

## PERFECT STORM (from page 1)

I see these storm clouds gathering again, but this time with three fronts. This storm will be far worst with the percent of reduction in business, and I foresee that **half of all the bait and tackle shops from Delaware to Maine will disappear by 2010.** This perfect storm will terriform the landscape that we will no longer find an individual shop that sells only the bait and tackle.

Any one of the three storm fronts would retard business, but the sum of all three in 2008-2009 will have a devastating effect.

### THREE APPROACHING STORMS

The first is the **Big Box Store Squeeze**, a situation caused by the addition of Dick's Sporting Goods, Bass Pro Shops and Cabela's. Bass Pro and Cabela's stores are more like theme parks where you can take the whole family and spend 4-5 hours and still not see everything. It's like going to an outdoor exposition which is open 365 days of the year.

Bass Pro has only been open since mid-November and my sales have already been reduced. It is effecting stores from Warwick, RI to New Bedford, MA.

They will affect stores that sell mid- to high-range tackle up to 40% and tackle shop that only sell bait and terminal tackle to a lesser degree.

The Big Box Stores will eventually have a price war among themselves while squeezing out the mom and pop shops.

The second "storm" is the **Saltwater Fishing License** situation will reduce participation of fishermen, thus shrinking the pie. This reduction will take place disproportionately with shore fishermen. There will be many of these individuals that are at an economic disadvantaged who will no longer fish.

I have collected lots of data and "data mining" on who and how saltwater license will change the demographics. The reduction of gross sale could be as high as 50%. This would affect bait and tackle shops that sell mostly bait and terminal tackle, plus tackle shops that sell higher end tackle to a lesser degree.

Finally, the third "storm" is the **Summer Flounder Fishery Management Plan Fiasco.** It looks like there could be a moratorium (closure) on summer flounder in 2009.

The percent of lures I sell for saltwater is 50% for striped bass and 50% for summer flounder. This would mean I would lose 50% of tackle sale for summer flounder.

Would these same fishermen target another species of fish or just quit fishing? We would need to do a survey to gauge the reaction of these fishermen. You have to wonder why someone who only fishes for summer flounder would purchase a saltwater license, then be told that the fish can't be kept! Add to this the cost of gas nearing \$4 per gallon at the docks.

I can only say a moratorium on summer flounder would have a negative effect on sales but unable to quantify a number at this time.

Any one of these events would be challenging, but the three of these events together will create The Perfect Storm. NOW is the time that you need to patronize the independent bait and tackle shop owners! More than ever our survival depends on it.

**\*See Bucko's Tackle at RISAA Saltwater Fishing Show**

## FISHING SHOWS (from page 1)

Last year, I bought several reels at RISAA's New England Saltwater Fishing Show and saved good money.

Another tip: If you buy more than one reel at the same vendor's booth, they may cut you a great buy instead of losing you to the next vendor on down the line.



**You'll find dozens and dozens of reels to select from.**

It's almost like haggling the price of a new car! Although not anywhere near that type of money you can still save quite a bit over buying during the peak season.

Many vendors also run "show only specials," some of which are really incredible deals. The one drawback is that you may buy something you don't need. So, think ahead of what your actual necessities are and then shop accordingly.

There's nothing wrong with buying a Toya at the show, but it is easy to get overwhelmed, spending a lot of money that you may regret later. All in all have fun!

Take your time roaming the isles. Don't buy the first thing you see. Wait until you have seen *everything*, then you can always head back to the first vendor to make the purchase if you couldn't find a better deal at another booth.

I noticed a lot of booths that sell soft plastics that are for the most part "no name" brands. These are some of the best bargains at the shows! You can easy buy enough shad bodies to last for several seasons at a fraction of the cost of the name brands, and trust me, the fish don't know the difference.

### SIT IN ON SEMINARS!

Take full advantage of what the show has to offer! It's not all about buying goods!

These shows have some great seminars! I would strongly suggest you take a notebook and pen and sit in on the seminars that interest you. You will learn a lot of information that you can use in the coming year. Hey, you paid to get in, so utilize all the show has to offer!

I for one will be doing a seminar at this year's RISAA New England Saltwater Fishing Show. I love the interaction with people, and I am more than happy to answer any and all questions patrons may have. It's really the best time because the pressure of the season is off, and we are there for 3 days, so be sure and talk with these speakers before and after the seminars.

Bring up any questions you may have. It's one of the few times that many pros will be assembled and that's what they are there for!

Take time also to chat with vendors about how there products are made, how they are best used. etc. You can gain a lot of info at the shows and that's what it is all about.

I hope to see lots of people at this year's RISAA show and remember to make the most of the show and your time!