



RISAA Events & Meetings

All events and meetings can be found online at www.risaa.org/calendar.html

Mar 23 • 6:30 PM • Board of Directors

Mar 29 • 7:00 PM • RISAA Seminar & Quarterly Meeting

Apr 5 • 6:30 PM • Fly Fishing Committee Spring Meeting

Apr 12 • 6:30 PM • Kayak Committee Spring Meeting

Apr 13-15 • N.E. Fisheries Mgmt Council Meeting, Newburyport, MA

Apr 20 • 6:30 PM • Board of Directors

Apr 22 • 6:30 PM • Legislative Committee Quarterly Meeting

Apr 26 • 7:00 PM • RISAA Seminar

May 3-6 • ASMFC Spring Meeting

May 18 • 6:30 PM • Board of Directors

May 24 • 7:00 PM • RISAA Seminar

Jun 22-24 • 6th Annual 3-Day Youth Fishing Camp, Rocky Point Park

Jun 28 • 7:00 PM • RISAA Seminar & Quarterly Meeting

Jul 26 • 7:00 PM • RISAA Seminar

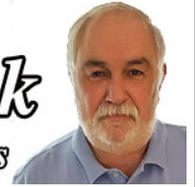
Aug 3-5 • ASMFC Summer Meeting

Aug 30 • 7:00 PM • RISAA Seminar

Sep 27 • 7:00 PM • RISAA Seminar & Quarterly Meeting

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From the President's Desk Stephen Medeiros



Rod Raso: Access advocate with good reason!

THE FISHING LICENSE

When NOAA announced that starting in 2010 there would be a mandatory National Angler Registry of all saltwater anglers on the entire coast. There would be a \$15-\$25 fee for every angler. All funds would remain with NOAA.

But NOAA also said that any state that had it's own angler registry/license would be exempt, but all anglers had to be registered one way or another.

At that time, we immediately began looking into the possibility of getting a Rhode Island saltwater fishing license at less cost, and getting a law passed that the money could only be used for recreational fishing and not go into that dreaded RI General Fund.

In September 2008, **Michael Sullivan**, RIDEM Director at the time, announced the formation of the Saltwater License Study Group, co-chaired by **Bob Ballou** (DEM) and myself (representing RISAA). Representatives from all local fishing clubs were invited to be part of the group.

It's all history now, but yes, we did it. Legislation was drafted, passed, and the \$7 license created at that time, still exists today and ALL funds continue to be used only to enhance saltwater fishing. The federal license now sits at \$25.

MEETING ROD

When the Rhode Island Saltwater Fishing License was being planned, I had the occasion to have a conversation with member, **Gerard "Rod" Raso**.

He had been a RISAA member for a few years, but I didn't really know him.

He was upset that we were supporting a fishing license.



Rod Raso

Rod was a Vietnam veteran and a retired New York City police officer and not afraid to speak his mind!

He told me he was going to go to the docks at Point Judith and fish - after first notifying DEM that he was there. He was going to protest. He said a saltwater fishing license was an infringement of his rights!

Today he said, "You talked me out of this and said that you was working out a deal and that it was better to deal with the Rhode Island government than with the Feds."

Rod didn't go through with his protest plans, and we grew to be good friends. He's sometimes a funny guy, and now has many friends in RISAA and is on our Legislative Committee.

But I want to share Rod's story on why personal rights and public access is so important to him. Please read on...

ROD-VETERAN

"I am no hero," said Rod. In 1966 he was drafted into the army.

"I couldn't stand the thought of being so far away from saltwater and fishing if I

g o t stationed in the middle of the U.S., so I volunteered for the Marines. Being young, dumb and stupid, Vietnam was just another little story in the newspaper."



Rod Raso, 1967

Ten days before my 13-month tour was done, I was **hit for the third time** while on the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ).

In two days, September 21 and 22, 1967, my battalion of 800 Marines sustained 3/4 casualties (dead and wounded).

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