



Scott Baker,
AP Chair

2024 June Council
Meeting

THE SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

Outreach and Communications Advisory Panel

May 2024 Meeting Summary Report



Overview of the AP Meeting



- Met via webinar on May 8, 2024
 - Previously met October 2023
- The AP was tasked to provide additional input on the educational component for Snapper Grouper Amendment 46 (Private Recreational Permitting and Education Requirement). Topic was previously discussed by AP at October 2023 meeting.
- Specific topics discussed:
 - Comments related to general framework of an educational component
 - Feedback on list of topics to be included
 - Program scope
 - State exemption



Education Component for S/G Amendment 46

– Additional Recommendations

Establishing an Education Component (General/Framework):

- Reiterated that the **education component** should be required before issuing the permit and **should be available online.**
- A grace period should be provided for the permit requirement.
- Continued support to **consider education components of other programs**, especially Return 'Em Right and FWC's current development of an education course for the Red Snapper Exempted Fishing Permit.
- Include background **information on why the permit is required and how the information will be used** in fisheries management.
- Annual permit **renewal reminders** that include information on the education requirements.



Education Component for S/G Amendment 46 – Additional Recommendations (cont'd)

Establishing an Education Component (General/Framework):

- Provide an online course (suggestions included 3-5 minutes, 7-10 minutes, to 15 minutes) for the initial permit and a shorter online course for annual permit renewal.
 - The AP **strongly supported building in benchmarks for the course** rather than a quiz at the end. Little support for “pass/fail” approaches.
 - ☐ **Any approach should meet the goals for the education course.**
- Module should not allow ability to skip questions or sections.
- Users should have the ability to retake sections of the education module.
- Consider those with learning disabilities, particularly if a test is involved. (ADA requirements)
- Have module available in other languages.

List of Topics for Educational Component



- The AP reviewed the list of topic recommendations developed by the Council at the March 2024 meeting and provided the following recommendations:
 - General agreement that the **draft list of topics is too ambitious** considering the length of time suggested for an online module.
 - ❑ Consider removing Fish ID and How to Measure a Fish.
 - ❑ Have a downloadable component for these topics or link to other sources.
 - ❑ Consider a reference booklet mailed to those completing the test to keep on the boat.
 - ❑ Focus on barotrauma and regulations in place to help released fish survive.
 - ❖ Remind fishermen that not all SG species need a descending device or to be vented when caught (i.e. certain species and when fishing in shallow water).

List of Topics for Educational Component (continued)



- Have information available in an **engaging way with video and graphics**.
 - Use a “story” approach to convey concepts, e.g., a fishing trip.
- Include information on how recreational fishing pressure can impact stocks.
- Strong support to **involve AP, state partners, Sea Grant, and other agencies in developing the education module**.

Program Scope



- **AP reiterated this is a HUGE project and will require funding and oversight by that exceeds Council staff capacity.**
 - Will require program coordination and additional staff.
 - Noted logistical issues with existing online education programs in dealing with incomplete modules, confirmation numbers for participant IDs, multiple IP addresses, etc. These issues have to be monitored and require dedicated staff to do so.
- **Collaboration for enforcement** should be considered.
- **NOAA Fisheries** would be the agency to handle the **scope of the education program, implementation, and responsibility to maintain the program.**
 - Could consider private contractor similar to other NMFS education required programs (HMS).
- **Reiterated the need to have the AP and partners lead the development of education materials.**



Program Scope (continued)

- **Learning doesn't necessarily incite behavior changes.** Consider multiple facets to the program, similar to Return 'Em Right, e.g., use of communication techniques through social media, etc. to encourage behavior changes.
- AP also noted the scope of the project and **need for dedicated funding:**
 - For example, FL State Reef Fish Survey – includes 628,826 permits (SA and Gulf) as of 4/17/2024. No education component required, but exemptions exist for those under the age of 16.
 - Amendment 46 SG permit and education requirements could exceed the FSRFS in numbers by comparison.
 - \$20M funding dedicated for Return 'Em Right Program.
- **An estimate of the number of permits for the SA region that may be generated would be useful:**
 - The estimate would provide information needed for a better quote for services from a potential contractor.
 - An estimate would be helpful for managers to get a handle on the number of anglers that may be involved as discussion continues.



Establish a State Exemption

- General support for a single universal requirement.
- Important to have a **standard education module** that states could use. A state could add information separately if needed but the core materials would be the same between the federal and state programs.
- Idea is similar to the state-based fishing license or federal saltwater angler registry.

Questions?

