

# The Modernizing Recreational Fisheries Act

(P.L. 115-405)

Overview of Nov. 2019 Council Coordinating Committee  
Discussions

# Modern Fish Act Overview

Purpose: “to expand recreational fishing opportunities through enhanced marine fishery conservation and management, and for other purposes”

- Numerous reports, studies, and guidance
- Authorizes management measures for recreational fisheries, reaffirms Annual Catch Limit requirements
- Recreational registry and data collection programs



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# Modern Fish Act Sections

## Title I

- **Section 101** – Study of allocations in mixed use fisheries
- **Section 102** – Fishery management measures
- **Section 103** – Study of limited access privilege programs for mixed-use fisheries

## Title II

- **Section 201** – Cooperative (Fed, state, non-gov) data collection
- **Section 202** – MRIP implementation of NAS 2017, state data partnerships



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# Section 102

Councils have the authority to:

*Use fishery management measures in a recreational fishery (or the recreational component of a mixed-use fishery)...such as extraction rates, fishing mortality targets, harvest control rules, or traditional or cultural practices of native communities in such fishery or fishery component.*

Existing MSA provisions still apply:

- Annual Catch Limits, National Standards, Accountability Measures, Rebuilding Requirements, etc.



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# CCC Discussion

## Congressional Sportmen's Foundation

- Access, opportunity, encounters
- Recognize ACL is a limit on fishing mortality in some form
  - ACL's ≠ only hard-pound quotas
- Need contemporary estimates of what's happening with a population



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# Mid-Atlantic FMC

Recreational Reform Initiative -- provide greater management stability in recreational management measures

- Revise current annual timeframe for evaluating fishery performance
- Set recreational specifications to a new multi-year process
- Establish guidelines for maintaining status quo regs



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# Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

## Management of Cobia

- 3 year coast wide specifications
  - Quota
  - Vessel & individual possession limits
  - Minimum size
  - Landings evaluated against catch targets as 3-year averages
- Commercial fishery closure based on pre-determined trigger



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# Pacific Fisheries Management Council

## Pacific Groundfish

- 9 overfished groundfish stocks rebuilt (e.g. bocaccio, canary rockfish, cowcod, ling cod etc)
- Harvest Control Rules established for both rebuilding and rebuilt conditions
- Inseason management applied
  - Continuous monitoring
  - Council team tracks catches
  - Council review of season status at each council meeting



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# Takeaways

- Modern Fish Act authorizes approaches that expand management flexibility
- Stability, predictability, opportunity
- Multiple approaches being explored/applied to suit regional/fishery needs:
  - Multi-year specs, annual specs, harvest rate, harvest control rules
  - Stakeholder interest in rate-based approaches
- Suggestion of SAFMC-GFMC working group
- Interest in exploring a pilot project



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