



June 14, 2013

To:  
Virginia Recreational Fishing Advisory Board Members  
Rob O'Reilly  
Alicia Nelson  
Virginia Marine Resources Commission  
P.O. Box 756  
Newport News, VA 23607

Dear Recreational Fishing Advisory Board Members,

The Peninsula Salt Water Sport Fisherman's Association Inc. (PSWFSA) would like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude for the excellent job you have done representing the interest of recreational saltwater fishermen in the state of Virginia.

We have been evaluating the 2013 budget of the Recreational Fishing Advisory Board (RFAB) and attempting to ascertain fund availability for projects for the current year as well as for any future endeavors. Our estimate is that there will be approximately 1.4 million dollars available for use to benefit the recreational fishing angler for this year (2013), however we expect this to dramatically decrease in 2014 and the years following. As you know, the top two projects that the recreational fishing community supports 100% are the Artificial Reef Program and access projects. With the current budget short falls that many cities are currently undergoing, we doubt that there will be projects submitted by the cities to build or expand existing access projects which leaves the Artificial Reef Program as the top project that the fishing community would like to focus funding on. With that being said, due to the grim budget prospects of future years we would like to encourage the RFAB to allocate \$750,000 dollars of the funds remaining from the 2013 budget to support the Artificial Reef Program while there is an opportunity and funds to do so.

Any allocation of funds would go a long way towards invigorating and expanding the reef and will yield multiple benefits with respect to the Chesapeake Bay and its surrounding ecosystem. It will improve the habitat and allow for increased shell fish growth, improve existing and create new shelter and feeding grounds for fish and much more; bottom line is that a healthier habitat means more fish. Fishing is a vital part of Virginia history past and present, it provides food, jobs and recreational opportunities for the community as a whole. We are hopeful that you will see the benefit and support this effort. If a decision is made to support the project, we would also like to request that the funds allocated by the RFAB to the Artificial Reef Program fund recipients ensure that all allocated monies be spent within 24 months of receipt so that appropriate allocation and expeditious use of funding is best achieved.

Thank you for any consideration regarding this matter.

David Agee  
Peninsula Salt Water Fisherman's Association