

Commercial fishing was most successful with nets. The average catch with 100 yards of net fished for 24 hours was 26 pounds of fish valued at about \$4.27. Bait lines caught an average of 3 pounds of fish per 100 hooks each 24 hours valued at 83 cents.

As with sport fishing, there were not enough fishermen to realize the possible harvest. There did not appear to be an increase in the number of commercial net fishermen using Guntersville Lake because of the elimination of commercial net fishing in Pickwick, Wilson and Wheeler lakes.

Eleven commercial net fishermen were contacted who had permanent addresses in counties other than those which border Guntersville Lake. Eight of these fishermen stated that they would have been fishing Guntersville Lake even if commercial net fishing had been legal in all TVA lakes. These fishermen moved about as fishing conditions changed.

There were no problems between sport and commercial fishermen exclusive to Guntersville Lake. As in other parts of the state, problems and conflicts came about from time to time because sport fishermen thought the commercial fishing industry had caused poor sport fishing in some areas. The reverse appeared true, however.

The catch of game fish species in nets during this period when crappie were readily available indicated that legal mesh nets were not capable of taking a significant number of game fish and that commercial fishermen, in general, had no interest in game fish species.

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ORGANIZING AN EFFECTIVE SALT WATER FISHING PROMOTION PROGRAM

By HENRY (HAL) LYMAN, *Publisher of The Salt Water Sportsman Magazine, Boston, Mass.*

Salt water sport fishing is growing more rapidly than any other participation sport in the United States. The recently published "National Survey of Hunting and Fishing" based on figures for 1960 and put out by the U.S. Department of the Interior shows an increase of almost 8% a year in this field since 1955. The survey states there are 6,292,000 salt water fishermen who spend an average of about \$100 per year on their favorite pastime.

It should be noted that the southeastern coastal states have a higher percentage of fishermen per population unit than do the northeastern or Pacific coastal states, yet the potential in marine angling is compara-

tively unexploited. This percentage is approximately 24% as compared to about 14% for the northeast and Pacific. Statistics are not the major feature of this talk, however; developing a sound marine angling program is.

First, it is impossible to promote something which is being destroyed. Therefore all interested in this field should fight the battle against the polluters, who destroy game fish feeding and spawning grounds; against the marshland fillers, who believe an acre of real estate that needs constant flood control and salvage work done on it, is worth more than a multi-million dollar natural resource; against the highwaymen, who want the coast laced with miles of tar and concrete, with low-span bridges and solid fill.

Orderly development of a salt water sport fishing program is vital to any coastal state. Unorganized development is like building a ship without plans—she may float, but not for long. Development should be distinguished clearly from scientific research. The latter is vital to any long-term marine fishery, but it is only a part of the over-all development program. The suggestions that follow are for those states which have a limited marine fisheries budget and must work on a step-by-step basis.

1. Basic organization in any state should include at least one man whose primary job is involved with marine sport fishing. This is *not* a spare-time job. This man should be an administrator, not a biologist. He should have a *good knowledge of public relations, should be good at meeting people and public speaking if possible and, for the ideal, he should have at least a basic knowledge of marine angling.* He and his staff should be responsible directly to a *small advisory board* representing a cross section of those interested in the sport fishery—resort owners, tackle dealers, fleet operators, etc. The board, of course, would be under the general administrative control of the State Conservation Department or equivalent body.

2. Local enthusiasm for a development program is an absolute necessity. Key men in coastal communities must be “sold” on the idea and shown that this development means much to them in local growth and in dollars and cents. They in turn can pass enthusiasm along to those with whom they have contact. Sportsmen’s clubs can help, but do not depend upon them alone. Service club’s, Chambers of Commerce, banking groups—in fact all who will benefit either socially or financially should be included.

3. An inventory and directory of the marine sport fishing available is vital. List and promote the type of fishing available right now. New fisheries will open up as the development program progresses. A directory of this fishing, given truthfully and in detail, can be a simple folder or an elaborate brochure, complete with maps. Have the help of an angler in preparing such a directory so that visitors’ questions will be answered before they are asked. Generalities and photos of glamor girls holding the wrong tackle are to be avoided. Fish species, basic methods used to catch them, launching ramps or sites, charter and party boats, boat liveries, shore fishing areas are among the items which should be included in both inventory and directory.

4. Facilities for sport fishermen are important. Encourage coastal businessmen to invest in such facilities and keep standards high. The areas with the best facilities will draw the most business even if fishing itself may not be the best. Private enterprise should develop such facilities rather than the states unless state parks restrict such development. State subsidy of some facility, such as an exploratory sport fishing boat, has been used successfully in some areas, but by and large such subsidy is required only in extreme cases.

5. Publicity should be started at the local level. Local newspapers and radio or television stations will cooperate. Use local dignitaries in stories and pictures to encourage local enthusiasm. Every person who meets the public—filling station attendants, desk clerks, etc.—should be aware of the marine angling available in his area. Truth in reporting fishing success is vital. A fisherman can be fooled once by puffed up claims, but not twice. Send the visitor to a neighboring area if fishing is not good in your own locality at the time, and he will be back. Inviting a large group of writers to sample local fishing costs a great deal. It is

better to invite a few key men in the publicity field and show them just what is available. Smother petty local rivalries wherever possible, but keep area competition keen on a friendly basis.

6. Once an official state organization has been established, encourage establishment of a cooperating group in the private enterprise field. This has been done with outstanding success in several coastal states. Those receiving the most from the sport fishing industry contribute the most to such organizations. Such groups generally have a paid director, familiar with both sport fishing and public relations, who is responsible to a managing board. The board itself, like the state advisory board, draws from all fields financially interested in marine angling. The purposes of such cooperating groups are to develop existing fisheries; investigate new fishery potentials and develop them; encourage investment in facilities catering to fishermen; publicize fishing available. The cooperating group does not duplicate the state work, but expands it and moves in areas where it is impossible for state officials to move.

7. Tournaments are one method of publicizing a fishing area. The state should not become involved in tournaments offering cash awards or merchandise prizes. Let such tournaments be sponsored by the cooperating group if desired or by local Chamber of Commerce, etc. A state wide tournament with trophy awards can be used to advantage, however. Although tournaments have been criticized as mere publicity gimmicks, they perform several valuable services. They call attention to a fishery which may not be well known and thus spread anglers over a wider area; they set standards of angling skill and sportsmanship; they build fellowship and good will among those participating.

8. Develop character in some phase of the fishery or in some area. This can be done by taking full advantage of every unusual aspect found. Local color, either from the point of view of personalities or of the character of the area itself, should be emphasized. For example, North Carolina's Outer Banks have been linked with channel bass fishing for years, Cape Cod in Massachusetts has meant striped bass and bluefin tuna have been associated with Wedgeport, Nova Scotia. Do not limit this character development to fishing only. Anglers have families and some aspect of an area may have special appeal to the non-fishing wives and children. Everything from she-crab soup to buried pirate treasure can be included.

9. Work for full cooperation between sport and commercial fishing groups. Both are working for the same thing—more and better fishing. Lack of understanding of problems involved has been the cause of most of the friction between the two groups. Arrange meetings between key men in both sport and commercial fishing camps, encourage anglers to take trips on commercial craft and commercial men to spend a day with anglers. When the two groups cooperate, they can demand and get a tremendous amount from state legislatures and others who hold the purse strings.

The development steps outlined above are basic, but of course must be altered in some degree to fit the fundamental state governmental organization. However, if states which have not established some sort of sport fishing program do not do so soon, they will find themselves far behind their coastal neighbors within a very few years. Worse, they will find that development in the future will be more costly and less effective than it is during this period of rapid expansion of the marine sport fishing industry.

DEVELOPING A STATE BOATING EDUCATION PROGRAM

By MATT J. KAUFMAN, *Manager, Boating Services and Education Department, Outboard Boating Club of America*

The Outboard Boating Club of America has been actively interested in the promotion of boating skills education since it was first organized some 15 years ago. Our major efforts in this area have been devoted to compiling statistical information on the causes of boating mishaps,