

February 2019



Fighting for Fisherman's Access to Beaches, Ponds, Rivers and Harbors

Falmouth Fishermen's Association
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2019 Board of Directors:

President: Keith Roberts	Newsletter: Steve Ferreira	Vice President : Kevin Downs
Beach Access: Don Hoffer	Secretary: Steve Ferreira	Merchandise: Kevin Griffin
Treasurer: Bruce Bumpus	Herring: Lou Turner	Membership: Open
Saltwater: Brian Curry	Historian : Open	Librarian: Charlie Peterson
Barnstable County League: Rep. Open		Facebook and SM : Mitch Buck
		Freshwater and Tournament
		Director: Open
		Past President: John Dillon

Monthly Meetings:

Meetings are held the first Tuesday of the month. Social hour starts at 6:00 PM with food and beverages available for purchase from restaurant with meeting starting at 7:00 PM.

Location:

Bucatino Restaurant and Wine Bar
7 Nathan Ellis Hwy
North Falmouth, MA 02556

January Speakers:

No meeting was held in January.

Next Month's Speaker

Our February speaker will be Dick Fincher of Phase II Lures. He will give a 20% discount for purchased or ordered items at the meeting. Dick will discuss how lures are made and fished for best results.

2018 Tournament Winners - FFA President Keith Roberts will present Winners of the 2018 fishing tournaments their trophies. Trout was won by Gary Osowick (photo) of Taunton with a 19 inch, 3.2lb brown trout caught in April. Bluefish trophy goes to Bill Prodoz of Pocasset with a 33.5 inch, weighing in at 8.2 lb and the Striped bass trophy goes to Kevin Downs of Falmouth with his 53 inch, 48.8lb catch. Beside bringing home the trophies these three members will have a years' worth of bragging rights. In 2019 all FFA current members automatically will be entered into the three tournaments.

- Trout - Gary Osowick 3.2 lbs 19" Brown
- Striper - Kevin Downs 48.8 lbs. 53"
- Bluefish - Bill Prodoz 8.2 lbs 33.5"

FFA Events

To be discussed at the February Meeting.

Vineyard Wind Events (Offshore Wind Power Company)

January 17-20: Mass Lobstermen's Association Annual Weekend and Trade Show

Vineyard Wind will be sponsoring MLA's annual weekend as part of our efforts to connect with the fishing industry in New England. Representatives from Vineyard Wind will be available during the multi-day event to answer questions about our project and solicit input from fishermen to further inform our project development process.

March 12: Barnstable Public Forum

Join Vineyard Wind and Barnstable town officials for a presentation about Vineyard Wind's construction plans to bring power to shore at Covell's Beach and connect to the Cape's electrical grid in Hyannis. This forum is open to the public. Vineyard Wind encourages area residents to attend to learn more about the project and ask questions.

Merchandise Prices

Hooded sweatshirts \$25

Long sleeve tees \$22

Tee's \$20

Hats \$20

Other Cape Fishing Information:

Barnstable County League Updates

Barnstable County League of Sportsman Scholarship Fund

Purpose: To set guidelines that the Barnstable County League will use to award scholarships to a member club that will fund a student/camper's participation in the Massachusetts Junior Conservation Camp two-week summer program. For kids age 13-17.

Proposal to Reduce Striped Bass Release Mortality

This winter DMF will be proposing to implement two new conservation measures for the striped bass fisheries aimed at minimizing the number of fishes that are killed through hooking and releasing. The proposed measures would prohibit the use of gaffs and mandate the use of in-line circle hooks when using live or cut natural baits.

The Massachusetts recreational striped bass fishery is primarily catch and release. Our anglers release about 93% of all the striped bass they catch. Discards in the commercial striped bass fishery, though difficult to quantify, are also believed to make up a significant share of the catch, especially given the larger minimum size for that fishery. Studies have shown that about 9% of released striped bass will die from the effects of hooking and handling (called release mortality). Given that recent stock assessments have shown that fishing mortality is increasing, we think it is time to institute some broad-based and effective measures to lower the mortality rate and ensure the future health of the striped bass stock.

We have heard from many anglers that feel a no-gaffing rule in the striped bass fishery is a no-brainer. Using a gaff to assist in bringing your catch aboard causes significant injury to the fish and there is often no way to tell the precise length of this fish until it is removed from the water. Given that our fisheries release large numbers of striped bass that are just below the legal size limit, we feel it is irresponsible to continue to allow the practice. Numerous other Atlantic coast states have already implemented such a provision in their striped bass fisheries, including Maine, New Hampshire, Connecticut, Maryland, and Virginia.

The mandatory use of in-line circle hooks is the single most effective way to decrease mortality in striped bass. There are many studies that demonstrate the efficacy of circle hooks in lowering release mortality in striped bass and other species. Deep hooking (i.e., when the hook catches in the esophagus or gills rather than the lip) is the major contributor to release mortality. It has been demonstrated that the use of circle hooks, as compared to j hooks, greatly reduces the incidence of deep hooking and therefore mortality. The latest catch estimate from the revised Marine Recreational Information Program (see page 7) indicates that Massachusetts recreational anglers released almost 13 million striped bass in 2017. If we apply the release mortality rate of 9%, that means over 1 million striped bass died after being released. That's compared to only 300,000 that were taken home and eaten! Clearly the mortality resulting from fishing in Massachusetts can have an effect on the striped bass population. That's why DMF is proposing the mandatory use of circle hooks for anglers using certain natural baits. A study in Maryland found a 90%

reduction in mortality when using in-line circle hooks. Imagine if we could reduce the number of release deaths from over a million fish to 100,000!

DMF will be bringing the proposal to implement these two conservation regulations to public hearing this winter. We seek the public's input on certain aspects of how the regulations will apply. For instance, should the gaffing and circle hook rules apply to the recreational, for-hire, and commercial sectors universally or should some groups be exempt; should artificial lures with bait (e.g., tube and worm) be included? We hope to see you at the public hearings and let us know your opinion. *By Michael Armstrong, PhD, Assistant Director*

Upcoming Sportsmen Shows

- Mass Standish Sportsmen Show is February 2-3, 2019
- Springfield Sportsmen Show is February 22-24, 2019
- Plum Islanders Surfcasters Fishing Show is March 9, 2019 in Newburyport, Ma.
- Worcester County League Banquet is March 23, 2019
- North East Fishing and Hunting Show in Hartford, Conn. Is March 29-31, 2019
- Mass Striped Bass Sport Fishing Expo is March 30-31, 2019 contact Ernie Foster.
- Mass Sportsmen Council Banquet is April 13, 2019