



Florida Fish and Wildlife
Conservation Commission

Fish and Wildlife Research Institute
and Division of Marine Fisheries Management

Do you

- ✓ Buy fishing gear?
- ✓ Fuel up your boat?
- ✓ Purchase a fishing license?

SPORT FISH RESTORATION

Florida's Saltwater Projects

Every time you do these things, you are helping to improve your fishing experience. You are one of many anglers and boaters who support the *Sport Fish Restoration Program*. You support it and you benefit from it!



YOUR
PURCHASE
SUPPORTS



What is the Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Program?

This national program, managed by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS), collects money from:

- ✓ excise taxes on fishing equipment
- ✓ import duties on fishing equipment and boats
- ✓ taxes on motorboat and small-engine fuels

The revenue collected is used to create future fishing and boating opportunities.

Where does the Sport Fish Restoration money go?

The USFWS distributes Sport Fish Restoration funds to state fish and wildlife agencies. Each state's share is based 60% on its number of licensed anglers and 40% on its land and water area. In Florida, funds are managed by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC). Florida receives approximately \$6-\$7 million annually. The money supports freshwater and saltwater resources, and projects to improve boating opportunities. FWC receives about \$3 million to \$4 million annually to support saltwater projects in Florida. For each project, 75% of the total cost is provided by Sport Fish Restoration funds and 25% comes from state funds, which include recreational fishing license fees.



FWC's Fish and Wildlife Research Institute
St. Petersburg, Florida, headquarters

How does the Sport Fish Restoration Program benefit you and Florida?

The Sport Fish Restoration Program uses funds generated from your purchases to support projects that provide you with improved fishing and boating opportunities. This brochure describes Florida's saltwater projects funded by the Sport Fish Restoration Program. FWC's Fish and Wildlife Research Institute (FWRI) conducts fisheries research projects. FWC's Division of Marine Fisheries Management coordinates several educational projects as well as the artificial reef program. FWC also coordinates boating-access improvement projects.



Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC)

Currently, the following eleven saltwater projects coordinated by FWC are funded by the Sport Fish Restoration Program.

Fisheries Statistics

Researchers monitor marine fish, crab, and shrimp populations in selected bay systems throughout the state. Areas of research include Apalachicola Bay, Cedar Key, Tampa Bay, Charlotte Harbor, Indian River Lagoon, southeast Florida, Jacksonville, and the Florida Keys. Data collected in this program are used in other research projects, such as sport fish genetics and sport fish health monitoring. Resource managers use the data collected in all of these projects in making management decisions.



Nearshore and Estuarine Gamefish

Scientists gather information on the behavior, ecology, and life history of Florida's nearshore and estuarine (an estuary is a partially enclosed water-body or bay where fresh water and salt water mix) fish species. Current research focuses on tarpon, bonefish, snook, spotted seatrout, wahoo, black sea bass, and shad. More data are needed to assess the population status of each of these recreationally important species. This information is vital for developing management plans at the state and federal levels.

Reef Fish

FMRI staff collect information on the age, growth, and reproduction of reef fish species in southeast Florida and the Florida Keys. Research concentrates on gray snapper, mutton snapper, yellowtail snapper, and lane snapper. Research on important species of groupers is also planned. This project provides fishery managers with necessary information on the life history and population dynamics of reef fish species.



Sport Fish Genetics

Genetic research focuses on two major areas: genetically identifying natural fish populations and genetic monitoring of hatchery-raised fish at FWRI's Stock Enhancement Research Facility. Genetic information about natural populations lets managers know if a species should be managed as a single population or if parts of the population should be managed separately. Genetic tags allow staff to distinguish released hatchery-raised fish and their offspring from fish in the natural population. This technique is used to evaluate the success of stocking program.

Habitat Suitability Modeling (Where Fish Live)

Researchers are developing computer models that predict the distribution of recreationally important fish species. The models include fish-catch data and information about temperature, salinity, water depth, and bottom type. These models are designed to help fishery managers forecast fish populations and to provide information about habitat important to fish populations that might need special protection or management.



Sport Fish Health Monitoring

Staff gather information about fish kills and outbreaks of diseases in Florida’s sport fish. Information is obtained by FWC researchers, as well as through a volunteer network and citizen reports to the Marine Fish Kill Hotline: **1-800-636-0511**. Staff also monitor sport fish health at FWRI’s Stock Enhancement Research Facility, thus ensuring hatchery-raised fish are healthy when released into the natural environment.



Marine Resource Geographic Information System

The Marine Resource Geographic Information System (MRGIS) is a computer system used to create a mapped version of marine-related data. Staff use MRGIS to respond to requests for data about Florida’s recreational marine fisheries. Boater’s guides, shown at left, are created using MRGIS data and offer information about marine resources and boating access sites in many coastal areas of Florida. Anglers, boaters, and resource managers find these guides to be a valuable tool. Guides are available free of charge and can be ordered by contacting FWRI’s outreach office or logging onto <http://research.MyFWC.com/products/products.asp>.

Artificial Reefs

FWC staff coordinate and track the progress of artificial reef projects conducted by coastal governments and qualified non-profit organizations. Staff monitor reef materials, reef construction, and the long-term stability of each reef. They perform scuba dives to gather data about the various types of marine life that use artificial reef habitats. A list of artificial reef locations can be found at <http://myfwc.com/marine/ar/index.asp>.



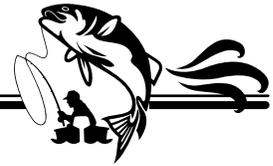
Aquatic Resource Education

Fishing clinics for children and women, offered statewide, are designed to inform participants about the marine environment. *Kids’ Fishing Clinics* are a one-day event divided into two segments. The first part of the day is spent learning basic fishing skills, such as casting and knot tying, as well as discussing the importance of conserving Florida’s marine habitats. The second part of the day is spent practicing these new skills while fishing. Women’s fishing clinics are a two-day workshop offering beginning to advanced skills classes on the first day and fishing opportunities on the second. Both of these programs provide participants the opportunity to learn about responsible angling and marine conservation in a hands-on environment.

Florida Saltwater Angler and Boater Outreach Project

In this project, anglers and boaters are informed of the roles they play in supporting the Sport Fish Restoration Program. Products describing Sport Fish Restoration-funded projects (such as videos and this brochure) are produced and distributed free of charge.





Boating-Access Improvements

FWC oversees Sport Fish Restoration-funded projects to improve boating access to marine areas. FWC uses the funds to improve public marina sites and create new boat ramps. Currently, the program is emphasizing maintenance and repair of existing structures. These projects improve boating-access opportunities for Florida's marine resource users.



Sport Fish Restoration Funding Cycle in Florida

The Sport Fish Restoration Program is a “user pays/user benefits” system of resource enhancement. In Florida, funds are distributed to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. The cycle of funding illustrated at right shows how Florida's anglers and boaters support the Sport Fish Restoration Program. Florida anglers and boaters benefit from the various projects that are funded through this program.

If you buy an item displaying the Sport Fish Restoration logo, you know that the excise tax was collected on that item. The logo also appears at boat ramp sites that are constructed or improved with funds from Sport Fish Restoration and on educational materials printed with these funds.



Information Resources

You can find out more about the Sport Fish Restoration Program at the following Web sites:

- ✓ fa.r9.fws.gov/sfr/fasfr.html—Information about the national Sport Fish Restoration Program.
- ✓ research.MyFWC.com—Details of saltwater Sport Fish Restoration-funded research in Florida.
- ✓ MyFWC.com—FWC site, including freshwater Sport Fish Restoration projects.
- ✓ MyFWC.com/marine—Artificial reef locations and current saltwater fishing regulations.

Resource Protection Hotlines

- ✓ FWC Marine Fish Kill Hotline: **1-800-636-0511** —Report saltwater fish kills and diseased or abnormal fish.
- ✓ FWC Division of Law Enforcement: **1-888-404-FWCC (3922)**—Report saltwater fishing violations, wildlife violations, or sick, injured, or dead sea turtles or manatees.



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