

## **Goals and Objectives**

### **1. Fishing**

Our goal is to be the voice and ears for the saltwater recreational fishing sector. We will stay abreast of all issues that affect recreational anglers. We will promote recreational saltwater fishing for enjoyment, relaxation, and sustenance. We will encourage family and corporate participation. We will be involved on all levels (local, state, federal, and international) that affect saltwater recreational anglers. Responsible conservation will be a major priority as we strive to enhance our resources by promoting healthy ecosystems and enhancement of marine resources. Our staff will focus attention and energy on obtaining all information related to saltwater recreational fisheries. We will utilize board member committees and provide assignments to encourage participation and expand the knowledge of members on issues. We will build archive records for reference. We will educate ourselves and the public on issues at hand. We will propose and seek cooperative research grants to provide much needed data on marine resources, which should enhance future stock assessments and provide for enhanced fishery management. We will establish allies at all levels to assist us with our common goals. We will become partners with organizations and agencies that can further our endeavors. We will oppose any action to split the saltwater recreational fishing sector. We will compete for representation on regional councils, commissions, advisory panels and international committees. We will strive to have our membership covered on every level.

### **2. Regulations governing Angling**

We will stay abreast of saltwater fishery issues on all levels. We will be involved in the development of future and established legislation that may affect saltwater recreational anglers, including but not limited to the Sustainable Fisheries Act and the Magnuson/Stevens Act. We will inform our membership of all legislation and regulatory issues that will affect them through publications, e-mails and letters. We will demand fair and balanced regulations. We will insist that sectors doing the most harm to a resource be dealt with to the degree that is equal to the harm they are imposing. We will educate federal, state, local, and international officials as to the importance of saltwater recreational fishing to the national, state, and local economies.

### **3. Habitat**

We will support and encourage the use of artificial reefs to enhance our marine resources and provide much needed habitat for marine communities. We will support continued research and monitoring of reefs to build a database to show their benefits. We will encourage the use of environmentally safe, cost-effective materials so that every saltwater recreational angler will have an opportunity to participate in an artificial reef program. We will encourage large area artificial reef zones off of all States.

We will support and encourage cooperative research of habitat concerns and report the results to our membership and the proper officials. We will be good stewards in the protection of our essential fish habitat. We will assist all agencies in identifying essential fish habitat and offer suggestions on how to protect and enhance it.

### **4. Data and Data Collection**

We will support and encourage continued research and cooperative efforts to develop better saltwater recreational fishing data. We will encourage the use of expert anecdotal expertise as an alternative to bad science. We will work to develop better

methods to estimate effort and harvest data from the saltwater recreational sector. We will support the use of available recreational fishing statistics to develop economic impact studies for the recreational fisheries. We will support the development of social and economic studies, which provide data on the impacts on sectors of saltwater recreational fishing (charterboat, headboat, guide boat, private recreational, and shore). We will seek to project this to include the number of jobs that are associated with saltwater recreational fishing and the full economic impact to local, state, and national economies. We will support and encourage cooperative research in association with experts to develop models that will more accurately reflect the importance of saltwater recreational fishing to local, state, and federal economies.

#### **5. Fishery Management Plans**

We will be involved from the inception of an FMP to the implementation. We will be involved with all plan amendments and keep our membership aware of what it is and how it affects them. We will offer suggestions on recovery alternatives for all species affecting saltwater recreational anglers. We will strive to assure that all sectors are treated fairly and equally. We will oppose any alternative that negatively affects the saltwater recreational fishing sector.

#### **6. Workshops**

We will encourage local, state, and federal agencies to utilize educational outreach through workshops, publications, and other means to educate and inform the public on issues. These workshops could include species of marine life, models used for economics or harvest, explaining regulations and/or enforcement or any number of issues that affect the saltwater recreational anglers.

#### **7. Allocation**

We will actively support maximum allocation of species to the saltwater recreational sector. We will educate the public and managers that saltwater recreational fishing not only provides substantial social benefits due to recreation but also is an extremely important economic generator for local, state, and national economies.

No closed fishing seasons are best for saltwater recreational fishing and we will work for that goal. We will support and encourage cooperative research to develop managing measures for saltwater recreational fishing to achieve year round fishing. As harvest data becomes improved, we should be better able to determine effort and harvest, which may allow for alternative management measures.

#### **8. Discards**

Regulatory discards have become a national concern; not only because of waste but also because of the impacts they have on current stock assessments. Discard information on the number and disposition is critical to determine stock status. We will propose and encourage cooperative research to develop better methods of determining discard status and ways to minimize discard mortality.

#### **9. Enforcement**

We will support fair and effective enforcement of regulations for all sectors. People who abuse these regulations are adding to the decline of our resources. We want to be responsible stewards of our marine resources and seek a partnership with enforcement so limited resources can be better utilized. We will work to obtain funds for adequate enforcement for local, state, and federal agencies.

We will report problem areas and penalty actions to our membership (i.e. Permit sanctions, civil penalties, criminal offenses and forfeitures). This will keep them informed of the type actions that could be taken against violators. We will encourage compliance with all regulations.

#### **10. Education**

We will strive to keep our membership and the general public informed about issues that are proposed or current that may affect them. We will strive to keep our membership informed of proposed or implemented fishing regulations that affect them. We will educate the local, state, and federal levels on the importance of saltwater recreational fishing and the benefits the communities receive from this important sector.

#### **11. Conservation**

We will support reasonable and effective conservation efforts that provide real benefits to the resources, including fishermen and the communities. We will work to ensure that proposed conservation regulations are understood and that they provide for the purpose they are proposed. The key to conservation is the involvement of all stakeholders in the process and we will work to inform everyone of all proposals. We will assure that any conservation regulation is shared by all sectors. We will attempt to quantify the percentage of participation from each sector to the decline of the specific resource and promote that degree of responsibility toward conserving the resource. We will work to assure that any conservation regulation is monitored to ensure the projected benefit is achieved and the regulation is effective. We will also work to repeal any conservation regulation that is ineffective in its designed purpose. Effective conservation of resources will enhance the resources thus providing positive benefits for the nation, communities, and anglers.

#### **12. Preserving Our Right to Fish**

We intend to be the ears and voice for the saltwater recreational angler. We will do everything within our power to promote and protect saltwater recreational fishing. We will focus on our heritage, family quality time, our economic value, including the jobs we create, protecting platforms that allow for saltwater recreational fishing opportunities and work for year round fisheries in all species. We will strive to eliminate the theory that fishing is a hobby and of no importance to the economy or us. We will form local, state and national chapters that will work to raise money to take our initiatives to Washington, D.C. and State levels. We will support politicians who believe that saltwater recreational fishing is an important part of our country's social and economic well-being.

