The Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) is seeking nominations for its annual Fishery Achievement Award. This prestigious award recognizes individuals, entities, and fishermen in the mid-Atlantic region who exhibit professionalism, diligence, and effort to protect the living marine resources through partnership, public education, and enforcement actions.

The award was created by the Council's Law Enforcement Committee in 1999 and is one of the capstones of the Council's public outreach program.

The 2003 Fishery Achievement Award was presented to the Marine Law Enforcement Region and Special Operations Unit of the New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife Bureau of Law Enforcement. This Law Enforcement Division in cooperation with other law enforcement agencies conducted a long term undercover operation that resulted in indictment of a bar/restaurant owner for trafficking undersized lobster and hard clams purchased from unlicensed harvesters.

Since implementation of the program in 2000, awards have also recognized two Coast Guard units for exemplary enforcement actions and a commercial fisherman for his remarkable commitment to conservation.

The Council will accept nominations for the 2004 awards through July 31, 2004. Anyone can submit a nomination and any person or organization can be nominated. Achievements nominated need not relate exclusively to enforcement. Other examples of protecting living marine resources include education, conservation, and public service. The Council will evaluate the nominations during its October Council meeting and present the award at its December meeting.

To receive a copy of the nomination form, visit the Council's website at: www.mafmc.org. Printed copies of the nomination forms are available by contacting Debbie Donangello at 302.674.2331 x 18.