

2023 Outreach Events Plan

In-person outreach events provide the opportunity to discuss complex federal fisheries management issues with the general public and stakeholders. These events also allow us to reach people that may be completely unfamiliar with the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (Council) and its purpose. Attendance at in-person outreach events promotes the Council process and demonstrates good-will by showing the investment of the Council in engaging the public. Outreach events can also be useful ways to collaborate with, and show support for other agencies.

In 2023, the Council aims to attend at least one engagement in each state. For some states there is more than one event listed in case the first choice is unavailable. Staff thinks both events listed for Florida could be accomplished as they require minimal costs and are nearby. The Council endeavors to attend a variety of events that engage each sector of the fishery: private recreational, for-hire, and commercial, with the specific goal of engaging members of these sectors that are not already engaged or have been less engaged in the Council process. One or more Council staff members and at least one Council member will attend each event. The presence of a Council member gives the public an opportunity to ask questions of policy makers and promotes understanding of the management process that could increase the Council's reach and increase engagement in the process. The 2023 outreach goal is to focus on attendance at smaller club meetings, and expos that allow a Council staff member to speak or provide a presentation on relevant management topics.

Analytics will be collected during each in-person outreach effort to help gauge the effectiveness of attendance at such events. The number of direct engagements or attendees present during a speaking opportunity, and the number of listserv sign-ups will be tracked for each event. These analytics will help inform future outreach event plans. Each year, Council Outreach staff can discuss potential outreach events to determine the best method of communication based on the target audience and provide the most useful outreach materials and/or discussion topic for that specific event.

Below is a list of proposed 2023 outreach engagements. Staff will coordinate with a contact person for each outreach event to request guidance on topics that would be appropriate to discuss at the event. Council staff will work to fulfill each commitment; however, some events may be canceled, the Council could be declined, or the event could be unable to accommodate Council attendance.

Florida

- **Gainesville Offshore Fishing Club (TBD):** The Gainesville Offshore Fishing Club is a non-profit organization with members who share an interest in inshore and offshore saltwater fishing in North Central Florida. It is one of the largest fishing clubs in the state. The club meets on the fourth Tuesday of each month at the Veterinary Academic Building.
Target audience: Private recreational fishermen

Potential engagement opportunity: Speaking at monthly meeting
Link: <https://gofc.us/>

- **iCast (July):** Fishing exhibition in Orlando, Florida with a “Conservation Corner” hosting vendors such as FWC, SAFMC, Return ‘Em Right and others. Select Gulf Council staff usually attends the event without hosting a booth.
Target audience: Industry members
Potential engagement opportunity: Hosting a “Lunch and Learn” session
<https://icastfishing.org/schedule-2023/>

Alabama

- **Mobile Big Game Fishing Club Meeting (TBD):** Recreational fishing club in Mobile, Alabama that holds tournaments as well as member meetings with invited speakers to discuss various fisheries topics.
Target audience: Recreational and for-hire fishermen
Potential engagement opportunity: Presentation to club members
Link: <http://mbgfc.org/>
- **Alabama Coastal Fishing Association (TBD):** The Alabama Coastal Fisherman's Association is an inshore saltwater fishing club based in Mobile, Alabama. They have monthly member meetings with guest speakers occasionally.
Target audience: Recreational and for-hire fishermen
Potential engagement opportunity: Presentation to members
Link: <https://www.acfafish.com/>

Mississippi

- **Mississippi Gulf Fishing Banks Meeting (monthly through November):** A non-profit organization that works with the MS Department of Marine Resources to develop and monitor artificial reefs off the MS Gulf Coast.
Target audience: Recreational and for-hire fishermen, general public
Potential engagement opportunity: Presentation to members
Link: <https://mgfb.org/>

Louisiana

- **Louisiana Fisheries Forward Summit (March 1):** A free event in Kenner, Louisiana that focuses on showcasing commercial fishing products, services and gear through an expo.
Target audience: Commercial fishermen
Potential engagement opportunity: Presentation or part of panel discussion
Link: <https://www.lafisheriesforward.org/summit/>

- Louisiana Charter Boat Association (TBD): The LCBA is a trade association for the charter-for-hire fishing industry in Louisiana. The association exists to promote the charter businesses in Louisiana.
Target audience: For-hire fishermen
Potential engagement opportunity: Presentation to members
Link: <https://louisianacharterfishing.com/>

Texas

- **Galveston Co. Fishing and Outdoors Expo** (December): Indoor fishing expo held in Texas City.
Target audience: Recreational and for-hire fishermen, general public
Potential engagement opportunity: Allotted time to speak
Link: <https://gotfishexpo.com/>