

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 6, 2010

Jane Lubchenco  
NOAA Administrator  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW  
Room 5128  
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Administrator Lubchenco:

I write to both thank you for meeting with me last week to discuss fisheries issues in New York and to follow-up on our productive conversation. As you know, the Long Island and New York fishing industries are fighting through some of the toughest economic times we have seen in generations. High fuel costs, overly restrictive limitations on catch, and shortened seasons (the latter two based on inexact data) have threatened the very livelihood of many New York fishing professionals and the coastal businesses and communities they sustain.

During our meeting, we discussed working together to extend this year's recreational black sea bass season. I mentioned to you that new catch data from 2009 was being finalized and is showing that the New York fishing community did not harvest as much black sea bass as early estimates had shown. Therefore, I believe the New York recreational fishing community could be allowed additional access to the black sea bass resource in 2010.

It is my understanding that in a vote this week supported by all member states of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's (ASMFC) Summer Flounder, Scup and Black Sea Bass Management Board, states will now have the option to extend the 2010 black sea bass season in state waters by an additional 90 days. The proposed new season will run from May 22 through October 11, with an additional open period of November 1 through December 31. The proposal would keep the size and bag limit the same of 12-1/2 inches and 25 fish per angler.

I urge you to follow this guidance and expedite approval of the proposed rule to extend the black sea bass fishery for federal waters in 2010. The black sea bass resource is a crucial fishery for recreational fishing community in New York, as our summer flounder season continues to shrink and many charter boats and for-hire vessels rely on black sea bass fishing for business through the fall and winter. To be sure, give the over-all health of the stocks, allowing an extension of the black sea bass season will provide a well-founded shot-in-the-arm for our struggling recreational fishing sector. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call Anne Fiala in my Washington office at 202-224-6542 or Gerry Petrella in my Long Island regional office at 631-753-0978.

Sincerely,



Charles E. Schumer  
United States Senator

CC: Patricia Kurkul, Northeast Regional Director, NMFS

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