

NOAA announces new National Saltwater Recreational Fisheries Policy

February 12 2015

Today at the annual Progressive Insurance Miami Boat Show, NOAA Fisheries Administrator Eileen Sobeck announced a new national policy to better serve America's 11 million recreational saltwater anglers and the companies and communities that rely on them. The National Marine Manufacturing Association (NMMA), which runs the boat show, hosted today's briefing for media and constituents.

Recreational fishing is an important national pastime that supports 381,000 jobs and generates in \$58 billion in annual sales impacts, according to a NOAA 2012 report. NMMA reports recreational boating is a \$36.8 billion industry and creates more than 338,526 marine industry jobs, supporting 34,833 businesses.

The policy—crafted with input from [recreational fishing](#) and boating communities, conservation organizations and managers across the nation—reflects anglers' voices on a number of existing and emerging concerns, including public access, resource stewardship, regulatory education, science innovation and better lines of communication between state and federal rulemakers with the community.

"With many of the nation's fish populations recovering strongly, fuel prices dropping and the economy rebounding, we anticipate 2015 will be a busy and exciting year for [recreational fishermen](#)," said Sobeck. "With this policy in place, the stage is set for NOAA and the recreational fishing community to work more closely than ever before to address the priorities of anglers while working to ensure these resources are

sustainable for the enjoyment of future generations."

Johnny Morris, founder of Bass Pro Shops, and Scott Deal, president of Maverick Boats, were instrumental in calling for this national policy through their non-governmental Morris-Deal Commission report, *A Vision for Managing America's Saltwater Recreational Fisheries*.

Recreational fishermen's input directly helped to formulate the policy's goals, which include:

1. Supporting and maintaining sustainable saltwater recreational fisheries resources, including marine and estuarine habitats;
2. Promoting saltwater recreational fishing for the social, cultural and economic benefit of the nation; and
3. Enabling enduring participation in, and enjoyment of, saltwater [recreational fisheries](#) through science-based conservation and management.

An implementation plan will be released within 60 days of today's release, with regional implementation plans to follow in the coming months. To view the policy, visit <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/management/recreational/policy/index.html>.

Provided by NOAA Headquarters

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