



Coastal Conservation Association Virginia

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March 4, 2013

Coastal Conservation Association Virginia

Virginia Recreational Fishing Advisory Board
C/O Jack Travelstead
Virginia Marine Resources Commission
2600 Washington Avenue
Newport News, VA 23607

Dear RFAB Members:

The CCA's Government Affairs Committee has reviewed the proposals submitted for the 2013 and has developed the individual positions noted below.

The omission of specific proposals to expand the state's artificial reefs is a continuing concern. While we applaud recent efforts by VMRC staff to facilitate the efficient deployment of donated materials onto existing sites, we see the need to submit reef enhancement projects as a priority in the 2013 second cycle of the overall RFAB program. We feel no other effort more clearly targets the intent of this fund to directly address the needs of the state's recreational anglers. As we noted in a recent prior cycle: *"we hope the board and commission take the necessary steps to ensure reef development remains on the 'must have' list of critical projects"*.

Multi-Year Projects for 2013 Renewal:

A. 2013 Chincoteague Island Charter Boat Association "TAKE A KID FISHING DAY", Chincoteague Island Charter Boat Association. \$2,088.65. **SUPPORT.** Our comments from a prior cycle still reflect our perspective on these important youth events. *"Proportionately, they provide perhaps the greatest long-term dividends when measured against the relatively modest outlay of funds. They not only expose an ever-growing number of young people to the joy and conservation ethic of sport fishing, but also provide a vehicle with which large numbers of volunteers impart a positive impression on the next generation of Virginians dedicated to the protection of our coastal resources."*

B. 2013 Knights of Columbus Annual Kids Fishing Day (Year 26), \$7,453.13. **SUPPORT.** See rationale in (A) above.

C. 2013 Hope House & Oak Grove Nursing Home Fishing Excursions and Clinics, Great Bridge Fisherman's Association. \$5,350. **SUPPORT.** As we have noted previously, these outings provide many of the same benefits as the youth events, and as such, should be supported by the fund. We have also noted in the past that if the stated amount requested for the T-shirts is deemed appropriate, the board should request the petitioners prominently display the fund as a primary sponsor of the event.

D. 2013 Youth Developmental "Hooked on Fishing" Adventure (Year 6), Virginia Charter Boat Association. \$12,960. **SUPPORT.** While the amount for this cost/request from VMRC has grown significantly over the past three years, the number of participating youth has as well. Even though the majority of the project cost is to come from outside the VMRC request, the board may wish to consider setting a maximum request amount for any single youth fishing/educational endeavor.

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E. 2013 Saxis and Morley's Wharf Fishing Piers Youth Fishing Tournaments (Year 12), Eastern Shore of Virginia Anglers Club. \$2,000. **SUPPORT.** See rationale in (A) above.

F. 2013 Sunshine Children's Fishing Program (Year 11), Portsmouth Angler Club/Sunshine Program. \$7,725. **SUPPORT.** See rationale in (A) above.

Research Projects for 2013:

H. Restoration of Submerged Aquatic Vegetation (SAV) Habitat in Chesapeake Bay and the Virginia Coastal Bays, VIMS. \$148,286. **SUPPORT.** While the title has been changed from "Enhancing" to "Restoration", this long-running endeavor has garnered our enthusiastic support since its original inception. The program's success on the seaside of the Eastern Shore has been remarkable and has been a great investment in improving the all-important shallow water environment. One can only hope that equivalent sustained gains can be achieved throughout similar settings throughout the lower bay. Apparently other state and/or national funds were not available as they have been on some occasions in the past. Still, our comments from prior cycles still reflect our view relative to support from the commercial sector. *".... we continue to feel the commercial sector should bear an equal cost in this and other SAV projects. However, even if commercial funding would arise, those commercial activities deemed 'detrimental' (haul seining, with associated prop scarring or any type of dredging) to this habitat should be prohibited. The lack of such safeguards would not only jeopardize the health of this habitat, but would also curtail any future support for using recreational monies in this regard."*

As always, we appreciate the opportunity to express our views on the allocation of our state's license funds. Additionally, we again urge you to allocate funds necessary to the continued development of our state's reef program. Thank you for your consideration.

Larry Snider
Chairman
CCA Virginia

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