

September 8, 2014

## Discussion On Saltwater Recreational Fisheries Policy

I would like to comment that I support the findings and goals that The Commission on Saltwater Recreational Fisheries Management has put forward in their Vision for Managing Saltwater Recreational Fisheries.

(Policy Scope)

To me the meaning of recreational fishing means just that it is the act of fishing for recreational purposes and nothing else. It means to me the act of fishing within the ethics set for the fishery in bag limits and closures.

The activities that I think make up recreational fishing are all of the range of activities that does encompass a whole lot of activities and segments within the fishing community. There is a need to add to the list recreational spearfishing and crawfish and tropical fish collection within the recreational diving activities also.

The effect of having recreational fishing defined in a standardized wording would be helpful this way a fisherperson would know the said meaning no matter where they have fished within the area of the NMFS or States boundaries, this would make for a clear manner without any confusion to the word recreational. Which should mean the term that is used to define the said meaning should be just that meaning that the word recreational fishing means just that one that states that the angler or diver or other listed person would act as a true recreational fishing pastime and not to be engaged in any back door fish sales under this said meaning of recreational fishing.

(Possible Policy Goals-Overview)

(Draft Goals #1 Through #4) These goals which are listed by NOAA Fisheries own practices with input from recreational non commercial fishing communities.

IN answer to question 1: They are sound and appropriate for a national policy one has to wonder why these said goals were not in place from start within NOAA Fisheries, see why so many recreational anglers had felt that they were left out of the process and had a backrow voice when it came to management of their fishery.

In answer to the question 2: I cannot think of another goal at this time but there should be a placement of a goal to be able to act upon a said parts of these goals if it is found out that additions are needed in the future.

(Draft Goal #1: To foster and enhance a sustainable, healthy, and diverse recreational non commercial fisheries and public access to them.

(1.A. Managment)

In answer to question number 1: I feel that there should be a realistic funding source set up for enforcement of set goals. I have seen enforcement funding cut to the bone while it is not only expected of them to enforce and patrol vast areas that they are expected to oversee in their duties as enforcement agents. They are doing a great job through their dedication and hard work in the field, one can only imagine their enforcement with proper funding for resource enforcement set up as one of the goals. I agree with all the suggested ideas that were put forward to NOAA Fisheries.

In answer to question number 2: I believe that these considerations should be incorporated into policy principles through public workshops and comment period open to all recreational anglers by NOAA Fisheries. This way the anglers would be involved within the workings of the said project, this way they would know that they are listened to and would feel that they have a stake in the process as recreational anglers. Only then when all comments are heard and acted upon should NOAA Fisheries put in place recreational fishery policy principles.

( 1.b: Resource Conservation and Enhancement.)

In answer to question number 1: This is a very important factor in the workings of recreational fisheries with the support of the recreational fishing public at large to feel comfortable and secure that their voice is heard on this matter. I believe that the suggestions shared to NOAA by the Commission on Saltwater Recreational Fisheries Management are sound and should be included to the said policy and also be open to other sound and knowledgeable suggestions on this policy.

In answer to question number 2: I believe as above it should be vented by the recreational fishing public at large through workshops and meetings and a open comment period for input to the policy at hand. Then after thorough review of said policy by the recreational public at large it should be acted upon also to be able to act on matters at large if needed and asked for by the recreational fishery sector.

(Draft Goal # 2: Integrate saltwater recreational /non commercial considerations throughout NOAA and the federal marine fisheries management system.)

This answer to question number 1 of this topic is a very important issue of the workings of NMFS fishery co-management with states within their area. In the FL Keys area we have seen this issue come into play in difference on bag limits between the two management systems. This action of this said goal would clear this matter up. There is a need to address the area of the FL Keys waters and place it into its own sector within the scope of NMFS areas, due to the fact that the area is within the National Marine Sanctuary System under NOAA and has areas set aside to limit their usage in many ways. Recreational Anglers view these areas as no take zones in which they feel that they are looked upon to benefit other areas of NMFS and FL waters without clear and just recognition within the body of the Commission's Council.(Possible Policy Goals in Detail as Fishery Management Within and Outside of Sanctuary's Boundaries.)It would also help in the fact that more trust would be felt by the recreational anglers towards NMFS on their management efforts. I feel that the suggestions put forward by the Commission on Saltwater Recreational Fisheries Management on this issue are all relevant to this matter and should be acted upon.

In answer to question 2, these issues should be incorporated within the scope of management issues of the policy at hand for this would be one of the defining policies that could and should be put into placement of goals of management of the marine fishery.

(Draft Goal Number Three) Encourage Partnership, Engagement and Innovation

The answer to this question 1 is the fact that this would help in the building of trust towards NMFS by the recreational anglers at large. Many anglers have felt that their knowledge and skills as recreational fishery were put so to speak at the back of the room. This goal would bring them to the front of the room and give them a real incentive to become active as a true partner and not the step child they have been within NMFS. The four suggestions given to you by the Commission on Saltwater Recreational Fisheries Management would go a long way into setting this goal up with any other sound and needed input on this matter.

The answer to question 2 is that I feel this matter should and would go before the public venting process with public workshops and open comment period. Which could be held as one workshop to cover all said issues at large. Then you could combine this draft goal with the next goal number 4 due to the fact that they would have the same effect and outcome.

(Draft Goal Number 4) Enhance Transparency, Follow-Through, and Continuity of Action

The answer to question 1 on this topic is that I feel that this is a most important follow up to the draft goal number three and should be put into place with draft goal number three. The three suggestions that you have gotten by the above Commission are well thought out and sound and should be placed within said draft goal. The long-term funding of recreational programs could and should include funding for enforcement, for within the FL Keys National Marine Sanctuary has taught us that one can make rules but said rules are worthless without proper enforcement of said rules and laws.

In answer to question number 2: This is a complex issue for it is by far one of the most important issues at hand for NOAA Fisheries to follow through on and be seen as a willing and open agency to the recreational non-commercial anglers.

Thank You:

Richard Grathwohl