



FishSmart Mid Atlantic/New England Workshop Steering Team

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FishSmart...

...For the future of fishing

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FishSmart...

...a program to increase the survival of
angler caught and released fish

What's the Problem?

- Release mortality severely impacts recreational fisheries
 - 211 *million* fish released annually by marine recreational anglers.
 - In some recreational fisheries, dead discards may exceed retained catch
- Science-based guidance is needed to drive actions to reduce release mortality

FishSmart Concept

Putting science into practice

- Assess our state of knowledge
 - Release mortality...what do we know?
 - Management...how is it applied?
 - Best Practices...what are they?
- Implement practices to reduce or manage for mortality

FishSmart Concept

Develop Information

- Compile information on best release practices for marine species *from existing sources* – don't reinvent the wheel
- Focusing on barotrauma on key species
 - West Coast Rockfish
 - Gulf/Southeast Red Snapper
 - Cod, Black Sea Bass, etc.
- Identify gaps in existing knowledge

FishSmart Concept

Communicate Information

- Team with Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation to *interactively* communicate with a wide angler base, enhancing current activist/scientist communication.
- Tap existing regional efforts (e.g., Recreational Community, Sea Grant, States, NOAA) to distribute information to anglers.
- Assemble information in a format that motivates anglers and fosters stewardship
- Develop template for materials for partners to use if desired.

***FishSmart* Concept**

Promotion of Best Practices

- **Best practices web casts**
- **National/Regional campaign**
- **Web presence with dynamic content**
- **Measure results!!**

FishSmart Concept

Engage Industry

- Work with industry to develop the basis for a "*FishSmart Tackle*" program

What's been Done?

FishSmart Barotrauma National Workshop, 2011

- Comprehensive review of science and management (www.fishsmart.org)
- General guidelines for the release of saltwater fish
- Specific release guidelines for species caught at greater depths
- Recommendations for improving management of fisheries with high release mortality
- Identify crucial gaps in research impeding ability to improve management

New England Release Mortality Used in Fishery Management Plans or Models

Species	Release Mortality	Study Or Other Source?	Citation
Cod & Haddock	30% (?)	Assumed	
Winter Flounder	15%	Study	Durso and Iswanowicz 1982
Pollock	100%	Study + Assumed	Rec catch a small part of the harvest

Mid Atlantic Release Mortality Used in Fishery Management Plan or Models

Species	Release Mortality	Study Or Other Source?	Citation
Summer Flounder	10%	Study	Multiple Studies
Black Sea Bass	25%	Study + Delphi model	Bugley and Shepherd 1991
Bluefish	15%	Study + modified	Malchoff 1995
Spiny Dog Fish	25%	Assumed	Based on similar species

Atlantic near shore (ASMFC plans) Release Mortality Used in Fishery Management Plan or Models

Species	Release Mortality	Study Or Other Source?	Citation
Striped Bass	8%	Study	Diodati and Richards (1996)
Red Drum	5%	Study	Murphy 2005
Tautog	2.50%	Study	Simpson and Gates 1999
Weakfish	10%	Study	Multiple Studies
Atlantic Croaker	10%	Assumed	

Example of National Workshop Findings: Management Guidance

- Regional workshops to develop region and species-specific guidance on handling techniques and management strategies
- Conduct exempted fishing permit studies certifying anglers for fishing in closed areas for the purposes of collecting data (e.g., population and research)
- Identify needed changes to the existing legal framework

Example of National Workshop Findings: Gaps in Knowledge

Effectiveness of recompression techniques for specific areas/fisheries

- How far down to release fish
- Quantify the impact of different release mortalities for fisheries assessments/catch estimation within season
- Species-specific effects of barotrauma, predation, warm water temperatures and hook mortality.

Progress to Date: Communications

- FishSmart website-for program information
- Establish brand identity
- Initiated work with RBFF to integrate into web delivery
- Initiate with *ASA FishSmart* Tackle program
- Develop a basis for “best practices.”

Future: Implementation

- Enhanced communications to motivate adoption of Best Practices by anglers
- *FishSmart Tackle Program*

***FishSmart* Gulf of Mexico/South Atlantic Workshop**

April 11-13, 2012

- Begin process to expand regulations allowing for recompression
- Encourage outreach to anglers on release techniques
- Modified FishSmart general release guidelines
- Discussion on modifying recommendations for depth of release in recompression.

FishSmart Pacific Workshop

May 8-9, 2012

- Anglers need to avoid catching restricted species.
- Supported using weighted devices to return a fish to the depth where caught (or as deep as possible).
- Venting only where recompression is not possible (Hawaii catch fish 1,200 feet).
- sufficient science exists to incorporate “improved survival” into management and address mechanisms to allow limited fishing in closed areas.



FishSmart.....*for the future of fishing*