has been, a violation of both state and federal regulations for boaters to discharge untreated waste into any water within three-miles of the shore (including bays and inlets). Yet until the establishment of the Clean Vessel Act there were few facilities where a boat could safely and easily facilitate the acceptable removal of boat waste. The result was many boaters discharged untreated waste into fragile habitats.

New Jersey Division of Fish & Wildlife's efforts to help prevent discharge of untreated boat sewage has been facilitated by funding (75% federal; 25% state) for the construction, renovation and operation of pumpout stations at marinas, as well as to municipalities for the purchase of pumpout boats to serve heavily utilized coastal waters. The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service has provided the Division with monies which will enable marinas to be partners in preventing this source of pollution.

Currently there are 146 marinas state-wide with pumpout stations in operation and three pumpout boats in service. Additionally, 25 marinas have made formal application to the Division and have been granted approval. The longest serving pumpout boat, the *Circle of Life*, is under the aegis of the Borough of Seaside Park. The two new pumpout boats, launched in 2001, are the *Royal Flush*, operated by Monmouth County, and the *Waste Watcher*, an Ocean County vessel.

Boaters using a CVA pumpout pay no more than five dollars for the



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service, although many marinas do not charge their own slip holders for pumping out. Some marinas offer the pumpout service free to all boaters. There are no charges for using *The Circle of Life* or *Waste Watcher* pumpout boats.

Marinas wanting to apply for a CVA grant to create a pumpout station may obtain an application from the Marine Trades Association (MTA) of New Jersey. The MTA will review the application and forward it to the Division for approval. Once approved, the requesting marina will be contacted to begin construction and ordering of pumpout equipment. All approved expenses are 100% reimbursed to the applicant upon completion of the work. Marinas interested in obtaining an application for installing a pumpout station under the CVA may write to the Marine Trades Association of New Jersey, 1451 Route 88, Suite 11, Brick, NJ 08724 or call (732) 206-1400.

Boaters interested in obtaining a copy of the Division's pumpout directory may write to: CVA Office, Nacote Research Station, Box 418, Port Republic, NJ 08241 or call (609)748-2056. For a telephone recorded list of pumpouts, call 1-800-ASK-FISH. The list of pumpouts is also available on the Division's website at www.njfishandwildlife.com.

Marinas, outdoor organizations or other civic bodies interested in having the Division's CVA Office exhibit at their location to provide information and literature about pumpouts and the Division's efforts to reduce non-point source pollution may call (609) 748-2056.

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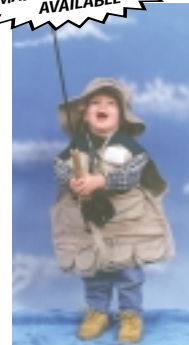
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**New Jersey's Accessible
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Visit www.njfishandwildlife.com/sites.htm

An Accessible Fishing Sites list is available to assist anglers whose mobility is impaired. All sites are wheelchair-accessible except for the Musconetcong River in Morris County, where vehicle access is to the shoreline. For a printed copy, contact Pequest at 908-637-4125.

A Guide to Health Advisories For Eating Fish and Crabs Caught in New Jersey Waters

What you need to know about recreational fishing and crabbing

James E. McGreevey, Governor • Bradley M. Campbell, Commissioner, NJ Dept. of Environmental Protection

IMPORTANT HEALTH INFORMATION

Fish are an excellent source of protein, minerals and vitamins and play a role in maintaining a healthy, well-balanced diet. Many people enjoy cooking and eating their own catch. However, since 1982, when research began to show elevated levels of potentially harmful contaminants in certain fish and crabs in some New Jersey waters, advisories were adopted to guide citizens on safe consumption practices.

These advisories were developed with reference to federal guidelines for dioxin, PCBs, chloro-dane and mercury in the aquatic species in the water bodies listed in the charts. You should read both charts thoroughly before going fishing.

Dioxin, PCBs and chloro-dane are classified by the United States Environmental Protection Agency as probable cancer-causing substances in humans. Mercury can pose health risks to the human nervous system, particularly to developing fetuses.

To minimize exposure to these potentially harmful contaminants and to protect your health, follow the guidelines below when preparing and eating the species taken from the areas mentioned. The following charts contain advisories and prohibitions in effect for specific fish and crabs in each water body as of January 1999. (See the note on the advisory updates.)

These charts also contain information about advisories issued by the states of Pennsylvania and Delaware that cover the Delaware River and the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal. These areas are common fishing spots for New Jersey residents.

BOUND BROOK INTERIM FISH ADVISORY

In August 1998, NJDEP issued a final fish consumption advisory for the entire length of the Bound Brook and its tributaries, including New Market Pond and Spring Lake. This action follows an interim advisory issued in 1997, when as part of an EPA investigation of the Cornell-Dubler Superfund site in South Plainfield, NJ excessive polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) contamination was identified in the fish collected from the Bound Brook. This final NJDEP advisory warns the public "do not consume any fish from the waters described above". This final advisory extends beyond the Bound Brook to include Spring Lake (tributary to the Bound Brook) as a second round of fish testing conducted by EPA identified level of PCBs in excess of the FDA action level. All waterways have been posted accordingly and public information on these toxic contaminant's is available in this and other publications. Should you want any additional information concerning this matter, contact the agencies listed below.

CATCH & RELEASE FISHING

Some fish have been tagged as part of ongoing scientific programs. If you capture a tagged fish, record the name and address of the tagging agency or program printed on the tag along with the number on the tag and the date and location of capture. Many programs offer small rewards for this information. For additional information on catch and release or tag and release, contact: US Fish & Wildlife Service 1-800-448-8322 NJ Division of Fish and Wildlife 609-748-2020 American Littoral Society 1-800-8BAYKPR NJ Chapter Hudson River Fishermen's Assoc. 201-857-2400

PREPARATION AND COOKING GUIDELINES FOR FISH UNDER ADVISORIES

You can reduce the level of PCBs, dioxins and most other chemicals (but not mercury) by properly cleaning, skinning and trimming species affected by most advisories and by following the cooking recommendations below. However, do not eat prohibited fish (see charts at right).

FISH: • Before cooking, remove and do not eat, the organs, head, skin, and the dark fatty tissue along the back bone, belly and lateral line (sides). • Avoid batter or breading, because they hold in the liquid which may contain contaminant's. • Bake or broil the fish on an elevated rack that allows fats to drain to the pan below; do not fry in a pan. • After cooking, discard all liquids. Do not reuse. • Other helpful guidelines to reduce exposure to contaminant's: • Eat smaller-sized fish (within state size regulations), instead of larger fish. Smaller, younger fish have lower levels of contaminant's than larger, older fish. • Eat a variety of fish from different locations.

BLUE CRABS: Eating, selling or taking (harvesting) blue crabs from Newark Bay Complex is prohibited. The highest levels of chemical contaminant's are found in the hepatopancreas, commonly known as the tomalley or green gland. It is the yellowish green gland under the gills. If blue crabs are taken from the water bodies other than Newark Bay Complex, the following preparation techniques can be followed to reduce exposure to some contaminant's: • Do not eat the green gland (hepatopancreas). • Remove green gland (hepatopancreas) before cooking. After cooking, discard the cooking water. • Do not use cooking water or green gland (hepatopancreas) in any juices, sauces or soups.

NEW JERSEY STATEWIDE	LOCATION	SPECIES	GENERAL POPULATION	HIGH RISK INDIVIDUAL ¹
Note: local advisories may be more specific for the more species. See below.		American eel bluefish (over 6 lbs.) striped bass*	do not eat more than once a week do not eat more than once a week consumption advisories vary by area; see below	do not eat do not eat consumption advisories vary by area see below
NEWARK BAY COMPLEX				
This complex includes Newark Bay, Hackensack River, Passaic River, and portions of the Cohansey, Delaware, Kill Kill, Kill B, Kill C, and Kill D that feed into these water bodies and		American lobsters	do not eat green glands	do not eat green glands
		striped bass*	do not eat	do not eat
		American eel*	do not eat more than once a week	do not eat
		blue crab*	do not eat or harvest ²	do not eat or harvest ²
		bluefish (over 6 lbs.), white perch and white catfish	do not eat more than once a week	do not eat
Passaic River (downstream of Dumree Dam) that feed into this section of the river.		all fish and shellfish ³ blue crab*	do not eat do not eat or harvest ²	do not eat do not eat or harvest ²
HUDSON RIVER				
Hudson River includes the river downstream of NY-NJ border (about 4 miles above Alpine, NJ) and Upper New York Bay.		American eel ¹ striped bass*	do not eat more than once a week do not eat more than once a week	do not eat do not eat
		bluefish (over 6 lbs.), white perch and white catfish	do not eat more than once a week do not eat more than once a week	do not eat do not eat
		blue crab	do not eat green gland (hepatopancreas) ³	do not eat green gland (hepatopancreas) ³
BARTAN BAY COMPLEX				
This complex includes the New Jersey portions of Sandy Hook and Barnegat bays, the tidal portions of the Barnegat Bay, the tidal portions of the bays in New Brunswick and the tidal portions of all rivers and streams that feed into these water bodies.		striped bass*	do not eat more than once a week	do not eat
		bluefish (over 6 lbs.), white perch and white catfish	do not eat more than once a week	do not eat
		blue crab	do not eat green gland (hepatopancreas) ³	do not eat green gland (hepatopancreas) ³
NORTHERN COASTAL WATERS				
This area includes all coastal waters from Raritan Bay south to the Barnegat Inlet		striped bass*	do not eat more than once a week	do not eat
CAMDEN AREA				
See additional advisories below				
This area includes Strawberry Lake, Pensacola Creek (north and south bays), Cooper River, Stewart Lake and Newton Lake.		all fish, shellfish and crustaceans	do not eat	do not eat
LOWER DELAWARE RIVER & BAY				
NJ is honoring DE and PA advisories See additional advisories on other chart.				
Delaware River from Yardley, PA to the PA/DE border, includes all tributaries up to the head of tide		American eel striped bass*	do not eat	do not eat
		channel catfish*	do not eat more than one meal a month	do not eat more than one meal a month
		All finfish	do not eat more than one meal every two months	do not eat more than one meal every two months
Delaware River from the DE/PA border south to C & D Canal			do not eat	do not eat
Delaware River from the C&D Canal south to the mouth of Delaware bay		Striped bass American eel White perch American eel White perch	For species listed do not eat more than one 8-oz. meal per year	

* Selling any of these species from designated water bodies is prohibited in New Jersey.
¹ High risk individuals include: infants, children under the age of 15, pregnant women, nursing mothers and women of childbearing age. They are advised not to eat any such fish or crabs taken from the designated regions since these contaminant's have a greater impact on the developing young.
² No harvest means no taking or attempting to take any blue crabs from these waters.
³ Interim recommendation based on research showing elevated levels of chemical contaminant's in the blue crab hepatopancreas (green gland).
 The State of Pennsylvania and the State of Delaware do not differentiate advisories between General Population and High Risk Populations, but do recognize that certain sub-populations may be at a higher exposure and should take additional steps when consuming fish under their advisories. (Issued 6/99)

CONSUMPTION ADVISORIES FOR LARGEMOUTH BASS AND CHAIN PICKEREL FROM NEW JERSEY FRESHWATERS			
NEW JERSEY STATEWIDE	SPECIES	GENERAL POPULATION	HIGH RISK INDIVIDUAL
For all freshwater bodies (except those listed below)	bass and pickerel	do not eat more than once a week	do not eat more than once a month
PINELANDS AREA			
For all water bodies (except those listed below)	bass and pickerel	do not eat more than once a month	do not eat
SITE-SPECIFIC PINELANDS			
Lake Lenape	bass pickerel	do not eat more than once a month	do not eat
	bass pickerel	do not eat more than once a week	do not eat more than once a month
	bass pickerel	no restrictions	do not eat more than once a week
	bass pickerel	no restrictions	do not eat
	bass pickerel	do not eat more than once a month	do not eat
	bass pickerel	do not eat more than once a week	do not eat
SITE-SPECIFIC STATEWIDE			
Assumpink Creek	bass pickerel	no restrictions	do not eat more than once a week
	bass pickerel	do not eat more than once a week	do not eat more than once a month
	bass pickerel	do not eat	do not eat
Atlantic City Reservoir - No Fishing/Allowed	bass pickerel	do not eat more than once a week	do not eat more than once a month
Big Timber Creek	bass pickerel	no restrictions	do not eat more than once a week
Canisear Reservoir	bass pickerel	do not eat more than once a week	do not eat
	bass pickerel	do not eat more than once a week	do not eat more than once a month
Clinton Reservoir	bass pickerel	do not eat more than once a week	do not eat
	bass pickerel	do not eat more than once a week	do not eat more than once a month
Cranberry Lake	bass pickerel	do not eat more than once a week	do not eat more than once a month
	bass pickerel	no restrictions	do not eat more than once a month
Crosswicks Creek	bass pickerel	no restrictions	do not eat more than once a week
	bass pickerel	do not eat more than once a week	do not eat more than once a month
Crystal Lake (Burlington County)	bass pickerel	no restrictions	do not eat more than once a week
	bass pickerel	do not eat more than once a week	do not eat more than once a month
Delaware River (Easton to Trenton)	bass pickerel	no restrictions	do not eat more than once a month
Delaware River (Trenton to Camden)	bass pickerel	no restrictions	do not eat more than once a week
See additional advisories above	bass pickerel	do not eat more than once a week	do not eat more than once a month
Lake Canasajo	bass pickerel	no restrictions	do not eat
Lake Hopatcong	bass pickerel	no restrictions	do not eat more than once a month
	bass pickerel	no restrictions	do not eat more than once a month
Manasquan Reservoir	bass pickerel	do not eat more than once a month	do not eat
	bass pickerel	do not eat more than once a week	do not eat more than once a month
Merrill Creek Reservoir	bass pickerel	do not eat more than once a week	do not eat
	bass pickerel	do not eat more than once a week	do not eat more than once a month
Monksville Reservoir	bass pickerel	do not eat more than once a week	do not eat
	bass pickerel	do not eat more than once a week	do not eat more than once a month
Rockaway River	bass pickerel	do not eat more than once a week	do not eat more than once a month
	bass pickerel	no restrictions	do not eat more than once a month
Round Valley Reservoir	bass pickerel	no restrictions	do not eat more than once a month
	bass pickerel	do not eat more than once a week	do not eat more than once a month
Shadow Lake	bass pickerel	no restrictions	do not eat more than once a month
	bass pickerel	do not eat more than once a week	do not eat more than once a month
Spruce Run Reservoir	bass pickerel	no restrictions	do not eat more than once a month
	bass pickerel	do not eat more than once a week	do not eat more than once a month
Swartswood Lake	bass pickerel	no restrictions	do not eat more than once a month
	bass pickerel	do not eat more than once a week	do not eat more than once a month
Union Lake	bass pickerel	do not eat more than once a month	do not eat
	bass pickerel	do not eat more than once a month	do not eat
Wanaque Reservoir	bass pickerel	do not eat more than once a week	do not eat
	bass pickerel	do not eat more than once a week	do not eat
Wilson Lake	bass pickerel	do not eat more than once a week	do not eat more than once a month
	bass pickerel	do not eat more than once a week	do not eat
Woodstown Memorial Lake	bass pickerel	no restrictions	do not eat more than once a month
	bass pickerel	do not eat more than once a week	do not eat more than once a month

† One meal is defined as an eight-ounce serving.
 • High risk individuals are pregnant women, women planning pregnancy within one year, nursing mothers and children under five years old.

AMERICAN LOBSTERS: A recent regional study of the American lobster has shown elevated levels of PCBs, cadmium and dioxin in the green gland (tomalley or hepatopancreas). This finding is consistent with other lobster studies conducted in waters of the northeastern coastal states. Therefore, consumers are advised to remove and not consume the green gland of all American lobsters caught from Maine to NJ, as well as avoid products made from the lobster green gland. This advisory does not apply to other edible portions of the lobster.

ADVISORY UPDATES

Advisories on fish consumption can change to protect public health as new data are collected and reviewed by state and federal agencies. Also, these agencies on occasion offer different advice for fish consumption. New Jersey is working with other agencies and is committed to developing the most useful, consistent advice possible. For the latest information, call one of the numbers below.

A GUIDE TO MERCURY HEALTH ADVISORIES FOR EATING FISH FROM NEW JERSEY FRESHWATERS

Recent research on largemouth bass and chain pickerel prompted the Department of Environmental Protection and the Department of Health & Senior Services to issue consumption advisories due to elevated levels of mercury found in these species. Mercury, a toxic metal, accumulates in fish tissue through the food chain. Since larger fish feed on smaller fish, mercury collects in their tissue as well, so that larger fish at the top of the food chain—such as largemouth bass and chain pickerel—are more likely to have elevated levels of mercury.

It is very unlikely that the levels of mercury found in these fish would cause immediate health effects. However, repeated consumption of contaminated fish poses potential health effects. Of particular concern is the potential effect on the nervous system of developing fetuses.

Although data show elevated levels of mercury in certain fish, it does not affect the quality of the waters used for drinking and bathing.

The charts provide general and specific information on the statewide and the Pinelands area advisories. The Pinelands area covers much of the seven counties in the southeastern portion of the state: Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester and Ocean counties. Some but not all of the water bodies covered under these general advisories have been tested. More testing is under way.

See recently issued advice below by the federal government regarding mercury in saltwater fish.

FEDERAL ADVICE ON MERCURY IN SALTWATER FISH

In the September 1994 issue of FDA Consumer magazine, the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) issued advice on eating shark and swordfish based on elevated levels of mercury contamination. Pregnant women and women of childbearing age who may become pregnant are advised by the FDA to limit their consumption of shark and swordfish to not more than one 7-ounce meal a month. For the general population, the FDA advises that consumption of shark and swordfish be limited to no more than one 7-ounce meal per week.

Some evidence suggests, however, that shark and swordfish should be consumed less frequently. This information is based on a US Environmental Protection Agency June 1994 report and on average mercury levels in shark and swordfish as reported by the FDA. Based on this evidence, women of childbearing age would be advised to eat no more than one 8-ounce portion of shark or swordfish every two months. The general population would be advised to eat shark no more than twice a month and swordfish no more than three times a month. Children under seven would be advised not to eat shark and swordfish at all.

If you would like further information, please call the New Jersey Department of Health & Senior Services at (609) 588-3123. You may also consider discussing this matter with your family physician.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Some of the advisories listed herein may be changing. For the most up-to-date information, please contact:

NJ Department of Environmental Protection
 Division of Science & Research (609) 984-6070
 Division of Fish & Wildlife (609) 748-2020

NJ Department of Health & Senior Services
 Consumer & Environmental Health Services (609) 588-3123

For background information on the advisories in the chart, local libraries can refer you to NJ Administrative Code 7:25-14, 18A

For information on Delaware Health Advisories, contact:
 DE/Department of Health and Social Services (302) 739-5617

For information on New York health advisories, contact:
 NY Department of Environmental Conservation (518) 457-6178

For information on Pennsylvania health advisories, contact:
 PA/Department of Environmental Resources (717) 787-9633

For information on health advice regarding saltwater fish, contact:
 US Food and Drug Administration Seafood Hotline at (800) FDA-4010

Skillful Angler Awards Program

The Skillful Anglers Program is designed to supplement the New Jersey State Record Fish list by recognizing that many anglers catch both freshwater and marine fish just below the record, but are of sufficient size and weight to have tested the angler's skill and thus be worthy of recognition.

Fisherman qualifying for a Skillful Anglers Award receive a signed certificate attesting to their achievement along with a bronze pin suitable to be worn on a fishing hat, or jacket. Only one pin and one certificate will be awarded per angler for each qualifying entry.

At the end of each year, special recognition is given to the anglers who caught the largest fish in each species categories. These winners are presented with a Special Award recognizing their accomplishments as the best of New Jersey's Skillful Anglers.

A application explaining the details of the program can be obtained from any many fishing tackle stores and Division offices, by calling us at (609) 984-0521, or writing: NJ Division of Fish & Wildlife, PO Box 400, Trenton, NJ 08625-0400.

It's simple to apply for an award: 1) Weigh the fish at a commercial establishment having a certified scale, [try a fishing tackle shop who also has applications], 2) Get the proprietor's signature on the application attesting to the weight, 3) Complete an application and return to the address on the application. All entries must be submitted within 30 days of catching the fish.

Minimum Weight Requirements Saltwater

Species	Weight	Species	Weight
Black Drum	70 pounds	Shark, Mako	250 pounds
Black Sea Bass	4 pounds	Striped Bass	40 pounds
Bluefish	18 pounds	Tautog	8 pounds
Cod	30 pounds	Tuna, Albcore	50 pounds
Dolphin	30 pounds	Tuna, Bigeye	200 pounds
Fluke	8 pounds	Tuna, Bluefin	500 pounds
Kingfish	1 pound	Tuna, Yellowfin	120 pounds
Marlin, Blue	400 pounds	Tuna, other	250 pounds
Marlin, White	60 pounds	Weakfish	10 pounds
Pollock	25 pounds	Winter Flounder	2 pounds



Nuncie Sacco, Linwood, NJ (Atlantic County) with the 60 lb, 49" Striped Bass he caught in Delaware Bay.

Application for Recognition as a New Jersey Skillful Angler

Name _____ Age _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____ E-mail _____

Fish Species (subject to verification by state biologist)

Weight _____ lbs. _____ oz. Length _____

Girth _____ Date Caught** _____

Where _____

Time _____

Caught from: _____ boat _____ shore _____ surf

_____ jetty _____ other (specify)

Captain _____

Boat Name _____

Line Test used _____ Reel _____

Type of Rod _____

Lure _____

Certification

Fish measured and weighed by _____

Establishment's Address _____

Telephone _____

Signature (from establishment)

I hereby certify this fish was caught in New Jersey waters in accordance with state laws and regulations, and that this fish was weighed on a certified scale.

Applicant's Signature _____ Date _____

**All applications must be submitted within 30 days of catching the fish.

Mail application to:
NJ Division of Fish and Wildlife
Skillfull Angler Awards Program,
P.O. Box 400
Trenton, NJ 08625-0400



Tom McCloy, Marine Fisheries Administrator, lands a nice striper.

Outdoor Skills Workshop for Women



Photo by Judy Weisman Wood

New Jersey's "Becoming an Outdoors-Woman" (BOW) Program is part of a nationwide effort to help women overcome barriers to participation in outdoor recreation by providing opportunities to try new activities. Since it began at the University of Wisconsin in 1991, the program has exploded in popularity. BOW can be found in 44 states and 8 Canadian Provinces across North America. New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife has been offering BOW workshops since 1995.

Although BOW workshops are designed for women, they offer anyone 18 years old or older opportunities to try new outdoor activities, improve existing skills, and meet other outdoor enthusiasts. The three-day BOW and one-day "Beyond BOW" workshops offer hands-on instruction in hunting, angling, and related outdoor pursuits in a relaxed, non-competitive atmosphere.

All of our instructors have many years of experience afield. They were chosen for their ability to pass on their knowledge and their belief in encouraging anyone who has an interest to get involved in the outdoors.

To find out more about the BOW program, log on to our website at www.njfishandwildlife.com or mail in the coupon below. Those with an e-mail account can subscribe to the BOW list-serve (electronic mail service). The BOW list-serve will send automatic updates about the BOW program and workshop availability. It's simple to subscribe. Go to the Division's website at www.njfishandwildlife.com and click on the link for mailing lists located on the left-hand side of the homepage. Fill out the electronic form and click submit. That's it! A confirmation message will ask you to return an authorization code. Once this is done, you'll be ready to receive automatic updates about New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife's BOW Program.

To be placed on the BOW mailing list, complete this coupon and send to: NJF&W, 220 Blue Anchor Rd., Sicklerville, NJ 08081.



Coastal Workshop For Teachers

New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife hosts a weekend coastal workshop annually in May at The Golden Inn/Wetlands Institute.

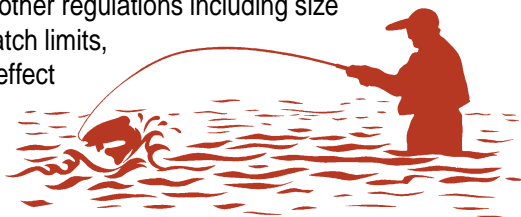
Call to be placed on the mailing list for future workshops:

609-748-2031

or visit our website at www.njfishandwildlife.com

New Jersey's FREE Freshwater Fishing Days are Saturday and Sunday, June 1 & 2, 2002

On these two days residents and non-residents may fish New Jersey's public fresh waters without a license or trout stamp. All other regulations including size and daily catch limits, remain in effect



Outdoor Skills Workshops

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City _____

State, Zip _____

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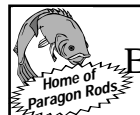
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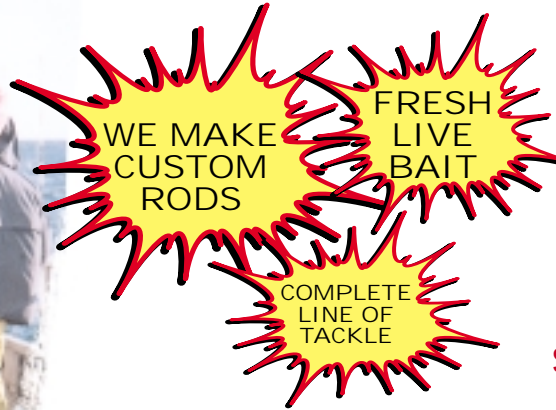
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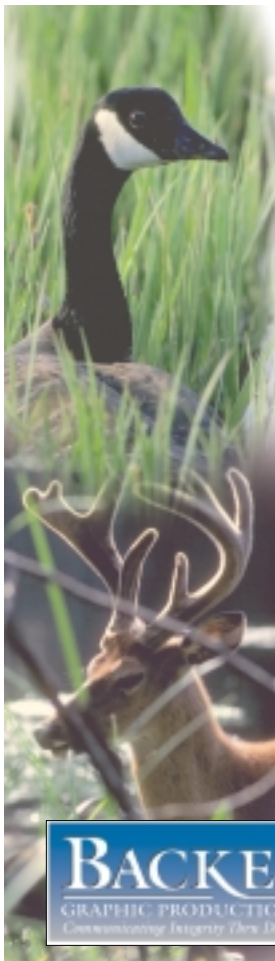
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