



# Saltwater Recreational Fishing Survey



Photo: Chesapeake Bay Program

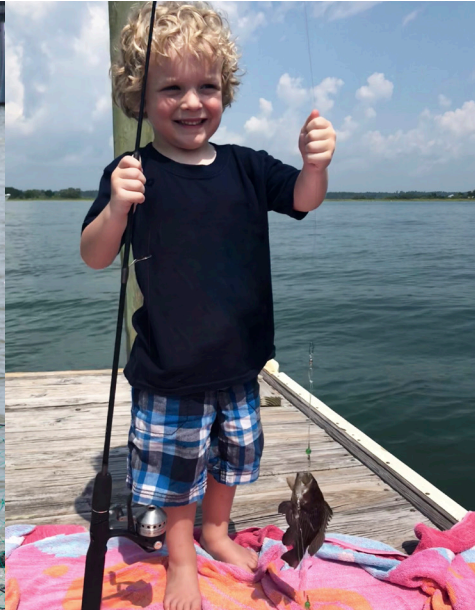


Photo: NOAA Fisheries/Dave Bard



Photo: Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

NOAA Fisheries is conducting this voluntary survey about saltwater recreational fishing, recreational fisheries management, and fisheries data collection. When answering these questions, please only focus on **saltwater recreational fishing** and saltwater recreational fisheries management and data collection. Saltwater refers to open ocean or any portion of a bay, sound, or river that is saltwater or slightly salty, as is the mixture of river water and seawater in estuaries.

This survey will help us better understand opinions and attitudes on fisheries management and data collection, and how anglers gather information on saltwater fishing issues.

Responses to this survey will be used to improve:

1. Our understanding of saltwater recreational anglers' knowledge, opinions, and beliefs on fisheries management and data collection.
2. How we communicate with saltwater recreational anglers.

*The questions in this survey are about **you and your saltwater recreational fishing activities, knowledge, and opinions.***

## SECTION 1. Saltwater Recreational Fishing Habits

In this section, we ask about your saltwater recreational fishing habits and reasons for fishing.

1. During the past 12 months, how many days have you spent saltwater recreational fishing? (Please provide your best guess.)

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Number of days (count partial days as full.)

2. Where do you go saltwater recreational fishing? (Check all that apply):

- State waters
- Federal waters
- I am unsure whether I fish in state or federal waters.

3. When you go saltwater recreational fishing, how often do you fish from ... (Select one choice for each fishing type.)

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
the shore? (The shore includes docks, bridges, causeways, beaches, banks, or any other shore-based place where you saltwater fish.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
a for-hire boat? (For-hire boats include charter and party/head boats.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
a private boat? (A boat belonging to an individual or a boat that is rented or leased by the operator.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. There are many different reasons people choose to go saltwater recreational fishing. How important are each of the following reasons to you? (Select one choice for each statement.)

I fish ...	Not at all important	Somewhat unimportant	Neither important nor unimportant	Somewhat important	Extremely important
to catch fish to eat.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
to catch a record or trophy fish.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
for the fun of catching fish.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
for relaxation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
to get away.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
for adventure and excitement.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
to spend time with my family and/or friends.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
to be with others who enjoy the same things I do.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
to be close to nature.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## SECTION 2. Saltwater Recreational Fisheries Management and Data Collection

In this section, we ask about your understanding and opinions on saltwater recreational fisheries management and data collection. Fisheries managers include representatives of NOAA Fisheries, state resource and fisheries agencies, and regional fishery management councils who establish fishing regulations to adhere to scientifically established catch limits — Fisheries managers are **NOT** law enforcement agents.

**5. How would you describe your knowledge of the saltwater recreational fishing regulations that apply to how you fish?**

*(Select one choice.)*

Poor

Fair

Good

Excellent

**6. During the past three years, have you attended a state or federal fisheries management public meeting or contacted a fisheries management or fisheries data collection agency to discuss fisheries issues?**

Yes

No

**7. Listed below are two statements regarding your knowledge and understanding of saltwater recreational fisheries management, data collection, and data use. Please indicate your level of agreement with each statement.**

*(Select one choice for each statement.)*

Strongly disagree    Somewhat disagree    Neither agree nor disagree    Somewhat agree    Strongly agree

I understand how fishery managers collect data on saltwater recreational fishing catch and effort.

I understand how fishery managers use saltwater recreational fishing catch and effort data to set fishing rules and regulations.

*Questions continue on the following page.*

**8. Listed below is a series of statements regarding the effectiveness of fisheries management rules. Please indicate your level of agreement with each statement. (Select one choice for each statement.)**

<b>Current saltwater recreational fisheries management rules ...</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Somewhat disagree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Somewhat agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>
provide good opportunities to catch fish and protect fish populations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
make certain that there will be good fishing opportunities for future generations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
protect marine environments and biodiversity.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
are easy to understand and follow.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
are well enforced.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**9. Listed below is a series of statements regarding the values, opinions, and goals of fisheries managers. Please indicate your level of agreement with each statement. (Select one choice for each statement.)**

<b>With respect to saltwater recreational fisheries management, I feel that fisheries managers ...</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Somewhat disagree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Somewhat agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>
share similar values to me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
share similar opinions to me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
think in a similar way as me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
take similar actions as I would.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
share similar goals to me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
listen to angler concerns.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
respond to angler concerns.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

*Questions continue on the following page.*

**10. Listed below is a series of statements regarding your trust in saltwater recreational fisheries managers. Please indicate your level of agreement with each statement. (Select one choice for each statement.)**

I trust fisheries managers to ...	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
collect accurate data on landings and fishing effort.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
accurately estimate total landings and fishing effort.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
accurately measure the size of fish stocks.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
use the best available data and science when proposing and implementing fisheries management rules and regulations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
manage fisheries in a way that ensures healthy fish populations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
manage fisheries in a way that maximizes recreational fishing opportunities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**11. Which focus area for saltwater recreational fisheries management is more important to you? (Select one for each choice.)**

<input type="checkbox"/> Current recreational fishing opportunities	OR	<input type="checkbox"/> Future recreational fishing opportunities
<input type="checkbox"/> Future recreational fishing opportunities	OR	<input type="checkbox"/> Protecting marine ecosystems and fish populations
<input type="checkbox"/> Protecting marine ecosystems and fish populations	OR	<input type="checkbox"/> Current recreational fishing opportunities

Questions continue on the following page.

### SECTION 3. Your Sources for Saltwater Recreational Fishing Information

In this section, we ask about the sources you use to get information on saltwater recreational fishing issues.

**12. How frequently do you use the following sources to gather information on saltwater recreational fishing (e.g., fishing regulations, fishing techniques, fishing hot spots, fishing stories)?** *(Select one choice for each source.)*

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently
Family members	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Friends	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Newspapers and fishing magazines	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Federal agency fishing websites and regulation guides	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
State agency fishing websites and regulation guides	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fishing websites/blogs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Online fishing message boards	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fishing television and/or radio shows	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bait and tackle shops/stands	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recreational fishing organizations (newsletters/emails/meetings)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Environmental advocacy groups	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fishing guides/captains	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fishing social media (Fishbrain, Fishidy, GoFree Hooked, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fishing rule apps (e.g., Fish Rules)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

*Questions continue on the following page.*

**13. How much do you trust information about saltwater fishing regulations and data collection issues when it comes from the following sources? Examples of issues include, but are not limited to:**

- the health of fish populations that are important to you;
- the motivation and goals of fishery managers; and
- the accuracy of stock assessments and fisheries data collection efforts.

*(Please circle your level of trust for each type of information source; 1 indicates no trust and 5 indicates complete trust. If you do not use or are not familiar with an information source, please mark "Do not use.")*

	No trust	.....▶	Complete trust	Do not use		
Family members	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
Friends	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
Newspapers and fishing magazines	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
Federal agency fishing websites or meetings	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
State agency fishing websites or meetings	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fishing websites/blogs	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
Online fishing message boards	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fishing television and/or radio shows	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bait and tackle shops/stands	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recreational fishing organizations (newsletters/emails/meetings)	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
Environmental advocacy groups	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fishing guides /captains	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fishing social media (Fishbrain, Fishidy, GoFree Hooked, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fishing rule apps (e.g., Fish Rules)	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>

**14. About how many other anglers (including family members, friends, members of fishing groups you belong to, etc.) do you discuss saltwater recreational fishing (e.g., fishing techniques, fishing locations, fishing regulations, fisheries data collection) with?**

- None     
  1-5     
  6-10     
  11-15     
  More than 15

## SECTION 4. About You

In this section, we ask questions about you to help us know more about saltwater recreational anglers. The information you provide will remain **strictly confidential** and will not be associated with your personal identity.

15. Are you licensed to saltwater fish in more than one state?

Yes  No

16. What is your gender?

Male  Female

17. How old are you?

Age in years

18. Are you of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish Origin?

*(Please check one.)*

Yes, of Hispanic origin  
 No, not of Hispanic origin

19. What is your race? *(Please check all that apply.)*

American Indian or Alaska Native  
 Asian  
 Black or African American  
 Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander  
 White  
 Other

20. What is the highest level of education you have completed? *(Please check one.)*

12<sup>th</sup> grade or less  
 High school graduate or GED  
 Associate or technical school degree  
 Bachelor's degree  
 Advanced, professional, or doctoral degree or coursework

21. Which of the following categories best describes your household's total annual income before taxes in 2018?

*(Please check one.)*

Less than \$20,000  
 \$20,000 - \$39,999  
 \$40,000 - \$59,999  
 \$60,000 - \$79,999  
 \$80,000 - \$99,999  
 \$100,000 - \$149,999  
 \$150,000 - \$199,999  
 \$200,000 or more

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 15 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other suggestions for reducing this burden to Adam Rettig, NOAA Fisheries, 1315 East West Highway, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910. This survey is voluntary. Information submitted will be treated as confidential in accordance with NOAA Administrative Order 216-100. Notwithstanding any other provisions of the law, no person is required to respond to, nor shall any person be subjected to a penalty for failure to comply with, a collection of information subject to the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act, unless that collection of information displays a currently valid OMB Control Number. NOAA Fisheries requires this information to enhance its communications and outreach activities. These data will be used to help NOAA Fisheries more effectively engage with its audiences by identifying key influencers and information pathways, and identifying the areas of greatest need and greatest opportunity for relationship-building.

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### Thank You

for completing this survey! We appreciate your participation in this survey.

Please mail back the completed survey in the postage paid envelope that was provided with the survey to:  
NOAA Fisheries, c/o ECS  
2750 Prosperity Avenue, Suite 600, Fairfax, Virginia 22031