



The Watch

Capt. Dave Monti, Chairman



The RISAA Legislative Committee’s mission is to provide, in partnership with the Affiliated Clubs, a forum for improving the knowledge and understanding of fishery-related and government issues that affect recreational anglers. An informed membership encourages involvement and advocacy. The Legislative Committee will strive to advocate responsible fishery decision.

The Committee is comprised of RISAA Members and delegates from the Affiliated Clubs. The Committee meets two or three times a year, depending on the number of fishery and/or legislative issues that develop.

Wind Farm Expansion - Several Hundred Turbines Possible

Anglers need to be more engaged with wind farms

Wind farm development is moving forward. Two to three hundred wind turbines are planned to be erected in some of the most fertile fishing grounds for recreational (and commercial) fishing. Three firms have secured leases to build wind farms in federal waters between **Block Island** and off **Nantucket**.

One of the wind farms is scheduled to be built on and around the fertile fishing grounds of **Cox Ledge**, about 20 miles southeast of Point Judith, Narragansett.

Scientists throughout the region (and nation) are studying the environmental, fisheries, marine biology and the socioeconomic impacts of ocean wind farms on the environment, fish and fishing communities. Much of the research will be coordinated and funded by the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (**BOEM**) along with wind farm developers.

From its inception the Block Island Wind Farm (BIWF) with five turbines that became operational last year, was designed and built by Deepwater Wind in part as a pilot project to prepare for hundreds of turbines to be built on the east coast. Much of the ocean wind farm study now underway or being planned for the future will use the BIWF as a model.

Some of the research underway includes the Southern New England Offshore Wind Energy Science Forum being held at the URI Narragansett Bay Campus on December 11-12; the ‘Offshore Renewable Energy Development and Fisheries’

workshop held on November 8-9 by the National Academy of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine on behalf of the BOEM at UMass Dartmouth; a University of Rhode Island study, once again funded by BOEM, on the social and economic impacts of

ocean wind farms (particularly on recreational fishing and tourism); and on November 16 UMass Dartmouth announced that Deepwater Wind Pledged \$1-million as seed funding for a new “Blue Economy Initiative” at University of Massachusetts.

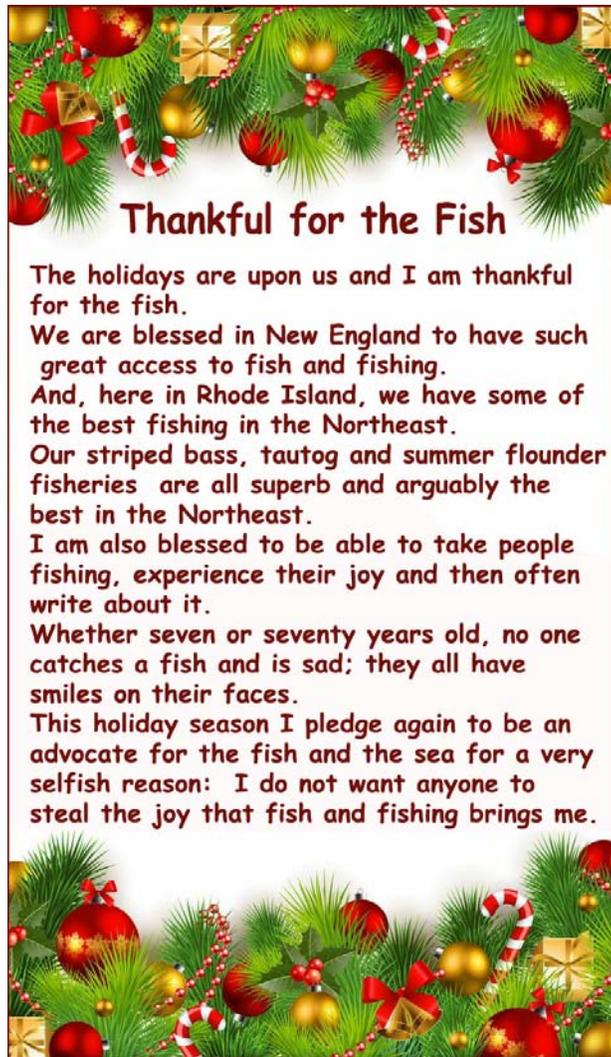
The ‘Blue Economy Initiative’ will examine how ocean industries can coexist and thrive. In the grant announcement **Jeffrey Grybowski**, Deepwater Wind CEO said, “The growth of offshore wind energy in the U.S. provides researchers with a tremendous opportunity to examine this new industry and how it can coexist with other ocean users, particularly commercial fishermen.”

UMass Dartmouth Workshop

BOEM commissioned the Academy of Sciences to do the UMass Dartmouth November 8-9 workshop noted above to garner input on what types of fisheries research might be needed to plan the projects. About 150 people attended including scientists, commercial fishermen and

organizations, RI and MA officials (**Grover Fugate** and **Dave Beutel** from the RI Coastal Resources Management Council), NOAA administrators and BOEM employees.

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Thankful for the Fish

The holidays are upon us and I am thankful for the fish.

We are blessed in New England to have such great access to fish and fishing.

And, here in Rhode Island, we have some of the best fishing in the Northeast.

Our striped bass, tautog and summer flounder fisheries are all superb and arguably the best in the Northeast.

I am also blessed to be able to take people fishing, experience their joy and then often write about it.

Whether seven or seventy years old, no one catches a fish and is sad; they all have smiles on their faces.

This holiday season I pledge again to be an advocate for the fish and the sea for a very selfish reason: I do not want anyone to steal the joy that fish and fishing brings me.