



Center for
Coastal Conservation



NMMA® National Marine
Manufacturers Association

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Contact:

ASA, [Mary Jane Williamson](#) 703.362.7350

TBF, [Ellen Peel](#), 954.202.9267

Center, [Jeff Angers](#), 225.931.9700

CCA, [Ted Venker](#), 281.953.6614

IGFA, [Jason Schratwieser](#), 954.927.2628

NMMA, [Christine Pomorski](#), 202.737.9774

Sportfishing and Boating Communities Continue to Call for Public Access in New National Ocean Policy

WASHINGTON, D.C. – July 21, 2010 – On July 19, 2010, the [White House's Interagency Ocean Policy Task Force](#) released its [final report on a new national policy](#) with the stated goals of ensuring protection, maintenance and restoration of the nation's oceans, coastal areas and the Great Lakes. Over the past year, the recreational fishing and boating community provided substantial input to the Task Force, the White House Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and advocated that the social, economic, public health and conservation benefits of sustainable use of our nation's public resources receive priority consideration in the new coastal and ocean management policy. Following the release of the new policy, President Obama issued an [Executive Order](#) to implement the policies in the report.

"Over the past year, we have had numerous meetings with CEQ, NOAA and Members of Congress to explain the importance of recreational fishing and boating to the economy, to conservation, and to marine resource stewardship through public access to coastal and ocean spaces," said American Sportfishing Association (ASA) President and CEO Mike Nussman. "We are pleased to see that the Task Force included recreational fishing and boating as part of the National Ocean Policy. However, we wish that the Task Force would have gone further and established public access to these great resources as a national priority. It is vital that we remain vigilant and involved in the design and implementation process."

The initial report of the Task Force did not include a single reference to recreational fishing. In [formal comment](#) provided to the Ocean Policy Task Force, the recreational boating and fishing community sought to clarify the goals of the policy and expressed grave concerns over the establishment of a new, overarching, top-down federal management regime and the need to recognize the economic, cultural and social importance of recreation in the nation's public waters.

The term 'recreational' now appears over 50 times in the final report, and there is a general theme that promoting recreational fishing and stewardship is an important national ocean policy objective. However, the top-down tone of the policy is clear while significant concepts that could set the foundation for vast areas closed to angling and public recreation remain vague and undefined.

"Closing our public resources to recreational activities can have a devastating impact on businesses and livelihoods that are dependent on those activities as evidenced by the Gulf of Mexico oil spill," Nussman further said. "We need to ensure that our public resources remain

open for American families to experience these recreational pursuits consistent with safety and conservation goals.”

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About these organizations

The American Sportfishing Association (ASA) the sportfishing industry’s trade association, committed to looking out for the interests of the entire sportfishing community. We invest in long-term ventures to ensure the industry will remain strong and prosperous as well as safeguard and promote the enduring economic and conservation values of sportfishing in America. ASA also represents the interests of America’s 60 million anglers who generate over \$45 billion in retail sales with a \$125 billion impact on the nation’s economy creating employment for over one million people.

The Center for Coastal Conservation (Center) is a coalition of the leading advocates for marine recreational fishing and boating. It is dedicated to promoting sound conservation and use of ocean resources by affecting public policy through the political process.

Coastal Conservation Association (CCA) is the largest marine resource conservation group of its kind in the nation. With almost 100,000 members in 17 state chapters, CCA has been active in state, national and international fisheries management issues since 1977. Visit www.JoinCCA.org for more information.

The International Game Fish Association (IGFA), is a 70 year old world renowned not-for-profit organization committed to the conservation of game fish and the promotion of responsible, ethical, angling practices through science, education, rule making and record keeping. IGFA accomplishes its mission by enlisting the voice of over 300 official IGFA representatives in nearly 100 countries, and more\ than 15,000 angler-members around the globe.

The National Marine Manufacturers Association (NMMA) is the nation’s leading recreational marine industry association, representing over 1,600 boat builders, engine manufacturers and marine accessory manufacturers. NMMA collectively produces more than 80 percent of all recreational marine products made in the United States.

The Billfish Foundation (TBF) is dedicated to conserving and enhancing billfish populations around the world. The non-profit organization is an effective advocate for international change, synthesizing science and policy into effective fishery management solutions. By coordinating efforts and speaking with one voice, The Billfish Foundation is able to work for solutions that are good for billfish and not punitive to recreational anglers.