

NOAA Fisheries National Saltwater Recreational Fisheries Summit Report to Council

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**NEFMC
Meeting
*April 18, 2018***



What: A facilitated summit to focus on improving opportunity and stability in recreational fisheries

Who: Participants from a diversity of regions and perspectives, including anglers, charter boat operators, tackle companies, managers, research institutions, and others

When: March 28-29, 2018

Where: Arlington, VA

Expected Outcome: A summary report





Objectives:

Share information and perspectives within and across regions about innovative management alternatives and approaches, uses of electronic data collection and reporting, socioeconomic, and conservation actions to improve opportunity and stability in saltwater recreational fisheries.



Identify opportunities for collaborative actions that improve opportunity and stability in recreational fisheries.

Discuss implementation strategies and solutions to overcome challenges and seize opportunities.



Topics:

1. Innovative Management Alternatives and Approaches
2. Socioeconomics in Recreational Fisheries Management
3. Angler Engagement in Collaborative Data Collection and Reporting
4. Expanding Recreational Fishing Opportunity through Conservation

For each topic:

Panel presentations and discussion as a large group, then
Break-out groups by region, and
Full discussion as a large group

Lessons Learned:

1. **Compliance rates improve when reporting is mandatory rather than voluntary.** For example, Mississippi has mandatory reporting with a 86% reporting compliance rate. Florida has voluntary reporting and out of 3 million trips only 350 trips reported.
2. Sec. Ross' presentation highlighted the **value of the recreational fishery in 2016 supported 439,000 jobs, \$374 billion, and 2% GDP.** These figures stress the importance for **accurate data** through electronic reporting and the need for **validation** in the data.
3. During the **MRIP** presentation, we learned about the new calibration **changes expected in July** and how it is going to be handled with the **possibility of allocation changes in the future.**
4. Finally, it was interesting to **learn what other states are doing.** One example of this was in Galveston, Texas. Recreational **charter boat fishermen were purchasing commercial quota**, then taking people fishing, and selling them fish. It was interesting to learn that MSA has provisions that allow this.

Lessons Learned:

1. Alan Risenhoover's discussed **flexibility already built into MSA**. Some of the **alternative approaches** to managing the recreational community identified were conditional AMs, carryover, multi-year averaging, risk policy, multiyear ACLs for stability, mixed fisheries management. We should consider these approaches.
2. **Electronic reporting (ER) potential** in the recreational community is **different across modes**. Aside from catch estimates, there are other data sources that can be self-reported by the community like biological data or socio-economic data. ER will probably not replace MRIP, but may supplement it. **Validation** will be important for ER to be used for catch estimates.
3. **MRIP data** is used by **managers** in a way that it was not designed to be used. The data is valuable on a broad coastwide scale, but when we use it to manage by sector, or state, or wave and also rare event species, we are **asking a lot out of the data**. We should think about how we use the catch estimates produced by MRIP when developing recreational measures.
4. Aquaculture was discussed several times. It seemed to get support **from the Secretary and undersecretary**. Secretary Ross also mentioned a business minded approach with a focus on reducing regulation. Councils should be aware of this **policy direction**.
5. **Trust and communication** was listed as an area the recreational community feels the agency and the councils need to improve. **Use socio-economic data more in the decision making process**. At the same time, **buy-in** when collecting socio-economic data **from recreational fishers is needed**.

2018 Council Priorities:

Address allocation issues if raised by new MRIP data

Get input on different ways to manage recreational fishery in light of highly variable catch estimate: for example, consideration of catch error estimates under MRIP, and error in bioeconomic models used to determine measures

Scope limited entry in the groundfish party/charter fishery