

MEMORANDUM



To: Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commissioners

From: Jon Fury, Director, Freshwater Fisheries Management

Date: May 1, 2019

Subject: Consent Agenda – Establish a R3 Fishing Grants Program

Purpose:

Obtain approval to advertise a new Sport Fish Restoration-R3 Fishing Grant Program under Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.) rule 68-1.003.

Summary:

The FWC is striving to increase participation in freshwater and saltwater fishing through an effort known as R3, or, Recruitment, Retention, and Reactivation. Recruitment of new anglers, retention of active anglers, and reactivation of lapsed anglers are important to the future of conservation funding. The Baby Boomer generation, currently the largest age group purchasing a fishing license, will soon reach the age of 65 and will no longer be required to purchase a fishing license. R3 programs are focused on increasing the fishing participation rate of different age percentiles over the next 10-15 years.

In order to effectively achieve R3 fishing goals, staff propose creating an R3 grant program to allow stakeholders the ability to partner with the FWC on facilitating R3 programs, expanding R3 reach, and increasing the participation rate of underrepresented fishing groups in the angling community. This would include three grant categories:

- High School Fishing - Provide funding for high schools with existing and newly established fishing clubs that focus on educating and developing the next generation of anglers.
- Community Fishing - Provide grants to local government agencies, non-profit organizations, and other family and youth-oriented organizations to promote and host fishing activities. Both current and newly established programs or activities would qualify.
- The Science of Fishing - Provide grants to partners that are collaborating on fisheries research projects related to increasing fishing efforts such as citizen-science data collection, fisheries data collection, analysis of trends, and development of programmatic recommendations.

The funding source for the new grant program would be the federal Sport Fish Restoration Program (SFR), along with support of industry partners, and collaboration with local governments. Guidelines and example application documents for the R3 Fishing Grants program would be incorporated in rule. Agency partners such as Fishing League Worldwide and Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation have been actively working with staff in establishing and supporting R3 programs. Staff contacts with these partners and other industry partners, and local schools with fishing programs have been made and they are supportive of the proposal and look forward to their continued involvement with the FWC.

Staff Recommendation:

Approval to advertise the proposed rule with no additional hearing unless requested and file for adoption as soon as possible.

Staff Contact and/or Presenter:

Jon Fury, Director, Freshwater Fisheries Management