

December 7, 2013

To: Samuel Rauch
Acting Assistant Administrator for Fisheries

From: Ken Franke, Chair
Recreational Fishing Subcommittee of MAFAC

Subject: White Paper on Recommendations for MSA by the Recreational Fishing Working Group (RFGW) and vetted through the Recreational Fishing Subcommittee

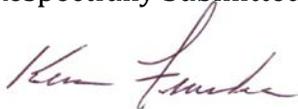
In mid-2013, MAFAC Chairman Rizzardi assigned the Recreational Fishing Subcommittee and Recreational Fishing Working Group to engage in an exercise, post MONF III, to help identify the motivations of recreational and non-commercial fishermen; common factors, goals, and management objectives of these sectors; and specific legislative, regulatory, and policy changes needed to achieve these goals. The white paper, which accompanies this memo, was created by the RFGW in response to the terms of reference outlined in the directing document received from NOAA Fisheries (Attached).

It is important I mention this white paper does not reflect a broad consensus viewpoint of MAFAC. It reflects only the opinions of a more narrow but national group of recreational fishery stakeholders comprising the RFGW.

The white paper was the product of many hours of work by the national membership of the RFGW (including the Pacific Islands). It was vetted through the Recreational Fishing Subcommittee and returned for final development with comments and questions to respond to. The final document was presented for information to MAFAC by the Recreational Fishing Subcommittee at the December 4, 2013 MAFAC meeting. The document is now being transmitted on behalf of the RFGW to NOAA Fisheries Leadership as per the original assignment. The contents will also be used by the developers of the Saltwater Recreational Fishing Summit to target key points of concern.

We respectfully hereby forward this white paper to the NOAA Fisheries Administration so you can understand the national perspectives of the wider recreational fishing community, as represented by the broad-based RFGW membership.

Respectfully Submitted,



Ken Franke

Attachment

From: **Samuel Rauch - NOAA Federal**

Date: Tue, Jul 9, 2013 at 12:54 PM

Subject: Request for the MAFAC Recreational Fisheries Working Group

To: Keith Rizzardi, Ken Franke, Mark Holliday

Dear Chairman Rizzardi:

The recreational fishing community regularly emphasizes that their motivations and interests differ fundamentally from those of commercial fisheries and they, therefore, should be managed accordingly. Anglers cite motives such as enjoyment, spending time on the water, catching a few fish, etc. versus maximizing landings/profit-making, respectively, as the basis for the request.

When asked what it means to be managed differently within the context of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, responses are often broad and center on the concept of securing additional opportunity to access the resource. Typically, they lack sufficient detail in terms of specific management goals or objectives sought or needed legislative, policy, or regulatory changes to allow for a practical targeted response.

Recognizing the expertise and personal experience embodied by the MAFAC Recreational Subcommittee and Recreational Fisheries Working Group (Working Group), NOAA Fisheries requests MAFAC to consider utilizing the knowledge contained therein to bring clarity to this important issue. NOAA Fisheries has prepared a draft exercise for your consideration (attached). It asks for assistance in defining key substantive differences between recreational and commercial sectors, commonalities between recreational fishermen e.g., policy and management goals and objectives, and specific legislative and policy changes necessary to achieve the aforementioned.

NOAA Fisheries will provide the Subcommittee and Working Group with background materials, including preliminary results of the recent National Angler Opinions and Perceptions Survey and others. NOAA Fisheries can also provide access to webinar and conference line services as needed. The results of this project would benefit the Agency during reauthorization of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA) and the on-going review of MSA National Standard One. Attached is a detailed description of the project which we hope to see completed in the Fall of 2013.

If you would like to discuss this request, need additional information, or have questions, please contact our National Policy Advisor for Recreational Fisheries, Russell Dunn, at [727-551-5740](tel:727-551-5740) or by email (Russell.Dunn@NOAA.gov).

Sincerely,

Samuel Rauch

Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs,
performing the functions and duties of the Assistant Administrator for Fisheries
National Marine Fisheries Service/NOAA

Recreational Fisheries Management Exercise
Timeline and Tasking
July 2013

Purpose

NOAA Fisheries would like to directly engage MAFAC and the MAFAC Recreational Fisheries Working Group (MAFAC RFWG) in developing a white paper to: 1) inform the recreational engagement initiative, 2) assist in preparing for re-authorization of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, and 3) provide input to NOAA Fisheries regarding revision of the National Standard 1 guidelines.

Background

During regional discussions and Managing Our Nation's Fisheries III, recreational/non-commercial fishery participants emphasized that their motivations and interests differed fundamentally from those of commercial fisheries and, therefore, should be managed accordingly. When asked what this means within the context of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, responses were often broad and centered around the concept of securing additional opportunity to access the resource. Typically, responses lack sufficient detail in terms of goals or preferred management approaches to enable development of policy or management proposals.

Some see the assertion of fundamental differences as intuitive, *e.g.*, experiential versus profit driven; others view this perspective as inaccurate since both are resource extractive. While changing, federal fishery managers typically rely on traditional management approaches aimed at the latter.

These disparate perspectives highlight the need to better understand the goals and objectives of recreational/non-commercial fisheries. This understanding can then inform management choices to better achieve the objectives.

The Challenges

Drawing on the background materials provided, as well as the experience and expertise of the MAFAC Recreational Fisheries Subcommittee and Working Group, please address the following challenges.

1) On the surface differences between commercial and non-commercial fisheries may appear relatively easy to describe (*e.g.*, outdoor social experience versus efficiency and profit margins) However, the analysis and choice of appropriate management policy and tools to address fishery issues to the satisfaction of each quickly becomes complex when considered at the fishery management plan (FMP) level.

Exercise 1.

From the perspective of recreational/non-commercial fishermen, please identify and concisely describe the key differences between the recreational, non-commercial, and commercial sectors which you see as most important for federal managers to understand in developing policy and regulation. For example, this could be motivation, economic contribution, social importance, scale of fishery, ability to target species or to mitigate fishing mortality rates. There are no prescribed parameters.

2) Where differences exist between recreational/non-commercial and commercial fisheries, they also exist between recreational/non-commercial fisheries as well. There is no such thing as a typical fishery or fisherman. The expectations and goals of anglers pursuing halibut may differ substantially from those pursuing marlin, e.g., high encounter rate and fish in the cooler versus low encounter rate and tag and release, respectively. This may be true for fishing opportunity as well, such as year-round fishery for resident species versus condensed fishery based on seasonal availability. Underlying these superficial differences are commonalities shared by recreational/non-commercial fisheries which are fundamental to the nature, goals and objectives of recreational/non-commercial fishermen everywhere.

Exercise 2.

In light of the results of Exercise 1, the ways in which recreational fisheries are currently managed, the results of the national angler perceptions survey and your expertise, please identify and describe the common factors, goals, and management objectives shared by recreational/non-commercial fishermen. For example, common factors might include motivations; common goals might include maximizing access to the resources (as defined by you); and common management objectives might include maximizing encounter rates. These are only examples and should not be viewed as constraining. Please be as specific as possible. For example, if motivations are a common factor, please detail the underlying motivations to the extent possible (spending time with friends, fish to eat, etc.)

3) Understanding the perceived differences between commercial and recreational/non-commercial fisheries, and the commonalities which bind recreational/non-commercial fishermen is essential to enable management to be more responsive to user needs. Because many management concerns (e.g., exceeding quota) and potential solutions (e.g., reduce season length) are common to commercial and recreational/non-commercial fisheries, managers often are frustrated in trying to identify solutions which satisfy all involved parties. More direct user input is necessary to improve recreational/non-commercial policy and management success.

Exercise 3.

Drawing on the results from Exercise 2, please describe specific feasible recommendations to achieve 2-4 of the common goals and objectives. If achievable under the MSA, taking into account current statutory requirements such as preventing overfishing and implementation of annual catch limits/accountability measures, please identify necessary policy or regulatory changes. If achieving them requires changes to the MSA, please identify necessary legislative changes. Identification of specific regulatory, policy, or legislative changes is the goal to help facilitate an effective response.

Exercise 4.

Reviewing the results of the previous exercises, please identify suggested agenda themes/topics for the 2014 National Saltwater Recreational Fisheries Summit. Finally, are there additional specific policy, regulatory, or management recommendations, or other actions not identified in the previous exercises necessary to better accommodate the values and interests of recreational/non-commercial fishermen?