



RFA & ALLIES SUE TO REOPEN SEA BASS FISHERY - “UNPRECEDENTED” FEDERAL CLOSURE FORCES FISHERMEN INTO LEGAL ACTION

In the midst of the most severe economic crisis since the Great Depression, our federal government has chosen to shut down the recreational fishery for black sea bass for the next six months based on survey data that's been described as “fatally flawed” by the National Academy of Sciences.

The Recreational Fishing Alliance (RFA) and our local industry allies from New York to the Carolinas are fighting back against this unprecedented and unwarranted shutdown of the black sea bass fishery by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). RFA members throughout the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic believe it's a battle that must be fought, regardless of the outcome and have demanded that RFA take action on their behalf. What is at stake is nothing less than our very future as recreational anglers, and the future of our recreational fishing industry.

During the first days of the closure, a grassroots effort resulted in a successful pledge drive of support for legal action. At the same time, a team of qualified fisheries attorneys and industry professionals reviewed NMFS' federal ruling and pored through pages of legal documentation to develop a proper legal strategy. Since the federal closure on October 5, tackle shop owners and party/charter captains up and down the East Coast, along with scores of individual anglers and RFA members who've had enough of these arbitrary federal decisions, have been making donations to the *RFA Legal Defense Fund*, established specifically for issues like this.

It's time we unite and show the federal government that recreational anglers will not tolerate arbitrary and capricious regulatory actions that inhibit our ability to utilize a healthy resource, thus violating the very laws set forth by the Magnuson Stevens Act. You too can support the fight by sending a check today made payable to the “RFA Legal Defense Fund” as follows:

RFA Legal Defense Fund
PO Box 3080
New Gretna, NJ 08224

Please be sure to write "Sea Bass" in the memo of the check and make a notation on the outside of the envelope to the same effect. Your timely response is to the benefit of us all. The Recreational Fishing Alliance will be dedicating all checks made payable to the *RFA Legal Defense Fund* directly towards these legal efforts outlined above. All donations will be tracked individually, from all groups and individual anglers.

The RFA has also set up a special online account through PayPal in which individual anglers can also make an electronic credit card donation. Many of the tackle shops and captains who rely on your valued service have pledged up to \$500 apiece towards the fight - as an individual angler just trying to make an honest stand in a tough economy, whatever donation you can offer towards the RFA Legal Defense Fund will be much appreciated.

Visit www.joinrfa.org and look for the DONATE button on the homepage to support the RFA Legal Defense Fund.

The RFA Mission is to safeguard the rights of saltwater anglers, protect marine, boat and tackle industry jobs, and ensure the long-term sustainability of our Nation's saltwater fisheries.