



Innovative Marine Fisheries Management Approaches - Survey and Workshops Update

November 18, 2015

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
Division of Marine Fisheries Management

Version 1

This presentation is an update on staff's work in response to direction of the Commission to focus on innovations in marine fisheries management. This presentation will include the results of an online survey and stakeholder feedback received at a series of statewide marine fisheries workshops.

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Report date: October 25, 2015

Marine Fisheries Innovation

Commissioner focal area and strategic priority

- Discussed October 2013 and June 2014
- Commission directed staff to gather public input on important marine fisheries issues in Florida

Goals of stakeholder engagement

- Are we working on the most important items?
- Are there new ways to look at issues?
- Are there new items we should consider?
- Gather specifics on items of concern
- Build relationships
- Gauge satisfaction with marine fisheries management in Florida



Marine Fisheries Innovation was identified by the Commission as a focal area and further developed into a strategic initiative as part of the Agency's Strategic Plan. This topic was discussed at a special strategic planning Commission meeting in October 2013 and again at the regularly scheduled Commission meeting in June 2014. Through these meetings, Commissioners directed staff to gather input on what marine fisheries topics are important to people.

There were many goals that staff hoped to achieve through gathering public input on fisheries topics. First, staff was interested in finding out what issues are most important to stakeholders around the state and if those are topics that staff are already working on. Through this, staff would also gather input and ideas on different ways to look at issues that are currently being worked on and find out if there are issues important to stakeholders that are not already being addressed. Staff would also be able to gather more specific information on stakeholder concerns and desires for particular items by talking to them in person, continuing to build positive relationships between staff and stakeholders in each region. Finally, staff hoped to gain insight as to how the public thinks the Commission is doing in managing Florida's marine fisheries: what is going well and where there is room for improvement.

Stakeholder Engagement Project

- Staff used two methods
 - Online survey
 - Series of workshops around the state
- Purpose of two method approach
- Considered input on statewide and regional scale

Today: Review survey and workshop input

- Statewide and regional concerns
- Successes and opportunities for improvement
- Items staff already working on that are on target
- Items included in the 2016/2017 Workplan
- Marine fisheries management satisfaction



Staff engaged stakeholders for this project in two ways, an online survey and a series of open-topic workshops around the state. There are many reasons why staff took a two-pronged approach to this project. Including a series of in-person workshops after the online survey not only allowed staff to advance relationships with stakeholders, it allowed those stakeholders to get immediate answers to questions and concerns that they had by being in the same room as managers. The workshops also allowed staff the opportunity to ask stakeholders questions about the information brought up through the survey process and also hear about issues that may not have been captured through the online survey. Information received through these two methods was looked at on both a statewide and regional scale.

This presentation will review the results of this stakeholder engagement project in a number of ways. Through this project, staff were able to identify concerns and interests of stakeholders throughout the state as well as on a regional basis. Staff were also able to gain feedback on what things stakeholders think are being done well in marine fisheries management and what aspects could be improved. As part of the workshop series, staff were able to update the public on which topics staff is already working to address. Staff have also included many items brought up through the survey and workshops in the 2016/2017 Workplan. Finally, during the workshop series, staff was able to gain insight into the level of stakeholder satisfaction with how marine fisheries are managed that was reported through the survey.

Statewide Survey

- Survey open during the month of June
- Participants answered questions and provided comments about their interests
- Nearly 7,000 people responded
 - 46 states
 - All Florida counties
 - All major interest groups
 - Commercial fishery
 - Recreational fishery
 - Concerned citizens
 - Tourism industry
 - Business community



As mentioned, the first approach that staff used to gather input from stakeholders was by creating and administering an online survey. The survey was open for three weeks in June 2015 and allowed stakeholders to give feedback on both topics of concern and species that are of interest to them.

As you know, Florida is the “Fishing Capital of the World” and as such, it is a vital part of Florida’s economy and a very special activity for both residents and non-residents that come to Florida from all over the U.S. Since fishing is such an important activity to the state, it is no surprise that the online survey received nearly 7,000 responses from 46 states. Survey responses were received from stakeholders representing all Florida counties and all major interest groups: commercial and recreational fishers, citizens concerned about the status of marine fisheries resources, and representatives of both the tourism and business industries.

Top Statewide Survey Results

Issues

- Allocation of resources between recreational and commercial interests
- Confusing and complicated fishing rules
- Water quality and habitat loss
- Invasive species, such as lionfish
- Regulatory discards

Species of Interest

- Red snapper
- Gag grouper
- Red drum
- Snook
- Spotted seatrout



The input received through the online survey was used to evaluate what topics concern stakeholders the most and the primary species that they are interested in at both the state and regional levels.

Stakeholders were able to choose up to four issues (from a list of more than 35) that concerned them about marine fisheries in Florida. Based on survey results, the issues stakeholders statewide were most concerned about are: allocation of resources between recreational and commercial interests, confusing fishing regulations, water quality and habitat loss, invasive species (such as lionfish), and regulatory discards (having to release a fish that is not legal to keep but may die after release).

Stakeholders were also asked to identify the top two marine fish or invertebrates that interest them. The species that received the most interest statewide were: red snapper, gag grouper, red drum, snook, and spotted seatrout.

Regional Survey Results – Issues

Southeast Florida/Keys

- Amount of Law Enforcement
- Areas closed to fishing
- Coral loss

Southwest Florida

- Commercial bycatch
- Fishing seasons are too short

Panhandle/Big Bend

- Fishing seasons are too short
- Status of fisheries reported by managers doesn't match what is seen by fishers on the water
- Regulations are too strict

East Coast

- Status of fisheries reported by managers doesn't match what is seen by fishers on the water
- Data lags behind current conditions
- Regulations are too strict
- Areas closed to fishing
- Commercial bycatch



Responses from the online survey were broken into four regions (Southeast Florida/Keys, Southwest Florida, Panhandle/Big Bend, and the East Coast) to identify concerns of stakeholders in each region that may differ from the concerns of stakeholders statewide. The issues listed on this slide are concerns that received a high response for the specific region. Issues that were also identified as statewide issues (on the previous slide) are not repeated.

The largest concerns reported in the survey for Southeast Florida and the Keys were the amount of Law Enforcement, areas that are closed to fishing, and loss of coral. In Southwest Florida, the primary concerns were bycatch from commercial fisheries and short fishing seasons. Like Southwest Florida, respondents from the Panhandle and Big Bend were very concerned with short fishing seasons. Additionally, Panhandle and Big Bend responses included concerns that the status of the fisheries that managers report doesn't match what fishers see on the water and that regulations are too strict. The primary concerns for fishers on the East Coast of Florida were that the status of fisheries reported by managers doesn't match what they're seeing on the water, data lagging behind the current conditions, too strict of regulations, areas that are closed to fishing, and bycatch in commercial fisheries.

Regional Survey Results – Species of Interest

Southeast Florida/Keys

- Dolphinfish
- Hogfish
- Black grouper
- Spiny lobster
- Yellowtail snapper
- Goliath grouper

Southwest Florida

- Red grouper
- Tarpon
- Hogfish
- Bay scallops

Panhandle

- Cobia
- Triggerfish
- Flounder

East Coast

- Dolphinfish
- Flounder



Online survey results for stakeholders top species of interest were also broken up by region. The species on this slide are species of particular interest for each region only and species that were of highest interest statewide are not included in this list. Stakeholders in Southeast Florida and the Keys expressed interest in many species including dolphinfish, hogfish, black grouper, spiny lobster, yellowtail snapper, and goliath grouper. The primary species of interest in Southwest Florida were red grouper, tarpon, hogfish, and bay scallops. The Panhandle and Big Bend region was more interested in cobia, triggerfish, and flounder and the East Coast of Florida was very interested in dolphinfish and flounder.

Note that concerns and interests of stakeholders were not the same throughout the state. There are many possible reasons for this ranging from concerns or species that are unique to a certain area that stakeholders in other areas do not experience to potential differences in the type of management that stakeholders in one area want compared to another part of the state.

Workshop Locations and Format

- Workshops occurred in July
- 18 in-person workshops and 1 webinar
- 281 people attended
- Many attendees reported taking the online survey
- Presentation given at each meeting
 - Statewide and regional survey results
 - Information about how we manage species
 - Current and future challenges
 - Staff concepts to start a discussion about the future of fisheries management



In addition to the online survey, staff hosted 18 in-person workshops around the state and one online webinar throughout the month of July. The workshop series was attended by over 280 people including FWC Commissioners, federal council members, as well as congressional aides and representatives. Many stakeholders at the workshops reported that they had participated in the online survey the month before.

At each workshop, a presentation was given by staff. This presentation included information on the statewide online survey results as well as the survey results for the region the specific workshop was located, topics and species that staff had heard about from regional stakeholders outside of the online survey, general information about how marine species are managed in both state and federal waters, and some of the current challenges that managers face along with challenges that are expected in the future. Staff then posed general questions to start discussion about the future of marine fisheries management in Florida and the paths that stakeholders are interested in seeing the Commission explore. Attendees were encouraged to ask any questions they had for staff and to provide verbal or written comments and feedback on any marine fisheries related topic of interest to them.

The next few slides will discuss information we heard from stakeholders who attended the workshops.

What We Heard – Long-term Concepts

- Open fisheries year-round with reduced bag limits instead of higher bags and closed seasons when rebuilding a fishery
- Standardizing bag limits across species
- Need for increased Law Enforcement (LE)
- Habitat degradation and water quality concerns
- Stakeholder desires vary regionally
- Competing stakeholder interests will continue to limit the Commission's ability to meet all stakeholder desires
- Improve recreational data collection



Staff have identified a multitude of issues brought up by stakeholders during the workshop series as general concepts to incorporate into long-term fisheries management, as opposed to detailed suggestions about a specific species or species group.

Staff heard from stakeholders at many of the workshops that they would prefer to have a lower bag limit if it meant that the fishery could be opened year-round, as opposed to having a closed season. Stakeholders also expressed that if groups of species had a standard bag limit then the regulations would be easier to remember and compliance would increase. Staff heard all over the state that while the FWC Law Enforcement officers are wonderful, an increase in the amount of Law Enforcement is necessary to really combat illegal fishing activities that are occurring. Stakeholders would also like to see the Commission take a more active role in finding ways to address marine habitat loss and water quality issues alongside the Florida Department of Environmental Protection. They advocated for partnerships with organizations and local governments to accomplish this task.

One of the most significant things that staff heard during the workshop series is that not all stakeholders want the same outcomes from fisheries management. Some fishers want to bring fish home for the dinner table, others want to catch large and exciting fish, and some people simply value the ability to go out and see marine life but not necessarily fish. Because of the different, often incompatible, stakeholder desires the Commission is limited in its ability to meet every stakeholder request in terms of management.

Another long term concept that surfaced during the workshops was the need for improved recreational data collection.

What We Heard – Statewide Issues

- Access to fisheries
- Pressure on unregulated species
- Concerns with regulatory discards
- Regulations for many species are confusing and hard to follow
- Support for regional fisheries management within the state of Florida
- Need to address the sale of recreationally-caught species
- Work on improving the FWC website and making the marine webpages more user-friendly



During the workshops, staff received input on a wide variety of stakeholder concerns and desires, some of which had not been captured through the survey. This slide represents some of the items that staff heard repeatedly, but not all issues and suggestions that staff received comments on while at workshops.

One of the primary issues that staff heard from stakeholders was their desire to maintain access to the fisheries. Also, many people expressed concerns with the effect that further regulating desirable species has on other species that don't have species specific regulations. Stakeholders report that as more fisheries have closed seasons or reduced bag limits fishers shift their efforts to unregulated species or less regulated species, which may cause those species to be harvested at unsustainable levels.

Some of the desires that staff heard from stakeholders directly conflicted with the desires of other stakeholders and underscore some of the difficulties that managers face when making or modifying regulations. An example of this is that many stakeholders expressed frustration over how cumbersome and confusing regulations can be and would like to see regulations be more streamlined while other stakeholders would like to see more regional fisheries management because the fisheries in their area are showing different trends than the statewide fishery for that species.

Stakeholders would also like the sale of recreationally-caught fish to be addressed. Finally, many stakeholders expressed frustration with the navigability of the Commission's website and the marine webpages.

What We Heard – Regional Concerns

Southeast Florida/Keys

- Lionfish – ideas for removal
- Barracuda – comments on rule proposal
- Increased level of bully netting
- Need for education of boaters/anglers visiting the Keys
- Dolphinfish regulation changes
- Goliath grouper nuisance behavior
- Marine reserves in FKNMS
- Other: spiny lobster, mutton snapper



Southwest Florida

- Mullet run concerns
- Increasing shark and dolphin interactions with fishermen
- Want regional management of fisheries
- Citizen science – how can anglers help gather data
- High fishing pressure could be negatively affecting red drum
- Other: red snapper, blue crab, gag grouper, goliath grouper



The workshops allowed stakeholders to elaborate on some of the concerns that were identified through the online survey as well as tell staff about concerns they have that may not have been captured in the survey.

Stakeholders in Southeast Florida and the Keys expressed an interest in developing new methods for lionfish removal, the (then) proposed barracuda species-specific regulations, increased participation in the bully net fishery in recent years, need for increasing the available or required education for boaters and anglers that visit the Keys (specifically education on sensitive habitat), need for modifications to dolphinfish regulations, depredation and other nuisance behavior exhibited by goliath grouper, and marine reserves in Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary. Southeast Florida and the Keys also expressed interest in spiny lobster and mutton snapper.

In Southwest Florida, stakeholders expressed concerns with the mullet fishery and the high discard mortality of white roe mullet. Stakeholders in this region also reported an increased instance of interactions between fishers and both shark and dolphins. Participants in the Southwest Florida workshops expressed an interest in increased regional fisheries management as well as a desire for increased opportunities for citizen science, where they can help collect fisheries data for managers and scientists. This region voiced a concern over the amount of pressure on the red drum populations due to frequent fishing tournaments in the area. Additional species of interest in this region include red snapper, blue crab, gag grouper, and goliath grouper.

What We Heard – Regional Concerns Continued

Panhandle/Big Bend

- Regulatory discards
- Cobia concerns
- Seagrass loss
- Mullet run concerns
- Oysters in Apalachicola
- Citizen science – how can anglers help gather data
- Other: red snapper, red drum, greater amberjack, gray triggerfish, sharks

East Coast

- Water quality affecting stocks
- Goliath grouper nuisance behavior
- Red snapper – lack of federal waters season in 2015
- Need more artificial reefs
- Lionfish – ideas for removal and outreach
- Other: snook, red drum, bait fish



Workshop attendees from the Panhandle and Big Bend region expressed concerns with being required to release fish that are not legal to harvest even if the fish may die, perceived declines in cobia populations, loss of seagrass habitat, mullet run and it's associated fishing mortality, and the status of Apalachicola oysters. Like the Southwest region, citizens from the Panhandle and Big Bend are interested in citizen science opportunities where anglers can help gather data to help inform management decisions. Stakeholders in these areas are also interested in red snapper, red drum, greater amberjack, gray triggerfish, and sharks.

The East Coast of Florida is very concerned with the effect that poor water quality is having on fish stocks, nuisance behavior of goliath grouper, and the lack of a red snapper season in Atlantic federal waters in 2015. Additionally, stakeholders in this part of the state would like to see more artificial reefs deployed and see new ideas for lionfish removal as well as increased lionfish outreach. Snook, red drum, and baitfish are also of interest to stakeholders in this region.

Successes Identified by Stakeholders

- Professionalism of FWC Law Enforcement
- Availability of staff for face-to-face meetings on issues
- Responsiveness of Commissioners
- Responsiveness of agency staff
 - 2010 snook closure after cold weather event
 - Ability to tackle a large number of marine items simultaneously
- Good relationships between the agency and stakeholders
- Willingness to consider new ideas and concepts
 - Special Lionfish Removal Opportunity
- Agency involvement in issues important to stakeholders, such as Biscayne National Park and FKNMS
- Partnering with other government agencies and stakeholder groups



Throughout the workshop series staff heard about a myriad of things that the Commission and staff are doing well in regard to marine fisheries management. One of the successes that was brought up in many workshops was the professionalism of Law Enforcement personnel and respect for the work that officers are doing with the limited staff available. Stakeholders also mentioned the availability for staff to have face-to-face meetings and workshops on issues and the responsiveness of Commissioners and agency staff to stakeholder concerns as an achievement. An example given of Agency responsiveness was the quick action that closed the snook fishery after a cold weather event drastically effected the population in 2010. Because of the quick action of the Commission, snook has been able to be open for harvest in recent years despite the mortality caused by the cold weather. Additionally, stakeholders appreciate staff's ability to tackle a large number of marine items simultaneously while maintaining the flexibility to address new and urgent items as the need arises. Overall, those in attendance at the workshops noted that the good relationship that the Commission maintains with stakeholders is a success.

Stakeholders appreciate the Commissions willingness to give new ideas due consideration. The Special Lionfish Removal Opportunity held during the July 2015 spiny lobster sport season was cited as an example of a non-traditional approach to harvest and education and citizens valued the Commission's willingness to try a pilot project like it.

Stakeholders also consider the FWC's involvement and support on issues that are important to stakeholders, such as Biscayne National Park, as a strength of the agency. Stakeholders respect the ability of the FWC to partner with other government agencies and stakeholder groups for the benefit of the resource and users.

Stakeholder Identified Opportunities for Improvement

- Need more LE on water
- Need more publications in Spanish
- Message not reaching all affected parties
- Ability to activate all affected user groups
- Expand partnerships
- Broader boater education about sensitive habitats
- Agency website



In addition to the Agency's successes that stakeholders identified throughout the stakeholder engagement process, areas where the agency could improve were also identified by stakeholders. A common theme throughout the survey and workshops was that there is a need for more law enforcement on the water in order to truly address illegal activities.

Although the Commission currently produces some of our publications in Spanish, stakeholders would like to see this initiative expanded. Stakeholders would also like to see the Commission look into ways that it's messages can reach all affected parties so that more stakeholders have the opportunity to voice their opinion on topics of interest to them. Along those lines, stakeholders feel that the Commission could improve in it's ability activate all affected user groups, including non-resource users.

As noted on the previous slide, many stakeholders expressed that the Commission's ability to partner with other organizations is a success; however, many feel that we could be expanding our partnership base and work cooperatively with more groups.

Many users would also like to see boater education increased, specifically as it pertains to areas with sensitive habitat like the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary. Finally, many in attendance at the workshops spoke of frustration related to looking for specific information on the Commission's website and would like to see improvements made to it.

Innovative Concepts

- Managing species as groups instead of individual species
- Standardized bag limits
- Ways to consider fishery closures differently
- Federal Council management ideas
- Citizen science
- Lionfish removal ideas
- Non-traditional partnerships that could benefit fisheries management
- Management of fisheries on a more regional basis to match stakeholder desires



Throughout the stakeholder engagement project, staff received suggestions for innovative management of the resources. Many fishers suggested that managing some species as groups would help streamline the regulations and make them easier for fishers to remember and comply with. Examples of this could be a group of fish that are given the same size and bag limit. This could also mean having an aggregate bag limit for a group of species, meaning that a fisher could keep a set number of fish from the group, regardless of which combination of species in the group they harvested. Fishers would also like managers to consider fisheries closures differently and when possible, reduce the bag limit instead of closing the fishery entirely.

Many stakeholders at the workshops provided ideas related to federal fisheries management at the Councils and expressed interest for innovative ways that fishers can help managers collect data, such as a mobile application where they can record their catch. Some citizens also expressed interest in new ideas for lionfish removal, such as possibly designing a trap that targets them effectively.

As previously mentioned, those in attendance at workshops applauded the Commission's ability to partner with relevant agencies and organizations but they think that there are non-traditional partners out there that could benefit fisheries management. Finally, stakeholders would like to see managers utilize regional management techniques more often to respond to stakeholder desires for fisheries.

Items We Heard That Staff Are Already Working On

- Trap fishery issues
- Creative lionfish removal
- Wholesale dealer license and retail license
- FKNMS and BNP concerns
- Gulf red snapper
- Shark concerns
- Goliath grouper
- Hispanic outreach
- Sector reallocation
- Oysters in Apalachicola
- Mullet run
- Hogfish, yellowtail snapper, mutton snapper, mangrove snapper



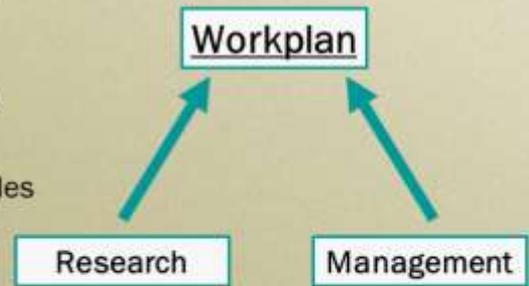
Often stakeholders may not realize that staff is working on a specific topic until a presentation is given by staff at a Commission meeting. Many concerns that stakeholders brought forward at the workshops are items that staff are already working on and this allowed staff to update those in attendance about progress being made and what the potential next steps are. This slide lists some of the topics that stakeholders expressed concern over or interest in that staff are already actively working to address. In addition to being able to update stakeholders on progress being made, staff were able to gather additional input on many of these active items.

Incorporating Input into Future Management

- Survey and workshop input was incorporated into DMFM's annual Workplan discussion with FWRI

Marine Fisheries Workplan

- Planning meeting held annually between DMFM and FWRI
- Began with MFC as contract with research group
- Considers:
 - State and federal items
 - Research results that indicate management might be needed
 - State and federal stock assessment schedules
 - Stakeholder concerns about issues
- Items chosen for upcoming year as well as considered for next 5 to 10 years



In line with one of the initial goals of the stakeholder engagement project, staff received input from stakeholders on issues and concerns that are not currently being worked on. These items were included in DMFM's annual Workplan meeting with FWRI and, in some cases, items were chosen for inclusion in the 2016/2017 Workplan.

The marine fisheries Workplan process began as an annual meeting between DMFM staff and FWRI leadership to try to plan management and research efforts for the coming fiscal year. Prior to 1998 marine fisheries was managed by the Marine Fisheries Commission (MFC) and management and research staff were not housed in the same agency. The annual Workplan meeting was part of the contract between the MFC and the research group but the meeting has been continued to aid in coordinating research efforts with management needs.

Staff includes both state and federal management items in the Workplan. Also considered for the Workplan are results from FWRI research that indicate management measures might be necessary, such as the results of a stock assessment. Staff also monitor which state and federal stock assessments are scheduled to be completed in the coming year and topics that stakeholders have expressed concern about for inclusion in the Workplan. Some items that are included in the Workplan are items chosen for the upcoming year as long as long-term items for consideration over the following 5-10 years.

Ideas from Workshops Incorporated in 2016/2017 Workplan

- Habitat and water quality
- Predator species depredation and nuisance behavior by dolphin, sharks, and goliath grouper
- Regional preferences versus streamlined regulations
- Managing species as groups instead of individual species
- Regulatory discards
- Citizen science opportunities
- Wholesale and retail sales license issues
- Dolphinfish bag and size limits
- Blackfin tuna needs management



Staff incorporated many issues and concerns brought up by stakeholders through the survey and workshop series into the 2016/2017 Workplan. Currently, staff provides comments on developing projects that may effect water quality or habitat but staff would like to look into ways that DMFM can have a more active voice on these topics. Staff continue to receive complaints about protected species such as dolphins, sharks, and goliath grouper exhibiting nuisance behavior and staff hopes that some of the frustration associated with this can be helped by outreach, such as the importance of people not feeding dolphins. As previously mentioned, many stakeholders would like to see regulations specific to their regions while others believe that regulations are complicated and hard to understand. Staff will continue to work to balance these two desires whenever possible. Along those lines, staff will look at managing some species as groups instead of individual species. This would mean that all species in the “group” could have the same bag or size limit, making the regulations easier for anglers to remember and follow. Stakeholders expressed a lot of concern over the total effect of releasing non-legal fish that may then die, or regulatory discards. Regulatory discards are one of the many things that managers take into account when make regulatory recommendations and staff believes that managers could be more clear on what goes into making regulatory decisions and do more outreach on this topic to alleviate some of the stakeholder concerns. Staff will also be looking for ways to increase opportunities for the public to contribute through citizen science and will work to correct issues with wholesale and retail licenses.

Staff also added two species-specific topics to the Workplan based on input received at workshops. The first of these is dolphinfish and determining whether the bag and/or size limit should be modified, especially in light of the unprecedented commercial closure in June 2015 in federal waters. The second is blackfin tuna, which does not currently have species-specific regulations.

Management Satisfaction – Survey and Workshops



Survey

- Stakeholders were asked how satisfied they were with marine fisheries management in state waters and federal waters
 - 63% believe FWC is above average in managing fisheries in state waters
 - 44% believe an above average job is being done in federal waters

Workshop

- Many stakeholders reported being satisfied with marine fisheries management in state waters
- Many reported that 63% satisfaction was good and should be considered success
- Many suggested number could not likely be improved because people have a variety of concerns and conflicting management goals



One of the questions asked in the online survey was how well the stakeholder believes that marine fisheries are being managed in both Florida state waters (shoreline out to 3 miles on the Atlantic and shoreline out to 9 miles on the Gulf coast) and federal waters off Florida (from state waters out to 200 miles). The results of this question showed that of stakeholders who completed the survey, 63% believe that FWC is doing an above average job of managing fisheries in state waters. In federal waters off of Florida, 44% believe an above average job is being done with managing marine fisheries.

During the workshop series, staff asked those in attendance what they thought about how well state and federal fisheries were being managed and also for their thoughts on why the level of satisfaction shown in the survey was not higher. Almost all stakeholders responded that they were generally pleased with how fisheries were managed. Many stakeholders reported that they thought the satisfaction shown through the survey were actually quite good and likely could not be increased due to the wide range of concerns and desires for different management throughout the state.

Efforts Underway Since Completion of Workshops

- Outreach and education on various issues
 - Boater education
 - Spanish outreach
- Improving website
- Items added to the 2016/2017 Workplan
- Information used to inform Council process
- Information used to inform current issues, such as mutton snapper



In addition to including some concerns brought up through this process in the next annual Workplan, staff has already begun using some of the input received in other ways. In terms of outreach, stakeholders expressed that they would like more boater education, specifically regarding boating in sensitive habitats, and increased outreach to Spanish-speakers, both of which our outreach teams are working on. Staff also heard ample feedback on difficulties finding information on the FWC website and staff is looking into ways to make navigating the website easier and more intuitive. As mentioned, staff has also included many topics brought forward by stakeholders into the 2016/2017 Workplan. Finally, input received during this process has been used to inform topics at federal Council meetings and topics that staff is currently working on, such as mutton snapper which will be presented to the Commission today.

Conclusions and Next Steps

- Staff is focused on the most important items to stakeholders
- Many people are satisfied with current marine fisheries management
- Managing large number of marine items is challenging and complex
- Continue working on items that span more than one Workplan cycle
- Repeat the survey and associated workshops every 3 to 5 years



The stakeholder engagement project reiterated that staff is already working on many issues that are of high importance to stakeholders and overall stakeholders are satisfied with marine fisheries management. Stakeholders were also very understanding of the large number and complexity of issues that managers face with marine fisheries.

In addition to items that staff has been working on since the completion of the project, staff will continue working on long-term items that span more than one Workplan. Staff thinks it would benefit FWC and it's stakeholders if the survey and workshop series were repeated on a three to five year cycle so that staff can be in-tune to concerns from stakeholders as they arise.

The following slides are considered backup material and are not anticipated to be part of the actual presentation



What We Heard – Regional Species

Southeast Florida/Keys

- Spiny lobster
- Lionfish
- Mutton snapper
- Goliath grouper
- Barracuda
- Dolphinfinh

Southwest Florida

- Red drum
- Mullet
- Red snapper
- Gag grouper
- Goliath grouper
- Blue crab

Panhandle/Big Bend

- Red snapper
- Red drum
- Greater amberjack
- Gray triggerfish
- Cobia
- Sharks

East Coast

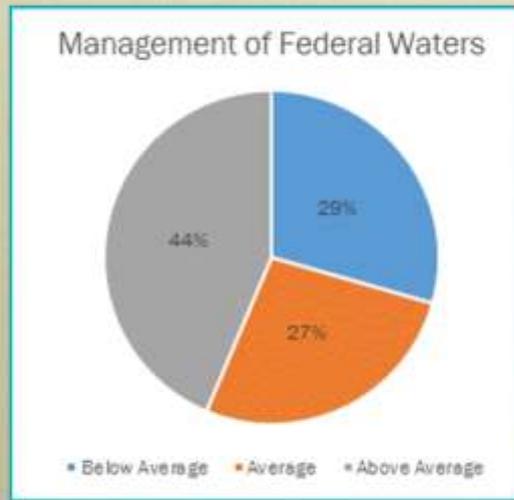
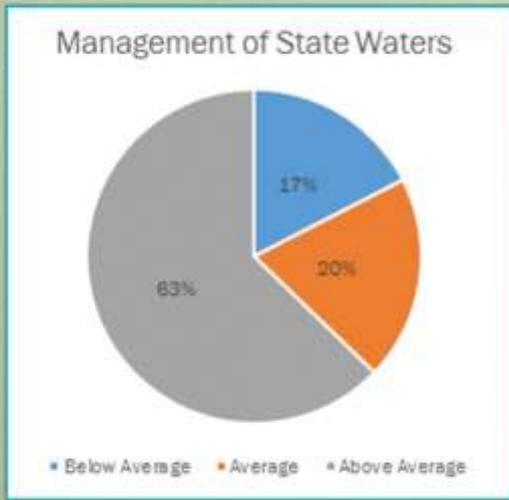
- Snook
- Red drum
- Red snapper
- Goliath grouper
- Lionfish
- Bait fish



During the workshop series staff heard detailed suggestions on the management of various species that are managed in state waters, federal waters, or that do not currently have species-specific regulations. The species listed on this slide are the primary species that stakeholders wanted to discuss during the workshops in each particular region.

Many of the species that staff heard suggestions on during the workshops are species that were also identified as species of interest in that region through the survey. The workshops allowed staff to expand on the input received through the survey (what species the stakeholders in the region are interested in) and to gather specific feedback on what type of management people would like to see. Examples of the types of suggestions received for specific species were modifying bag and size limits, managing a species to promote larger-sized fish, modifying allowable harvest methods, and modifying seasons.

Stakeholder Satisfaction



These charts show the responses received from the online survey in response to a question about how well the stakeholder believes that marine fisheries are being managed in both Florida state waters (shoreline out to 3 miles on the Atlantic and shoreline out to 9 miles on the Gulf coast) and federal waters off Florida (from state waters out to 200 miles).