

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
Saltwater Recreational Fisheries Town Hall
August 8, 2014

Input on Scope:

- Appropriate to recognize the diversity of the community and segment out industry, shore-based, for-hire, etc.
- Who is this policy directed to? All those who fish in the EEZ. But also, it's about the collective benefit of a well-managed fishery for all saltwater anglers.

Input on draft goals:

1. Foster and enhance sustainable, diverse, and high quality recreational/non-commercial fisheries and public access to them.

- Protect against exclusion. Absent clear science to the contrary, the policy should state that federal waters remain open to public fishing.
- Artificial reefs. Include rules about special exclusion zones around artificial reefs.
- Two most critical components to understand – stability and fishery abundance attracts fishing effort. Policy should help to avoid yo-yo regulations. Believe compliance with regulations is related to frequency of changes in regulation (i.e., the more the regulations fluctuate, the lower the compliance rate).
- Policy should reflect that anglers want both diversity (different kinds of fishing opportunities) and opportunities (lots of them).
- Applying “optimum yield” to recreational fisheries. Understanding that optimum yield may be about actually leaving more fish in the water (e.g. effort follows abundance) and not maximizing the amount harvested. Define what “value” we’re trying to maximize.

2. Integrate saltwater recreational/non-commercial considerations throughout NOAA and the federal marine fisheries management system.

- Interactions with other federal agencies. More and more issues (e.g., marine spatial planning) require coordination across agencies. Would like policy to help coordinate those efforts and ensure recreational fishing interests are strongly represented during deliberations with other agencies.
- Co-management. Recreational fishing takes place mostly in state waters. Makes sense then to hand off more control to the states and commissions to manage fisheries.
- Consistency. Policy should strive for encouraging consistency of state and federal regulations. Discrepancies increase angler confusion and fuel animosity.
- Allocation. May be beyond the scope of the policy, but could use a framework to help management bodies make allocations.

3. Encourage partnership, engagement, and innovation.

- Minority anglers. We need to do more to engage difficult to reach segments of angling public especially those whose first language is something other than English. Should

work with states to provide resources to support outreach and communicate not only sustainability, but health impacts (fish advisories) to subsistence fishermen.

- Outreach on the policy is good, but can NOAA sustain this level of engagement? A challenge is to communicate with sheer numbers of anglers and the diversity of the community.

4. Enhance transparency, follow-through, and continuity of action.

- No comments.