

Best Fishing Practices Update

OUTREACH &
COMMUNICATIONS
ADVISORY PANEL

OCTOBER 2022



Overall Goals and Objectives



1. Increase awareness, knowledge and use of fishing methods that will improve survivorship of released fish

- Understanding of barotrauma and mitigation strategies, specifically descending devices
- Knowledge of Council regulations related to best fishing practices, including descending devices and circle hooks

2. Increase knowledge of and participation in Council activities

- Citizen Science Program, advisory panels, and public comment opportunities

3. Build and maintain relationships with fishing communities

- Periodic contact both in-person and via email
- Redistribution of best fishing practices and Citizen Science outreach materials



Outreach Strategies

- Tackle Shop Tours
- Fishing Seminars
- Charter Trips
- Industry Events

Activities Completed This Year

- **“Responsible and Effective Bottom Fishing” seminar**
 - With local charter captains, Mark Phelps and Chuck Griffin at Haddrell’s Point in Mt. Pleasant, South Carolina
- **Outreach events with SCDNR**
 - Governor’s Cup tournament in Georgetown, South Carolina
 - Charter Guide Summits in Charleston, Murrells Inlet, Lemon Island, South Carolina)
- **ICAST 2022- Orlando, FL**
- **Charter trip in Hatteras, NC**
 - With Good Time Sportfishing and local writers
- **Tackle shop visits:**
 - Outer Banks, North Carolina (Hatteras, Manteo, Kitty Hawk)
 - Northern (Myrtle Beach, Murrells Inlet, Georgetown), central (Charleston), and southern (Beaufort, Hilton Head) South Carolina
 - Northern (Savannah) and southern (Darien, Brunswick) Georgia
 - Florida Keys (Key Largo, Marathon, Key West)



Regional Differences

Outer Banks, North Carolina

- Knowledge of barotrauma, but not descending devices
- Did not see a single descending device in the 15 tackle shops visited
- Hatteras is considered hub for bottom fishing, but little knowledge of descending devices
- Most upset about Red Snapper compared to other places visited



Regional Differences

South Carolina

Did have support for descending devices, but did not necessarily see a need for regulations

Expressed frustration with Council projects and concerns on how the data would be used

Central SC seems to be the most accepting of materials

Regional Differences

Georgia


- Mostly inshore tackle shops
- Big box stores had descending devices and knew of regulations (Bass Pro, West Marine)
- Marinas see offshore fishermen during Red Snapper season, but mostly inshore fishermen rest of year



Regional Differences

Florida Keys

- Accepting of descending devices and best fishing practice regulations
- Stores that did not have descending devices wanted them in stock
- Stores have an overall problem of getting enough descending devices in stock
- Questions daily about descending devices and regulations
- Need more education on how to explain descending devices to customers



Discussion Questions

1. What should we prioritize for outreach strategies next year? Tackle shops, charters, seminars?
2. Where in your state might be hot spots for seminars? Specific locations?
3. Recommendations on charter captains to speak at these seminars