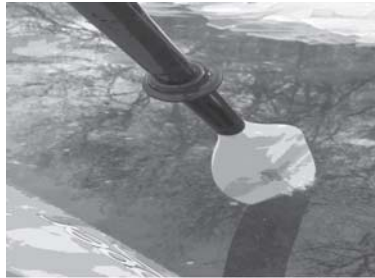


Hard Water. IT'S WINTER, MAN!

by TODD CORAYER



Fishing saltwater water in January is much more enjoyable when it's not frozen. It's hard paddling when the water's hard.



Last week, on such a beautiful and warm Sunday, a friend packed up his kayak, Lew's reels, tackle boxes, snacks, a few 16 ounce cans of emergency "liquids" and his trusty nine-weight, for a few hours on a salt pond.

He needed to get out.

You know that need: a few months of cold winter winds, one big ole' snowstorm under your belt, driveways heaving with frost and an ache to reach for a coffee cup sprayed with cold saltwater.

With a glimmer of hope in his eye, more likely salt on the truck windshield, he zipped past Sunday morning traffic, heading to his own, personal church.

The pond, she was frozen tight. Solid. Done.

Points for effort, extra points for getting out of the ice flow

Thick as hell, no Sunday service that day.

There was a single shot of open water waving in that perfect light morning breeze but way beyond the hard water. He threw a few rocks, even swung a thick branch like a hammer, hoping to chip away enough to maybe launch. The pond answered his query with a gurgle and rolled over and went back to sleep. Back to the truck, driveway, garage and wind he went, smiling, understanding we're on the heels of Spring.



Spring means saltwater fishermen need to renew their federal fishing license.

The state of Rhode Island charges seven dollars for residents and ten dollars for out-of-state fishermen.

We're past the point of arguing the merits of yet another license or bragging about never paying to fish the ocean so here's the good news.

The federal government manages the National Saltwater Angler Registry for fishermen in states which do not have state licenses and that costs \$29.00.

Here we pay only seven.

The Rhode Island Saltwater Anglers Association worked deliberately to ensure monies raised by state license sales, minus administrative costs, are spent directly on projects which benefit saltwater anglers so your monies don't get sucked into that financial quagmire called "The General Fund."

You can register online through [RIDEM's website](#) and Rhode Islanders will also benefit

from a reciprocal policy with Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York and the great state of Maine. That's a lot of bang for seven bucks.

RISAA member Todd Corayer is a lifelong fisherman who lives not far from the Saugatucket River with his wife, who supports his fishing mainly to get him out of the house and a young son who regularly catches more fish than him.

You can follow Todd's articles online at [fishwrapwriter.com](#)

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