I was shocked at the vote on the fluke season considering the overwhelming support for option 2.

The Council owes those who supported option 2 an explanation.

Thank you,

Philip Welsh

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Last night's meeting was something else!

Bob Rush is incredible! Bend the rules to get his way!

Kevin Wenk? - I have a lot of friends who want Option # 1!

Well, I have two thousand friends who want Option #2!

One of my friends called me after the meeting was over and said WTF!

All of the comments were for Option # 2 and it was voted down!

Does not give inspiration for anglers to give their input since it does not matter!

I am not bitter about the decision, but the process of reaching it leaves a bad taste!

I would like to have the survey info sent to me that you showed how many people voted for the 2 options and where they are located.

On another subject, I have testified I think on two occasions in Trenton that Fish & Wild & Wildlife do NOT belong in the Ag. Dept. Does not make sense so you were not out of line with your comments on this!

The JCAA has always fought that power grab!

JT

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The meeting last night was a farce, you actually voted on option 1 despite a 70% majority desiring option 2. You apparently based this on hersay that "my phone is blowing up from all the small boat owners who want option 1"

The fix was in - all the voters had their heads down ashamed to look at us.

Don't waste our time with surveys and meetings when it doesn't mean anything.

Disgraceful

Nick Calio

Hello,

Could someone please provide an explanation as to why the council choose to go completely against public voting on the flounder season? Why have a public vote/poll if the results are completely ignored.

Thank You

Joe DeLio

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Yesterday’s meeting was a farce. The council completely disregarded the public comments and emails responses which both overwhelmingly supported option 2. Why ask for public opinion when it’s completely disregarded.

The council members should be ashamed of themselves.

Mike Purvin

Jeff. Those of us who dedicate our time to participate in the fishery management process were appalled at the decision reached by a unanimous vote to accept status quo for the fluke fishery, without providing the public an explanation of the decision they reached. Certainly it is their right to vote as they see git but it is quite important that the fishing public feels they are being represented fairly by the NJMFC.

I would suggest the NJMFC provide explanation to the public for the reason for their decision

Dr Harvey Yenkinson

The webinar was nice and the  power  point presentation  was great.  Unfortunately it was a waste  of time as the council  totally disregarded the will  of the  people.  Thanks for your  effort  but  I'll probably  never  bother getting  involved with  something  like this again.                     Sincerely. Linda Haertel Ladies Club  of the Forked River Tuna Club

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Hello Mr. Brust,

IMHO you did a good job pulling the meeting together. However, it was far from enjoyable.

To me at least, it seemed like a total sham to pretend that hosting an open forum for public comment on the 2021 NJ Fluke season meant that the committee cared one wit about those most impacted by the two options available. I believed the deadline for public comment ended Feb 26 anyway.

The suggestion to delay making a decision because of some limitations of the Webinar program not permitting everyone to be heard from was, in my mind, outrageous. Wait for how many more respondents? Every citizen in NJ?

Was it possibly only an excuse to delay making any decision until it was going to be too late to put option 2 into effect? Or a scapegoat for not making the extra effort needed to move away from the status quo? And why kick the decision to split the state with Option 1 for southern and 2 for northern communities further into the future?

As I recall, Option 2 was preferred by a wide majority of around 800 email respondents (probably many speaking on behalf of the members of their organizations) into action. There were far more than expected favorables for Option 2 coming from the south as well. Despite the overwhelming majorities’ preference for option 2 the committee went ahead with an almost automatic unanimous vote for Option 1. Which is what it is but to make that choice to disregard the will of the majority without any explanation or rational being offered as to why, is very telling. Why weren’t stakeholders offered that? It would be nice to know. Maybe Option 1 is the best choice for the species and man alike. What made you all vote that way?!

I am a newcomer to fisheries management meetings but I hope to never be involved with another charade such as this. I wasted 3 hours of my valuable time when it seems the decision was already made and agreed upon by the committee ahead of the actual vote. Maybe I’m wrong but that’s the impression I got. It’s left a very unsettling affect on me. If this sounds too harsh I’m sorry. But you asked for comments.

Joe Albanese

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Ray, Joe and Jeff,

I really appreciate your efforts in conducting a survey about our fluke regulations. I helped spread the word about the survey to people all over the state via the internet. I also talked about it on Rack and Fin Radio while discussing the fluke options with host Tom. P. I also praised the NJBMF and NJMFC at that time explaining that they do their best but their hands are often tied by decisions made by the ASMFC and MAFMC.

Having the survey was an excellent idea that could help in future management decisions. However, many people mistakenly believed that their opinions were going to mean something when the council considered which option to adopt. Option 2 was favored by 73% of the respondents as well as the vast majority of those who spoke at the meeting. The later season had across the board support from all sectors; the private boaters, shore fishermen, the for-hire fleet and tackle stores. Bay and ocean fishermen alike overwhelmingly favored the later season. Even when broken down by counties along our coast, only Atlantic County favored the early season.

One council member argued that the survey and meeting was not fair as it did not allow everyone to speak. It was as fair as it could be under the circumstances. Everyone had an equal opportunity to email their comments in or join the webinar. It is not your fault that some people are technologically challenged. Also, there were far more people who voiced their opinions via email or on the webinar than any other council meeting we ever had.

Another council member claimed that you did the survey to influence their decision. Well isn't public opinion supposed to influence their opinion? Yet another council member claimed his phone was "blowing up" with texts and phone calls from people who wanted to comment. Funny how that was not happening to the other council members. Finally one of the council member said he had a lot of friends who wanted option 1 so he made a motion for that option which passed unanimously. No explanation was given to the public as to why they voted that way.

I've been involved in fisheries management issues for about 40 years and this is the most blatant disregard of the will of the public that I have ever seen. People are really upset about this and believe the decision was made long before the meeting. They have lost faith in the system and are unlikely to get involved in the future. It's a shame that this once highly respected council has lost its credibility.

Lastly, while I have your ear, I truly believe that the BMF does a great job despite the fact that you are overworked and understaffed. Keep up the good work!

Sincerely,

Paul Haertel

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Yesterday’s meeting was a farce. The council completely disregarded the public comments and emails responses which both overwhelmingly supported option 2. Why ask for public opinion when it’s completely disregarded.

The council members should be ashamed of themselves.

May I please have a response explaining the rationale used to make this decision.

Mike Purvin

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I attended the NJMFC meeting held virtually on 3/4/21. I was surprised by the unanimous vote of the council to choose Option #1 regarding the upcoming summer flounder season. The public comments and email results overwhelmingly supported Option #2. What rationale can the Council provide for ignoring the majority voice of the public and casting votes for an option the public clearly did not want. Please explain how the council came to this stunning decision.

Thank you

Mike Purvin

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To Whom It May Concern,

I think it is an absolute disgrace that you ask for public opinion and then totally disregard the information that was sent to you all. Don’t waste my time if you don’t take the information provided from the public and use it. Clearly the vote / response showed that 73% of the public that responded wanted the fluke dates changed to option #2. While only 23% of the vote / response wanted the same dates as last year. It’s about time the members get their heads out of their butts and start using some common sense and listen to the public. This situation even without the public input should have been “Common Sense” to implement Option #2.

Start doing what is right for the recreational fishermen, charter captains and visitor’s to the Jersey Shore.

Respectfully,

Chuck Reed

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Why do you waste peoples time with meetings and Emails etc. when you already know what your plans are for the upcoming season. It's an absolute outrage when the favoring option was 2 and you still went with with the first option!!! It's a fix !!Just like the national election.

Stephen Granieri

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It was with great surprise that I read your committee opted to leave the fluke season remain as is as opposed to pushing the season back as was suggested.

I was even more surprised to see that the committee opted to ignore the fluke fishing season survey results, which overwhelming supported a later season . While I understand not all factors included in your decision are available to the public, it would go a long way to help the fishing community understand if the committee provided it's rational for this decision.

Thanks for what you do

Respectfully

Tom Cavanagh