

Accomplishments of the Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council

The Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council is a federally chartered advisory committee established in 1993. The Council advises the Interior Department Secretary, through the director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, on recreational fishing and boating issues. Its 18 members, who serve 2_year terms, include state resource agency directors, representatives of fishing and boating industries and associations, and experts in public outreach, resource conservation, and recreation (with the director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the president of the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies serving as *ex officio* members).

- **January 1993** Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council established.
- **April 1994** Council releases *Recreational Fisheries Stewardship Initiative* outlining major threats to fisheries and aquatic systems and recommending efforts to combat them. Top priority given to policy for "achieving balance" in the administration of the Endangered Species Act as it relates to recreational fisheries. Another was Executive Order on Recreational Fisheries.
- **October 1994** Council convenes more than 70 state, tribal, and federal fisheries advocates to recommend ways to reduce conflicts between traditional fishery management practices and federally listed species recovery efforts.
- **November 1994** Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt formally endorses *Recreational Fisheries Stewardship Initiative*; says he will recommend Executive Order on Recreational Fisheries.
- **February 1995** Council releases "position paper" called *Conserving Federally Threatened, Endangered, and Proposed Species While Providing and Enhancing Recreational Fisheries Programs*.
- **March 1995** Council releases special report called *The Impact of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade on the Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Program*.
- **June 1995** President Bill Clinton signs Executive Order (12962) on Recreational Fisheries requiring federal agencies to improve recreational fisheries within the context of their programs and responsibilities. The Order required development of a policy to improve administration of the Endangered Species Act as it relates to recreational fisheries, required the development of a comprehensive fisheries conservation plan for federal agencies, and broadened the Council's responsibilities by charging it with monitoring federal agencies' progress under the fisheries conservation plan.
- **August 1995** former Service Director Mollie Beattie requests the Council convene fisheries stakeholder meetings to compile recommendations on the appropriate role of the Service in recreational fisheries management.

- **September 1995** Congress directs the Service to develop \$2.1 million in cost savings for its fisheries program in the 1997 budget (1996 budget totaled \$64.7 million); Beattie asks Council for recommendations.
- **October 1995-April 1996** Council holds several stakeholder meetings, including state agency directors, state fisheries chiefs, representatives of the Native American Fish and Wildlife Society, conservation organizations, and industry representatives.
- **December 1995** Council gives former Service Director Mollie Beattie its fiscal year 1997 cost savings recommendations.
- **December 1995** U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries Service announce draft policy on administration of the Endangered Species Act as it relates to recreational fisheries.
- **June 1996** *Recreational Fishery Resources Conservation Plan* unveiled.
- **June 1996** *Final Policy for Conserving Species Listed or Proposed for Listing Under the Endangered Species Act While Providing and Enhancing Recreational Fisheries Opportunities* announced.
- **August 1996** Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council completes recommendations on the appropriate role of the Service in fisheries management and presents them to Acting Service Director John Rogers. Council recommends additional stakeholder meetings; at the national level as well as in each of the Service's seven geographical regions.
- **August 1996** Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council completes its first annual report on federal implementation of Executive Order for Recreational Fisheries. Agencies reported internal restructuring and a stir of planning activities to set up recreational fisheries offices and develop their respective agency's strategies for implementing the *Recreational Fishery Resources Conservation Plan*.
- **October 1996** Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council convenes more than 100 recreational fisheries stakeholders to identify actions by non-Federal partners to complement the *Recreational Fishery Resources Conservation Plan*. Recommended actions include: 1) address habitat conservation and restoration issues through amendment to the Clean Water Act, 2) provide access to fishing waters in partnership with private entrepreneurs, 3) educate and recruit new anglers through aggressive marketing/education programs in urban areas, and 4) compile socio-economic data pertaining to recreational fisheries.
- **September 2000** Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council releases *Saving a System in Peril: A Special Report on the National Fish Hatchery System*. The project was undertaken at the behest of Members of Congress and the Fish and

Wildlife Service to help establish a clear mission for the National Fish Hatchery System. The process garnered input from a wide array of interested partners and stakeholders, including States, conservation organizations, Tribes, industry and NGOs. Many of the 20 consensus recommendations of the report were incorporated into a strategic plan for the hatchery system.

- **January 2002** Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council releases *A Partnership Agenda for Fisheries Conservation*.