

**Recreational Fisheries Strategic Plan
Regional Constituent Workshop #6
Pacific Islands Region – Honolulu, Hawaii
June 23, 2004**



The sixth Regional Constituent Workshop in the series supporting the development of the new National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Recreational Fisheries Strategic Plan for 2005-2009 was held at the Ala Moana Hotel in Honolulu, Hawaii on June 23rd for Recreational Fisheries constituents in the Pacific Islands Region. The workshop was held in conjunction with the week-long 123rd Meeting of the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council (WPRFMC). The series of NOAA-sponsored regional workshops is designed to provide constituents from all regions the opportunity to share their vision of an effective and successful Federal Recreational Fisheries Program, describe the characteristics and attributes of this Program, and discuss them in the context of a review of the draft NOAA Recreational Fisheries Strategic Plan.

The opening of the workshop was highlighted by a series of speakers underscoring the importance of the NOAA strategic planning effort on behalf of the local recreational angler community. Formal remarks were offered by Kitty Simonds, Executive Director of the WPRFMC; Roy Morioka, WPRFMC Chairman; Bill Hogarth, Director of NOAA Fisheries, and Michael Kelly, NOAA Fisheries Director of Constituent Affairs. Council members Mark Mitsuyasu and Walter Ikehara provided presentations on WPRFMC-unique data collection initiatives and bottomfish programs, respectively. The constituents were then offered two breakout group sessions, one for participating in the Recreational Fisheries strategic planning workshop process and another to address local bottomfish data collection issues. The bulk of the constituents, approximately 120 in number, attended the strategic planning breakout group. They contributed to a facilitated session designed to elicit ideas from each individual, share these ideas and prioritize them through small group interaction, and then jointly develop an affinity diagram representing a collection of the key attributes and characteristics of the whole group. The diagram that follows represents the product of this exercise. The current draft of the Recreational Fisheries Strategic Plan was then introduced and the attendees were afforded the opportunity to comment on the contrasts and similarities between their group product and the draft Strategic Plan. Time constraints levied by the formal presentations prior to the workshop limited the amount of time available for in-depth discussion of the Plan.

The WPRFMC provided a valuable service to the workshop through its attention to advance notification of the constituents, engagement of the mainstream media, and incentives to attend (e.g., a valuable vacation give-away sponsored by a local radio station). The large number of attendees was a testimony to the effectiveness of their outreach effort; however, advance public announcements by the Council emphasized only limited aspects of the full scope of the workshop, including the issue surrounding consideration of a marine recreational fishing license to facilitate better data collection. As a result of this promotion and local sensitivity to the issue in one of three remaining states with no licensing requirement, much of the visible pre-workshop press coverage focused almost exclusively on this issue.¹ The by-product was a large percentage of the constituents at the workshop who anticipated a discussion of the licensing issue only. As expected, the attributes developed by the attendees that appear in the diagram reflect the bias towards the licensing issue.

One theme unique in its emphasis at this workshop was the perceived need to recognize the unique Hawaiian culture and the social impacts that Recreational Fisheries management initiatives could have on the indigenous peoples of Hawaii. There was an overwhelming sense of a local “right to fish” and a perception that the native ethnic population is better positioned than Federal regulators to appropriately manage their recreational fisheries resources. Culture-specific solutions for fisheries oversight (e.g., the Konohiki Community) were offered for consideration.

Results of Affinity Diagramming Process: Characteristics and Attributes of the Future Federal Recreational Fisheries Program

Regulation	Licensing	Education and Outreach	Data Collection	Hawaiian Culture	Management Tools	Enforcement	International Cooperation
Be Accountable; Establish Definable Goals and Objectives; Annual Audits	No Fees, Permits, Etc.	Education and Outreach Workshops	Accurate Data Collection and Reporting	Preserve the Rights and Culture of Indigenous People	Throw Netting Only for Netting Family	More Enforcement of Laws	International Cooperation Enforcement
Educate and Encourage Local Participation in Decision-Making	Voluntary Data Collection From Recreational Fishermen - No License; No Fees	Grass Roots Education	Data Collectors at Harbors and Boat Ramps	Ensure the Fishing Rights of the Hawaiian Community Are Addressed	Reduce or Eliminate Lay Netting	More Enforcement	Respect Other Countries' Fish Supplies
State and Federal Cooperation	No Licensing Fee If No Fishery to Speak Of - Create One First	Support Locally-Oriented Education Program (On Everything - Safety, Conservation, etc.)	Gain Data From Clubs; "Educate"	Duplicate What Alaska is Doing Here in Hawaii But For Native Hawaiians	Restrict Surround Netting to Offshore Only	DLNR (Not Police) On Premises	Government Should Not Pollute Our Ocean and Keep [Invasive] Species Out of Our Waters
Communications - Direct to Boat Owners - No Surprises	All Monies Collected Should Be Used to Clean Up Pearl Harbor So Fish, Crabs, etc. are Consumable	Understand Natural Cycles and How We Relate to Them	Cooperative Research - Benefits and Incentives	Hawaiian Gathering Rights - No Fees	Restrict Huge Nets In-Close	Plan Should Support Local Fisheries Enforcement Program	
Federally Funded; Local Control	[No] Permits; Licensing		Real-Time and Accurate Data	Leave Hawaiians Alone	Smart Gear Development to Reduce Bycatch & Mortality	Protect Purely Recreational Quotas	
No G-Man [No Government Involvement]	Minimal Fee for Fishing License - Put It Back Into a Recreational Program for the <u>State</u> of Hawaii		[Determine] How to Collect and Who to Share Info With (No Secret [Fishing] Spots)	Ahupua'a System	Designated Pole Fish Beaches Only		Other
Set Broad Guidelines and Allow Local (i.e., State) Control	License Fees Should Go Back to the Program			Recognize Native Rights	Limit the Amount of Recreational Fishing Tournaments; Enforce a Fee, Limit Types		Conservation For the People, Not <u>From</u> the People
Determine if Overfishing is Cause of Loss of Fish Stock	No Permits			Enforcement - Konohiki Community	Increase Poundage Size for Sale/Limit		
No Special Consideration					Establish Realistic Size Limits - One Season of Spawning		Other
Implement a Plan of Fairness to All Users					Fish Ponds - Reopen/Utilize Aqua-Farming		The Ocean and All Living Creatures In It Belong to Everybody
Plan Needs to Consider Hawaii's Uniqueness					Increase Efforts On Restocking (Use Fish Tax to Pay)		
Work With the People							
Managed By Local Recreational Fisherman							
Fishing Laws Updated to Reflect Current Needs							

The largest number of attributes provided by the attendees dealt with regulatory philosophies and issues. Within these, there was a common thread of local control of recreational fisheries management under Federal sponsorship. Accountability, cooperation across all levels of management, and effective communications were also emphasized. As with earlier workshops, the constituents recognized the need for improvements in data collection efforts, enforcement of regulations, international cooperation, and education and outreach. The attributes that were characterized by the group as recreational fisheries management tools provided several specific implementation suggestions and were weighted toward control of netting.

Dr. Hogarth concluded the workshop with an extensive, ad-hoc question and answer session with the constituents. Discussion of the marine recreational fishing license issue dominated this session as well but the attendees clearly appreciated the value of fielding their concerns with the NOAA Fisheries Director and hearing his direct responses. This closing session also provided an opportunity for encouraging continued participation in the strategic planning process.

¹Leone, D., *Gone fishin' for licenses*. Honolulu Star-Bulletin, June 23, 2003, p. 1