



Nov 2009

Maryland Saltwater Sportfishermen's Association

8461C Fort Smallwood Road • Pasadena, MD 21122

Phone: 410-255-5535 • Fax: 410-255-1552

Email: fishmssa@aol.com • Website: www.mssa.net

Executive Director's Report

It's already November and I have yet to get out fishing this fall. I suppose I have been too busy ensuring that we have the opportunity to fish that I overlook the fact that I would like to take part in it. I bring this up because recreational fishing and the marine industry is being crippled by unfortunate economic times and untimely poor fisheries management decisions.



Just recently the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) closed the black sea bass fishery in all federal waters. Based on flawed data and poor policy, the fishery was closed when in fact it was considered to be at a "rebuild" status. Approximately 95% of Maryland recreational black sea bass landings come from federal waters. This closure will have a devastating impact on recreational fishermen and will have serious socio-economic implications for Maryland and its communities on the Atlantic coast.

Another interesting and alarming fact that has been haunting us for many years now is that NMFS based its decision on unreliable data and surveys that were never designed for this type of management. You know it as MRFFS. NMFS acted unilaterally in making this decision when in fact the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) determined that closing the black sea bass was unnecessary after reviewing the recreational landings data. I support the decision of the ASMFC for the reasons stated above and the dangerous precedence it could set.

While the MSSA must preserve and protect recreational fishing in Maryland, we are working hand in hand with the Recreational Fishing

Alliance (RFA) on federal issues. As you know, federal mandates can have a tremendous impact on our fishing and our communities, as seen with the black sea bass decision. The RFA is effective in its mission and the MSSA will fight alongside when necessary.

I would also like to take this time to remind everyone that we have the last tournament of the year coming soon in November. November 21 and 22 to be exact, the Chesapeake Bay Fall Rockfish tournament. This will mark the 17th year this fall classic has been around and we are expecting another great turn-out. Last year we set a record for this tournament with 130 boats participating and nearly 600 anglers. First place took home almost \$30,000! I suspect we can beat that this year.

Please take part in the All Tackle Captain's Meeting on November 16th at their new store location in Annapolis. There will be Door Prizes and plenty of good times. All four Captain's Meetings are from 5:00 PM until 7:00 PM.

There are plenty of ways to enter. Online at www.mssa.net, by phone 410-255-5535, or at any of the Captains Meetings. Please see tournament book or website for times and locations.

I would once again like to thank you for your support and commitment to the MSSA and to making our fisheries better for the future. Please take the time to take our younger generations out fishing, they are the future of Americas favorite pastime.