

**Port Meetings**  
**Shellman Bluff, GA**  
**4/16/14, 8:00 a.m.**

**1) Communication & Timely Information**

Issues/Not Working--

- How long does it take to change the law (MSA)
- Notification before red snapper opening

Solutions—

- Give a longer notice for closures (one week prior to closure is not enough)
- Send notification to fishing clubs

**2) Regional Management**

Issues/Not Working--

- Different states, different limits
- State and federal regs
- Why shortage in one states affects rest of states
- Change limits depending on stock
- Smaller regional control areas

Solutions—

- Regional stakeholder meetings with forecasting during meetings (similar to format of port meetings)
  - Ask each stakeholder what is happening in each area at these meetings– also goes under incorporating fishermen’s knowledge into data collection

**3) Recreational Representation**

Issues/Not Working--

- Commercial vs recreational bias in rulemaking – fisherman has been seeing this for the last 50 years; the commercial community has lobbied and has legislators in their pocket; the recreational fishermen don’t have the same organizational capability; fairness and equity;
- Are any of the regulators recreational fishermen

Solutions—

- Establish a web site for a “voice” platform for recreational fishermen – a way to get input from recreational fishermen (similar to a forum)
- Establish “public” lobbyists for recreational interest – watchdog / ambassador program for the recreational sector;
- Increase recreational representation on the Council;
- Develop a community liaison from within fishing organizations/clubs to communicate with Council and staff

**4) Data Issues & Stock Assessments**

Issues/Not Working—

- Need better data

#### Solutions—

- Adopt a biologist program- bringing scientists out on the boats
- Opportunities for cooperative research;
- Have a fishing club representative as a part of a recreational voluntary fishing data collection program

### **5) Recreational data collection (reporting; MRIP estimates)**

#### Issues/Not Working--

- How are assessments validated
- No forecast, hindsight only – data issues; data collection and management and forecast for the stakeholder
- Better stock assessments
- How are quotas validated
- Are mortality rates included in creel limit determinations
- Concern about true recreational fishing effort - Not thousands of offshore rec fishermen in GA
- GA catch statistics, how are they derived – how do they decide we don't have any BSB or red snapper? Question about the creel surveys and the inaccuracy of the fishermen's reports (concern about this flawed data being a part of the stock assessment process)
- If recreational fishermen have 87% of red snapper quota, how can this be met with specific creel limits and limited (red snapper) – recreational data and landings; the fisherman questioned how this % could ever be met with such limited days of fishing
- Need more information from the fishermen not paid people (scientists/creel clerks)
- Put regulators on recreational fishing boats
- Formula; calculation for 87% needs to be redefined (allocation for red snapper)

#### Solutions—

- Develop a pool of local anglers willing to provide recreational catch data
- Online reporting – voluntary (if it is a voluntary program, it will be more reliable and more honest)
- Gauge release mortality
- Fish management done by the recreational angler
- Survey fishermen catch
- Harvest tag program; reward (incentive based); an analogy to alligator harvest tag program in other states.

### **6) Broad economic impact - recreational/commercial**

#### Issues/Not Working--

- Economic impact recreational v. commercial

#### Solutions—

- Raise creel limits for fish that are abundant for that state

### **7) Economical Trips (recreational)**

#### Issues/Not Working--

- Cost factor for fishing trips – low creel limit, not making it worthwhile, cost of fuel; regulations affecting trips

Solutions—

No solutions were offered by the group.

**8) Discards**

Issues/Not Working--

- Discard mortality, red snapper – why throw back short red snapper when they will die anyway

Solutions—

- Set bag limit and keep what you catch
- No bycatch killed (full retention)
- What you catch is what you count or keep

**9) Proactive Approaches**

Issues/Not Working--

- No personal (artificial) reefs – in the Gulf you can develop your own offshore reefs, but can't do that here, would like to do so

Solutions—

- Extend the season and creel limit for bsb now
- GA waters need artificial reefs to attract fish

**10) Law Enforcement Issues**

Solutions—

- Enforce all issues equally