



Coastal Angler

Summer 2006

Chairman's Corner

CCA New York: 10 Years and Still Going Strong

by Charles A. Witek III

CCA NY has reached a milestone. This March, we completed our 10th year of service to the marine resources and the individual anglers of New York.

I was privileged to serve as CCA NY's first chairman. Five years ago, I retired from that post to head our Government Affairs Committee, and devote my time to our efforts to advocate for fisheries conservation. However, in mid-February, I was surprised and humbled to learn that our Board of Directors decided to ask me to again take the helm, and lead CCA NY into its second decade.

A lot of things have changed since a small group of anglers met in Wantagh in 1996, and committed themselves to found an organization that was destined to be the state's most outspoken advocate for the restoration and conservation of our marine resources.

Since then, we have earned our place at the policymakers' tables. CCA NY members have been appointed to fill two consecutive vacancies on the Mid-Atlantic Fisheries Management Council. We have been invited to sit on the New York Marine Resources Advisory Council, the Fisheries Committee of the Hudson River Estuary Program and various advisory panels at the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission.

The positions we take, and the management measures we advocate,

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Landed safe and sound, this striper is about to be released, wiser and none the worse for the experience.

Keeping an Eye on the Diamond

It is an exciting time to be a member of CCA New York. Having just celebrated our tenth anniversary year, with a full slate of contentious advocacy issues and renewed focus on the fundamentals that have made this organization strong, there is a lot to keep members excited.

CCA NY will build on its previous successes by carefully balancing four key elements - membership, fundraising, advocacy and communications. Like the four points of a diamond, no single one of these elements can exist or be effective on its own. But, by combining these points of focus, the organization grows stronger in influence in the political arenas that manage the direction of our fisheries and the future of our coastal resources.

We must have a strong and growing membership, not only to catch the watchful eye of vote-conscious politicians, but also to build the grassroots chapter boards that saturate coastal and inland communities with the proper conservation

message and create the dollars to get things done. These boards find points of influence in the community and form the foundation of the organization as a whole.

From inception, CCA NY was founded on a committee system, and without strong grassroots, that foundation falls apart. From a local chapter board to the State Board of Directors, every member matters.

As an organization, CCA NY is pursuing some ambitious goals in our advocacy program for the coming year. We are committed to protecting and restoring our collapsed winter flounder population, which has declined more than 90% from where it was just a few years ago. We have renewed our efforts to protect Hudson River striped bass, and the river herring that they feed upon, and we are working with other concerned organizations to protect the eelgrass and other submerged vegetation that provides nursery areas for many sport

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Building a Foundation for the Future

*by Bill Raab
President, CCA New York*

This month's newsletter should find all of you gearing up for the warm weather, with the cold of winter fading away. It's hard to believe that it was ten years ago that CCA/NY started out as a small group of volunteers. Now we have chapters throughout Long Island, New York City, and up the Hudson into upstate New York.

Ten years ago, we were a very few with a common goal, doing all we could to protect a ravaged fishery, where every species was either being exploited to the point of no return, or so far gone that no serious fishing was even attempted. The management of most species was haphazard at best, with regulations being implemented or changed with little regard to their impact on the fish, the main force being the various user groups, each vying for a bigger piece of an ever-shrinking pie.

Through long hours and hard work, including participating in countless meetings and putting together a tremendous grass-roots effort, we have built a reputation as a staunch advocate of sound management practices. While not always popular, we have maintained a constant focus on doing what is right. Our reputation has given us a respected opinion in many areas of the management process. This is something that is very hard to attain, and you can all be proud to have brought us here. We have achieved significant wins in the arena, and again, it was because of all of you.

While the bulk of our work has been to improve things in the various fisheries, it is by no means all we do. We have run, and will continue to run events such as Surf Seminars, Kid's Fishing Days, and the various social events and fishing trips while helping with beach clean-ups, and access issues. None of this would be possible without you, the CCA NY Member, and your tireless dedication to the goals we work toward. I can't begin to say how

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impressed I am with all of you. As a whole, you are probably the most knowledgeable group of people on fish issues outside the regulatory and scientific circles. You can intelligently express both our positions, and the reasons we hold them. It makes me proud to be your President.

There is still much work to be done, and we will meet the challenges, no matter what they may be. There is one thing I'm sure of, and that is no matter what comes our way, and as we become more involved in other aspects, we will remain firmly committed to our core mission of protecting the fisheries as best we can, to ensure they will be around for future generations. I look forward to hearing from you, and working with all of you



Fishing in New York - there's nothing like it!

A View From Outside In

By Ted Venker

Communications Director, Coastal Conservation Association

The danger of mission creep exists for groups like Coastal Conservation Association, too. CCA is, first and foremost, an organization dedicated to the conservation of marine resources.

In 1979, Lee Iacocca became CEO of Chrysler and took on what had to be one of the toughest jobs in corporate America. Chrysler cars were the butt of jokes and the company was drowning in red ink. In his book, Iacocca described a company that had gotten so far away from its core business that it was doing nothing well.

At some point, Chrysler even had a division that made washers and dryers.

Perhaps you could label it a form of "mission creep," but it seems to be a natural tendency for companies to extend themselves beyond the things that they originally set out to do, and the results are usually not pretty (see Enron). In Chrysler's case, it took a \$1.5 billion federal loan to successfully get back on track. In Enron's case, the tracks went over a cliff.

The danger of mission creep exists for groups like Coastal Conservation Association, too. CCA is, first and foremost, an organization dedicated to the conservation of marine resources. We draw our strength from tens of thousands of recreational anglers all over the country, and we depend upon the best science available to base decisions on how to manage those resources so that their health and existence are never threatened.

If the science indicates that recreational fishermen need to take a reduction in the bag limit in order for a certain fish stock to recover, for example, then CCA will support that position, even though the vast majority of our members are recreational anglers who will be directly impacted. How could we do otherwise?

Staying focused on the resource and any issues that may impact it is CCA's core business, and it is critical that we stay on track. That sometimes means taking unpopular stands on difficult conservation problems or simply refusing to get involved with issues outside our conservation mission. CCA has earned its success by being true to its principles and keeping its resources aimed squarely at the fish.

There is no shortage of issues out there, however, and there are dozens of groups who would love to tap into CCA's resources to pursue this goal or that. No matter how worthy those objectives might seem, we could easily find ourselves making washers and dryers.

In any complex, worthy cause there can be divisive issues and staying the course sometimes means moving into the crosshairs. It is difficult to hear critiques from the sidelines. It is even tougher when volunteers who have generously contributed their time, money and effort find reason to disagree strongly with a CCA position or decision. It is easy to begin to look inward and question what we are doing.

At those times, it would be helpful if we could see ourselves, not through our own critical eyes, but through the eyes of the state and federal decision-makers who work in partnership with CCA to restore and conserve coastal fisheries.

In New York, we were recently given that opportunity. Each year, CCA NY presents an award to a person or persons who have had a positive impact on the fisheries of the state. This year, it was awarded to four individuals from the New York

Even the fish know...



CCA is **THE** steward for
New York's
marine resources.

*Tell a friend or family
member to join today!*

Department of Environmental Conservation, who have a long history of dedicated service to the fish and fishermen of the state, but are virtually unknown and unheralded in the angling community.

The following is excerpted from one interviewee's response:

I have long been an admirer of the CCA for its advocacy on the part of marine fishery resources and for its consistent ethic in support of conservation causes. In particular I have a great deal of respect for an organization and its leadership that is willing to take the time necessary to understand the issues, and contribute to the thoughtful debate and discussion of marine fishery issues that is otherwise so often missing in public discourse today.

That response provides a very brief, but very clear perception of how CCA is viewed at the agency. Looking at those words, it becomes apparent that CCA has precisely the sort of credibility and respect that an organization like ours should be striving for. True to our mission. Informed. Thoughtful.

We should all take this to heart. If we build on the respect we have earned with the decision-makers, make no apology for assuming the mantle of leadership and concentrate single-mindedly on our goals, we will achieve what we set out to do. We will stay on the right track.

■ Keeping an Eye on the Diamond

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and food fish. Those are just a few of the issues that CCA NY will be working on over the course of the next year.

In order to be effective in our advocacy program, CCA NY will also need to focus on membership growth and chapter development. We have just scratched the surface of the recreational fishing community. We will be developing new local chapter boards, thus allowing more members the opportunity to participate within CCA NY's infrastructure. If you would like to start a new chapter in your area, or help re-start an inactive one, please contact the state office at 917-256-1805.

There is still much that can be done to improve membership retention and recruitment, and one of the easiest and most effective tools is

each member simply signing up a friend, relative or neighbor. It has almost become cliché, but who cannot think of at least one person that he or she can sign up? With that basic membership drive alone, the math speaks clearly. We could double our membership. And, with such a growing group of concerned conservationists, there is little we will not be able to do for our coastal resources.

The need to engage in fisheries advocacy and engage policymakers on important issues is a never-ending battle. The work we're doing on

flounder, striped bass, river herring and habitat issues is just a small part of what needs to be done. It is obvious there is a lot of work to do.

Although not a conservation issue, the threat of reduced access to New York's coastline is also a matter that demands CCA NY's attention. We helped defeat the Corps of Engineer's plan to reshape the shoreline at Long Beach, a project that would have buried the jetties from which our members fish.

We have also fought legislation that is intended to arbitrarily prohibit vehicular access to many of New York's beaches. That fight will go on, and CCA NY will not abandon it.

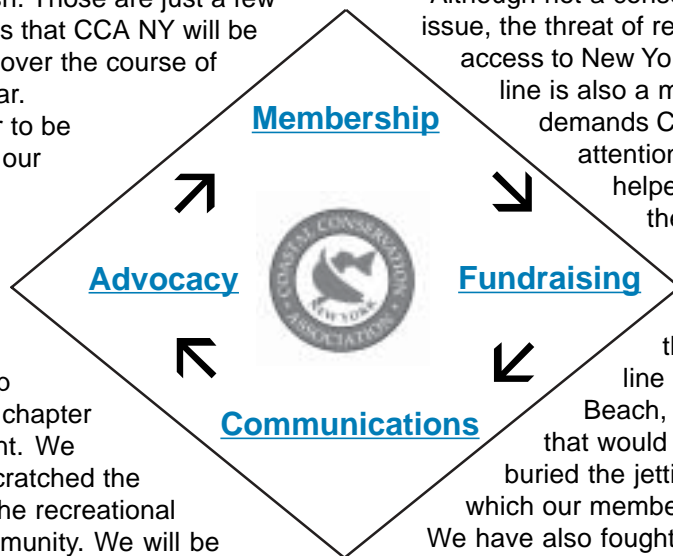
Communication is by no means the last leg of CCA NY's organizational focus, but it is the anchor that supports the membership, fundraising, and advocacy efforts of the organization. It carries our message, accomplishments and vision to our membership, and to the general public, both inside and outside the fishing community.

Without communication, we lose our grassroots. Through the Coastal Angler, TIDE, the CCA NY website, press releases and a variety of other communication vehicles, we promote an understanding of the organization and the many things it accomplishes.

CCA NY's accomplishments are a tribute to the many members who are willing to work toward a common goal. We must expand our communications committee, to keep our members and the public informed. We are blessed

with an army of dedicated volunteers who seek new members, execute fundraising activities, fill the state decision making committees and carry the message of fisheries conservation. The larger we get, the larger the stick we carry to our legislators and fisheries regulators.

With so many positive accomplishments behind us, it is exciting to imagine what lies ahead. And as long as we keep focused on the proverbial diamond, we will accomplish great things for New York's coastal resources and the recreational anglers who enjoy them.



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NEWS FLASH

Fishery Survey Needs Repair

The National Academy of Sciences completed its long review of the Marine Recreational Fisheries Statistics Survey and to no one's surprise, found that the MRFSS system was in need of extensive revisions. The NAS conclusions and recommendations were very similar to those that have been made by CCA over the past five or six years.

When MRFSS was first rolled out in 1981, it was not intended as a tool that would be used for detailed, sometimes near real-time, state-by-state quota management. Twenty-five years after its inception, managers find themselves trying to address today's difficult fisheries issues with yesterday's data collection system.

Dick Brame, CCA's Atlantic States Coordinator, probably said it best, when he likened using MRFSS to manage today's fisheries to using a Commodore 64 to run Windows. It just can't be done.

To read the entire NAS executive summary, go to <http://www.nap.edu/catalog/11616.html>.

The bottom line is that MRFSS needs to be fixed. Throughout that process, CCA will be working with NMFS, providing advice that will hopefully lead to a better product.

FOCUS ON:

Stock Assessments

Fish, unlike cash, securities or inventory, aren't amenable to precise enumeration; every figure employed in a stock assessment is a reasoned estimate.

Of all the factors considered in fisheries management, perhaps none are as mysterious to laymen as the process of determining the size of a population.

The stock assessment process can be very complex, and generally requires a substantial amount of accurate data and a team of biologists who understand how to best apply the available information to the life history of a particular species. At the hands-on level, it is an arcane procedure best left to professionals, but at a conceptual level, where most fisheries advocates and many fisheries managers operate, it is actually fairly simple.

In a very real way, counting the fish population isn't very different from preparing an income statement for a business. One begins with the assets on hand at the beginning of the year (the starting population), adds deposits and other income (re-

cruitment), then subtracts withdrawals (fishing mortality) and depreciation on assets (natural mortality) to determine the final profit (increase in population) or loss (population decrease).

Of course, things aren't quite that simple. Fish, unlike cash, securities or inventory, aren't amenable to precise enumeration; every figure employed in a stock assessment is a reasoned estimate. As a result, biologists will find supporting data, such as New York's Ocean Haul Seine Survey of striped bass, or Massachusetts' trawl survey of summer flounder, that has proven itself, over the years, to be a reliable predictor of fish abundance, and will develop "tuning indices" that further refine the population estimate.

The most refined assessment of a population, a "virtual population analysis" ("VPA") that mathematically models each year class as it moves

through a species' population, is extremely data intensive. It requires input not only of the absolute numbers of fish, but also of the cohort to which each fish belongs.

Provided that such information is available, a VPA can often signal a future problem in a fishery (e.g., a dominant year class originally assumed to assure the health of the fishery, which becomes subject to extremely heavy fishing pressure, so that it is substantially diminished before reaching spawning age). It can also be used to project the health of a fishery some years in the future, as year classes mature and eventually age out of a population, and new year classes appear.

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Hudson Valley Chapter Pig Roast

Make plans to attend the 8th Annual Hudson Valley Chapter Fundraiser and Pig Roast. Featuring live and silent auctions, raffles, trap shooting, horseshoes and fishing. Bring an appetite - hot dogs, hamburgers and, of course, PIG, will be on the grill

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FOCUS ON:

Stock Assessments

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Despite the detail provided by the best stock assessments, the fact that all inputs represent estimates rather than absolute values will invariably result in some uncertainty. The greatest level of uncertainty is associated with the final year of a VPA, since it reflects only a single year's data. Earlier years reflect the inclusion of multiple years' data, and thus more closely model the state of any fish population.

It is not at all unusual for "retrospective bias" to become apparent in a model's output. For example, if a flaw in a model causes it to chronically overestimate recruitment or underestimate mortality, the model will re-

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turn estimates that are higher than the actual population. Since the estimate of population size at year-end is used as a starting point for the next year's computation, such errors can grow in size over time. It is that sort of error that resulted in the SARC's downward revision in the summer flounder population estimate in 2005, which will lead to a lowered harvest cap in 2006.

On the other hand, inaccurate input can also make mortality appear higher, and a population lower, than it actually is. That was the case with the 2004 striped bass assessment, in which bad state data, particularly that provided by Massachusetts, resulted in an F estimate 150 percent above the overfishing threshold; removal of the offending data resulted in an estimate that was substantially lower. It is the number of estimates, and the



paucity of hard data, that also brings the results of the current weakfish assessment into question.

The dependence of stock assessments on good data has created a sort of caste system within species. Striped bass and, to a somewhat lesser degree, fluke, stand above the rest, as beneficiaries of extensive data collections that permit the population to

be assessed with substantial accuracy, although some retrospective bias will always exist.

Weakfish and bluefish are victims of a data shortage. Although both populations have

been modeled, the weakfish assessment just failed its peer review, while the bluefish model barely passed through the review process intact, being accepted, with qualifications, by two SARC panelists and conclusively rejected by a third.

At the bottom of the list lie scup and black sea bass, which are managed on the basis of abundance in trawl surveys, as the data is not sufficient to allow formal modeling; winter flounder also suffer from the lack of a model adequate to predict the status or behavior of the population.

Despite its math-intensive nature, stock assessment is not a precise science, and professionals do not pretend that it is. Rather, it is a tool to assist managers in crafting regulations most likely to restore and conserve fish populations. The useful-

ness of the tool depends on the species in question, the abilities of the person constructing the model and the appropriateness and accuracy of the data included.

However, there is little doubt that even an imperfect model provides useful information, and takes management a step beyond those days when harvesters would protest regulations by stating "There's plenty of fish out there," and no one could ultimately prove them wrong.



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New York Moves to Block Data Blackout

Last August, some recreational fishing industry organizations were considering a boycott of the Marine Recreational Fishing Statistics Survey (MRFSS), which is used to estimate the number of fish that anglers harvest each year.

CCA, which is dedicated to the principle of rational, science-based fishery management, strongly opposes such action. CCA recognizes that MRFSS is imperfect, and in the past year has been working with the National Marine Fisheries Service and the National Research Council to improve the system, not destroy it.

On Sept. 1, CCA's national office issued a press release condemning the boycott process. "No good can come of a data blackout," the release stated. "It is irresponsible to discuss a boycott of the present system until a better one is in place. Ignorance is not an acceptable option and a boycott could easily backfire."

The motivation behind the boycott seems to be displeasure with fisheries management and its unwillingness to accede to demands for business-friendly management measures, regardless of their possible impacts on fish populations.

Although MRFSS is imperfect, it remains the only tool available to estimate recreational harvest.

CCA NY was pleased to learn that the DEC has proposed, and in early March adopted, regulations that require for-hire vessels to accept observers and data collectors on board. Managers need an accurate and expanded data collection process to make effective management decisions. Now it appears that the for-hire fleet, which is a frequent critic of current recreational harvest data, will be a meaningful contributor to the data collection effort which can only help the system.

For a more complete version of this article, visit the CCA New York website - www.ccanyc.org



Throw a party for a few hundred of your closest friends!

Get involved and make a difference in the fight to conserve and improve our coastal resources - volunteer to lead your local CCA chapter! The local chapter network is an essential cog in our conservation machine here in New York, funding our advocacy program and raising awareness of our local issues through banquets, fundraisers, seminars and local projects. Contact the CCA office for more information about leading a chapter in your area, (917) 256-1805, or email arion_li@mindspring.com.

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Fluke Regulations Cause Controversy (Again)

It seems that setting fluke harvest limits are never easy. 2006 proved a more difficult year than most.

The initial problem was caused by the conclusions of the June, 2005 Stock Assessment Review Committee, a panel of top scientists from around the world which convenes twice each year to review fishery management plans. The SARC determined that the fluke population was actually smaller than biologists had believed, due to an error which resulted in the model overestimating the fluke population in the current year.

As a result, the Summer Flounder Technical Committee determined that harvest would have to be decreased if the population was to meet its 2009 recovery deadline. Instead of the 33 million pound harvest originally planned for 2006 (up from about 30 million pounds in 2005), the Total Allowable Catch for 2006 would have to be reduced to 23.6 million pounds.

Needless to say, that news wasn't welcomed by anyone.

After more than one meeting and considerable debate, the 23.6 million pound TAC was adopted. Even though the decision required that harvest be reduced by more than 30%, states from New Jersey south felt little impact, as none caught their entire 2005 allocation. Only Massachusetts, Connecticut and, most particularly, New York faced substantial additional restrictions, with New York's 38% cut the harshest of all.

Gordon Colvin and the others on New York's delegations to the Mid-Atlantic Council and ASMFC tried to ease the impact by suggesting a coastwide management scheme, rather than state-by-state allocation. However, sentiment in the "have" states was not particularly favorable to the "have nots;" and

the best that could be arranged is a transfer of "unused" fluke from those states that had underfished but, as of the ASMFC meeting in February, had adopted 2006 regulations identical to those they had in place in 2006. It's not very much.

It is better to fish under harsh regulations for more than five months than to fish under laxer bag and size limits but have the season cut short.

As a result, New York anglers will be governed by a 4-fish bag limit, an 18 inch minimum size and a short season that runs May 6 to Sept. 12.

CCA NY's board unanimously decided to urge the DEC to adopt a longer season, beginning in May and extending through October, even if it meant going to an 18 1/2-inch minimum size (but would also have pro-

vided a larger bag limit) feeling that it is better to fish under harsh regulations for more than five months than to fish under laxer bag and size limits but have the season cut short.

However, New York's long coast, that encompasses areas as different as Great South Bay, Montauk, Staten Island and Long Island Sound, makes it extremely difficult to come up with regulations that please everyone. Each area's unique fishery calls for a different combination of season, bag limit and minimum size, and assures that no set of statewide regulations will leave anglers completely satisfied. Viewed in that perspective, the regulations finally established by the DEC represent a reasonable compromise.

It's not a good situation. 2007 will be a little better, but New York anglers won't get a fair shake unless the current state-by-state allocation is replaced by a consistent regulations throughout the region. We're working to make that happen.

The Road to Better Fishing Starts in Your Local Chapter GET INVOLVED IN YOUR CCA TODAY!

Chapter	Contact	Phone	2006 Banquet Dates
Albany		Contact CCA to help	Not yet scheduled
Brooklyn/Queens		Contact CCA to help	Not yet scheduled
Central Suffolk		Contact CCA to help	Not yet scheduled
Hudson Valley	Scott Emslie	845-435-2051	June 17
Manhattan		Contact CCA to help	Not yet scheduled
Nassau	Brian O'Keefe	516-771-9880	August
South Fork		Contact CCA to help	Not yet scheduled
Staten Island		Contact CCA to help	Not yet scheduled
Westchester		Contact CCA to help	Not yet scheduled
Western Suffolk	Doug Laukaitis	Contact CCA to help	Early November



This striped bass gets some assistance catching his breath before being released.



A young angler on the Suffolk Family Fishing Trip: contemplates a fluke.

Final Decision on Freedom of Information Request

As noted in the last issue of *The Coastal Angler*, CCA NY filed a request with the DEC seeking documents related to the state's decision to issue emergency regulations increasing the bag limits for striped bass and bluefish. The road to obtaining those documents was a long one, with the agency failing to provide the documents in the time required by law.

After persistent effort, the DEC finally provided a package of documents which provided no information as to why proposed regulations were not put out for public comment prior to issuance, as the State Administrative Procedures Act requires, and contained no data or other factual support for the DEC's ultimate decision to increase the bag limits.

The DEC refused to hand over an additional 20 documents, claiming that such documents were exempt from disclosure under a provision of the Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) which shields certain "inter-agency or intra-agency materials" from public scrutiny. CCA NY appealed that decision to deny public access to such documents.

On Feb. 23, an administrative judge denied CCA NY's appeal on the basis that the documents withheld by the state were either documents con-

taining the opinions and recommendations of agency staff (which is legally exempt from disclosure) or documents protected by attorney-client privilege.

Perhaps most striking was not the documents produced, but rather those which did not exist, such as those that would have provided a factual basis for the issuance of emergency regulations. CCA NY requested a further review of the administrative record, to determine whether there was anything at all that might have provided legal justification for the emergency action.

There was not.

The only conclusion that can be drawn is that the decision to issue emergency regulations was, in the language frequently used by the courts, "arbitrary and capricious, and an abuse of agency discretion," and, thus, illegal.

In the end, CCA NY reminded the DEC that the public has a right to be consulted on management matters, and that except in extraordinary circumstances, decisions cannot be made without first consulting the citizens of New York.

Preparing a regulatory package takes a lot of work, and a lot of time, at a number of different levels. It is easy to understand how an over-worked and understaffed department might be tempted to cut a corner from

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time to time. However, as a guardian of our fisheries, it was CCA NY's duty to call them on it. And because we complained, we strongly suspect that you won't see the DEC casually use their emergency powers in the future. The DEC tries to be responsive to the public, and when the public insists that they be heard, CCA NY is confident that the DEC will listen.

Chairman's Corner

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can impact the health of our fish populations for years into the future.

CCA NY is only as good as its members and volunteers, and having come to know many of you over the past decade, I can state with confidence that no group of volunteers is any better. By working hard and sticking to our goals, we will guarantee that CCA NY remains a clarion voice for the responsible management of New York's fisheries.

It isn't always easy. As a fishery conservation group made up almost entirely of anglers, CCA NY walks a knife edge, between the militant "angling rights" organizations and angling industry groups, who would mortgage our fisheries' future for larger harvests and perhaps increased incomes today, and "environmental" organizations that are largely well-meaning but often see anglers as part of the problem facing fisheries conservation, and not conservation advocates.

One member, who was with CCA NY from the beginning, says "Being on the knife edge means that we bleed a lot." Unfortunately that's true.

Sometimes we lose good volunteers who just can't take either the pressure that comes with staying true to our mission, or the criticism from those eager to see us fail.

At the same time, it is impossible to be a part of the greater CCA family and not be confident that we will prevail. Each year, when I attend CCA national meetings, I cannot help but be awed by the quality of both our volunteers and our national staff.

That's when I am reminded that there is only one CCA, and no other organization can come close to what it

offers, whether in the intellectual capital that it brings to the fisheries debate, the dedication of the volunteers who donate untold hours toward CCA's success, or the staff and organization that, like the best coaches and managers, knows how to mold and hone a winning team.

Consider the Atlantic States Committee. Led by Dick Brame, who has earned an advanced degree in wildlife management, it brings together representatives of every CCA state between Maine and Florida, so that we can address the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission with a unified, coastwide voice. Dick is known to and welcomed by every ASMFC Technical Committee and Management Board. No other organization addresses fisheries management on such a comprehensive, coastwide basis, or with such a credible voice.

Then, on national issues, we have our General Counsel in Washington, Bob Hayes. Bob isn't just a good attorney who cut his teeth working for the National Marine Fisheries Service in its formative days. He isn't merely a Washington insider, who served as a negotiator for earlier presidential administrations and even now represents the State Department as one of America's three commissioners to the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas. Beyond those professional qualifications, Bob is a dedicated angler and conservationist, who recently left his partnership in a Washington law firm to serve just two clients, including CCA, and better concentrate on the causes closest to his heart.

Speaking with him always reminds me how much more there is to

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learn about fisheries issues; every time we talk, I come away knowing far more than I knew when the talk began. No one else in the fisheries arena comes close to matching what he has to offer—and he's ours.

No discussion of CCA's virtues is complete without mentioning the national volunteers that form the core of our strength. CCA's membership is made up only of individuals; there are no company or organizational members. Out of those 90,000 people come its state and local chapter boards, as well as the national board that actually governs the affairs of CCA.

That, too, makes CCA unique. No other fisheries advocacy group has over 125 members on their national board, chosen by the member states. No other fisheries group has every policy decision debated and approved by a roomful of anglers. No other fisheries group is so clearly comprised of anglers interested in the public interest and the fish, and so free of the influence of people who, in one way or another, rely on our fisheries resources for their personal income.

There is, indeed, only one CCA, and one CCA NY that brings CCA's mission, capabilities and principles here to our home state. I ask all of you to take a little time (or, if you can, more than a little time—See "Throw a Party..." in this issue) to support CCA NY and, when asked, to write a letter or show up at a DEC hearing in support of CCA's positions. For you, our members and volunteers, are the heart, muscle and soul of CCA NY.

With your support, our potential is boundless; with you, I look forward to taking CCA NY into our second decade. There is much that we need to do.

MISSION STATEMENT

The stated purpose of CCA is to advise and educate the public on conservation of marine resources. The objective of CCA is to conserve, promote and enhance the present and future availability of these coastal resources for the benefit and enjoyment of the general public.

CCA NY Invited to Legislative and Executive Oceans Events

The New York Assembly's Standing Committee on Environmental Conservation held a hearing at Jones Beach in October to investigate the future of New York's coast, its fisheries and habitats. Just a few days later, on October 24, Governor Pataki hosted an Oceans and Great Lakes Conference in Manhattan, where similar issues were explored. CCA NY was invited to participate in both events.

Although CCA NY is no stranger to the legislative and regulatory process, both events provided a somewhat unique experience, since they were focused on the overall health of the marine environment, and did not concentrate on the purely fisheries-related topics that form the core of CCA NY's expertise.

At the Assembly hearing, CCA NY was asked to present a short, prepared statement to the Committee, and to be prepared to answer any questions that arose. CCA NY tailored its testimony to address habitat issues that affected fish populations, emphasizing the need for a study to determine whether environmental effects played any role in the decline of winter flounder, urging the state to be sure that energy projects (such as Verdant Energy's proposed turbines in the East River and the LNG facility planned for Long Island Sound) are not harmful to living resources before permitting them to move forward, questioning the wisdom of beach replenishment projects such as that recently defeated at Long Beach, and asking for the regulation of bycatch-prone and destructive fishing gear types, including fish traps, gill nets and roller trawls. CCA NY also pointed out the historic role that the sportsman has played in the conservation arena, and urged that the state encourage anglers by providing ready access, including appropriate motorized access, to fishing areas, and warning the state of the adverse effects that no-take marine protected

areas would have on the angling community.

At the Governor's Oceans Conference CCA NY participated in the Research and Education forum in the morning, and the Habitat and Sustainable Fisheries panel in the afternoon. Issues included the need for additional DEC funding, for both enforcement and program purposes, incorporating the best available science in DEC decisions, the need to get children involved in marine-related experiences, the importance of permitting fishery management plans to run their course rather than permit premature harvest increases and the desirability and difficulties of ecosystem-based management.

The issues raised at the two events are already being addressed in New York's current budget debate, and in other legislation. CCA NY appreciates the opportunity it was given to contribute to the process, and will continue to monitor marine-related issues on behalf of its membership.



Four generations of anglers are on board for the Family Fishing Trip.



Suffolk Chapter Family Fishing Day!

The Suffolk Chapter held its 9th annual Family Fishing Day aboard the Captain Eddie B out of Captree State Park last summer. The event, designed to get families fishing together and get children who might not otherwise get a chance to fish out on the water, was an unqualified success. Fifty-one people attended, including 19 children, the most ever. Every child who participated will be enrolled in CCA's New Tide program.

Summer flounder were the target, although most of the fish had a case of lockjaw. Enough were caught to keep everyone happy, especially 6-year-old Krystyn Holzman, who caught the pool-winning 19-incher.

Every child on board was a winner, as each received a goodie bag as well as free tickets for the drawings that were held at frequent intervals throughout the day. Every child took home a prize.

Thanks go to Guy and Kathy Zummo, Doug Laukaitis and Donna Kolb, who made up the committee for the event, and most particularly to Bill McGinley, who was not only a committee member, but also donated four rod and reel sets that were awarded to children during the day.



Krystyn Holzman and her prize-winning fluke.

Winners of the hourly drawing show off their prizes.



Coastal Angler

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New York
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- ...Final Decision on Freedom of Information Request
- ...Results of MRFSS Review
- ...Update on Fluke Regulations
- ...Suffolk Chapter's Family Fishing Day
- ...Hudson Valley Pig Roast!

COASTAL CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION OF NEW YORK MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

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Check One: NEW MEMBER RENEWAL GIFT MEMBERSHIP

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(For E-Currents and CCA information ONLY)

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- Charge to my: (circle one)
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MEMBERSHIP ONLY: \$25

One (1) year membership with membership card, window decal, 2 bumper stickers, *TIDE* magazine.

ASSOCIATE MEMBER: \$15

Per each adult family member. All member privileges except *TIDE*.
Provide names: _____

NEW TIDE (YOUTH): \$10

Rising Tide newsletter, logo patch and decal, iron-on T-shirt transfer, redfish sticker. For members 17 and younger.

PRINT MEMBERSHIP \$100

All of the above plus CCA print of your choice - www.joincca.org/prints.htm

BRONZE MEMBERSHIP \$200

Bronze lapel pin, print, plus member gifts.

SILVER MEMBERSHIP (PATRON) \$500

Silver lapel pin, print, plus member gifts.

GOLD MEMBERSHIP (LIFE) \$1,000

Gold lapel pin, print, plus member gifts. Option of quarterly payments of \$250 over one (1) year available.

Credit card number _____ Signature _____

Credit card exp. date _____ My additional contribution to CCA NY's efforts: \$25 \$50 \$100 Other _____

Mail to CCA New York, PO Box 1118, West Babylon, NY 11704
or enroll online at www.joincca.org