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New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

Andrew M. Cuomo, Governor

Joe Martens, Commissioner

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## **DEC ANNOUNCES SALTWATER FISHING REGISTRY Future Harvest Quotas Based on Number of Registrants**

The Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) today announced all saltwater anglers are required to register in the state's new, no-fee saltwater fishing registry. DEC developed the registry in compliance with recent legislation that suspended the fee associated with the state's marine recreational fishing license for two years. The no-fee registration system will be used by the National Marine Fisheries Service and interstate fisheries regulators to set harvest quotas for marine species.

"New York's angler community plays an essential role in the management of the state's fish and wildlife programs," said DEC Commissioner Joe Martens. "Full participation in the registry by the marine sportfishing community is needed to help ensure New York gets its fair share of the national coastal fishing harvest in comparison with other states."

The new registration system fulfills a federal mandate to develop a database of New York marine recreational anglers to improve federal recreational fishing surveys about the number and size of their catch. This information is vital since it is used to set quotas, size and bag limits, and fishing seasons in subsequent years. DEC anticipates this new data will provide accurate information for future management of the coastal fishery and better integration into federal reporting systems.

DEC reminds anglers that registration in the New York registry is required even if they are already registered with the federal National Saltwater Angler Registry. DEC will automatically enroll all lifetime license purchasers, charter/party boat operators and individuals who purchased a Recreational Marine Fishing License in 2011 in the no-fee registry. Therefore, those license holders do not need to register this year. However, all saltwater anglers will be required to register annually beginning in 2012.

Marine anglers can register by using DECALS, the DEC's automated sporting licenses system. Effective immediately, all anglers 16 years of age and older who take fish from the waters of the marine district, or who take anadromous fish from any waters of the state, are required to register. This requirement is the same as the recently repealed Recreational Marine Fishing License, but is now free of charge. Those fishing from a for-hire party or charter fishing vessel licensed by DEC are not required to obtain an individual registration

To register, anglers can go to the usual outlets for sporting licenses, or register online anytime on DEC's website at <http://www.dec.ny.gov/permits/6101.html>. Anglers can also register by phone by calling 1-86-NY-DECALS (1-866-933-2257).

Participation in the registry is comparable to a license to fish in marine waters. After registering, anglers will be given a card similar to the fishing license the registry replaced. Those registering online should print out their receipt. The registration card or receipt must be in possession when exercising the privileges of the registration. Failure to register or carry a recreational marine license or registry card may subject anglers to enforcement and fines.

For more information, visit DEC's website: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/permits/54950.html>

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