

Project Title: Marine Outreach and Education Program

Project PI: Robert Wiggers

Reporting Period: July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010

SRFAC Funding Objectives:

- Support an outreach program that focuses on making recreational boaters, anglers and associated audiences better stewards of marine resources.
- Utilize the public recreational tagging program as a tool for communicating with recreational anglers.
- Ensure that outreach events and program materials are accessible to coastal constituents in all coastal regions of South Carolina.
- Analyze and report upon historical data collected by the Marine Game Fish Tagging Program.

Summary of Activities/Accomplishments to Date:

From July 1 through April 30, 2010

- Outreach staff represented the Marine Resources Division at seven multi-day shows/expos including the Harry Hampton Hunting and Fishing Expo, Charleston Boat Show, Southeast Wildlife Expo and the Palmetto Sportsman's Classic. Attendance at these events ranged from 7,000 – 40,000 attendees.
- Through the Carolina Coastal Discovery Marine Education program, staff completed 29 vessel based education programs and 41 land based programs to students and teachers from grades K-12.
- Seven programs focusing on adult audiences were completed through the Coastal Exploration Series and collaboration with various Master Naturalist programs.
- Through the public recreational tagging program, a small contingent of taggers continues to tag and release target species. Thirty one (31) additional tag kits were supplied during the reporting period, and anglers tagged 465 fish, of which 63% were red drum. During the reporting period, 84 (recreationally) tagged fish were reported and numerous recaptures of fish tagged through the Inshore Fisheries Section were processed and forwarded to appropriate staff.
- A technical report covering historical data from the Marine Game Fish Tagging Program was completed and posted to the SCDNR website.
- Public information material was distributed through the Coastal Information Distribution System (CIDS). Twenty four days were spent delivering approximately 127,000 copies of printed material to 117 vendors located throughout the coastal counties of South

Carolina. Materials included rules and regulations books, tide tables, fish rulers, fish identification posters, and regulation update cards.

- General public outreach occurs on a daily basis through response to public inquiries. Staff responded over 125 requests for information. To facilitate the dissemination of information, the Saltwater Recreational License Program website was updated to include informational videos and answers to frequently asked questions related to the use of marine resources and associated licensing requirements.