

SFEC Reef Update & Reef Ball Memorials (Randy Roash, Reef Coordinator)

The SFEC is in the process of building a new reef “field” for the Ocean City Reef. Included in this deployment are 15 reef balls. These balls each weigh 750 lbs. and are 4 feet high and measure 4 feet in circumference. Our partners in this deployment are *Destination Steelmantown NJ* and *Northstar Marine*. This latest deployment is scheduled for sometime in mid-2023. There are both individual and family memorial sponsorships available for these reef balls. Three reef balls have already been sponsored for this next deployment. The cost to sponsor a reef ball is **\$1,270**. This includes a plaque that will accompany the sinking of the reef ball. In addition, the SFEC has embarked on a new alliance with *the Sport Fishing Association* and it is likely that they will provide us with a tug boat that will also be sunk as reef material for a Townsend Inlet (TI) Reef deployment.



Both the Ocean City and Townsend Inlet Reefs are a short run from Corson and Townsend Inlets. These reefs make for a good marine habitat and fishing grounds for small boaters along with the local party and charter boat fleets and operators. Reports from Sea Isle City indicate tremendous results through February at both reefs for cold water fish. The Ocean City Reef is home to the Jack Clements Reef, the Bud Lyon Memorial-Joe Coffey Memorial-Frank Smoot Memorial Reefs. In addition, reefs named for current members (Mrs. Thomas and Mrs. Oliver) along with Herb Hollinger, Sr. Memorial Reef. The SFEC has funded and managed over 25 reef programs beginning in 1999. These reefs have been located and charted by NOAA, Home Port Charts, and the NJ Division of Fish & Wildlife. These reefs provide a stable ocean habitat in a time of beach dredging and other ocean floor changes. At the same time, these reef structures provide a feeding and mating ground for over 300 types of fish, crustaceans, shellfish, and even ocean mammals.

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