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Recreational angling reels in huge economic numbers

Catching just 3% of U.S.-caught saltwater fish, recreational angling outpaces commercial fishing in economic benefits

by Mike Nussman, President & CEO
American Sportfishing Association

According to the NOAA website, saltwater commercial fishing, from harvesting to processing, to wholesaling, to retailing produces about 1,509,108 jobs in the U.S. But more than 80 percent of our fish and shellfish are imported. So if we look at just the commercial jobs from U.S.-caught fish and shellfish, the number drops to 611,372 jobs. If we look just at finfish, the number drops further to 423,208 jobs.

Commercial	Sales (billions)	Income (billions)	Employment
Harvesters	\$4.57	\$1.81	60,334
Processors	\$4.52	\$1.45	33,157
Wholesalers	\$3.34	\$1.43	28,061
Retail	\$15.23	\$7.15	301,656
Total	\$27.66	\$11.84	423,208

Commercial industry economic impacts using the same multipliers used in Fisheries Economics of the United States. Imports have been removed, as well as shrimp, crab, freshwater fish, lobster, surf clam/ocean quahog, scallop and all other shellfish.

NOAA tells us that saltwater recreational fishing produces 533,813 U.S. jobs. From a jobs perspective, saltwater recreational fishing and saltwater commercial fishing are pretty close in terms of employing Americans.

However, NOAA has never given recreational angling its due, for a variety of reasons, but primarily

Recreational	Sales (billions)	Income (billions)	Employment
Trip	\$5.8	\$4.1	108,596
Durables	\$76.4	\$19.9	425,217
Total	\$82.2	\$24.0	533,813

because NOAA is a part of the Department of Commerce and the Department of Commerce simply doesn't understand recreation. It has no recreational programs and there is nothing like the state fish and wildlife programs or even the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service within the Department of Commerce.

Another possible reason the Department of Commerce ignores recreational angling is that, according to NOAA data, commercial harvesters catch 97 percent of U.S.-caught saltwater fish. Recreational anglers catch only 3 percent. It is true that Alaskan pollock and menhaden make up many tons of the commercial catch, but still, just 3 percent is recreational.

These figures take on a whole different meaning when you take those percentages and tie them back to the jobs numbers. The commercial fishing sector claims 423,208 with 97 percent of the entire harvest. The recreational sector claims 533,813 jobs with just 3 percent of the catch.

On an apples to apples basis, for every 1,000 pounds of commercial catch, 0.06 jobs are produced. For every 1,000 pounds of recreational catch, 2.09 jobs are created. It is time for a new paradigm in federal fisheries management.

Click [HERE](#) check out other demographic and economic data on recreational fishing gathered by the American Sportfishing Association.

CCA and Valero Partner in Conservation

Multi-year sponsorship continues CCA youth angler outreach and education program

Coastal Conservation Association and Valero Energy Corporation have announced plans to continue their successful relationship to promote conservation ethics and education among young anglers through the award-winning CCA Rising Tide youth outreach and education program. The Rising Tide program was launched initially in 2007 with Valero's support and the company this week announced that it will continue its sponsorship of the program through 2012.



“Parents and teachers know well how difficult it is these days to get kids thinking about the world beyond their cell phones and video games. You have to get creative to get kids thinking about their role as future stewards of our marine resources, and Valero's support of the Rising Tide program is allowing us to do that,” said Pat Murray, CCA executive vice president. “We are excited about building this program for the next three years and beyond.

Through a dynamic youth program that includes an eye-catching newsletter, marine conservation lesson plan and interactive web site, Valero and CCA are endeavoring to capture the enthusiasm of children and encourage them to understand and protect the coastal landscape. The Texas Outdoor Writers Association recognized this multi-media program for excellence in 2008.

“The award-winning Rising Tide program teaches children at an early age the importance of caring for the environment and conservation. This is a great investment in our children's future” said Eric Fisher, VP Investor and Corporate Communications Valero Energy Corporation.

“Making students and others aware of the conservation challenges that face our bays and oceans and helping them be part of the solution is the foundation for a lifetime of conservation,” said Murray. “We are fortunate to have a partner in Valero that is committed to educating youth about marine conservation.”

Reefs today for fish tomorrow

*150 tons of concrete and rock debris to be added to reef
nine miles offshore*

CCA Texas recently donated \$25,000 to fund 150 tons of concrete and rock debris to be added to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department's (TPWD) Vancouver reefing area in state waters just nine miles off the coast of Freeport. The undertaking will be a joint effort between CCA Texas' Habitat Today for Fish Tomorrow program (HTFT), TPWD and local and private businesses, which will provide services and expertise for transporting, storing and placing of the reef material which was donated by Texas A&M Galveston.

This project is important in many regards. Not only is this the first major project undertaken by the new HTFT program, the reef will provide vital habitat for many species of reef dwelling fish as well as afford an incredible fishing opportunity within easy reach of anglers.

"This project is a win-win," said CCA Texas HTFT Director, John Blaha. "The materials are going to be placed in an area with already established reefs so logically the species already in the area will be able to significantly expand their range and numbers. Anglers will benefit by having additional areas to fish within an easy boat ride from the coast. It is an exciting time for HTFT, and the members of CCA Texas should feel great pride in this important conservation project. This is just the first of several projects of this nature that HTFT is going to participate in along the coast. We anticipate great things from HTFT and for the future of the resource."

In addition to reefing projects, HTFT will be heavily involved with other projects such as marsh replenishment, bay debris clean-ups and other enhancement projects vital to conserving Texas coast areas for future generations of Texans.

3,000 Ghost Nets to Disappear

*\$4.5 million federal grant to speed removal of derelict fishing gear
from Puget Sound*

The marine resources of Puget Sound received a tremendous boost yesterday when the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) announced the Northwest Straits Commission will receive a \$4.5 million grant to remove derelict gill nets lost or discarded in Puget Sound. Since its inception in 2006, Coastal Conservation Association (CCA) Washington has strongly supported funding for the Northwest Straits Commission and has lobbied federal and state officials to take action to remove these silent killers.

"Ghost nets haunt our waters," said Bryan Irwin, Executive Director of CCA in the Pacific Northwest. "These invisible killers of ESA-listed salmon, marine mammals and other marine life take a devastating toll. We commend NOAA for not only recognizing this serious environmental challenge, but also targeting these funds to remove 3,000 high-priority derelict gill nets from Puget Sound. The project is an important first step toward the real solution of ending the use of these dangerous nets in our waters."

Lost and abandoned gill nets create a vicious cycle of destruction. They continuously ensnare fish, crabs and marine mammals which then die, attracting additional predators, which then also become ensnared. The nets also wreak havoc on marine habitat. Carried by currents and tides, they scrape the floors of rivers and bays, scouring the fragile ecosystems.

In addition to supporting funding for derelict net removal, CCA Washington has also called upon state officials to move boldly to reduce the ongoing loss of commercial fishing gear and to hold offenders ac-

countable. Proposed measures include mandatory identification tags for active gear, and mandatory reporting of lost gear.

“CCA Washington applauds the efforts of the Northwest Straits Commission, Senator Patty Murray, Congressman Norm Dicks and Congressman Rick Larsen for working to remove these destructive nets,” concluded Irwin. “These nets lie under the water’s surface destroying marine life around the clock, out of the sight and mind of the general public.”

Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission survives attack

Washington adjourned its 2009 legislative session with the current Fish and Wildlife Commission still intact despite a concerted effort to tear it down. Two separate bills backed by the commercial fishing industry sought to reduce the Fish and Wildlife Commission's authority to that of an advisory board, and replace all sitting Commissioners as punishment for recent pro-conservation decisions.

CCA Washington drew on the power of its grassroots, expert lobbying and official testimony presented by its Government Relations Committee to expose the motivation of the bills’ backers. Commercial interests had been working for three years to weaken the F&W Commission, but CCA Washington rallied to gain 14 committee votes in only four weeks in the successful effort to stop both bills.

Giant Salmon Spotted in Puget Sound

San Juan Propane is demonstrating their support for CCA in the Pacific Northwest in a big way. Their propane tanker truck travels around the islands of the Puget Sound by ferry and the mainland of Anacortes supplying propane and raising awareness for CCA. The truck has been featured in several local newspapers and magazines, and the owner reports numerous phone calls from passengers on ferry boats asking about CCA.



Move to Increase Ethanol Blend Levels Alarms Boat Owners

On March 6, 2009, a new pro-ethanol lobbying organization called Growth Energy and 54 ethanol manufacturers formally requested that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) increase ethanol blend levels in gasoline up to 15 percent (E15). As is required by law, EPA on April 21 published a Notice for Comment in the Federal Register, beginning a 30-day public comment period. On May 15, the EPA extended the comment period. The original public comment period was slated to end on May 21, 2009 but will now be extended to July 20, 2009.

Ethanol Advocates are mobilizing their forces to submit 20,000 favorable comments to the EPA requesting that the Agency grant a waiver for E15.

There are 18 million boats currently in operation in the U.S., and none of them has been designed, certified or warrantied to run on anything above E10, the current maximum legal blend level. Boaters know very well that increased ethanol blends will cause performance problems with their boats and engines, increase maintenance costs, potentially pose safety risks and increase air pollution. E15 will also void manufacturer warranties.

And yet, neither EPA nor any other federal agency has done a single test on the impacts of E15 on marine engines, fuel systems, or components. NMMA asks you to support a science first approach and urge EPA to deny the ethanol industry's E15 waiver request unless and until independent and comprehensive scientific testing is completed on a full range of marine engines and other products.

Click [HERE](#) to go the NMMA Action Center with more background information and links to submit comments on the proposal to increase ethanol blend levels.

Gill net arrests on rise in Alabama waters

Anonymous tip to CCA Alabama hotline leads to latest arrest

By JEFF DUTE

Outdoors Editor

Alabama Press Register

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An anonymous tip led to the arrest of a Fairhope man on recreational gill-net charges last week, possibly earning cash for the tipster under the Coastal Conservation Association's reward program.

Capt. Glenn Kornegay of the Alabama Marine Resources Division said the information received indicated a gill net was repeatedly being set illegally off Mobile Bay's Eastern Shore south of Fairhope. MRD personnel based in Gulf Shores checked the area four or five times, he said, before Officer Cole Gates located it shortly after midnight on Tuesday.

CEO Trey Pose set up surveillance on the net, Kornegay said, and at about 7 a.m., two men showed up. Kornegay said that Pose waited until one of the men, Cecil Daniel Taylor, 60, waded into the water, retrieved the net and began picking out the fish.

Taylor faces charges for an unattended net; setting an unmarked net; recreational netting without a recreational license; setting a recreational net beyond 300 feet from shore; and, because there were five speckled trout in the net, possession of game fish while in possession of a gill net. Taylor was also charged with public intoxication. He was taken to jail and released the same day on \$100 bond, according to Baldwin County Jail records.

Besides the speckled trout, Kornegay said there were about 50 pounds of mullet in the net.

A second man, McArthur Anthony, 67, also of Fairhope, was issued warnings on the same offenses. Kornegay said Anthony owned the net but was not charged because he did not touch the net.

The net and fish were confiscated.

CCA government affairs chairman Edwin Lamberth said the arrest is proof that the organization's community watch on the water program is working.

"Tips like these are necessary to help MRD enforce our laws," Lamberth said.

Georgia anglers donate to red drum study

CCA Georgia recently presented the state Department of Natural Resources (DNR) with a \$15,000 donation to support the Peach State Reds Initiative, a pilot project to determine the feasibility of using hatchery-reared red drum to enhance angler catches. The funds were raised through the CCA sponsored Redfish Rally, a coastwide, redfish-with-the-most-spots tournament.

“Our members are avid saltwater anglers who want to make sure that future generations enjoy quality fishing opportunities in healthy coastal ecosystems. They join a group like CCA Georgia to have a positive influence on local, state and national conservation efforts,” explained Harry Lowe, state chairman of CCA Georgia. “We support the Peach State Reds Initiative because Georgia DNR is committed to the same vision as our organization and shows it by exploring all fishery management tools, even those that may be non-traditional.”

Many anglers believe that Georgia DNR, like its counterparts in some other southeastern states, should use hatchery-reared saltwater fish as part of its fishery management program. In 2002, a citizen’s advisory group was appointed to help Georgia DNR evaluate what action, if any, should be taken. After 18 months of study, including visits to Florida and South Carolina to learn about their hatchery-reared red drum projects, the group recommended that Georgia undertake a pilot red drum stocking project. The Peach State Reds Initiative was developed in response to that recommendation, and Georgia DNR applied for Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration to fund the project.

Since Georgia does not have a saltwater fish hatchery, the South Carolina DNR was contracted to produce one million red drum fingerlings from adults captured in Georgia waters. These two-inch fingerlings were released in the Wassaw estuary near Savannah during the late summer of 2006 and 2007. A 23-acre saltwater pond on Jekyll Island was stocked as well with 2,200 six-inch fingerlings in the spring of 2007 and 2008.

CCA South Carolina volunteers launch oyster restoration projects

With the establishment of CCA SC’s Topwater Action Campaign, the state chapter has been busy pursuing habitat initiatives to benefit our coastal environment. Beginning with the Boone Hall Oyster Festival in January, CCA volunteers began the sometimes dirty work of collecting oyster shells for recycling projects that would come later. CCA SC and the state Department of Natural Resources (DNR) estimate that nearly 1,800 bushels of oysters were recycled through this program in its first efforts.

Fast forward to the present and those shells are now playing a part in the oyster restoration part of the campaign. Utilizing the oyster boats acquired late last year, CCA SC volunteers transported and placed those shells back into the marine environment to establish new oyster beds and fishery habitat at two locations in ACE Basin and Hobcaw Creek.

“Now is when all the work of collecting shells in the winter pays off,” said CCA SC State Board member Allen Bell of the CCA Topwater Action Campaign. “This was the most fun part of this project as well.”