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NOAA Fisheries Saltwater Recreational Fishing Attitudes and Preferences Survey Preliminary Results

Introduction

In the fall of 2012, NOAA Fisheries initiated a nationwide survey of saltwater recreational anglers to enhance our understanding of recreational fishermen's perceptions, management preferences, and motivations. Undertaken as part of NOAA Fisheries' Recreational Fisheries Engagement Initiative, the survey will provide managers with information to better understand and more easily align decision-making with constituent preferences, gauge angler expectations, and create a baseline against which to gauge future management performance when complete.

Over 14,000 surveys were randomly distributed to active recreational fishing permit holders in continental coastal states and Alaska beginning on February 11th, 2013. Recreational fishery participants and managers in NOAA Fisheries' Pacific Islands Region requested a delay in sampling in that region, which was accommodated.

The data summarized below are nationally aggregated frequency distributions from partial results (4,110 returns) for a few highlighted survey questions, to provide participants in the Managing Our Nation's Fisheries III conference a sense of the data being returned. All results are preliminary, based on limited returns, and subject to change. Additional returns are expected through FY2013 with detailed analyses to follow. Final results will be shared with stakeholders, fishery management councils, commissions, and other interested parties.

Threats to the Marine Environment

The survey asked respondents to rank the severity of 14 individual threats to the marine environment (e.g., climate change, non-native species, etc.).

The following were identified as severe or moderate threats to the marine environment by the greatest percentage of respondents in the initial results: overfishing as a result of commercial fishing activity (88%), industrial pollution (86%), and habitat loss (79%).

Conversely, the following were identified as 'not a threat at all' or 'not very severe threats' by the greatest percentage of respondents in initial results: alternative energy (67%), shipping (51%), and overfishing as a result of recreational fishing activity (48%).

For more information on the NOAA Fisheries Recreational Engagement Initiative please check us out at:

www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/management/recreational/