Dear NJMFC Member or Advisor,

Our research team at Rutgers University has been studying a sand ridge near Brigantine Shoal off Atlantic County to better understand its role as fish habitat. The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) is funding this research to help predict fish response to changes such as sand dredging.

Rutgers’ research team has been using bottom trawl, fish tagging, and side-scan sonar methods at this site to obtain field data. We are studying how bottom features across the ridge change over time, such as with storms, and the ways fish associate with them.

We have completed two years of field research, and we invite you to join us to hear our preliminary findings and provide feedback based on your knowledge of fish behavior and the associated fisheries and ecological issues at sand borrow sites.

Details about this meeting:

**When**: Thursday, March 20 from 6:30 – 8:30 pm (sandwiches and soft drinks served @ 5:30 pm)

**Where**: Jacques Cousteau National Estuarine Research Reserve Coastal Education Center, 130 Great Bay Blvd., Tuckerton, NJ 08087

**What**: The meeting will include presentations and Q&A about our preliminary research results (bottom trawling, fish tagging, and bottom habitat mapping), as well as discussion periods about fisheries and ecological issues at borrow sites used for sand dredging.

**Who**: Fishing industry stakeholders (recreational and commercial) and our Rutgers University research team

**If you plan to attend, please RSVP by March 13** by replying to Doug Zemeckis via email ([zemeckis@njaes.rutgers.edu](mailto:zemeckis@njaes.rutgers.edu)) or phone (732-349-1152).*Note that space is limited and will be first come, first served.*

If you have any questions in advance, or if you can’t make the meeting and would like to learn more or provide feedback, then please reach out to our project team.

Thank You,

Doug Zemeckis (Marine Extension Agent, Rutgers Cooperative Extension; [zemeckis@njaes.rutgers.edu](mailto:zemeckis@njaes.rutgers.edu))

Thomas “Motz” Grothues – Project lead Principal Investigator (Associate Research Professor, Rutgers University; [grothues@marine.rutgers.edu](mailto:grothues@marine.rutgers.edu))

Stephen Potts (Postdoctoral Researcher, Rutgers University; [stephen.potts@marine.rutgers.edu](mailto:stephen.potts@marine.rutgers.edu))

Josh Kohut (Professor, Rutgers University; [kohut@marine.rutgers.edu](mailto:kohut@marine.rutgers.edu))

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Douglas Zemeckis, Ph.D. | County Agent II (Associate Professor)

Marine Extension Agent for Ocean, Atlantic, and Monmouth Counties

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