

Best Fishing Practices Outreach Update

SAFMC Meeting
September 2023



Campaign Activities

What It Means to Me" project proposal

Best Fishing Practices Master Volunteer Program (BFP MVP)

SAFMC and Sea Grant Outreach Updates

Future Outreach Plans

The background of the slide is an aerial photograph of the ocean. The top half shows the dark blue, textured surface of the water with gentle ripples. The bottom half shows more turbulent, white-capped waves. A solid, dark blue horizontal band is overlaid across the middle of the image, serving as a background for the text.

'What It Means to Me'

Project Proposal

Background and Purpose

- Trust between fishermen and fisheries managers has long been a challenge.
- Fostering positive relationships = regular interaction with stakeholders.
- Project aims to bridge trust gap by capturing participant's voices in a relatable and positive manner.

Project Goals

#1: Help bridge the trust gap between the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council and fishermen.

#2: Encourage more fishermen to use best fishing practices and get involved in fisheries management by joining advisory panels, attending Council meetings, making public comment, becoming a SAFMC Release participant, and participating in the Best Fishing Practices Master Volunteer Program.

#3: Document the stories of those involved in South Atlantic fisheries in a positive light.

Focus

- Film and edit informal, short conversations with fishermen.
- **Possible conversation topics:**
 - How participant began fishing
 - Importance of fishery preservation
 - How their fishery can be preserved
 - Involvement in SAFMC Release and FISHstory
 - Advice to fellow fishermen
- **Possible platforms:**
 - Social media stories and Youtube
 - ArcGIS StoryMap
 - SAFMC website
 - Other SAFMC outreach programs



TIMELINE

2023

July-September

- Develop project proposal
- Investigate platforms to be used
- Draft conversation topics
- Practice with SAFMC staff

September-December

- Present proposal to Council
- Gather b-roll content
- Identify and confirm participants
- Project implementation
 - Oct: SG AP meeting
 - Nov: DW, MC AP meetings
 - Dec: Council meeting

2024

December-February

- Continue gathering b-roll content
- Video and audio editing
- Begin sharing on SAFMC platforms

Discussion

- 1. Approval of overall project**
- 2. Approval to start filming at fall Advisory Panel meetings**
 - Snapper Grouper
 - Dolphin Wahoo
 - Mackerel Cobia
- 3. Suggestions for conversation topics**
- 4. Recommendations of platforms to share videos on**

Best Fishing Practices Master Volunteer Program

Project Update



Goals

- #1:** Expand reach by empowering key members of the fishing community to spread the best fishing practices message and methods on SAFMC's behalf.
- #2:** Increase awareness and use of all best fishing practices when releasing fish, specifically snapper grouper species exhibiting signs of barotrauma.
- #3:** Increase SAFMC's regular interaction with stakeholders that will grow involvement in fisheries management.



What is it?



Regional, in person workshops to train volunteers to become experts in best fishing practices (BFP).



Encourage training those in their fishing community.



Hosted quarterly, approximately 1.5-2 hour long workshops.

Target Audience

- Key members of fishing communities
- Port samplers
- Novice fishermen (indirectly)
- State and federal agencies



Workshop Components

BEST FISHING PRACTICES

- Barotrauma
- Descending devices
 - How they work, state and federal regulations
- Additional best practices
 - Handling, hooks, air exposure, avoidance
- Creating a descending device



Discussion throughout



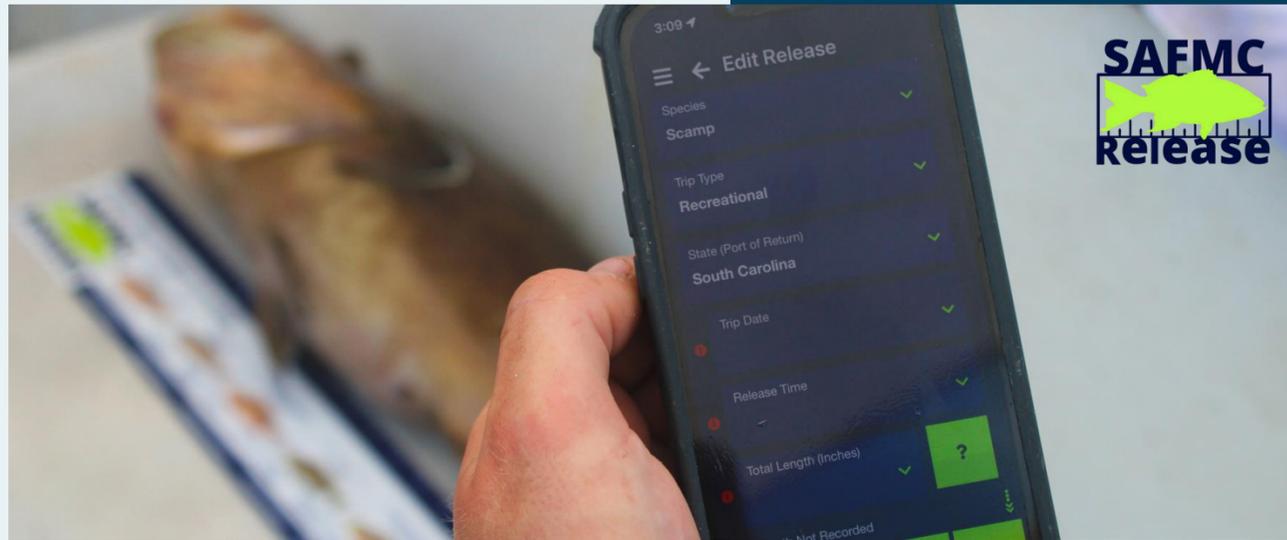
Workshop Components

GETTING INVOLVED

- Citizen Science
 - SAFMC Release, FISHstory
- The SAFMC
 - Magnuson Stevens Act overview
 - SAFMC jurisdiction and FMPs
 - Advisory panels, Council, public comment



Discussion throughout



Timeline

Phase I

April '23-July

- Establish background, purpose, audience goals
- Identify barriers and solutions
- Determine workshop components

Phase II

July-November

- Develop workshop components
- Establish evaluation methods
- Program branding
- Draft locations and dates

Phase III

December-March '24

- Solidify locations and dates
- Develop informational materials
- Create advertisements and promote workshops

Phase IV

March-December

- Workshop implementation

A photograph showing a person in a dark blue long-sleeved shirt with the 'Sea Grant' logo on the sleeve holding a large, reddish-brown fish. Another person is using a black measuring device to measure the fish's length. The background is a light-colored surface, possibly a boat deck. The text '2023 SAFMC and Sea Grant Outreach Efforts' is overlaid in white, centered, with horizontal lines above and below it.

2023 SAFMC and Sea Grant Outreach Efforts

& What's Coming Up

EVENTS

- Haddrell's Point Fishing Expo-Charleston, SC
- SCDNR Open House- Charleston, SC
- NCDMF 200 Year Jamboree- Morehead City, NC
- ICAST- Orlando, FL



SEMINARS

- Haddrell's Point Fishing Expo-Charleston, SC
- Coastal Scuba- North Myrtle Beach, SC
- Jacksonville Offshore Fishing Club-Jacksonville, FL





ADDITIONAL EFFORTS

Tackle Shop Outreach

- 🎣 North Carolina (Morehead City)
- 🎣 South Carolina (Hilton Head, Charleston)
- 🎣 Georgia (Savannah, Brunswick)
- 🎣 Florida (Jacksonville, St. Augustine, Daytona, Miami, Key Largo)



CREATE YOUR OWN DESCENDING DEVICE

WHEN DO YOU NEED A DEVICE?

- ✓ When fishing for snapper grouper species in South Atlantic federal waters
- ✓ On any vessel (private, charter/headboat, commercial)

WHAT WILL YOUR DEVICE NEED?

- ✓ Minimum of **16 oz** of weight
- ✓ Minimum of **60 feet** of line or rope
- ✓ 1 device **readily available** per vessel

TYPES OF HOMEMADE DEVICES

INVERTED HOOK



A barbless hook and enough weight makes this a simple and effective descending device.

JAW CLAMP



Easily made with a fish grip device, some rope, and rubber bands.

WEIGHTED CRATE



Attach weights to a basket or milk crate, and descend your fish.

Scan the QR code to learn how to create these devices!

Why Regulations?

Snapper grouper species live in deeper waters and often suffer from barotrauma. The regulations listed in this brochure aim to improve the survival of released fish in the multi-species snapper grouper fishery.

Barotrauma 101

When gases in a fish's body cavity expand due to changes in barometric pressure while being reeled up quickly from depth.



- THE SIGNS:**
- Floating on water surface
 - Bulging eyes
 - Bloated stomach
 - Protruding stomach
 - Anal prolapse
 - Bubbling scales

Additional Information

Learn more about best fishing practices and federal regulations in the South Atlantic on our website at safmc.net/bfp.



FISH RULES

Download the free Fish Rules app to have the latest regulations at your fingertips. Available for recreational and commercial.



Have Questions?
Contact Ashley Oliver, Best Fishing Practices Outreach Specialist
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Using Best Fishing Practices

Federal Requirements When Fishing for South Atlantic Snapper Grouper Species



- Descending Device Requirements
- Hook Requirements
- Dehooker Requirements
- Using a Descending Device

Descending Device Requirements

- Have at least one descending device on board and **readily available** for use on any commercial, for-hire, or private recreational vessel while fishing for or possessing South Atlantic snapper grouper species.
- Attach the device to at least **16 ounces of weight**.
- Attach the device to minimum of **60 feet of line or rope**.



READILY AVAILABLE:
Attached to minimum length of line or rope **and** weight.

Hook Requirements

- Non-offset, non-stainless steel circle hooks with hook-and-line gear and natural baits north of 28° N latitude (just south of Cape Canaveral, FL).
- Non-stainless steel hooks with hook-and-line gear with natural baits south of 28° N Latitude.

Dehooker Requirements

- Have at least **one** dehooking device on board and use it to remove hooks from snapper grouper species.
- The dehooker must have a blunt end and rounded edges and be able to secure the range of hook sizes and styles.
- The device must allow the hook to be secure and shield the barb to prevent re-engaging hook.

Using a Descending Device

- A descending device is a weighted instrument that helps fish return to depth.
- A descending device should only be used if the fish is showing signs of barotrauma.



Learn more, including how to create your own descending device, at safmc.net/bfp.

BEST PRACTICES

For a complete list of best practices visit: safmc.net/bfp

Upcoming Plans for 2023 & 2024

Seminars

- September: SeaCoast Anglers Fishing Club- Little River, SC
- TBD November: West Palm Beach Fishing Club, South Dade Recreational Anglers Club
- TBD January: FL Keys

Events & Additional Efforts

- January: FL Keys Seafood Festival- Key West, FL
- Tackle shop outreach (Central NC, South FL and Keys)
- Sea Grant charters (Morehead City, NC; FL Keys)
- BFP MVP

Questions?

BEST PRACTICES

Use appropriate gear



Keep the fish in the water



Look for signs of barotrauma



Use a descending device when needed



For a complete list of best practices visit:
safmc.net/bfp