

## TIDE Bits, March/April 2010

As the weather begins to warm, coastal anglers' thoughts turn to fishing Alabama's inshore and offshore waters. When the water temperature reaches about seventy degrees, the speckled trout begin their summertime pattern, and the tripletail start showing up around structure in the bays. Offshore fishing also begins to awaken as Cobia and other species begin their northward migration.

The springtime warming trend also signals a return to CCA's spring fundraising events. Our Lower Alabama chapter begins the season with the Spring Beach Party, held on the second weekend in April. Spring Fling, sponsored jointly by the Mobile and Eastern Shore chapters, will be held on the first Thursday in May, followed by Birmingham's Crawfest the second Thursday in May.

One of CCA Alabama's biggest challenges for 2010 will be recapturing members that were lost during the 2008/2009 economic downturn. A strong membership base is necessary if we are to continue to be a significant force in marine conservation.

Our Government Relations and Marine Science committees are working diligently to revive the successful gill net buyout program in the State Legislature. There are now less than fifty active commercial gill net fishermen in Alabama, and that number will continue to shrink.

Communicating with our members is important, and CCA Alabama is keeping up with a national trend towards using email as the primary means of keeping members abreast of new developments. *Undercurrents*, the CCA Alabama newsletter, is now being sent to members by email. According to Blakeley Ellis, "long lead times, coupled with increased printing and mailing costs, have led us to a decision to use email as the most practical means of communicating with our members." Members are encouraged to send their e-mail address to the state office in order to make certain current information is received. The new Fish Alabama license tag is gaining in popularity around the state. "The tag initiative has the potential to provide a substantial stream of income for marine conservation in Alabama," says Edwin Lamberth, State Chairman. The tag costs \$50 per year, and of that amount \$41.25 is returned to CCA.