

Marine Recreational Fishing License/Registry Study Group Meeting Minutes

December 15, 2008

Attendees: Bob Ballou; Jeff Barker; Capt. Frank Blount; Mike Bucko; Al Conti; Capt Bruce Getchell; Richard Hittinger; Capt. Ed Kearney; Richard LaFaille; Steve Medeiros; Capt. John Rainone; John Mazurak; John Troiano and Robert Ferioli).

Absent: Fred Brown; Daniel Maia and David Peterson.

The next meeting would be January 12, 2009 at an East Bay location TBA. The meeting schedule for the subsequent 3 months will be February 16, 2009 at a South County location TBA; March 9, 2009 location TBA and April 13, 2009 location TBA.

Guest Speaker: Najih Lazar; Rhode Island Division of Fish and Wildlife

Key Issue: Will increased effort in getting good data mean that we are not hit with larger restrictions in catch than in previous years?

Brief Synopsis of Discussion:

1. State currently buys intercept and phone surveys from the same private contractor as NOAA to determine estimates with better accuracy.
2. There has been a problem with the private contractor in fulfilling their contract for intercept surveys.
3. Connecticut and North Carolina are conducting their own MRFSS intercept surveys and they are getting better data.
4. Can a Rhode Island based registry do a better job than the proposed Federal effort?
5. A sizeable amount of money could be generated by a Rhode Island sponsored registry.
6. Some states don't get good numbers on tautog and because RI was able to get a better handle on the species population, we got a separate limit.
7. The pro and cons of developing a Rhode Island registry versus the Federal registry were discussed. It was determined that the pros far outweighed the cons.
8. There were some concerns brought up by the group; Cost; Revenue Allocation; Exemption from Federal Registry and Reciprocity.
9. Monthly meeting should address individual topics.
10. Agenda for January's meeting was determined to be: Reciprocity

Future of the Study Group:

1. Federal Registry and go home.
2. Federal Registry until 2011 and then a RI Saltwater Registry. (Consensus Choice)
3. Federal Registry until a RI Saltwater Registry can be implemented.

Public Comment: There were 12 members of the fishing community in attendance.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8:45PM.