



**STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL
PROTECTION**

Daniel C. Esty
Commissioner

Bureau of Natural Resources
Marine Fisheries Division
www.ct.gov/deep/fishing

**A STUDY OF MARINE RECREATIONAL
FISHERIES IN CONNECTICUT**



Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration
F-54-R-31 Annual Performance Report
March 1, 2011 – February 29, 2012



Job 6: Public Outreach

State of Connecticut
Department of Energy and Environmental Protection
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Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration
F-54-R-31
Annual Performance Report

Project Title: *A Study of Marine Recreational Fisheries in Connecticut*

Period Covered: March 1, 2011 - February 29, 2012

Job Title

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Date: August 30, 2012

Cover: A wonderful moment with family enjoying a great catch of summer flounder (fluke).

JOB 6: PUBLIC OUTREACH

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JOB 6: PUBLIC OUTREACH

GOAL

To increase awareness among anglers and the general public of the information products provided by this project and how this information contributes to state and federal efforts to enhance, restore and protect marine habitat and recreational fish populations.

OBJECTIVES

1) Increase public awareness that research & monitoring are essential to good fisheries management and the majority of marine fisheries research & monitoring activities in Connecticut are funded through excise tax on fishing tackle and motorboat fuels

SUMMARY

1. A total of 25,733 outdoor and environmental writers, marine anglers and boaters, marina operators, fishing tackle retailers, Fisheries Advisory Council (FAC) members, students, and members of the general public attended outreach events. The importance of research and monitoring to good fisheries management was incorporated into the programs (Table 6.2).
2. These same audiences also learned that good water quality and proper pollution prevention (non-fishing impacts) are essential to good fisheries habitat management.
3. Total attendance at three engagements with sportsmen clubs and other recreational environmental clubs was 137 (Table 6.2). The audience was encouraged to become actively involved in the fishery management process by attending public hearings and FAC meetings. Notices of public hearings were sent to hundreds of tackle shops and various media outlets including the DEEP website (www.ct.gov/deep/fishing).
4. Total attendance at four career day events at the Marine Fisheries office with Connecticut high schools was 28 (Table 6.2). The students were encouraged to become actively involved in fisheries biology and management.
5. The message that the majority of marine finfish research and monitoring are funded through Federal excise taxes on fishing and motorboat fuels was emphasized at major department outreach events (Table 6.2).

INTRODUCTION

Public outreach was formally incorporated into this project in 1997 (segment 17). An outreach plan was developed by project staff working closely with US Fish and Wildlife Service personnel. Six target audiences were identified in priority order (Table 6.1) in the outreach plan. This report summarizes F54R outreach activities conducted from March 2011 to February 2012 (segment 29).

**Table 6.1:
Priority Audiences for
Outreach Activities**

1. Outdoor/environmental writers
2. Marine anglers
3. Marine boaters and marina operators
4. Fishing tackle retailers
5. Fisheries Advisory Council (to CT DEP)
6. General public

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Outdoor and Environmental Writers

DEEP press releases, project summaries, FAC quarterly reports and full annual reports were mailed and e-mailed out to several outdoor writers, members of the CT Outdoor Recreation Coalition (CORC) and Fisheries Advisory Council (FAC). Project staff were also interviewed concerning F54R activities in person, at public and regulatory hearings, and over the telephone by writers and reporters for the news media.

Marine Anglers and Marine Boaters

Project personnel organized and assisted in DEEP, Marine and Inland Fisheries Division displays at two statewide fishing/hunting and boating shows. The shows were sponsored by CMTA, Dodge Trucks, Channel 3, Channel 30 and Connecticut Outdoor Recreation Coalition and were held in January and February of 2012 at the Connecticut Convention Center. These shows attracted 24,539 anglers, non-anglers, boaters, tackle retailers, legislators and general outdoor recreation enthusiasts. The theme for this show was "Enhanced Fishing Opportunities", Trophy Fish Close to Home" and "Marine Fisheries Division Angler Surveys". F54R activities were highlighted at these shows in displays entitled "Trophy Fish Award Program" and "Marine Angler Surveys, (a marine fisheries cooperative management program)". Audiences learned the importance of research and monitoring which are funded through excise taxes on fishing tackle and motorboat fuels. Colorful posters and pictures, brief project specific text and taxidermy reproductions helped draw attention to marine species monitored under F54R programs and solicit questions and discussion of those programs. The new state record Tautog (taxidermy reproduction) was also displayed at the DEEP booth.

Several outreach displays were developed by project staff and mounted in the lobby and hallways at the Marine Fisheries Headquarters in Ferry Point State Park. These displays highlighted unique characteristics of Long Island Sound, public access, species identification, the trophy fish award program, marine angler surveys and gave a brief description of current F54R programs designed to protect the Sound's resources. These fisheries displays can easily be viewed by anglers, boaters and their families at this popular fishing and picnic area.

The Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (DEEP) hosted the ‘Third Annual Trophy Fish Award Ceremony’ at the Northeast Fishing and Hunting Expo in the Connecticut Convention Center in Hartford on Saturday February 18, 2012. Twenty-two marine anglers were presented with a framed “Angler of the Year” certificate recognizing their achievement of having harvested or caught and released the largest fish in one of several species categories during 2011. Twelve marine anglers were presented with a customized wooden plaque for catching new state record fish in 2011 (8 adult and 4 youth). For a summary please see: [2011 Marine Fisheries Trophy Fish Award Program Summary](#).

Fishing Tackle Retailers

Fishing tackle retailers provide an important avenue for communication between the department and anglers. A complete list of fishing tackle retailers is maintained and updated yearly. Timely DEEP press releases, species fact sheets, Connecticut angler guides and Marine Fisheries Brochure are mailed to tackle retailers to keep them informed. Correspondence between the marine fisheries office staff and retailers are ongoing.

Fisheries Advisory Council

The Fisheries Advisory Council, which represents a cross section of Connecticut residents with interests in fisheries issues, met quarterly to discuss statewide fisheries issues. After each meeting most Council members report Council discussions back to the fishing and environmental groups they represent. Council members also discussed monitoring and funding issues at meetings with state legislators. Many Council members visited Marine Fisheries displays at the Northeast Fishing and Hunting Expo, CMTA Boating and Fishing Show and other activities the Fisheries Division held during 2012. ‘A Study of Marine Recreational Fisheries in Connecticut’ was mailed to Fishery Advisory Council members to keep them informed.

General Public

Marine Headquarters is open daily Mon-Fri. attracting thousands to the public outreach displays at the office. Display topics included all F54R projects. Activities funded under other Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration projects were also highlighted; including Connecticut Pumpout Stations and Waste Reception Facilities (V-4), Motorboat Access Renovation and Development (F60D), Motorboat Access Area Operation and Maintenance (F70D), and Habitat Conservation and Enhancement (F61T).

Sport Fish Restoration projects were also highlighted at public schools and universities throughout the year. Presentations titled “Marine Fisheries Management / Sportfish Restoration and Marine Resource Management” were provided to students. These outreach events highlighted the importance of coastal resources and all facets of marine resource protection. Approximately 481 students attended Marine Fisheries Division presentations.

Finally, project staff lead numerous workshops and speaking engagements throughout the state, as well as informational tours and talks at the Marine Fisheries Office (Table 6.2). These talks and

tours reached all target audiences, especially the business community, teachers and students. Audiences learned how to become active participants in the fisheries management process, through public informational hearings and FAC Meetings.

MODIFICATIONS

None.

Figure 6.1: 2011 state record Tautog (23lbs 9ozs) on display at the Northeast Fishing and Hunting Expo, Hartford CT, February 2011 (CT DEEP Marine Fisheries Display).



Table 6.2: Summary of talks, tours, career days and workshops given by project staff highlighting F54R activities, March 2011 – February 2012 (segment 29).

| DATE: | PRESENTATION TYPE: | ORGANIZATION | TITLE / TOPIC: | Target Audience | TOTAL |
|--------------|---------------------------|---|--|------------------------|--------------|
| 3/21/2011 | Marine Presentation | CCSU Marine Biology | Marine Fisheries Biology | students | 54 |
| 4/5/2011 | Fishing Club Talk | Westport Outfitters | Marine Fisheries Mgmt./ Angler Surveys | anglers | 41 |
| 4/17/2011 | Career Day / Mentoring | Fermi High School | Marine Fisheries Biologist | students | 6 |
| 4/18/2011 | Career Day / Mentoring | Girl Scouts | Marine Fisheries What we do | students | 20 |
| 4/20/2011 | Career Day / Mentoring | South Windsor High School | Marine Fisheries Biologist | students | 6 |
| 4/21/2011 | Career Day / Mentoring | Enfield High School | Marine Fisheries Biologist | students | 8 |
| 4/22/2011 | Career Day / Mentoring | Southington High School | Marine Fisheries Biologist | students | 8 |
| 5/1/2011 | Fishing Club Talk | CFFA | Marine Fisheries Mgmt./ Angler Surveys | anglers | 43 |
| 5/19/2011 | Career Day / Mentoring | Glastonbury High School | Marine Fisheries Careers | students | 140 |
| 6/16/2011 | Marine Field Presentation | CCSU Marine Biology | Marine Fisheries Biology | students | 65 |
| 7/18/2010 | Fishing Club Talk | HTFD Club Sports | Marine Fisheries Mgmt./ Angler Surveys | anglers | 50 |
| 7/25/2011 | Marine Presentation | Groton Maritime Academy | Marine Fisheries Biology | Students | 17 |
| 9/24/2011 | Marine Presentation | CT DEP Hunting and Fishing Appreciation Day | Marine Fisheries Management | anglers | 500 |
| 1/27-29/2012 | Outreach Display | CMTA Boating Show | Enhanced Fishing Opportunities | General Public | 9,872 |
| 2/17-19/2012 | Outreach Display | Northeast Fish and Hunting Expo | Enhanced Fishing Opportunities | General Public | 14,667 |
| 2/18/2012 | Award Presentation | Northeast Fish and Hunting Expo | Trophy Fish Award Program Ceremony | Marine Anglers | 236 |
| | | | | | 25,733 |