

MAFAC Recreational Fishing Working Group (RFGW)

SSMC3 – 14836, 3 – 5 pm, April 13, 2011

Meeting Summary

Participants

RFGW:

Lee Blankenship

William Brown

Tony DiLernia

Bob Fletcher

Bruce Freeman

Steven Fukuto

Jason Schratwieser

Craig Severance

Rad Trascher

MAFAC members:

Ken Franke

Patty Doerr

NOAA Fisheries:

Gordon Colvin

Forbes Darby

Russ Dunn

Mark Holliday

Sabrina Lovell

Heidi Lovett

Joshua Stoll

Nicholas Valentini

NOAA External Affairs:

James Chang

NOAA CMSP Program:

Jessica Kondel

Jennifer Lukens

Welcome and updates: Attendance was taken, and all staff introduced themselves. Ken Franke, as chair of the MAFAC Recreational Fishing Subcommittee welcomed all participants. It was announced that Doug Boyd stepped down from the Working Group, due to his appointment to the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council. Staff will be working to identify an individual to fill this vacant seat, as well as the other remaining slots.

National Ocean Policy (NOP) & Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning (CMSP)

Jennifer Lukens, presenting [The PowerPoint Presentation is available on RFGW website at http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/ocs/mafac/Documents/rec_fishing_wg_4_12_11_clean_lukens.ppt]

A few explanatory notes: Slide 5 presents the nine National Priority Objectives (NOP). The four in blue to the left address how the Federal Government is going to reorganize what we do to work on NOP issues. The other five in green to the right are areas of special emphasis.

CMSP is a planning process, based on sound science (the What). It identifies areas most suitable for various types or classes of activities (the How). Practically, it provides the process for doing smart management (the Why). There are no regulations associated with CMSP, rather it is a planning process that weaves through the 140+ federal regulations already in place.

Fishery Management Councils (Councils) will not have an obligatory a seat on the Regional Planning Bodies (RPB), but each RPB is required to develop a formal consultation process to ensure engagement between the RPBs and Councils.

How Recreational Fishery interests can engage will be through: 1) the Council consultation process, and 2) RPB stakeholder engagement processes.

National level activities include:

- National workshop and simulation exercise (June 2011)
- Formation of the Governance Coordinating Committee (GCC)
- Formation of RPBs
- Strategic Action Plan Development- comments can be submitted through April 29 on-line
- National Information Management System and Prototype Data Portal

Questions

Craig Severence : I'm in Hawaii. For both Alaska and Western Pacific regions, do indigenous people have formal recognition?

Response (Lukens): In the framework, only formal tribes are recognized, but federal agencies are actively working to reach out and engage indigenous communities.

Response (Chang): From External Affairs – all non-federally recognized tribes are flagged to be engaged. There is authority provided to the GCC to create committees and subcommittees and the thought is that indigenous peoples to be engaged that way, as well.

Tony DiLernia: How will competing interests be resolved?

Response (Lukens): The National Ocean Council (NOC) is drafting language regarding a dispute resolution mechanism. If an issue cannot be resolved regionally, it can be elevated to the NOC.

DiLernia: In the example of FERC, they are not obligated to engage in the dispute resolution process.

Response (Lukens): True, but the idea is to bring people together, discuss in advance, identify areas needing protection, share the science and have it on the table, so that when a permit issue arises, decisions will have been made in advance.

Bruce Freeman : You mentioned data consolidation? It will not be an easy process.

Response (Lukens): Agreed. There are a lot of available data, but not always in compatible formats.

Since last summer, IT architects have been convening to design a robust system, identifying what the metadata would look like and how it will be accessible to all. This is not a small undertaking, but there is an effort to get an initial portal stood up by end of summer/ early fall. It's a work in progress. It is not necessary to capture all the data in a central location, but link to it where it exists. More information can be provided.

Bruce Freeman: It would be tremendous, when it becomes available to the public.

Mark Holliday: How might MAFAC inform the process?

Russell Dunn: It seems there are multiple avenues of communication available to the recreational community. When plans are out for comment, having as much warning as possible will help private citizens to comment in their free time.

Response (Chang): There will be formal entry points with the RPBs, when comment periods are open, etc. There are also informal entry points, such as with the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ), speaking directly with the principles, through the Under Secretary, and through Eric Schwaab. RFWG members should take advantage of all avenues to ensure your issues and concerns are heard.

2011 Marine Recreational Expenditure Survey

Sabrina Lovell, presenting [The PowerPoint Presentation is available on RFWG website at http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/ocs/mafacc/Documents/rfwg_presentation_on_2011_expenditure_survey.ppt.]

NOAA has legislative mandates and collects data to help provide background information to compare before and after disasters. Data are used by Councils, NOAA, NMFS, research for better methods, NGOs, academia, and the recreational community itself. In 2011, NMFS will be conducting the survey for the second time.

Sabrina described all aspects of survey and provided sample results and how data are analyzed (please see presentation slides). Then she asked the group "How can we work together?"

Bob Fletcher: Discussed a data issue for California. Data may be skewed if NMFS is relying on sport fishing. Whether the CPF fleet passengers have California licenses, may determine whether their information gets captured (using CA license frame).

Rad Trascher: What you have described seems very comprehensive, but how will you take into account the oil issue in the Gulf and its impacts.

Response: That is a concern, particularly since there are lots of entry points in Louisiana, and there is so much waterfront property. The current efforts hope to get a very good cross section of people. However, to the extent that activity is down due to spill, there is not much we can do.

We had discussion with the American Sportfishing Association about doing panel studies, but now we are in the middle of the survey effort and cannot change.

Rad: We could facilitate reaching members via email to add to intercept, if that helps.

Jason Schratwieser: Why was the charter sector in Hawaii omitted?

Response: The survey that the state of Hawaii conducts for NMFS omits the charter industry. Hawaii is different, and our NMFS scientist on scene has gotten some in the charter industry to hand out surveys, but it will not be as comprehensive. They have been very resistant. Maybe you can help us convince them? We believe a lot of money is being spent there, but cannot capture those data.

Bruce Freeman: Are dock fees and insurance included in the survey?

Response: Yes it is on there- in the boat question.

Question: Using 4-wheel drive vehicles is very common. Is this captured?

Response: Off-road vehicles are included in the vehicle question.

Mark Holliday reiterated the information on the slide that lists ways you can be involved. Sabrina noted that they did a press release, and there have been some responses with calls from the media and interviews with newspapers. But we still need to publicize it better, so if you have ideas on who/how we can spread the word even better, she welcomes that.

MRIP Update

Gordon Colvin, presenting [The PowerPoint Presentation is available on RFWG website at http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/ocs/mafacc/Documents/rfwg_mrrip_april_2011.pptx]

Our plan included calling on members of the Work Group on specific workshops and projects. We've done some of this, and we plan to do more and thank you for your volunteering.

There will be monthly news casts in the future. One was sent out about 2 weeks ago, and it will continue. Exemption process has been completed for most states – 25 of 29 are exempt. Gordon is working on exemption designation for New Jersey and DC. Tentatively, around May 1, the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) will have a program in place in New Jersey, and we hope to designate exemption soon thereafter. New York will remain ineligible, but Maine enacted a mandatory, no fee registration. Striped bass endorsement might be repealed, but should retain its exempted status. The Federal Registration is \$15.

Eighteen funding proposals are being reviewed and one is for a multi-frame, effort-based effort. There was a "Timeliness Workshop" last month in St. Petersburg. There is a lot of interest for more timeliness of catch data use inseason. Some members of workgroup did participate (thank you!), and a key outcomes summary will be up on the website soon. Final project report will be done in the summer.

Gordon reviewed the National Research Council concern about bias in Marine Recreational Fisheries Statistics Survey (MRFSS). The list of potential biases are in the presentation slides. A team developed a new estimation method to address bias. The same team identified changes to the sampling design, and it has been field tested in North Carolina. The new method has been extensively reviewed and is being adopted. Estimates for 2011 data will be using new method, and it will provide retrospective assessment back to 2003. Now, the same team is looking at survey designs in other parts of the country as well.

Gordon asked the group, What do you need from us? Talking points, project updates, other??

Tony DiLernia: Will MRFSS and new estimation method need to be done side by side?

Response: No, since it can go back to 2003 and reassess the old data. The North Carolina pilot was done side-by-side, those results will be compared. In some other instances it will be compared, other instances, not. NMFS has planned to implement improvements as they come onboard. So, it is an ongoing process.

Russ Dunn: There is not a point when a switch will be thrown – it's more an evolutionary process, as pieces are finalized and made ready, they will be used.

Marine Recreational Engagement Initiative - Year in Review

Russ Dunn presenting [PowerPoint Presentation is available on RFWG website at http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/ocs/mafacc/Documents/year_in_review_barotrauma_workshop.pptx]

What should be in institutional plans (slide 7)? Russ is looking for input from groups like MAFAC and the RFWG on national level priorities as well as regional plans.

Tony DiLernia: Did Dr. Lubchenco tour the Bass Pro and IGFA Hall of Fame facility? I think that was a good idea.

Response: I think she was quite impressed at the magnitude of the Miami boat show.

Tony DiLernia: Well done. I think decision makers need to see that recreational fishing is a lot more than a six pack of beer and a row boat.

End meeting: 5:03