

Winter Issue
January 2010



Tide Lines



COASTAL CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

GRANITE TIDES

A newsletter from CCA NH

President's Report

The CCA NH, 2010 programming year has arrived. **Tuna Mania V** has been scheduled for Saturday, January 30th at the Redhook Brewery. The planning committee has engaged a mix of old and new presenters in our annual effort to support the bluefin tuna research conducted by Dr. Molly Lutcavage of the UNH Large Pelagics Lab. Read the article by **Bryant Bickford** covering the event and do not delay in purchasing tickets, as they are sure to sell out.

Aimee Reeve has reported on a recent conference organized by the **Piscataqua Region Estuaries Project (PREP)**. The 2009 "State of the Estuaries" report is prepared every three years to evaluate the status and trends of a select group of environmental indicators. The bottom line: Great Bay is not so great of late. All of our regional estuarine systems require our dedicated attention.

Planning for the **annual banquet and fundraiser** on March 27th, 2010 is progressing. The **Kittery Trading Post** has already donated a \$500 raffle gift card. KTP has been a much appreciated, perennial supporter. The tickets are available in this newsletter. Major sponsors for the event are being solicited and potential auction item donors are being contacted. A change in venue is being considered that will allow us to decrease the cost of tickets. The board of directors will be choosing a recipient for the 2010 Conservationist of the Year to be honored at the event. Attendance by all CCA NH members is mandatory.

CCA NH had hoped that **Tim McClare** would be nominated by the governor to fill the vacant coastal commissioner seat on the NH F&G Commission. Unfortunately, Tim had to withdraw his name when his new job would not allow him to commit the extensive time required to perform the commissioner duties. The seat remains vacant. Anyone interested?

The **CCA NH website** has languished in mediocrity for quite a while. But, that has changed. Check out the new site developed by Brigham Pendleton Design and the website committee. It is a huge improvement to say the least. New pages and links are being developed and plans for continual and timely maintenance are in the works. The picture gallery will be expanded and refreshed once I receive some quality pictures from all of you. Check out www.ccanh.org today.

The last newsletter in October mentioned

some late breaking news from Orvis. Read the article about the **Orvis Oyster Project** and the **\$10,000 grant**.

The CCA NH board has taken **two public positions** recently. The first was before the **Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission** in opposition to a proposal by commercial striped fishermen to rollover a portion of their uncaught quota from the current year to the next. The proposal was defeated but will undoubtedly be back. The second is a position supporting the removal of the **Taylor River Dam** in Hampton Falls. The NH DOT controls the structure and is considering three options when the Interstate 95 bridge is rebuilt: no action; rebuild the dam with a new fishway; or remove the dam. There are many concerns that the DOT must consider. Both CCA NH board positions are included in this newsletter.

The board elected new officers in December. Three of us didn't know how to say "no". I continue as president, **Don Swanson** as vice-president, and **Michael Reeve** continues as treasurer. **Mitch Kalter**, whose performance was beyond reproach, ended his stint as secretary. **Gordon Thompson** of York was elected as his replacement.

Last July's **circle hook initiative** will be duplicated in 2010. **Gamakatsu** will again donate a thousand circle hooks that we will repackage and attach to CCA NH brochures. Members will spend a summer weekend contacting fishermen wherever we find them along the coast. Minimizing dead discards and advocating safe release techniques is essential.

CCA National has restated its position on a **CITES** listing for Bluefin tuna. Be sure to read the recent news release.

Ellen Goethel has joined the CCA NH board of Directors. Ellen is a conservationist and educator from Hampton and the recipient of the 2009 Conservationist of the Year award. We are fortunate and pleased to have her at the table. The board is open to all members and your participation is always appreciated. The next board meeting is Jan. 13th at 6:30 pm at Zampa's in Epping.

Much is happening, and much more is planned. The success of our organization in promoting healthy marine resources comes down to you and me. A top down organization seldom succeeds. Your participation is absolutely essential. **Is there not but one thing you can do to help?**

Jeff Barnum, President

CCA NH's Tuna Mania is Back

Tuna Mania V will be held Saturday, January 30th, in the Red Hook Brewery at the Pease Tradeport. The event will start at 9:30 am and run until 3:30 pm. There will be vendor tables, raffles, and an auction to benefit Dr. Molly Lucavage's UNH Large Pelagics Research Center (LPRC). As with the previous events, seating is limited and tickets will undoubtedly sell out quickly. Call 603-731-2669 as soon as possible. Tickets are \$42 each and will **not** be available at the door.

Dr. Molly Lutcavage, Director of the LPRC, will be showing and discussing her latest video footage of bluefin tuna tagging, and the movements and behavior of juveniles, observed through the tagging program. We will also hear about the current state of the fishery worldwide. Graduate students, Walt Golet and Ben Galuardi will be provide a presentation on the historical trends in conditions, distribution, food habits and forage relationships of Atlantic bluefin tuna.

Chris Weiner from Perkins Cove, ME and Ralph Pratt from Green Harbor, MA have over 50 years of experience in the harpoon fishery. Both have spectacular video footage of this traditional New England fishery in the Gulf of Maine and Cape Cod waters. They will be discussing their techniques, along with their thoughts on the current state of the tuna fishery.

Shawn Joyce, a recreational angler from New Castle, NH, went from catching one tuna in 2008 to over thirty in 2009. Shawn's presentation will include a discussion and video on tactics and tackle from the recreational angler's viewpoint. National Marine Fisheries Special Agent, Chris Schoppmeyer, will talk about the NMF's bluefin tuna regulations.

Proceeds from the event will be donated to Dr. Molly Lucavage's LPRC so that we may continue to monitor the health of this important fishery and better understand their migratory patterns. Do not miss Tuna Mania V. Call 603-731-2669 today for tickets. Visit www.ccanh.org for more information.

Contributed by Bryant Bickford
Chair CCA NH Tuna Mania V Committee



Orvis Oyster Project

The Orvis Company of Manchester, Vt. awarded a \$10,000 grant in October to CCA NH to initiate an oyster shell recycling program that will provide some of the preferred and necessary substrate for oyster bed restoration in Great Bay. The oyster population has declined precipitously. Around 1000 acres of healthy oyster beds present in 1993 have dwindled to less than 100 acres. Filter feeding oysters could filter the entire estuary in a few days, but now the filtering capacity is negligible. Siltation, over harvest, nutrient loading, storm water runoff, disease, and excessive nitrogen are the reasons for their demise. Simultaneously, eelgrass has completely disappeared from portions of the ecosystem. It is essential to maintain a stock of native oysters in the estuary while the root causes of their decline are addressed.



Buckets of recycled oyster shell waiting for pick-up

Oysters grow best on oyster shell. But, when beds are covered in silt, the young oysters called spat have nowhere to adhere. There are areas where siltation is not a problem and new beds can be established and protected from harvest. New beds can either be seeded or will be available for young oysters when natural spat sets occur. Oyster shell is not readily available and some current efforts resort to using hard clam shell as an alternative substrate. The Orvis Oyster Project will reuse shell currently discarded by the many regional seafood restaurants serving oysters purchased out of state. Larger volumes of shell may be available at regional oyster festivals in New England. Shell must be stored out of doors for three warm months at an existing site already established at the University of New Hampshire's Kingman Farm. Collected shell will be used directly in the bay as substrate and in cultivation projects.

The recycling program will involve gaining the cooperation of all the area restaurateurs up and down the coast and scheduling weekly pickups. Robert's Maine Grill of Kittery, Maine, has jumped on board already, and we expect other restaurants to follow. Nick Lapointe of the Home Depot in Portsmouth, NH has provided the five gallon containers and Scott Eldredge of Eldredge Lumber in Kittery, Maine has helped out with the easy open lids. Volunteers will drive established routes and exchange empty containers for full ones. Sources and the number of bushels are recorded. Collected shell will end up at the Kingman Farm for eventual bed restoration by The Nature Conservancy or CCA NH if additional funding from other sources is secured. Scamman's Home and Garden Showplace in Stratham has helped solve the logistical problems.

The project will provide some of the shell necessary for the work and research of Dr. Ray Grizzle of the UNH Jackson Estuarine Lab and a cultivation project led by Ray Konisky of The Nature Conservancy. In the latter, volunteer residents raise oysters in cages suspended from piers until they can be transferred to new beds in the bay. Both individuals were instrumental in early project development.

The CCA NH Oyster Recycling Steering Committee has been charged by the board to oversee and administer the project. Signage, media and outreach, and a kick-off event are being considered. The group meets monthly immediately after the board of directors.

CCA NH is thrilled with this grant from Orvis. This is an opportunity to directly engage local businesses and indirectly engage the public. Great Bay has not been so great, of late. Media coverage will be essential. A good portion of the public is not aware that Great Bay is under considerable stress and, as most scientists agree, may reach a tipping point. An effort to restore oysters and raise public consciousness is essential. An informed public will ultimately influence policy makers and hopefully alter our personal activities and behaviors so that we can all be stewards of a healthy Great Bay.

State of the Estuaries Conference Summary

The Piscataqua Region Estuaries Partnership (PREP) hosted the State of the Estuaries Conference on October 16, 2009 at the Great Bay Gallery in Somersworth, NH. Over 200 people attended to hear from a selection of more than 20 presentations.

Topics included reports on the status and trends regarding the health of the entire Piscataqua watershed including Great Bay Estuary, Hampton-Seabrook Estuary and 52 towns in Maine and New Hampshire. Indicators and methodology contributing to the findings, conservation and management issues, restoration projects, and the effects of global warming were all addressed. Presentations ranged from preparations for a warmer climate with more flooding & drought, to identifying options that should be considered by Seabrook to protect the town from the threat of rising sea levels. Others reviewed the health of oyster, clam, and native fish populations and some identified the challenges of efforts to address non-point source pollution. In addition to mapping conservation areas and looking at land use decision making and municipal environmental planning approaches, there were reports on the mapping of fluvial erosion hazards and development of standardized guidelines for road/stream crossings.

While presenters exhibited passion and commitment to the achievements of PREP goals, their collective message was sobering.

“The environmental quality of the Piscataqua Region Estuaries is declining. Eleven of the twelve environmental indicators show negative or cautionary trends.”

Small victories were reported in the areas of land conservation and marsh restoration, but the overall message was extremely serious as they have been unable to keep pace with development and habitat loss. Toxic contaminants and total nitrogen load have been increasing. Dam removal and habitat restoration may provide beneficial impacts on the populations of diadromous fish, but these species need suitable habitat for spawning and rearing young and are dependent on the health of the watershed.

“The most pressing problems for the estuaries relate to population growth and the associated increases in nutrient loads and non-point source pollution.”

The true success made evident at this conference was the extent to which various agencies were able to communicate and share information in order to achieve common goals. As described in their report PREP is governed by a 27-member management committee comprised of representatives from municipalities, planning commissions, natural resource agencies, watershed groups, conservation organizations, energy producers, researchers, and anglers. PREP is currently working with stakeholders to set priorities and define key actions for a new Management Plan to be released in 2010 that will lay the foundation for meeting new challenges in protecting and restoring regions estuaries and coastal watersheds over the next decade. Noted for its valuable water resources, cultural heritage, and business and industry, this region is important to state and local economies.

A full copy of the report can be viewed at www.prep.unh.edu or by requesting a copy from Dave Kellam at 603 862 3403.

Submitted by Aimee Reeve

CCA NH Says Goodbye to Bob Mitchell

On December 23, 2009 CCA NH and the entire conservation community lost a good friend and colleague, Bob Mitchell. Robert W. Mitchell, Sr., 71, died suddenly at home while preparing to write his monthly column for Hawk-eye Magazine. Bob was one of the founding fathers of CCANH, a passionate fisherman, an extraordinary fly tier, an accomplished writer and a great conservationist. An avid outdoorsman, Bob was a member of the N.E. Outdoor Writers Association; Senior Editor of Fly Fishing New England Magazine; a columnist for Hawkeye Magazine; editor of CCA NH's contribution to Tide Bits; a member of the NH Wildlife Federation and countless other conservation organizations. He was also the long time owner and operator of the Ipswich River Mayfly Company.

Bob and his partner of over 30 years, Joan Fuller, lived in Goffstown, New Hampshire. He will be sorely missed by those of us who were infected by his passion for fly fishing—and for life.

CCA National's Recent Bluefin Tuna Position

Coastal Conservation Association Comments on U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Consideration of a CITES Listing for Atlantic Bluefin Tuna

Following the management decisions made at the November 2009 meeting of the International Convention for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) in Recife, Brazil, the Coastal Conservation Association (CCA) remains firm in its call for the United States to take a leadership role and insist that all international trade in Atlantic bluefin tuna be halted, while hope for a recovery still remains.

Management measures adopted by the member countries of ICCAT at its latest meeting fall far short of the commitment needed to ensure a future for this valuable species, despite a growing international realization that time is growing short to end the overexploitation of bluefin tuna.

ICCAT's own Standing Committee on Research and Statistics (SCRS) issued guidance warning that adoption of a harvest limit of 8,500 tons in 2010 would result in a 70 percent chance that the spawning stock biomass for bluefin tuna would still be less than 15 percent in 2019. Nonetheless, the member countries of ICCAT adopted a 2010 harvest limit of 13,500 tons. Furthermore, the SCRS called for a closure of the Mediterranean during spawning season which was also rejected.

These latest decisions continue ICCAT's well-documented history of ineffective half-measures regarding the international management of Atlantic bluefin tuna and underscore the need to have both the eastern and western stocks of Atlantic bluefin listed on Appendix I to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES). Given the ICCAT track record, the "promise" to adopt measures next year that will have at least a 60 percent probability of moving the spawning stock above the low 15 percent level seems empty. Also, efforts by European nations to eliminate the illegal fishing on the species that caused the liberal 2008 quota to be exceeded by more than 50 percent have yet to show success.

In our previous correspondence, CCA asked that, should ICCAT fail to adopt biologically defensible management measures, the Department of Interior proceed with an effort to list the Atlantic bluefin on Appendix 1 to the CITES, thus prohibiting the international trade in bluefin and extinguishing the greatest motivation to overfish the species. It is clear from the last meeting of ICCAT that its management efforts have again failed the United States, the world and the bluefin tuna. There is no longer any reason to expect ICCAT to end the overexploitation of bluefin.

American fishermen and markets are not responsible for driving bluefin tuna to the edge of extinction, but this country needs to lead the solution to salvage what is left and set it on a road to recovery. Under an Appendix 1 listing, American commercial fishermen will be allowed to market bluefin domestically and anglers will be able to continue fishing within the proscribed quotas and bag limits. We encourage the Department of Interior to proceed with the necessary course of action to list the Atlantic bluefin on Appendix I to CITES and prohibit the international trade in bluefin.

CCA NH Rollover Position

*** Editor's Note: The following letter to the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, states the CCA NH board's unanimous position against a rollover of striped bass commercial quotas. The Commission agreed and defeated the motion.**

Nichola Meserve
FMP Coordinator
1444 Eye Street NW.
6th Floor
Washington, DC. 20005

Re: Striped Bass Draft Addendum II

Nichola,

The Coastal Conservation Association of New Hampshire does **not** support Draft Addendum II to Amendment 6 that would allow the rollover of uncaught commercial quotas from one year to the next. The Board of Directors unanimously and strongly objects to this provision.

If the bass are not present to be harvested in any particular year, they simply are not available for harvest. A rollover precedent is ill-advised. As a recreational fisherman, if I fail to catch my NH bag limit of two fish over 28 inches on a given day because of bad weather or lack of skill, would I be allowed to keep twice that number the following day? I think not. I do not own those fish and neither does the commercial fishery. Striped bass, and every other species, belong to the public.

Given the current status of the striped bass stock, and the just released and undigested assessment, it is premature to even consider a rollover provision, even if you can somehow justify that the commercial fishery should have this advantage. A commercial quota should be set annually and should allow for the inevitable illegal and unreported catch. States that exceed their quota should at a minimum have twice that number deducted from the following year. The stock is undeniably in decline. Let's get serious.

Jeff Barnum
Pres. CCA NH
603 770 3201

\$500 KTP Raffle Tickets available now

CCA NH raises significant funds from the sale of KTP's \$500 gift card raffle tickets. Print the enclosed raffle ticket page, fill out, cut, and send only the stubs with your payment to CCA NH, PO Box 4372, Portsmouth, NH, 03802. If you are receiving this newsletter by regular mail, detach, fill out, cut, and send. Tickets are one for \$5 or ten for \$30. Stubs and payment (cash or check) must be received prior to the drawing on March 27th, 2010 at the Annual Banquet and Fundraiser.

\$500 Kittery Trading Post Gift Card Raffle Ticket
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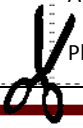
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CCA NH Position on Taylor River Dam Feasibility Study

***Editor's note: The following letter to Mr. Landry, adopted by the CCA NH board, states our support for dam removal. The final decision is pending.**

L. Robert Landry Jr.
Bureau of Highway Design
Room 120
JOM Building
7 Hazen Drive
Concord, NH 03302
RLandry@DOT.state.nh.us

Re: Public Comment on Taylor River Dam Feasibility Study

Mr. Landry,

After reviewing the feasibility study and considering concerns raised by the public at an informational meeting in Hampton Falls, CCA NH supports Option C: Bridge Reconstruction and Dam Removal. Our support for this position is contingent upon all possible assurances that the toxic sediment load currently in the Taylor River Pond is removed so that there will no opportunity for that material to adversely impact the shellfish beds in the Hampton/Seabrook estuary. An assessment to determine the full extent of contamination and the potential for negatively impacting marine species including invertebrates downstream is essential. An assurance that adequate funding to perform all these tasks is a prerequisite to our support for dam removal.

Returning the impoundment to a tidal flow certainly has some negatives. The potential for salt intrusion affecting some shallow residential wells, we understand, will be mitigated by the DOT and cisterns will be built to service the need for fire protection. There will obviously be the loss of a popular fresh water fishing spot, but in truth there are many warm water fishing opportunities in the region. In contrast, there are an extremely limited number of locations on the NH coast where anadromous species can access spawning habitat. The herring run of 100,000 is now barely a pathetic run of 1000 individuals.

The poor water quality exacerbated by ongoing nutrient runoff and oxygen depletion would be remedied. The sediment load and the associated toxic content must be removed. The suggestion that a new dam should be built, leaving that contaminated cocktail in place is shortsighted. A new dam is no assurance that a future catastrophic failure will not flush this load into the estuary. Given the current poor condition of the dam, the "No Action" option is the least desirable and has the greatest risk of releasing the load downstream.

Removal of the dam and conversion of the pond to a tidal estuary when rebuilding the interstate bridge is the preferred approach in our estimation. Sediment removal to a secure location is a must. Protecting shellfish beds in the downstream estuary is essential.

Jeff Barnum
President CCA NH

Coastal Conservation Association of New Hampshire
P.O. Box 4372, Portsmouth, NH 03801

COASTAL CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION OF NEW HAMPSHIRE



Membership Application/ Renewal: Please cut out and send to:

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\$25 Standard Membership– 6 issues of *Tide Magazine*, 4 issues of *Granite Tides*, membership card, window decal and bumper stickers

\$15 Associate Membership– for each additional family member; all Standard member privileges except *Tide Magazine*

\$10 New Tide Membership– all individuals 17 and under receive member privileges, *Rising Tide Magazine*, logo patch and iron on Tshirt transfer

\$100 Membership– your choice of a current CCA Membership print, 6 issues of *Tide Magazine*, 4 issues of *Granite Tides*, window decal and bumper stickers

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