

## GROUND FISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON NMFS NATIONAL POLICY FOR SALTWATER RECREATIONAL FISHERIES

The Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) received and discussed a presentation on the 2022 National Saltwater Recreational Fishing Summit by Mr. Daniel Studt, National Marine Fisheries Service Recreational Fisheries Coordinator, West Coast Region, and offers the following comments/suggestions.

The GAP supports the overarching 2015 Purpose and Policy statements, Scope, Goals and Guiding Principles.

Under Principles 1, 3, 4, and 5, we offer these suggestions:

- Encourage cooperative fisheries surveys and management in collaboration with Canada and Mexico. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries manages the harvest of many trans-boundary fisheries. Thus, high levels of scientific and policy collaboration are essential.
- Elevate collaborative research efforts between the public and state/NOAA Fisheries. The growing citizen science movement should be discussed in the context of self-reporting catch applications whose increasing popularity is being driven, in part, by the work of conservation organizations.
- Provide additional funding for needed fisheries independent data supporting stock assessment efforts. Current data availability continues to be a challenge, especially with respect to areas where fishing has been temporarily or permanently restricted or access is limited by the distance or weather conditions commonly encountered.
- The GAP notes a need to increase Federal support for the state-managed enforcement bodies tasked with at-sea enforcement. A higher level of at-sea presence supports less restrictive regulatory measures. Limited enforcement ability results in overly restrictive measures at sea. Enforcement advisors are compelled to strive for regulatory measures that can be enforced at the landing site and restrict pelagic fisheries with groundfish aboard. We need to minimize the current dynamic which unnecessarily constrains gear use and spatial access.

Under Principles 2 and 6:

- The update would benefit from greater recognition for the food value of the recreational catch. Recreational angling not only provides an opportunity for fun in the sun, but most often also the high value food for the table. This is food for not only the angler and their family, but catches are often shared much more broadly with less fortunate anglers, friends and neighbors, as well as members of underserved communities through donation to food banks and other distribution entities.
- NOAA Fisheries and the Councils should develop a process for engaging recreational fisheries stakeholders in a more in-depth discussion of optimum yield and how it can be

used to identify and prioritize management objectives better suited to the cultural, economic, and conservation goals of the angling community.

- Policy and funding should support public outreach across diverse communities, cultures, and languages on emerging fishing techniques and opportunities, which support regulatory compliance, conservation, and fishing success. Supporting fishing opportunities for youth is especially important for providing access to marine careers such as commercial fishing, marine transportation, or many other related marine fields.
- Recreational fishing should be expressly allowed around aquaculture and wind structures. Marine conservation and recreational angler access often benefits from structures placed in the marine environment. However, this access must be expressly allowed as a condition of leasing the public space to private entities for any purpose. This follows Public Trust Doctrine priorities.

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11/2/22