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Patchogue Fishing Club

Conservation Report
March 2004



*Possible Changes in NYS DEC Fishing
Regulations*

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List of Changes and Options for Changes in the N.Y.S DEC Marine Fishing Regulations

Black Sea Bass

The current legal minimum size limit for Black Sea Bass is locked in at 12” and a daily bag limit of 25 fish is also remaining in force for 2004. The open season for Black Sea Bass will be January 1st to September 7th, it will be closed from September 8th till September 21st, and then reopen for September 22nd until November 30th. This is for all coastal waters in all states.¹

Black Fish

For now it looks like the Blackfish regulations are staying the same at one fish per day from June 1st till October 6th, then 10 fish per day from October 7th till May 31st. The minimum size limit is still at 14”.

Blue Fish

There will be a new assessment for Blue Fish later this year. As for now the Federal limit stands at 15 fish per day. In New York State controlled waters it is expected to remain the same at 10 fish per day.²

Flounder (winter)

So far, the winter flounder regulations are going to stay the same this year. An 11” minimum size limit, a 15 fish per day bag limit, and an open season from March 20th till June 30th and September 15th till November 30th.³

¹ The News Letter of the New York Sport Fishing Federation, January – April. 2004, Volume 16 Number 1

² The News Letter of the New York Sport Fishing Federation, January - April. 2004, Volume 16 Number 1

Fluke (Summer Flounder)

New York recreational fishermen are being saddled with a 48.5% reduction in their fluke quota. There are still arguments be thrown back and forth about the way in which this reduction will be implemented. As of now, it looks like we will have an 18” minimum size limit, a three fish per day bag limit, and an open season from May 8th till September 20th. There should be a definite answer on this by the end of next month. On a better note the proposal that would even up the allocation of landings for Fluke is going to be heard before the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council and the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Management Board this October in Kill Devil Hills, North Carolina. The petition is asking for the allocation of landings for Summer Flounder be evened out at 50/50. The current standings are 60/40 in favor of commercial interests. Even though the proposal is going to be heard, it doesn’t mean that it will be passed. We need to put some pressure on our local representatives to back this proposal.⁴⁵

Porgies (Scup)

As with Fluke, Porgies anglers are going to see big changes in the new 2004 regulations. Our quota for porgies is going to be cut some 57%. A preliminary estimate was for a regulation of 25 porgies per day, an 11-1/4” minimum size limit, and a season of Memorial Day till Labor Day. There is a catch. If Massachusetts gets their way, we could be saddled with an even deeper cut in our quota. Massachusetts is protesting the sharing with New York in the overage on porgies. This will probably not be straightened out until some time in May.⁶

³ The News Letter of the New York Sport Fishing Federation, January – April. 2004, Volume 16 Number 1

⁴ Conservation Watch by Al Ristori, The Fisherman March 4, 2004, Volume 39, Issue #10

⁵ Conservation Watch by Al Ristori, The Fisherman March 11, 2004, Volume 39, Issue #11

⁶ The News Letter of the New York Sport Fishing Federation, January –April. 2004, Volume 16 Number 1

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Weak Fish

In New York State controlled waters the current weak fish regulations are going to be carried over for 2004. The regulation will be a 16” minimum length requirement (10” filleted and 12” dressed), a 6 fish per day bag limit, and a year long open season.⁷

Safe Boating Course

There is a new safe boating course being produced in a partnership between the USCG Auxiliary and The US Power Squadrons. It is available on line at www.AmericasBoatingCourse.com on line. The cost for the course is \$34.95. You can either receive an easy-to-follow color manual and a CD ROM in either Windows or Mac formats. You can also opt for the on-line course. There is also a mentorship program available. After the completion of this course you will receive a validation number entitling you to one free proctored examination along with any state requirements and upon successful completion of this exam; a Safe Boating Certificate will be issued.⁸

There is a U.S. Coast Guard Safe Boating Course being offered at the Middle Country Library on Wednesdays at 7:30pm till 9:30pm. The course starts on April 28th, concluding on June 23rd. The cost is \$40.00 for materials. You must be a resident of the Middle Country School District.⁹

Personal Floatation Device Legislation

I recently spoke with a USCG officer at the Suffolk County Boat Show. He confirmed that the PFD Legislation [requiring the mandatory wearing of PFD’s on vessels underway less than 21’] may be implemented next season. He stated that they are currently deciding how the ordinance should be written. He also suggested that the wearing of a PFD is a very good idea on any sized vessel while underway.

⁷ The News Letter of the New York Sport Fishing Federation, January –April, 2004, Volume 16, Number 1

⁸ Your in Command Boat Safely, pamphlet by USCG & U.S. Department of Homeland Security,

⁹ Spring 2004 Middle Country Public Library, Adult Services Booklet