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January 18, 2016

[krootes-murdy@asmfc.org](mailto:krootes-murdy@asmfc.org)

RE: Summer Flounder Regs.

Dear Sir:

On behalf of the Strathmere Fishing and Environmental Club, the largest fishing and recreational club in South Jersey with a membership of approximately 180 members, I am writing to you to set forth our position with regard to the upcoming size limit for summer flounder.

We believe that a size limit of 17 inches extending from Delaware Bay up through the Great Egg Inlet ("GEI") is fair given that this particular area is severely depressed in terms of the paucity of prime female spawning of fish and also based upon the following data.

Historical data over the past 20 years indicates that the average size of summer flounder caught in Cape May County is over 14 inches. April has always produced the largest fish at over 19 inches and by May there is a drop to just under 18 inches which then drops to just over 17 inches in June and then down to just over 13 inches in July through September.

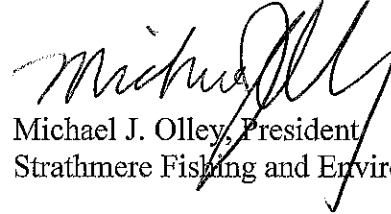
The summer flounder population has seen improvement over the past several years when the size limit went from 13 inches to 17.5 inches. However, since the implementation of the 18 inch regulation in New Jersey, the stock has been deteriorating since approximately 98% of all summer flounder caught over 18 inches are females.

Furthermore, tagging data clearly indicates that 80% of fluke which return after spawning are returning further north than they were originally caught and not to their original tagged area which means that the largest flounder will be in the northern areas of South Jersey.

Accordingly, we are requesting that the Council seriously consider extending the Delaware Bay Line further north up the South Jersey Coast. Alternatively, there should be consideration permitting a recreational fisherman to keep two fluke between 16 inches and 18 inches in their bag limit. We urge you to consider these options given the fact that the economic impact on the industry in South Jersey is significant that a number of marinas and tackle shops have been forced to close recently.

As always, we thank you for your consideration and the work which you do and we urge you to consider our position.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael J. Olley", written over a horizontal line.

Michael J. Olley, President  
Strathmere Fishing and Environmental Club

MJO/snt

cc: Sallie Callahan (via email)