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GOVERNOR CUOMO UNVEILS “NY OPEN FOR FISHING & HUNTING”

Memorializes Free Saltwater Angler Registry Beyond 2013



Jody Carroll - Wounded Warriors

New York saltwater anglers can continue to fish for free in 2013, and beyond!

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo today announced NY Open for Fishing and Hunting, a plan to streamline hunting and fishing licenses and reduce license fees to support tourism opportunities and benefit sportsmen and sports-women throughout the state. The proposal is part of the 30-day amendments to the 2013-14 Executive Budget and would reduce fees paid by hundreds of thousands of hunters, anglers and trappers while maintaining support for the state’s fish and wildlife programs.

In addition to simplifying the current license structure to foster recruitment and retention of resident and non-resident hunters and anglers

while reducing the number of licenses offered and lowering many the associated fees, the Governor’s proposal will also make permanent a free marine fishing registration, which was scheduled to expire at the end of 2013.

“I know the recreational and economic value hunting and fishing bring to New York State,” Governor Cuomo said. “The sporting community bolsters tourism across the state. According to a national survey, more than \$8.1 billion of economic activity is created as a result of sporting activity in New York. Under my proposal, it will be easier for more New Yorkers and visitors from across the country to take advantage of New York’s rich sporting tradition.”

Read Governor Cuomo’s full statement at

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www.governor.ny.gov/press/02202013-ny-open-for-fishing-and-hunting.

“Members of the Recreational Fishing Alliance (RFA) and New York Sportfishing Federation are especially grateful for the Governor’s efforts to eliminate the saltwater fishing tax in New York, and his announcement today that the marine fishing registration will be permanently free is great news,” said Jim Hutchinson. The RFA managing director and president of the New York Sportfishing Federation explained that the free angler registry replaced a fee-based saltwater license as of 2011, but he said the ‘free’ part of the equation was set to sunset on December 31, 2013. “Our members and marine business owners are thankful for the efforts of those who fought hard in Albany to make sure this fishing tax was finally eliminated for good,” Hutchinson added.

“Hunters and anglers are the foundation of the state’s conservation community, concerned about caring for the state’s habitats, forestland and waterways,” said New York State Department of Environment Conservation (NYDEC) Commissioner Joe Martens, adding that the Governor’s proposal will help “attract newcomers to hunt and fish in New York and ensure that the programs that the hunting and fishing communities enjoy continue to be funded.”

While providing relief to sportsmen and sportswomen, this proposal will ensure that the Conservation Fund remains solvent through the financial plan (State Fiscal Year 2018-19). New York will continue to provide services, programs and projects to boost hunting and fishing opportunities. The State will also be working closely with the conservation community in the coming months to identify projects to enhance hunting and fishing access and improve wildlife habitat.

The full repeal of the saltwater fishing fee was welcome news on both sides of the aisle to-

day. “The salt water fishing license fee should have never been passed in the first place,” said Senator Lee Zeldin (R-Shirley) who fought hard upon taking office in 2011 to secure the original three-year moratorium on the fee in the 2011-2012 state budget. “As Governor Cuomo said at a Freeport press event in August of 2011, some things in life should be free and saltwater fishing is one of them,” Sen. Zeldin said, adding “I commend the Governor for his leadership on this issue and for including an elimination of the fee in this year’s state budget. This is a very positive action on behalf of Long Island fishermen.”

In the official release from Governor Cuomo today, Capt. Tony DiLernia of Rocket Charters and member of the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council added “In announcing the proposal to make the free marine fishing registration permanent, Governor Cuomo is following through on his commitment that some things in life should be free, including fishing in the ocean. This is an example of government providing a service to New Yorkers without taxing for it.”

Saltwater anglers in New York are reminded that while it’s free to register, new federal requirements for data collection in the recreational sector require that you do register before wetting a line in saltwater.

[Click here to go to the free angler registry page at the NYDEC.](#)

About Recreational Fishing Alliance
The Recreational Fishing Alliance is a national, grassroots political action organization representing recreational fishermen and the recreational fishing industry on marine fisheries issues. 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. For more information, call 888-JOIN-RFA or visit www.joinrfa.org.