

ALTERNATIVE MANAGEMENT: AN ANGLER'S PERSPECTIVE

CHRIS HORTON

FISHERIES PROGRAM DIRECTOR

CONGRESSIONAL SPORTSMEN'S
FOUNDATION



ALTERNATIVE MANAGEMENT IN THE MODERN FISH ACT

- 303(b)(3) “establish specified limitations which are necessary and appropriate for the conservation and management of the fishery on the—
 - (A) catch of fish (based on area, species, size, number, **weight**, sex, bycatch, total biomass, or other factors);
- ACL’s ≠ hard-pound quotas only
- “The way we’ve always done it” is not always the way we should do it.



ANGLERS AS CUSTOMERS

- Optimum Yield vs. MSY
- In many rec fisheries, OY is more about encounters/opportunity than harvest
- Examples:
 - Kingfish in the Gulf of Mexico
 - Bluefish in the Atlantic
- There will be some rec fisheries (Gulf red snapper) where managing more to MSY is appropriate
- Not asking for a one-size-fits all approach - that's the problem we have now



More Days



More Fish



Better Catch Rates



Larger Fish



Resource Conservation



All of the Above



SYSTEM THAT FITS THE DATA WE HAVE NOW

- We need a system that fishes on today's stock - not on a hypothetical stock calculated from the past.
- Anglers respond to what they are encountering on the water today.
- For many recreational fisheries, we need real time estimates of abundance, or at least some index of what's happening with the population.





EXAMPLES?

- Florida's snook fishery
 - Managed for 40% SPR
 - Currently at >50%
- Extraction Rates and Harvest Control Rules
 - Extraction Rate - common in freshwater management
 - Harvest Control Rule – already doing it with snook, seatrout, red drum, etc?
- What do we need
 - Recognize that an ACL is simply a limit on fishing mortality in some form
 - Contemporary estimates of what's happening with a population



WHAT WE EXPECT

- We are not fisheries managers, and we do not have all the answers.
- We ask that NOAA Fisheries put at least as much effort into finding better ways to manage recreational fisheries as they are asking us to do.

