

## Appendix I. Comments from the Federal Register Notice and Agency Responses

### Comment 1

On Fri, Jun 22, 2012 at 2:37 PM, Jack Kelleher <[jfkshadow@comcast.net](mailto:jfkshadow@comcast.net)> wrote:  
**This request is for a new collection of information.**

The objective of the survey will be to understand the range of attitudes, preferences, and concerns that recreational anglers hold towards saltwater fishing. Rather a broad statement, isn't it. Is there further information about what they would like commented on?

Thanks,

John Kelleher

**Kristy Wallmo**

Jun 22

to Jack

Jack,

We are currently developing the survey instrument. The focus will be on the kinds of things recreational anglers expect out of their fishing trips, their satisfaction with current management, and opinions on regionally-specific issues related to saltwater recreational fishing and management.

When we have a survey instrument developed I would be happy to send it to you.

Thanks for your interest - Kristy Wallmo

**Note: A survey instrument was sent to Jack in August.**

## Comment 2

On Tue, Jul 3, 2012 at 11:29 AM, Chad Hanson <[chanson@pewtrusts.org](mailto:chanson@pewtrusts.org)> wrote:  
Ms. Wallmo,

I have seen the agency's notice and solicitation for comments on the proposed information collection on "understanding recreational angler attitudes and preferences for saltwater fishing." The notice only provide general information as to what is to be collected. I am wondering if you can share the specific information that is to be collected (i.e., provide a copy of the survey questions to be asked) so I can have a better understanding of what data this survey will be gathering.

thanks  
Chad

### Chad W. Hanson

Science and Policy Analyst

Gulf of Mexico Fish Conservation Campaign

The Pew Charitable Trusts, Pew Environment Group

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**From:** Kristy Wallmo [mailto:[kristy.wallmo@noaa.gov](mailto:kristy.wallmo@noaa.gov)]

**Sent:** Tuesday, July 03, 2012 2:00 PM

**To:** Chad Hanson

**Subject:** Re: Proposed Information Collection: Angler Attitudes

Chad,

Thanks for your message - I have attached the survey instrument. Please note that at this stage the instrument is a draft and we will be taking this to a focus group and also asking for feedback from regional economists and NMFS's recreational fisheries coordinators. Also, note that this version is specific to the West Coast (CA, WA, OR), but there will be a version that is specific to each coastal region of the U.S. Please feel free to email if you have additional questions.

Thanks, Kristy

**Kristy Wallmo**

Jul 5

to Chad

Thanks Chad. I've tried to address your questions below:

On Tue, Jul 3, 2012 at 3:30 PM, Chad Hanson <[chanson@pewtrusts.org](mailto:chanson@pewtrusts.org)> wrote:

Thanks for the draft survey and bit of background. A couple of more questions if you don't mind:

1. Does this notice for comments cover all the regional surveys under development, or would another notice have to go out for public comment on the process for the other regions one at a time?

(Krsisty) This notice covers all regional surveys - they will likely not change too much with the exception of the species and geographic fishing areas - there may be additional questions for regional instruments, pending comments.

2. When and how could I get the final version of the survey for the SE/Gulf region?

(Krsisty) I would be happy to send you this when it is developed - it may be the end of August.

3. What is the specific intent for these surveys? For instance, will these results be presented at Council meetings, made available to state agencies? Or is this for internal planning /evaluation purposes?

(Krsisty) The findings will be publicly available - results will be presented at meetings and conferences, and can certainly be sent to state agencies/commissions, etc... If a Council requests that we make a presentation on the results we would be more than happy to oblige, as long as travel budgets allow.

4. Also, is it possible to provide input as to what type of information / questions asked for the SE/Gulf survey?

For instance, I am interested in

a. if anglers might prefer having a set recreational season where many or most species would be open at the same time rather than having some species opened and closed at separate times where there might be inducing bycatch issues.

(Kristy) I actually like "a" a lot, and will likely try to incorporate this into a question for the Southeast survey instrument.

b. anglers catch and release practices/behavior/attitudes which may include a number of questions but I think would be very informative to managers.

(Kristy) "b" would not be possible on this survey - I agree it would be informative but the survey is almost at it's capacity for questions as it stands. We have conducted a survey in the Northeast that included a suite of questions on catch and release behavior -- I published a paper from that data in NAJFM and can send you a copy.

Thanks for your interest,

Kristy

**Comment 3**

**From:** Todd Phillips <[tphillips@oceanconservancy.org](mailto:tphillips@oceanconservancy.org)>

**Date:** August 17, 2012 11:28:38 AM EDT

**To:** "Jessup, Jennifer" <[JJessup@doc.gov](mailto:JJessup@doc.gov)>

**Subject: Comment Letter: Proposed Information Collection: Understanding Recreational Angler Attitudes and Preferences for Saltwater Fishing [FR Doc No: 2012-15127]**

**RE: Proposed Information Collection: Understanding Recreational Angler Attitudes and Preferences for Saltwater Fishing [FR Doc No: 2012-15127]**

Dear Ms. Jessup:

Ocean Conservancy<sup>1</sup> appreciates this opportunity to provide comments on the **Proposed Information Collection: Understanding Recreational Angler Attitudes and Preferences for Saltwater Fishing** survey to be performed by National Marine Fisheries Service Office of Science and Technology (NMFS OST).<sup>2</sup> We are encouraged to see that NMFS OST is pursuing stakeholder involvement in their decision making processes. This, we believe, is integral to the success of the recreational data collection and management programs administered by NMFS. The addition of these data will likely help managers shape regulatory actions in the future.

In the Federal Register notice, comments were invited on four topics: (a) whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden (including hours and cost) of the proposed collection of information; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

**Summary Recommendations:**

(a) This information is essential to the proper performance of agency functions and integral to increased understanding of angler attitudes and preferences.

(b) We choose not to comment on this point as we lack the necessary information regarding internal time management and budgetary allocations within the OST.

(c) We suggest several additions to the survey questions in order to clarify and/or obtain more detailed data from participants.

(d) The dual mode information collection methodology is very functional and efficient.

**Detailed Recommendations:**

***Item (a)***

Understanding of angler attitudes and preferences is integral to US fishery management. In the current fishery management system, stakeholders are invited to participate in all publicly held fishery management meetings. The decisions managers make affect the public. They, the managers, require stakeholder involvement in the process to make informed decisions that provide the best benefit to the nation. Unfortunately, members of the public are not always able to attend these meetings due to such things as travel costs, work schedule, etc. These stakeholders deserve a voice and this survey allows their thoughts and opinions to be relayed to the

appropriate decision makers. We would argue more of these types of qualitative data gathering surveys, not fewer, are needed to give the public more input into the system.

***Item (b)***

No comment due to our lack of knowledge regarding internal allocations of employee time and budgetary allotments with the NMFS OST.

***Item (c)***

The scope of the information to be collected has been well thought out and is both simple and concise enough that respondents should not feel overburdened to complete the survey. However, there are several instances where additional choices should have been provided for participants. The specific questions that we would draw your attention to are listed below, with our comments and recommendations following.

*Question 9: During the past year, which of the following meetings have you attended?*

While this question provides four (4) descriptive answers and an 'Other' category, it does not provide a 'None' category. It could be assumed that in the 'Other' category, one could answer with a "no meetings attended;" however, this is not explicitly stated. We suggest a 'None' selection be provided.

*Question 11: Most of my fishing trips are taken from...*

Kayaks are increasingly popular methods of fishing platforms. While the selection of 'Private Boat' could also imply kayak, it is not explicitly stated. Further, to developed better sampling data and understanding of the fishery at-large, the selection of 'Kayak' should be provided or, at minimum, included with or described as a private boat.

*Question 15: Please read each item in the table...*

The layout of this question is confusing. The data is necessary; however, a suggested means to make the layout easier to read would be to added vertical column dividers. This would allow participants to understand each column is a separate section and uses a different scale.

*Question 18: In your opinion, how much of a threat, if any...*

A suggested addition to the listed factors is “Commercial Fishing.” While Ocean Conservancy does not have a position on this one way or another, a common topic at regional fishery management council meeting’s public testimony session is recreational anglers voicing their opinion on commercial fishing and its effects on marine fisheries. Thus it seems useful to include this option given the purpose of the survey.

*Section 5: About you and your household*

Two additional questions are suggested for this section:

- 1) If the angler has their own boat
- 2) If their boat is moored at a private dock or marina

The limitations of saltwater recreational surveys, like the Marine Fisheries Information Program, to sample private docks and marinas are well known. We suggest these two questions as a means to increase data collection from these modes

*Additional Comments*

This portion provides nearly a page for participants to submit any additional comments they may have. Some participants may be more vocal than others and a suggested improvement would be to allow anglers to attach additional pages for those participants who do not use the internet based survey.

**Item (d)**

The dual mode method of mail and the internet as a means of distribution and data transmission is appropriate. The provided information did not detail the level of contact between NMFS OST and selected participants and whether the participants would be given the choice of electronic or paper submission. Electronic submission, via the internet, is a cost effective and efficient means to obtain the information requested in the questionnaire. We suggest NMFS OST offer both methods and allow the participant to choose which one they believe works best for them.

We thank NMFS and the Department of Commerce for allowing Ocean Conservancy to comment on this forthcoming survey. Angler attitudes and preference data is intrinsic to better management of the resource and will allow managers to make better decisions regarding our nations fishery resources.

Sincerely,

Todd Phillips  
Fishery Monitoring Specialist  
Ocean Conservancy  
106 E 6th Street, Suite 400  
Austin, TX 78701

to tphillips, JJessup, Sarah, Ayeisha, bcc: me

Hello Todd,

Thank you for your comments on the NMFS survey "Understanding Recreational Angler Attitudes and Preferences for Saltwater Fishing" [FR Doc No: 2012-15127]. Based on comments we have received thus far we have already made revisions to the survey instrument you reviewed. I am attaching a revised survey instrument that I believe addresses some of your comments - particularly the comment you had on Q. 15. Please see below for responses to your specific comments. Thanks for your careful review of the survey and your suggestions. Please feel free to email myself or Ayeisha Brinson (the other NMFS economist working on the survey development and implementation) if you have further questions or comments.

Q9: adding a "None" response category. We assume the respondent will not check any of the boxes if the intent is none of the above. However, we will work on arranging the responses so that we can add a "None" category - we are slightly constrained by the page layout but will try to work that in.

Q11: adding a "Kayak" response category. We would like to maintain consistency with the MRIP survey, which does not include an option for "kayak"

Q15: Please see the revised instrument - we had other comments that were similar to yours and thus revised the question and the format.

Q18: adding "commercial fishing" as a response category. There is a response category for overfishing, which includes commercial fishing. This question was taken from a larger survey and we would like to maintain consistency in the format/response categories as much as possible for comparative purposes.

Section 5: Adding two additional questions about boat ownership/mooring. We can work on trying to incorporate these two questions - again we have space constraints and need to maintain a survey booklet that is no more than 12 pages total but we will try and fit these two questions onto the page.

For the space constraint reason listed above we cannot add extra blank pages for anglers to comment. In addition, in our experience survey respondents rarely write more than one page of comments - most do not write more than a paragraph.

We are looking into implementing this survey as a dual mode survey - currently the survey is intended as a mail survey but we are examining our budget constraints to determine whether a dual mode is possible.

Again, thank you for your comments. - Kristy Wallmo and Ayeisha Brinson