

Recreational Angler Accountability Workgroup Report



Background

- Rec. Angler Acct. Letter from David Sikorski(CCA MD) to SFAC.
- At 4/2010 SFAC a workgroup was formed.
The participants were:
 - David Sikorski
 - Dave Smith
 - Herb Smith
 - Carol Stevenson
 - James Wommack

Goals

- Discussing the issues raised in “rec angler accountability letter (4/11)” and the topic as understood by rec. anglers and the groups that represent them.
- Presenting findings to SFAC
- Making recommendations to DNR Fisheries Service based on findings.

Presently...

- Phone and dockside surveys are the two best methods used by fisheries managers.
 - NMFS Funding of surveys is 50% of optimal levels
 - State funding has been directed to increase the number of surveys at important times of the season(per FMTF rec.)
 - Survey locations are being reviewed to ensure most accurate data and best use of funds.

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- Striped Bass fishery is being managed at an acceptable level(per DNR definition)
- Charter Captains maintain “accountability” by reporting their catch.
 - Charter clients are occasionally counted in dock surveys as well.
- Private anglers do not always provide accurate information during interviews.

In an accountable fishery....

- Angler impact is understood by managers
- Anglers participate honestly in surveys
- Managers always strive to obtain the best available science
- Rec Anglers behave in an ethical manner
- Anglers carefully handle the catch they intend to release
- Anglers pass on proper practices to friends, family, fellow anglers.

Recommendations to DNR

- DNR maintains the proper level of phone and intercept surveys of rec. anglers, and works to increase the accuracy of the surveys whenever possible.
- DNR should work to educate recreational anglers on ways to promote lower discard mortality for both targeted and non targeted species.