



**Programmatic Assessment of the  
RECREATIONAL BOATING &  
FISHING FOUNDATION**

**Sport Fishing  
and Boating  
Partnership  
Council**

**FY2013–2015**



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**Programmatic Assessment  
FY2013–2015**

**Activities of the  
Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation**

Report of the 2015 *Ad Hoc* Assessment Team  
to the Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council



Approved by Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council May 4, 2016



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## REPORT SUMMARY AND FINDINGS

In response to declines in recreational boating and fishing participation, Congress passed the 1998 Sportfishing and Boating Safety Act. The Act requires the Secretary of the Interior to implement a National Outreach and Communication Program to address recreational boating and fishing participation and promote conservation and responsible use of the nation's aquatic resources. In response, the Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council (SFBPC) developed a strategic plan for the program and the Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation (RBFF) was established in October 1998 expressly to carry out that plan.

RBFF is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to increase participation in recreational fishing and boating and thereby increase public awareness and appreciation of the need for protecting, conserving and restoring America's aquatic natural resources.

RBFF has received funding to implement the National Outreach and Communications Program from a Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund (SFR) discretionary grant, which is awarded through a competitive process. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) is responsible for administering the discretionary grant and provides a detailed accounting of the RBFF program and its activities to the Secretary of the Interior. For the period 2000-2015, RBFF received \$166,873,694 in SFR funding. For the time period of 2013-2015, RBFF received a total of \$35,374,619.

The Act directs the Secretary of the Interior to conduct periodic reviews of the National Outreach and Communication Program. Responsibility for the assessment was delegated to SFBPC, on behalf of the Secretary, through a 1999 memorandum of understanding (MOU) and subsequent renewals of this MOU (Appendix A). This memorandum states the SFBPC "will monitor the implementation of the program, will evaluate effectiveness of the program by communicating regularly with its stakeholders, and will regularly report findings to the Secretary and the signatories of this agreement."

### Previous Assessments

The SFBPC previously undertook reviews of RBFF in 2002, 2006, 2009 and 2012. This assessment is the fifth review of the RBFF and its implementation of the National Outreach and Communication Program. The most recent assessment (2010-12) experienced delays and was approved by the SFBPC in February, 2015.

Like the previous assessments, the 2015 assessment evaluated the efforts of RBFF relative to five questions directly derived from the legislative mandate for the National Outreach and Communications Program:

- 1. Have RBFF activities had a positive impact on recruitment and retention of boaters and anglers?**
- 2. Have Stakeholders found added value in the adoption of RBFF products?**
- 3. Has RBFF increased the public's knowledge of boating and fishing techniques, and its awareness of boating and fishing opportunities?**
- 4. How has RBFF enhanced the public's understanding of aquatic resources?**
- 5. Have RBFF products and activities increased conservation and responsible use of aquatic resources by boaters and anglers?**

Based on recommendation #1 from the 2009 assessment, RBFF worked with SFBPC, FWS and AFWA to develop a series of “consensus measures” to help standardize the metrics for evaluating the five questions (Appendix B). To do so, the group identified two overarching objectives: 1) increase participation in recreational angling and boating, and 2) increase public awareness of sound fishing, boating and conservation practices. Under each objective are a series of goals that support each objective. Finally, each goal has one or more specific metrics to measure RBFF’s progress towards the goals and ultimately the two objectives. This report lists the results of the consensus measures and metrics in the sections devoted to each of the five questions.



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### **FY 2013-2015 Assessment**

In September 2015, SFBPC seated a ten-person Assessment Team to undertake an independent, impartial and constructive programmatic assessment of RBFF for the period 2013–2015. Collectively, the team comprises experience and expertise in recreational boating, fishing, marketing, program analysis, economic development and familiarity with the conduct and impact of RBFF’s programs.

Because of delays in delivery of the 2012 assessment report, RBFF did not have the opportunity to implement 2012 recommendations during the 2013-15 assessment period.

Instead, the 2013-15 assessment focused only on measuring progress toward the goals and objectives based on the metrics adopted in 2009. This strategy was employed, in part, to complete the 2013-15 assessment more quickly and provide RBFF with several years to implement recommendations made in the 2012 and 2015 assessments.

### **2015 Assessment Findings and Recommendations**

Because RBFF did not receive the 2012 assessment report until the end of the 2013-2015 assessment period, it clearly did not have a chance to respond to the recommendations set forth in the 2012 assessment report in time to affect the 2012-2015 results. Therefore, many of the same issues addressed and recommendations made in the 2012 assessment report are still appropriate for this 2015 report. The 2015 Assessment Team refers frequently to the 2012 findings and recommendations in this report, and the full list of 2012 recommendations is reprinted in Appendix C. In July 2015, RBFF submitted its formal response to the 2012 Assessment Report to the SFBPC (Appendix D). Although technically not part of the 2013-2015 assessment period, the Assessment Team felt it was important to include this response as evidence of RBFF’s intentions to address the 2012 report findings.

Following is a brief summary of the 2015 Assessment Team’s findings for each question, based on the consensus measure results, along with a page reference for the section of this document that addresses the findings in more detail.



**Question 1. Have RBFF activities had a positive impact on recruitment and retention of boaters and anglers?**

RBFF did not achieve its consensus metric objectives for fishing license sales or boat registrations during the 2013-15 assessment period. There are states where fishing license sales and/or boat registrations have increased, and RBFF efforts contributed to those results. However, results of the lapsed boater and lapsed angler programs are mixed, and results of RBFF’s stakeholder satisfaction surveys show that many stakeholders were uncertain about RBFF’s effectiveness in increasing boat registrations, fishing license sales and participation in boating and fishing (page 12). Moreover, it is difficult to determine the direct impact of RBFF’s activities on these metrics. The Assessment Team recognizes that myriad factors influence individual decisions to participate in boating and/or fishing. The consensus measures developed following the 2009 assessment provided a good starting point for assessing RBFF’s progress using a suite of metrics related to the five questions. However, measuring progress is not a static process—it is an iterative one in which new outcomes need to be measured and existing metrics revised. This assessment demonstrates that RBFF and its partners need to begin shifting from metrics that primarily measure outputs (visits to a web page, media stories tracked) to metrics that measure outcomes (sustained participation in fishing and boating). This is challenging work; however, it is essential in order to demonstrate progress toward the goals RBFF was created to achieve. New metrics are needed that will better assess RBFF’s direct impacts on recruitment and retention of boaters and anglers.

**Question 2. Have Stakeholders found added value in the adoption of RBFF products?**

RBFF met its objectives in two of the three consensus metrics associated with this question (page 15). First, all fifty states registered to participate in RBFF’s marketing workshop in 2015 (North Carolina and North Dakota were eventually unable to attend), and second, RBFF exceeded its objective for non-federal match monies (in-kind and cash) all three years of the assessment. However, RBFF fell short of its stakeholder satisfaction metric all three years of the assessment. Further, many participants in RBFF’s annual stakeholder satisfaction survey were uncertain about the degree to which RBFF’s programs were impacting the recruitment and retention of boaters and anglers—a continuation of trends reported in the 2009 and 2012 assessment reports.

RBFF has an opportunity to renew a genuinely collaborative partnership with states and other stakeholders. As state needs change and questions arise about the effectiveness of longstanding programs such as the lapsed angler program, RBFF has an opportunity to engage in proactive problem solving and consultation with states. Changing this dynamic, becoming more collaborative, and customizing service for stakeholders can ensure that every partner – states, industry and RBFF – will become more effective. Achieving these outcomes will also lead to success in recruiting and retaining more anglers and boaters.



PHOTO: UPUPA4ME/FLICKR

**Question 3. Has RBFF increased the public’s knowledge of boating and fishing techniques, and its awareness of boating and fishing opportunities?**

RBFF has exceeded objectives for five of the eight consensus metrics created for this section (page 30), including:

- Increase unique visitors to TakeMeFishing.org digital assets (TMF) by 10% annually
- Increase return visitors to TMF digital assets by 10% annually
- Increase page views to the “where to” pages of TMF assets by 10% annually
- Increase page views to the “how to” pages of TMF assets by 10% annually
- Increase referrals from TMF digital assets to Discover Boating.com by 10% annually

Objectives were not achieved for the following three consensus metrics in this section:

- Increase referrals from TMF to state fishing license purchase pages by 10% annually
- Increase referrals from TMF to state boat registration pages by 10% annually
- Increase influence of TMF on public’s decision to boat or fish (survey data)

Changes in the methods used for tracking referrals may explain much or all of the shortfall in two of the three metrics that did not meet objectives.

Of greater concern to the Assessment Team was the quality of some of the “where to” data that appears on the TMF website, which was also expressed in the 2012 assessment. It is very likely that compiling and validating the quality of this information is not completely RBFF’s responsibility (sometimes it’s not RBFF’s responsibility at all), but there remains a significant opportunity for greater collaboration with states and other stakeholders to continually expand and improve the important “how to” and “where to” boat and fish information on TMF. Toward this end, the Assessment Team recommends usability studies such as customer testing or focus groups directed specifically at the “where-to” information on TMF.org. It would be best if these studies were conducted by an independent research firm with specific expertise in this field.

Of additional concern to the Assessment Team (and to RBFF) is the unsustainable nature of 10% annual increases in these consensus metrics. This is further validation of the recommendation to revisit and revise the consensus measures and metrics as soon as possible to clarify the objectives that RBFF needs to work toward.

Finally, the Assessment Team recommends that RBFF work with state agencies that have the capability to develop systems that can track users that are referred to fishing license and boat registration pages from TMF, to determine what percentage of these referrals result in sales.

**Question 4. How has RBFF enhanced the public’s understanding of aquatic resources?**

RBFF has worked since its inception to design and implement a set of education materials and programs to enhance public understanding of aquatic resources. During the past two assessment periods, RBFF made major changes to these efforts, cancelling major programs (e.g., Education Grant Program and Discovery Education’s *Explore the Blue* program) and developing new ones (e.g., Disney campaign and *Vamos A Pescar* Hispanic campaign). The Assessment Team respects RBFF’s expertise in marketing and its discretion to make programmatic changes. However, the Team was unable to objectively evaluate the significant changes that occurred during the assessment period because the consensus measures and metrics do not provide specific goals, objectives, or criteria for developing, implementing, and evaluating the new initiatives. The Team recommends that goals, objectives, and criteria be developed and RBFF rigorously evaluate current and future initiatives based on them. This will help future assessment teams, the Council, FWS, and other stakeholders to objectively and fairly evaluate the effectiveness of programs, and will assist RBFF in its future decisions regarding major programming changes (page 34).

**Question 5. Have RBFF products and activities increased conservation and responsible use of aquatic resources by boaters and anglers?**

RBFF has met or exceeded its consensus metric objectives for increasing visitors to the conservation pages and boating and fishing safety pages in all three years of the assessment. It also met its objective to use the SFR logo on all products and materials. The Assessment Team congratulates RBFF on these excellent accomplishments. Looking forward, the Team cautions that these metrics do not demonstrate changes in boater and angler conservation knowledge or responsible use. Additionally, while RBFF has met its objectives for visits to conservation and safety pages, the number of visits to these pages pales in comparison to the overall number of visitors to TME.org. Although the vast majority of visitors might not come to TME for conservation or safety information, there remains an opportunity to draw more attention to these areas of the site, increasing their impact on boaters and anglers. The Assessment Team encourages the committee that develops new consensus metrics to consider metrics that will create a more direct connection between RBFF’s programs and increased conservation and responsible use behaviors by boaters and anglers (page 38).



PHOTO: MATT HARLOW, DJ CASE & ASSOCIATES

## 2015 Recommendations

Based on the 2015 Assessment, the Assessment Team makes the following recommendations:

1. RBFF, SFBPC, FWS and AFWA should develop a new list of consensus measures and metrics on which to base future assessments of RBFF's effectiveness. As part of this process, the parties should first review the metrics that were established for each of the current consensus measures to ensure they remain up-to-date and relevant. Metrics and measures that are no longer relevant or meaningful should be removed. In addition, the parties should revise existing metrics and develop new metrics that are outcome-based wherever possible, and that are directly related to the five questions from the legislative mandate for the National Outreach and Communications Program.
2. The SFBPC, AFWA and FWS should work with RBFF to identify surrogates for certified license sales data and boat registration data that would allow RBFF to more quickly respond to changing market conditions and modify its recruitment and retention programs.
3. RBFF should engage in a genuinely collaborative and ongoing partnership with stakeholders about how to improve programs to increase and sustain participation in boating and angling in the United States. The collaboration process should include identifying specific stakeholders and their specific goals and needs. In addition, RBFF should proactively pursue opportunities to collaborate with states that want more customized services, including alternatives to the current lapsed angler program, and additional contractual services such as enhanced state agency marketing.
4. For TMF.org pages that include state information, there is an opportunity for RBFF to work with states to highlight those programs and resources that states may want to promote (e.g., banners with links to state program sites). When states do not have the capacity for state-specific information, RBFF should work closely with these states to ensure information posted on TMF.org is available and accurate. RBFF could make state-specific banner ad space available on TMF.org state pages to highlight state events and add links from RBFF "Where-to" pages to the most accurate state resources. One potential way to measure the success would be to track the number of referrals from the TMF website to state-specific resources.
5. RBFF should begin reporting the number of visitors that are referred to each state licensing/registration page. In addition the RBFF should work with state agencies to encourage development of systems that would allow state agencies to track users that are referred to fishing license and boat registration pages from TMF. (A system is currently being pilot-tested in Florida.) If/when such systems are in place, RBFF should report state-by-state referrals and outcomes as part of its consensus measures.
6. RBFF, AFWA, FWS, and SFBPC should work together to establish specific goals and objectives and a process for rigorously evaluating and reporting on RBFF's effectiveness at enhancing the public's understanding of aquatic resources and



sustained participation in boating and angling. (For example, if the Disney and/or Hispanic campaigns are intended to achieve these goals, how will RBFF evaluate the effectiveness of these campaigns and measure success?)

7. RBFF should work with SFBPC, FWS, and AFWA to develop a communications plan to proactively integrate conservation and safety messaging with all fishing and boating messages and increase prominence of conservation messaging in RBFF communications.
8. The Assessment Team commends the quality of the images provided by RBFF and recommends that the image library be regularly updated (e.g. diverse ethnicity, urban backgrounds in shots, updated PFD styles, etc.).
9. Work with SFBPC, FWS, and AFWA to develop one or more metrics to measure the outcomes of RBFF's activities on conservation and responsible use of aquatic resources by boaters and anglers.



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## **INTRODUCTION**

In September 1998, a group of individuals dedicated to angling and boating formed the initial board of directors for a new nonprofit entity known as the Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation (RBFF or Foundation).



**RECREATIONAL  
BOATING & FISHING  
FOUNDATION**

RBFF was formed specifically to recruit and retain recreational boating and fishing participants while encouraging a conservation ethic and respect for the aquatic resource. Its founding mission was “to implement an informed, consensus-based national outreach strategy that will increase participation in recreational angling and boating and thereby increase public awareness and appreciation of the need to protect, conserve, and restore this nation’s aquatic natural resources.” This ambitious mission was to be achieved through the pursuit of five objectives:

1. Create a top-of-mind recreational boating and fishing campaign to develop awareness, trial and continued participation;
2. Educate people how and where to boat and fish;
3. Target market segments and create messages that address each segment’s specific needs;
4. Educate stakeholders on marketing, outreach and implementation of national strategies to targeted user groups; and
5. Make availability of, and access to, boating and fishing locations easy and simple.

Creation of RBFF was the direct result of efforts arising from the Sportfishing and Boating Safety Act of 1998 (Act) which directed the Secretary of the Interior to “develop and implement, in cooperation and consultation with the Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council (SFPBC or Council), a national plan for outreach and communications” directed at addressing the decline in recreational fishing and boating. The national plan was drafted with input from 11 national stakeholder meetings hosted by the Council in which more than 400 individuals participated. The Council drafted a Strategic Plan (Plan) for the National Outreach and Communication Program (Program), which Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt approved in February 1999.

Recognizing the need for a non-profit organization to spearhead implementation of the strategic plan, RBFF was formed. In March 1999, the FWS and RBFF signed a cooperative agreement to provide financial support to RBFF for professional marketing expertise needed to implement the National Outreach and Communications Program. In July 1999, an RBFF Chief Executive Officer was hired and began the process of hiring permanent staff and establishing an office in Alexandria, VA.

In September 1999, FWS, SFBPC and the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (now the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies or AFWA) entered into a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with RBFf establishing the framework for a “collaborative effort to implement the National Outreach and Communications Program.” The MOU states the SFBPC “will monitor the implementation of the Program, will evaluate effectiveness of the program by communicating regularly with its stakeholders and will regularly report findings to the Secretary of the Interior and the signatories of this agreement.” The original MOU was in force, as amended, through 2016, when a new MOU was executed (Appendix A).

Funding for the National Outreach and Communications Program is provided through the Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund. RBFf has been the sole recipient of these funds to date, although some of these funds have been distributed outside of RBFf in the form of grants. Between 2000 and 2015, the Foundation received \$166,878,544 in federal appropriations from the Sport Fish Restoration account (Table 1).

**Table 1: RBFf: Appropriation History**

Fiscal Year*	Federal Appropriation
2000	\$5,000,000
2001	\$6,000,000
2002	\$7,000,000
2003	\$8,000,000
2004	\$10,000,000
2005	\$9,790,000
2006	\$9,790,000
2007	\$10,773,941
2008	\$12,305,981
2009	\$13,758,009
2010	\$13,716,383
2011	\$12,850,523
2012	\$12,514,238
2013	\$12,027,783
2014	\$12,213,605
2015	\$11,133,231
Total	\$166,873,694

\*Funding by RBFf Fiscal Year (April 1-March 31); Federal Appropriations are previous Federal FY (October 1-September 30)—e.g., RBFf FY2013 funded with Federal FY2012.

Under the Sportfishing and Boating Safety Act, the FWS serves as the liaison between the RBFf, SFBPC, AFWA and other stakeholders. The FWS is also responsible for administering the discretionary grant and provides a detailed accounting of the program and its activities to the Secretary of the Interior.



## **RBFF Mission and Governance**

RBFF is incorporated in the Commonwealth of Virginia, and is operated as an educational organization in accordance with Section 501(c)(3) of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code.

The Foundation's mission is *"to increase participation in recreational angling and boating and thereby increase public awareness and appreciation of the need to protect, conserve and restore this nation's aquatic natural resources."*

A volunteer board of directors, serving three-year terms, governs RBFF. The board of directors consists of one non-voting representative and no fewer than four and no more than 24 directors appointed as follows:

- A. Twenty-two of the directors and one non-voting representative shall be appointed by the organizations listed below and in accordance with the following:
  - a. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (one non-voting representative)
    - i. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service director, or designee
  - b. Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (seven seats)
    - i. Executive director of AFWA, or designee
    - ii. State agency representative (six seats at-large, with due representation from angling and boating interests)
  - c. National Marine Manufacturers Association (five seats)
    - i. NMMA president, or designee
    - ii. Boating industry representative (four seats)
  - d. American Sport Fishing Association (five seats)
    - i. ASA president, or designee
    - ii. Sport Fishing industry representative (four seats)
  - e. Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council (five seats)
    - i. Grassroots conservation/advocacy organizations (two seats)
    - ii. At-large (three seats)
- B. The directors then in office may appoint up to two at-large directors.

## **Strategic Plans and Expenses by Program Area**

RBFF has consistently worked to describe its programmatic objectives in a series of strategic plans. The organization's core focus is evident in its most recent FY 2017-2019 Strategic Plan (Appendix E), which focuses on:

- **Consumer Engagement:** Increase participation in recreational boating and fishing by recruiting new audiences through a national marketing and communications campaign designed to increase awareness of fishing and boating and natural resource conservation, dispel negative stereotypes, and encourage consideration, trial and ultimately participation.
- **State Engagement:** Grow the number of anglers and boaters by working in collaboration with state agencies to develop, implement and evaluate innovative

recruitment, retention and reactivation (R3) activities. Share results and details of R3 efforts with all state agencies so that each individual agency can successfully implement these programs.

- Industry Engagement: Partner with industry manufacturers and retailers to develop and implement marketing projects designed to increase category growth, while simultaneously, through research; develop consumer insights, knowledge and tools that industry can use to grow its individual brands.

RBFF’s budget has followed these broad categories for several years. Its actual expenditures for these categories during the assessment period are reflected in Table 2.

**Table 2: RBFF’s Expenditures FY2013-FY2015**

Functional Expense/ Fiscal Year	2013	2014	2015
Consumer engagement	\$6,845,952	\$8,280,025	\$7,875,801
State engagement	\$1,792,467	\$1,618,984	\$1,568,169
Industry engagement	\$1,700,080	\$1,080,092	\$578,216
Digital communications*	\$1,367,494	\$0	\$0
Administration, overhead & misc	\$1,227,596	\$1,101,100	\$1,178,085
Total:	\$12,933,590	\$12,080,201	\$11,200,271

\*In FY 2014 and beyond, the costs for “Digital communications” were rolled into the “Consumer engagement” category, so digital communications were no longer reported as a separate line item in the budget.

Note on Fiscal Years: The RBFF fiscal year is April 1–March 31. The federal fiscal year is October 1–September 30. In general, RBFF reports to the FWS and SFBPC on its activities on the basis of its fiscal year. However, many references are also made to activities conducted in the calendar year (CY). This assessment attempts to be consistent and report activity either on the basis of RBFF’s fiscal year (marked “FY”) or the calendar year (simply the year).

### Assessment Responsibility and Prior Assessments

The Sportfishing and Boating Safety Act of 1998 requires the Secretary of the Interior undertake a review of the Plan “periodically, but not less frequently than once every 3 years.” This responsibility was delegated to the SFBPC via the 1999 and 2016 memoranda of understanding (MOU), which state the SFBPC “will monitor the implementation of the Program, will evaluate effectiveness of the program by communicating regularly with its stakeholders and will regularly report findings to the Secretary and the signatories of this agreement.”

In 2002, the SFBPC undertook the first review resulting in the report *Implementation of the Strategic Plan for the National Outreach and Communication Program, a progress report to the Secretary of the Interior*. The 2002 review provided a foundation for a comprehensive assessment conducted in 2006.

The *Programmatic Assessment of the Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation, FY 2003-2006* (2006 Assessment) evaluated the efforts of RBFF relative to five questions that are tied directly to the Sportfishing and Boating Safety Act and the National Outreach and Communications Program. The 2006 Assessment presented a set of findings and recommendations to the Secretary of the Interior and the RBFF Board of Directors in early 2007. The assessment was intentionally designed to be replicated in subsequent years. The 2009 Assessment examined RBFF activities from April 1, 2006, through March 31, 2009 (RBFF FY 2007-2009). The 2012 Assessment examined RBFF activities from April 1, 2009 through March 31, 2012 (RBFF FY 2010-2012).

## 2015 ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

The scope and methodology of this assessment is reduced from previous assessments. Because of contracting delays and suspension of activity due to a federal budget sequestration, the 2010-2012 assessment report was not delivered to Department of Interior until April 2015, which was after the close of the 2013-2015 assessment period (April 1, 2012 through March 31, 2015). Since RBFF did not have a chance to review or act on the recommendations of the 2012 assessment during the 2013-2015 period, it clearly is not responsible for implementing these recommendations in the 2015 assessment. Consequently, many of the 2010-2012 recommendations are still appropriate, and they are referenced frequently in this report and included as Appendix C.



PHOTO:PAUL BRADSHAW/FLICKR

To get the assessment process back on sequence, the SFBPC decided at its February 2015 meeting to reduce the scope of the 2015 assessment to only consider the “consensus measures” that were agreed to as part of the 2007-2009 assessment (Appendix B).

In August 2015 the FWS and the SFBPC hired DJ Case & Associates (DJ Case) to facilitate the 2015 Assessment. By September 2015, the SFBPC and FWS had approved a draft methodology and named the 2015 Assessment Team (members listed below).

<b>Betty Huskins (Chair, SFBPC member)</b> Founding Chair Southeast Tourism Policy Council Linville Falls, NC	<b>Debbie Lininger</b> Marketing Coordinator Colorado Parks and Wildlife Denver, CO
<b>Norman A. Schultz</b> President Emeritus Lake Erie Marine Trades Association St. Petersburg, FL	<b>Julie Tack</b> Information Specialist Iowa Department of Natural Resources Des Moines, IA
<b>Chris Cantrell</b> Fisheries Program Manager Arizona Game and Fish Department Phoenix, AZ	<b>James Adams (SFBPC member)</b> States Organization for Boating Access Richmond, VA

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**Gene Gilliland (SFBPC member)**  
SFBPC member & B.A.S.S. LLC  
Director, B.A.S.S. Conservation  
Birmingham, AL

**Kelly Kaylor**  
Director of Communications  
National Marine Manufacturers Association/  
Discover Boating  
Chicago, IL

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**Julie Tack**  
Information Specialist  
Iowa Department of Natural Resources  
Des Moines, IA

**Fred Harris (SFBPC member)**  
National Board Representative  
American Fisheries Society  
Fuquay Varina, NC

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**Tom Champeau**  
Director of Freshwater Fisheries Management  
Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation  
Commission  
Tallahassee, FL

**Brian Bohnsack**  
SFBPC Coordinator/Recreational Boating and  
Fishing Foundation Liaison  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Falls Church, VA

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**Phil Seng**  
Contractor  
D.J. Case & Associates  
Mishawaka, IN

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Because of the reduced scope and methodology of the review, the Assessment Team focused its efforts primarily on:

### **1. RBFF ANNUAL REPORTS**

Since 2010, RBFF has provided the SFBPC and the FWS with annual reports on consensus measure data. The FWS provided these progress reports to the Assessment Team for review.

### **2. DATA FROM RBFF STAFF**

Representatives from DJ Case and from the 2015 Assessment Team contacted RBFF to obtain information and insights. Throughout the assessment process, RBFF provided additional information as requested, including reports, financial statements and databases prepared by their staff, consultants and others. RBFF reviewed the data presented in this assessment report for accuracy.

### **3. STAKEHOLDER QUESTIONNAIRES**

The Assessment Team also reviewed results from RBFF's surveys of agency and industry stakeholders for the assessment period, and relied on industry and NGO representation on the Assessment Team for additional experience and expertise.

### **Answering the Five Questions**

Notwithstanding the reduced scope of review, the 2015 Assessment used the same basic evaluation framework developed for the 2006, 2009, and 2012 assessments. The assessment evaluates the efforts of RBFF relative to five questions directly derived from the legislative mandate for the National Outreach and Communications Program:



1. **Have RBFF activities had a positive impact on recruitment and retention of boaters and anglers?**
2. **Have stakeholders found added value in the adoption of RBFF products?**
3. **Has RBFF increased the public's knowledge of boating and fishing techniques, and its awareness of boating and fishing opportunities?**
4. **How has RBFF enhanced the public's understanding of aquatic resources?**
5. **Have RBFF products and activities increased conservation and responsible use of aquatic resources by boaters and anglers?**

At the direction of the SFBPC, within these five questions, the 2015 Assessment Team focused specifically on the consensus measures that were agreed to by the FWS, AFWA, RBFF and SFBPC (Figure 1). The term *consensus measure* refers to the narrative objective and goal (e.g., increase participation in recreational angling and boating) while the term *metric* refers to specific activities or outputs that were identified (e.g., increase fishing license sales as reported by the FWS in 2015 by 5% over 2010 levels) to measure progress toward the broader objectives and goals.



PHOTO: RECREATIONAL BOATING AND FISHING FOUNDATION

**Figure 1. Structure and Organization of Consensus Measures Developed by RBFF, SFBPC, AFWA and FWS.**

**Objective 1:** Increased participation in recreational angling and boating

- **GOAL 1:** Communicate with anglers, boaters, and the general public to increase awareness of: angling and boating opportunities, boating and fishing techniques, and the availability of and access to boating and fishing locations thereby reducing barriers to participation in angling and boating.
- **GOAL 2:** Collaborate with State agencies, industry and stakeholders in developing and implementing marketing and outreach strategies to recruit and retain boaters and anglers as described in the National Outreach & Communications Program.
- **GOAL 3:** Develop and implement strategies to ensure that RBFF has sufficient funding to achieve its objectives.

**Objective 2:** Increased public awareness of sound fishing, boating and conservation practices

- **GOAL 1:** Promote the conservation and responsible use of the Nation's aquatic resources by anglers, boaters and the general public.
- **GOAL 2:** Promote safe fishing and boating practices.
- **GOAL 3:** RBFF's communications will improve the public's understanding of the contribution of recreational angling and boating to the conservation of aquatic resources.



PHOTO: RECREATIONAL BOATING AND FISHING FOUNDATION

For each goal there are associated metrics that RBFF tracks and annually reports to the FWS (Appendix B), SFBPC and others. The Assessment Team organized each goal and its associated metric(s) under the five questions derived from the Program's legislative mandate as follows:

**:: Question 1 ::**

**Have RBFF activities had a positive impact on recruitment and retention of boaters and anglers?**

**Objective 1: Goal 1:** Increased participation in recreational angling and boating

**Metrics:**

1. Increase fishing license sales as reported by the FWS in 2015 by 5% over 2010 levels and in 2020 by 10% over 2010 levels.
2. Increase boat registrations as reported by the USCG in 2020 by 5% over 2010 levels.

**:: Question 2 ::**

**Have Stakeholders found added value in the adoption of RBFF products?**

**Objective 1: Goal 2:** Collaborate with state agencies, industry and stakeholders in developing and implementing marketing and outreach strategies to recruit and retain boaters and anglers as described in the National Outreach & Communications Program.

**Metrics:**

1. Engage all 50 states in an annual marketing improvement enhancement effort produced by RBFF designed to upgrade the marketing skills and tools of state agencies responsible for fishing and boating.
2. Demonstrate improving stakeholder satisfaction annually through a consistent satisfaction survey of stakeholder groups that is executed by an independent third party.

**Objective 1: Goal 3:** Develop and implement strategies to ensure that RBFF has sufficient funding to achieve its objectives.

**Metrics:**

1. Annually raise non-federal dollars and in-kind contributions (not including value added in purchased media buy) to equal 25% of federal dollars received.
2. The non-federal dollars raised as part of #1 must be at least \$1.5 million in total for FY2011 to FY2013 combined.

**:: Question 3 ::**

**Has RBFF increased the public’s knowledge of boating and fishing techniques, and its awareness of boating and fishing opportunities?**

**Objective 1: Goal 1:** Communicate with anglers, boaters and the general public to increase awareness of: angling and boating opportunities, boating and fishing techniques and the availability of and access to boating and fishing locations thereby reducing barriers to participation in angling and boating.

**Metrics:**

1. Increase unique visitors and return visitors to TMF.org digital assets (i.e., web, mobile, apps and future digital assets) by 10% annually from the FY2011 baseline of 3,399,941 and 911,709, respectively.
2. Increase page views to the “where to” pages of the TMF.org digital assets by 10% annually from the FY2011 baseline of 1,442,105 and “how to” pages of TMF.org digital assets by 10% annually from the FY2011 baseline of 2,177,110.
3. Increase referrals from TMF.org digital assets (i.e., web, mobile, apps and future digital assets) to state fishing license purchase pages by 10% annually from the FY2011 baseline of 853,313.
4. Increase referrals from TMF.org digital assets (i.e., web, mobile, apps and future digital assets) to state boat registration pages by 10% annually from the FY2011 baseline of 62,861.
5. Increase referrals from TMF.org digital assets (i.e. web, mobile, apps and future digital assets) to DiscoverBoating.com by 10% annually from the FY2011 baseline of 12,004.
6. RBFF will conduct an annual survey of people who have contact with Take Me Fishing/RBFF programs and products to determine if use of/contact with those programs or materials influenced the user’s decision to boat or fish. RBFF will establish a baseline on the influence of Take Me Fishing in FY2012 and establish hard metrics for improvement over that baseline.

**:: Question 4 ::**

**How has RBFF enhanced the public’s understanding of aquatic resources?**

While Objective 2: Goal 3 (RBFF’s communications will improve the public’s understanding of the contribution of recreational angling and boating to the conservation of aquatic resources) addresses this issue, there currently is no metric that specifically measures the public’s understanding of aquatic resources.

**:: Question 5 ::**

**Have RBFF products and activities increased conservation and responsible use of aquatic resources by boaters and anglers?**

**Objective 2:** Increased public awareness of sound fishing, boating and conservation practices.

**Goal 1:** Promote the conservation and responsible use of the nation’s aquatic resources by anglers, boaters and the general public.

**Metrics:**

1. Increase total visitors to TME.org conservation pages by 10% annually from the FY2011 baseline of 32,058.
2. Increase conservation and responsible use message delivery in earned PR articles and impressions of delivered messages by 10% annually over the FY2012 baseline.

**Goal 2:** Promote safe fishing and boating practices.

**Metric:**

1. Increase page views to the boating and fishing safety pages of TME.org by 10% annually from the FY2011 baseline of 25,939.

**Goal 3:** RBFF’s communications will improve the public’s understanding of the contribution of recreational angling and boating to the conservation of aquatic resources.

**Metric:**

1. Use of SFR logo on all RBFF printed and digital materials.

## 2015 ASSESSMENT RESULTS

**:: Question 1 ::**

**Have RBFF activities had a positive impact on recruitment and retention of boaters and anglers?**

**BACKGROUND**

Recreational fishing and boating remain two of America’s most popular outdoor pastimes. An estimated 46 million anglers went fishing in 2014, generating billions of dollars in retail sales across the country.<sup>1</sup> Fishing is considered a “gateway” activity leading to involvement in other outdoor activities such as boating. More than 87 million adults participated in recreational boating in 2014, owning nearly 16 million boats.<sup>2</sup>



PHOTO: RECREATIONAL BOATING AND FISHING FOUNDATION

1 Special Report on Fishing and Boating, RBFF and the Outdoor Foundation, (2014).

2 Recreational Boating Statistical Abstract, National Marine Manufacturers Association (2014).



## ASSESSMENT

There are two consensus metrics that RBF tracks to measure progress on Question 1 – fishing license sales and boat registrations.

**METRIC:** Increase fishing license sales as reported by the FWS in 2015 by 5% over 2010 levels and in 2020 by 10% over 2010 levels

It is important to note that while the metrics call for increases over base levels of a defined year, RBF reports its objectives as increases over the previous year's actual license sales.

According to FWS data, license sales declined significantly in 2013, and have remained fairly stable around 28 million after that—which is less than the consensus measure metric of 29.5 million (Figure 2). Although this metric provides a solid, outcome-based objective to work toward, there are myriad factors that influence yearly fishing license sales, and the Assessment Team recognizes that it is not appropriate to evaluate RBF's effectiveness based on this metric alone.

Also, the Assessment Team recognizes that RBF does not receive certified license sales data from the USFWS until long after the fiscal year in question is over, making it impossible for RBF to make mid-course corrections or to adjust its marketing efforts based only on certified license data from USFWS.

Figure 2: Yearly Fishing License Sales



Source: FWS data and data provided by RBF yearly reports to the SFBPC and the FWS

Results of RBF's *State Agency Feedback Study* showed mixed perceptions of the effectiveness of RBF's program suite in increasing participation in recreational fishing. When asked "How effective is RBF in its efforts to increase participation in recreational fishing", the survey report shows that 56% of respondents answered "very or extremely effective" in 2013, 54% answered similarly in 2014, and 55% answered similarly in

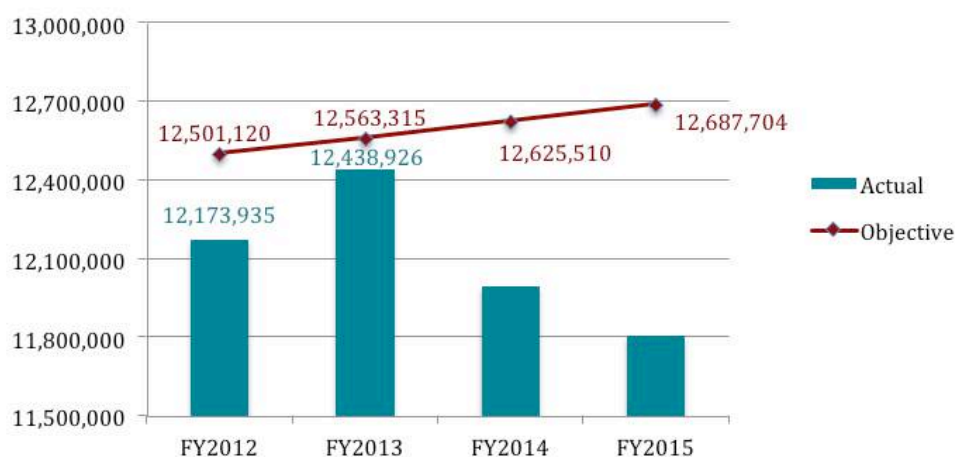
2015.<sup>3</sup> However, the survey report doesn't mention the respondents who said "don't know." When the "don't know" responses are included, the percentages of respondents who answered "very or extremely effective" drops to 45%, 41% and 38% for the three years of the assessment period, respectively. There are many reasons a respondent may say "don't know" (see section on boat registrations below) but the Assessment Team feels it is inappropriate to summarily disregard these responses.

With less than half of all survey respondents reporting that RBFF's program is "very or extremely" effective, and with 20-30% saying they are unsure of the program's effectiveness, there remains a need for RBFF to work collaboratively with state stakeholders to address its angling recruitment activities and programs. For more details on this, see the section on *Question 2* below.

**METRIC:** Increase boat registrations as reported by the U.S. Coast Guard in 2020 by 5% over 2010 levels.

Boat registrations have showed declines each year of this assessment period, falling significantly below RBFF objectives (Figure 3). However, similar to the metric for increasing fishing license sales, there are many variables beyond RBFF's control or influence that impact the number of boats that are registered in a year. Consequently, this metric—although critically important to the overall goals of RBFF—is not particularly useful for measuring RBFF's effectiveness.

**Figure 3: Yearly Boat Registrations**



Source: RBFF yearly reports to the SFBPC and the FWS

When asked: "How effective is RBFF in its efforts to increase participation in recreational boating," the survey report shows that 51% of respondents answered "very or extremely effective" in 2013, 43% answered similarly in 2014, and 50% answered similarly in 2015. However, when the "don't know" responses are included, the percentages of respondents who answered "very or extremely effective" drops to 33%, 28% and 27% for the three

<sup>3</sup> AMG Research (2014). Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation State Agency Feedback Study.

years of the assessment period, respectively. In many states, boat registrations are handled in a different agency than fishing license sales, which could explain the large number of “don’t know” responses. It also could be reflective of the complex factors influencing boaters’ decisions to register their boats, and the high degree of uncertainty about the effect that any one program or entity might have on those decisions. In any case, like the consensus metric of fishing license sales above, the overall number of boats registered in a given year is not a particularly good measure of the effectiveness of RBFF’s programs or efforts, and the modest number of survey respondents who believe RBFF’s efforts are “very or extremely effective” suggests that more work is needed here (see more on this under *Question 2* below).

### Findings and Observations

Overall, it is challenging to measure the direct impact RBFF is having on the recruitment and retention of boaters and anglers. There are many complex factors



PHOTO: RECREATIONAL BOATING AND FISHING FOUNDATION

influencing boating and fishing participation. The sales of fishing licenses and boat registrations are extremely important metrics, but they do not directly measure the effectiveness of RBFF at promoting recruitment and retention. New measures and metrics are needed to help bridge this gap.

Although RBFF cannot control the ultimate outcome (i.e., personal decisions to boat or fish), it was specifically established to influence that outcome, and just as reported in the 2012 assessment, significant numbers of RBFF’s most important stakeholders say they are uncertain if RBFF is positively impacting those decisions. It may be that more information or better communication could reduce this

uncertainty; but regardless of the cause, this finding foreshadows a key recommendation of this assessment: RBFF should engage in more collaboration and participatory dialogue with its stakeholders to evaluate the effectiveness of current programs and future improvements (see *Question 2* below).

In addition to fishing and boating participation being complex behaviors that are affected by many variables, RBFF also has the challenge of not having up-to-date license sales data to guide its efforts and allow mid-course corrections. This hinders RBFF’s ability to quickly modify its programs in “real time” to increase participation and sales.

### Recommendations to Increase Reach and Impact

1. RBFF, SFBPC, FWS and AFWA should develop a new list of consensus measures and metrics on which to base future assessments of RBFF’s effectiveness. As part of this process, the parties should first review the metrics that were established for each of the current consensus measures to ensure they remain up-to-date and relevant. Metrics and measures that are no longer relevant or meaningful should be removed. In addition, the parties should revise existing metrics and develop

new metrics that are outcome-based wherever possible, and that are directly related to the five questions from the legislative mandate for the National Outreach and Communications Program.

2. The SFBPC, AFWA and FWS should work with RBFF to identify surrogates for certified license sales data and boat registration data that would allow RBFF to more quickly respond to changing market conditions and modify its recruitment and retention programs.

## :: Question 2 ::

### Have stakeholders found added value in the adoption of RBFF products?

#### BACKGROUND

To conduct its recreational boating and fishing mission, RBFF works with, and provides support to, a large number of stakeholders from state and federal natural resource agencies, boating and fishing industries, and non-governmental organizations and associations with conservation, fishing and/or boating missions. Members of RBFF's Board of Directors represent these primary stakeholder groups, and RBFF involves stakeholders, both formally and informally, in the design and implementation of its programs.

RBFF stakeholder activities are directed at five principal audiences: 1) state agencies, 2) fishing industry, 3) boating industry, 4) federal agencies and 5) SFBPC. Each of these stakeholder groups has a dedicated interest that aligns with the "recruitment, retention and stewardship" mission of the Foundation.

RBFF focuses on supporting stakeholder efforts to increase participation in recreational boating and angling and stewardship of the nation's aquatic natural resources. Therefore, the success of RBFF should be defined, in part, by the degree to which Foundation stakeholders adopt, utilize and find value in its services and resources.

#### ASSESSMENT

There are three consensus metrics that assess whether stakeholders have found value in RBFF's products.

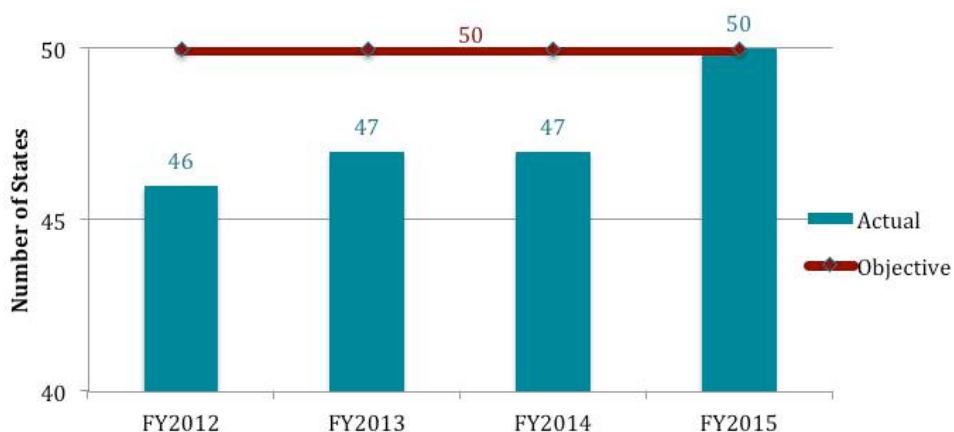
**METRIC:** Engage all 50 states in an annual marketing improvement enhancement effort (e.g., state marketing workshop) produced by RBFF designed to upgrade the marketing skills and tools of state agencies responsible for fishing and boating.



PHOTO: IDAHO FISH AND GAME/FLICKR

The Assessment Team commends RBFF for achieving its goal of 100% participation from states in its state marketing workshop in 2015 (Figure 4). (All 50 states registered to participate; however, North Carolina and North Dakota were eventually unable to attend.)

**Figure 4: Number of States Engaged in Marketing Improvement Enhancement Effort (Marketing Workshop)**



Source: RBFF yearly reports to the SFBPC and the FWS

A big part of the state marketing workshop is focused on imparting marketing knowledge and education to state agency personnel responsible for implementing the State Fishing License Marketing Program and the Boat Registration Marketing Program—the so-called “Lapsed Angler” and “Lapsed Boater” programs.

### State Fishing License Marketing Program

During the assessment period, 35-40 of the states were participating in the lapsed angler program (Table 3). When costs of delivering the program were subtracted from the revenue generated by increased license sales, net revenue was over \$4 million for all years of the assessment. However, when campaign results were compared to results in control areas (where no campaign treatments were applied), the net revenue totals went negative every year (although each year was less negative than the previous year). This suggests that on average, the increased license sales were happening regardless of RBFF/state agency campaign activities. Certainly there were exceptions in specific states, where the campaign yielded positive net revenue based on lift, but on average this was not the case.

**Table 3: Summary Results From Lapsed Angler Program**

	# States Participating	Net Revenue	Net Revenue Based on Lift
FY 2013	35	\$4,172,360	(\$715,248)
FY 2014	40	\$4,047,557	(\$304,366)
FY 2015	40	\$4,930,031	(\$62,371)

Source: RBFF



## Boat Registration Marketing Program

The situation was quite different in the lapsed boater program. Fewer states were participating during the assessment period, but net revenue and net revenue based on lift were both positive in every year of the review (Table 4). These results suggest that on average, the lapsed boater campaign was driving boat registrations at a higher rate than they were occurring in control areas, and that states were making money with these campaigns—even after subtracting program costs.

**Table 4: Summary Results From Lapsed Boater Program**

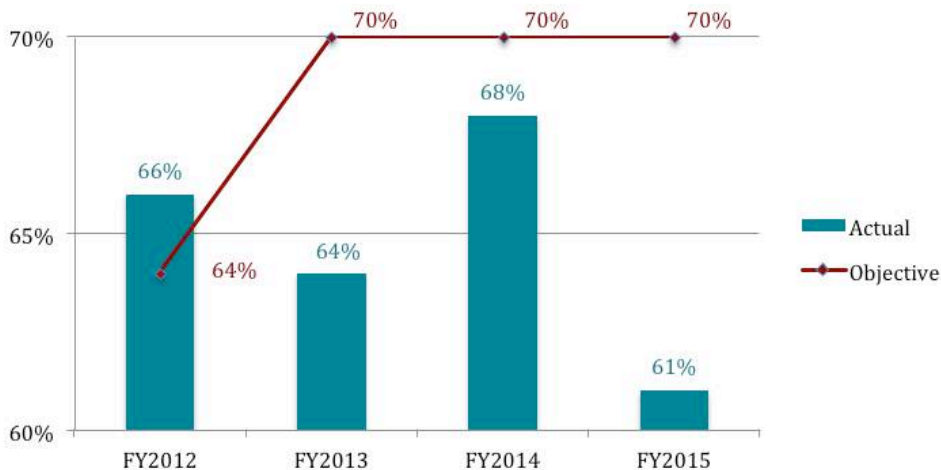
	# States Participating	Net Revenue	Net Revenue Based on Lift
FY 2013	15	\$1,002,700	\$370,965
FY 2014	19	\$1,488,086	\$666,567
FY 2015	21	\$1,421,730	\$654,206

Source: RBFF

**METRIC:** Demonstrate improving stakeholder satisfaction annually through a consistent satisfaction survey of stakeholder groups that is executed by an independent third party.

Overall state agency stakeholder satisfaction with RBFF has been below goal in all three years of this assessment period. Satisfaction has been fairly close to the 70% goal (ranging from 61-68%), but has not met the consensus metric during this assessment period (Figure 5).

**Figure 5: Stakeholder Satisfaction**



Source: 2014 Assessment Team State Stakeholder Questionnaire



PHOTO: RECREATIONAL BOATING AND FISHING FOUNDATION

**METRIC:** Annually raise non-federal dollars and in-kind contributions (not including value added in purchased media buy) to equal 25% of federal dollars received.

RBFF gets funding through the National Outreach and Communication Program, an independent program funded from the Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund. Through FY 2015, RBFF has received more than \$166 million in SFR funding.

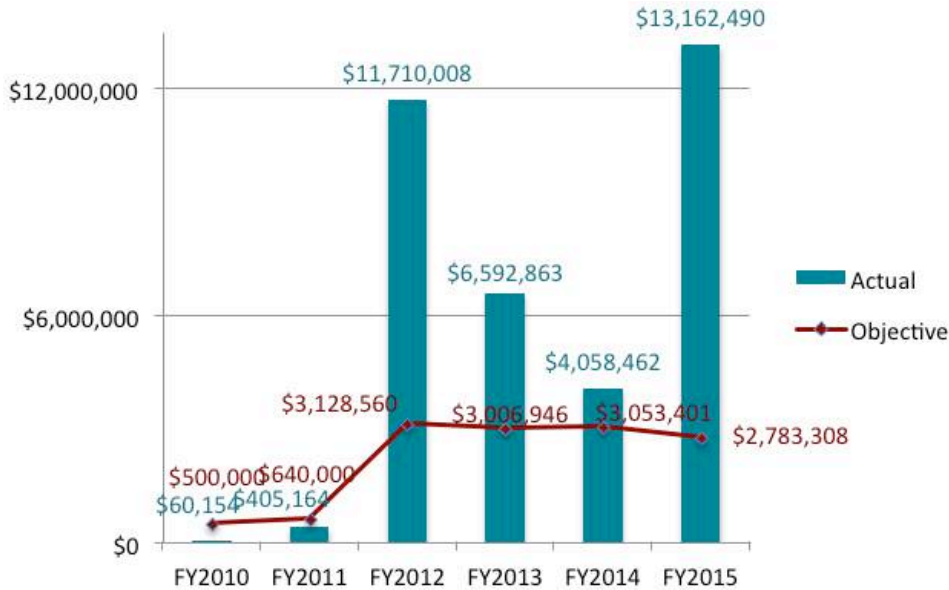
The initial cooperative agreement authorizing the transfer of SFR funds to RBFF for implementation of the National Outreach and Communications Program stated that RBFF “will, over the course of the five-year program, provide at least a 25% match (in-kind or non-federal funds) of the amount of federal funds provided under this and subsequent agreements.” A second cooperative agreement executed in 2000 includes the same match requirement, while the 2005 and 2007 agreements state that the Foundation’s Board of Directors will “be responsible for setting annual in-kind services/ contributions objectives for the Foundation and tracking the progress of the Foundation in achieving these objectives.” Collectively, the legislative history and cooperative agreements provide RBFF with a clear responsibility to leverage SFR funds.<sup>4</sup>

In response, RBFF’s Operations and Policy Manual states “RBFF shall make reasonable efforts to obtain non-federal contributions and other revenues in amounts equal to or greater than 25 percent of the federal funding received.” Originally there was a consensus metric that required \$1.5 million of this match to be cash; however, upon completion of the 2012 assessment, the SFBPC discontinued this metric.

<sup>4</sup> Cooperative Agreements between FWS and RBFF: 14-48-98210-9-J053 (March 1999); 98210-0-J079 (2000); 982105J004 (April 2005); and 98210-7-J005 (April 2007).

RBFF has exceeded its match requirement goals in all three years of the assessment period—drastically exceeding the goal in FY 2015 (Figure 6).

**Figure 6: Cash and In-kind Contributions Received by RBFF**



Source: RBFF yearly reports to the SFBPC and the FWS

RBFF uses PSAs to generate in-kind contribution value in order to meet its targeted 25% match to federal funds received. Therefore, RBFF tracks the dollar value of the PSA placements by media type (TV, radio or print). RBFF uses an outside contractor to generate PSA placements and report on the placement details, including dollar value, broadcast dates, number of airings, stations, print publications and circulation (Plowshare was the vendor in FY 2013-14; TV Access was the vendor in FY 2015). PSA placement values for the past 3 years are as follows:

- FY 2013 - \$6.5 million
  - TV: \$4.9 million
  - Radio: \$1.4 million
  - Print: \$0.1 million
  - Other: \$0.1 million
- FY 2014 - \$4.0 million
  - TV: \$2.6 million
  - Radio: \$0.7 million
  - Print: \$0.6 million
  - Other: \$0.1 million
- FY 2015 - \$12.6 million
  - TV: \$7.1 million
  - Radio: \$5.2 million
  - Print: \$0.2 million
  - Other: \$0.1 million

Although cash match is no longer a consensus metric, RBFF did receive cash contributions during the assessment period as follows:

- FY2013 – \$65,000
- FY2014 – \$79,000
- FY2015 – \$341,000

### Findings and Observations

The Assessment Team commends RBFF for fully achieving its goal of getting all state stakeholders to attend a marketing workshop in 2015. Engagement with stakeholders is critically important, and the workshop is an excellent venue for RBFF to share information and expertise with stakeholders. However, with stakeholder satisfaction remaining below objective, and with significant percentages of stakeholders uncertain as to the effectiveness of RBFF’s programs in increasing boat registrations and fishing license sales, the Assessment Team reaffirms the findings of the 2012 Assessment—increasing and improving the engagement and collaboration between RBFF and its stakeholders is a high-priority recommendation. Further, there is an opportunity to increase collaboration with federal agency partners as well, not only the state agencies.

The Assessment Team commends RBFF for exceeding its goal of raising at least 25% match in all three years of the assessment—far exceeding its goal in 2015. Not only is this a beneficial leveraging of available budget, but it also demonstrates RBFF’s willingness and ability to match the federal funds it receives just as its agency partners must do.

## Recommendations to Increase Reach and Impact

This recommendation remains unchanged from the 2012 Assessment Report.

3. RBFF should engage in a genuinely collaborative and ongoing partnership with stakeholders about how to improve programs to increase and sustain participation in boating and angling in the United States. The collaboration process should include identifying specific stakeholders and their specific goals and needs. In addition, RBFF should proactively pursue opportunities to collaborate with states that want more customized services, including alternatives to the current lapsed angler program, and additional contractual services such as enhanced state agency marketing.

### :: Question 3 ::

**Has RBFF increased the public's knowledge of "how-to" boat and fish, and its awareness of boating and fishing opportunities?**

#### BACKGROUND

*Take Me Fishing* is RBFF's brand for building consumer awareness of boating and fishing, and for converting awareness into participation. RBFF works hard to build equity in the name, look and logo of the brand with its boating and fishing stakeholders, and has the goal of making [Takemefishing.org](http://Takemefishing.org) (TMF) the Web's largest database of fishing and boating spots and unprecedented how-to information.

#### ASSESSMENT

There are eight metrics that inform Question 3. These metrics address the efficacy of TMF by measuring visitation, referrals and influence. RBFF monitors the TMF website's performance in a number of ways. Monthly tracking information is gathered from Google Analytics and web-related statistics such as Discover Boating web referrals, state fishing license referrals and state boating registration referrals. This information is summarized in a "dashboard," which is presented to the RBFF Board of Directors on a regular basis.

**METRIC:** Increase unique visitors and return visitors to TMF digital assets by 10% annually from the FY 2011 baseline of 3,399,941 and 911,709, respectively.

It is important to note that while the metrics in this section call for annual increases over the FY 2011 baseline, RBFF reports its objectives as increases over the previous year's actuals. The Assessment Team recognizes that 10% annual increases are not sustainable forever, and reiterates the need for revised metrics for these consensus measures (see *Recommendation 1* above).



**TAKEMEFISHING.org**



For the assessment period, “digital assets” included the following:

- FY 2012: TMF.org, TMF Mobile, Boat Ramp App
- FY 2013: TMF.org, TMF Mobile, Boat Ramp App, TMF Youtube Channel
- FY 2014: TMF.org, TMF Mobile, Boat Ramp App, Embeddable Map, Top Places Microsite, Disney Microsite, TMF Youtube Channel
- FY 2015: TMF.org, TMF Mobile, Boat Ramp App, Embeddable Map, VAP.org, Disney Microsite, TMF Youtube Channel

The number of unique visitors to TMF digital assets exceeded the goal in FY 2013, dropped below goal in FY 2014 and jumped well above goal again in FY 2015 (Figure 7).

**Figure 7: Unique Visitors to TMF Digital Assets**



Source: RBFY yearly reports to the SFBPC and the FWS

\*Note: For any given month, a person is a unique visitor the first time they visit and a return visitor for any additional visits within that month. For RBFY's year-to-date and year-end reporting, a person can only be a unique visitor once during the reporting period and is a return visitor thereafter even if it is more than a month later.



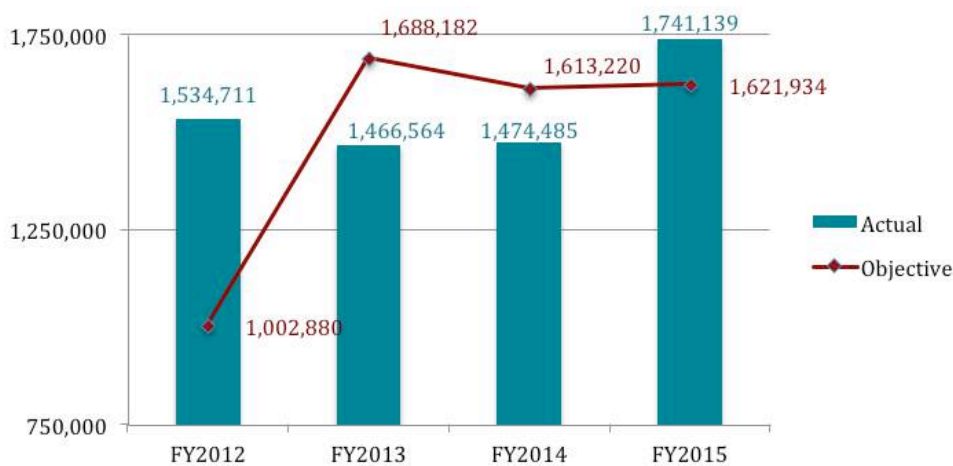
PHOTO: RECREATIONAL BOATING AND FISHING FOUNDATION

The significant increase in unique visitors across RBBF’s digital assets for FY 2015 (as compared to FY 2014) can be attributed to several factors:

- Vamos A Pescar – 2015 marked the debut of RBBF’s new digital property for Spanish-speaking audiences (VamosAPescar.org), which resulted in 292,800 visitors.
- Embeddable Map – An existing partnership with the Outdoor Channel was extended to a full year, resulting in twice as many visitors to this property compared to the prior year (2,060,165 vs. 1,068,923).
- TMF YouTube channel – RBBF introduced a number of new videos on the YouTube channel, including Spanish-language videos, and the channel was enhanced to better organize and implement best practices for search engine optimization, all of which significantly boosted the number of visitors (434,219 vs. 172,812).
- Disney Microsite – A longer campaign run in FY 2015 resulted in almost 13 times more visitors than the prior year (182,893 vs. 14,261).

The number of return visitors to TMF digital assets fell short of the objective in FY 2013 and FY 2014, but exceeded the objective again in FY 2015 (Figure 8).

**Figure 8: Return Visitors to TMF Digital Assets**



Source: RBBF yearly reports to the SFBPC and the FWS

The reasons for the increase in the number of return visitors in FY 2015 are likely the same as those listed above for increases in FY 2015 unique visitors.

**METRIC:** Increase page views to the “where to” pages of the TMF digital assets by 10% annually from the FY 2011 baseline of 1,442,105 and “how to” pages of TMF digital assets by 10% annually from the FY 2011 baseline of 2,177,110.

The number of unique page views garnered by the “where to” digital assets exceeded the objective in FY 2013, dropped below objective in FY 2014, and exceeded objective again in FY 2015 (Figure 9). Year-to-year fluctuations are expected, but in general, the trend is increasing, which is a very positive outcome.

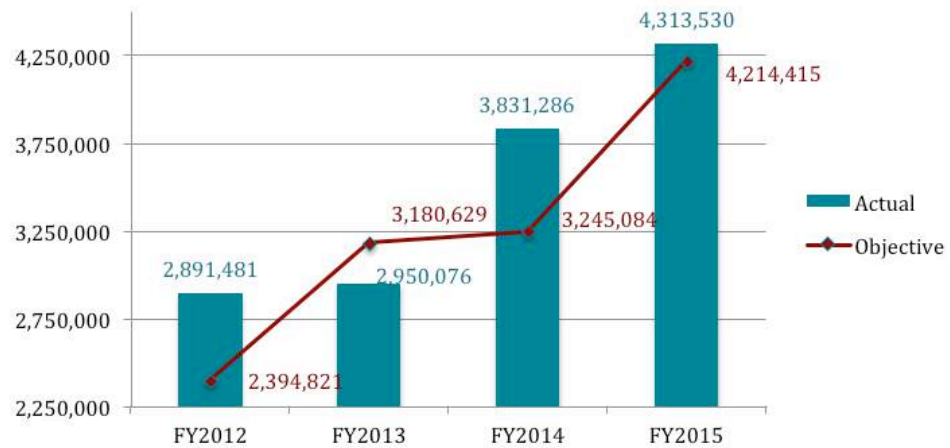
**Figure 9: Unique Page Views to ‘Where To’ Pages of TMF Digital Assets**



Source: RBFY yearly reports to the SFBPC and the FWS

In FY 2013, unique page views to the “how to” pages of TMF digital assets dropped below the objective, but significantly exceeded objective in FY 2014 and slightly exceeded objective in FY 2015 (Figure 10). Again, the trend is increasing.

**Figure 10: Unique page views to the ‘How to’ pages of TMF Digital Assets**



Source: RBFY yearly reports to the SFBPC and the FWS

The Assessment Team commends RBFY for achieving its objective for both the “How to” and “Where to” pages of TMF in FY 2015. However, the Assessment Team recognizes that 10% annual increases are not sustainable forever. In addition, although the number of page views garnered by digital assets is a valuable index, it is not a measure of the quality of the information provided or the role that information plays in encouraging or facilitating boaters and anglers to get out on the water. Particularly regarding the “where to” information, Assessment Team members reported a number of instances of constituents finding problems with the quality of the information provided, and spot-checking of online data during the assessment process revealed issues with data quality.

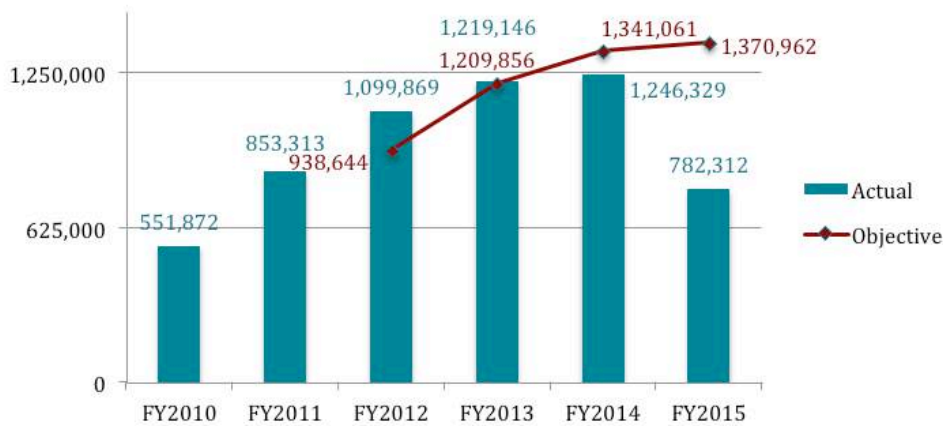
Clearly, RBF is not responsible for all of these issues/problems, but the current metrics do not provide any means to rate RBF’s performance directly. There remains a great opportunity for RBF to collaborate with state agencies to identify the specific areas where states need (and do not need) RBF’s assistance, and when it is deemed necessary, to identify appropriate sources of where-to information for use on TMF digital assets.

In RBF’s 2015 *State Agency Feedback Study*, 63% of respondents said they were “very or extremely satisfied” with the *Places to Boat and Fish Map*.<sup>5</sup> From a performance metrics perspective, it is unclear whether this percentage is good or bad. Again, RBF needs better metrics that it can measure against to more effectively assess progress at providing end users the information they need to take an active role in boating and fishing.

**METRIC:** Increase referrals from TMF digital assets (i.e., web, mobile, apps and future digital assets) to state fishing license purchase pages by 10% annually.

RBF exceeded its objectives for referrals to state fishing license purchase pages in FY 2013, fell a little short in FY 2014, and dropped off considerably in FY 2015 (Figure 11).

**Figure 11: Referrals From TMF to State Fishing License Purchase Pages**



Source: RBF yearly reports to the SFBPC and the FWS

RBF increased search engine marketing (SEM) spending on fishing license sales campaigns each year of the assessment period (Table 5).

**Table 5: RBF Search Engine Spending – Fishing License Sales**

Fishing License Sales Paid Search	FY13	FY14	FY15	Percent Change
Referrals from TMF.org to state websites	1,219,146	1,246,329	782,312	-36%
Budget	\$269,191	\$415,956	\$486,746	81%

Source: RBF

5 AMG Research (2015). *Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation State Agency Feedback Study*

RBFF reports that the drop in referral numbers can be largely explained by a change in reporting systems. Rather than continuing to apply and maintain tracking codes (tags) for every individual template and page across all its digital assets, RBFF transitioned in 2015 to using Google Tag Manager, streamlining and simplifying tagging via its unified management tool. Now the tracking code for every page across all digital properties is managed in one location, keeping RBFF from having to touch the different properties or their individual templates and pages directly to gather the information.



PHOTO: RECREATIONAL BOATING AND FISHING FOUNDATION

This transition also allowed for a thorough review of the various tracking configurations that were in place across all digital properties—and led to adjustments that now ensure uniform tracking in the future. These adjustments had the biggest impact on the license and registration referral metrics, and although they resulted in a reduction in overall license and registration referral numbers for FY 2015, the accuracy of those numbers was improved and will be much more consistent and realistic from now on.

During the assessment period, there was no way for RBFF to estimate or report how many of the referrals from its digital assets to state agency licensing pages resulted in actual license purchases. The same was true for boat registrations. These data are dependent on the states having the systems in place to track the specific referrals from RBFF and then being willing and able to share the data outside of the state system. RBFF is pilot-testing such a system in Florida in 2016.

For purposes of this assessment, RBFF provided an informal, sample breakdown of 2015 fishing license and boat registration referrals by state, which can be found in Appendix F. RBFF cautions that this is only a general guide—a “proof of concept” of what could be provided in the future if it is made into a consensus measure. The Assessment Team feels that state-by-state reporting of referrals could be very useful for the individual state agencies, and recommends that this be made into one of the new consensus measures.

**METRIC:** Increase referrals from TMF digital assets (i.e., web, mobile, apps and future digital assets) to state boat registration pages by 10% annually from the FY 2011 baseline of 62,861.

Referrals from TMF.org to state boat registration pages exceeded objectives in FY 2013 and significantly exceeded objectives in FY 2014; however, referrals dropped drastically in FY 2015 (Figure 12).



**Figure 12: Referrals from TMF to Boat Registration Pages**



Source: RBFF yearly reports to the SFBPC and the FWS

As with the fishing license sales campaign, RBFF increased search engine marketing (SEM) spending on boat registration campaigns each year of the assessment period (Table 6).

**Table 6: RBFF Search Engine Spending – Boat Registration**

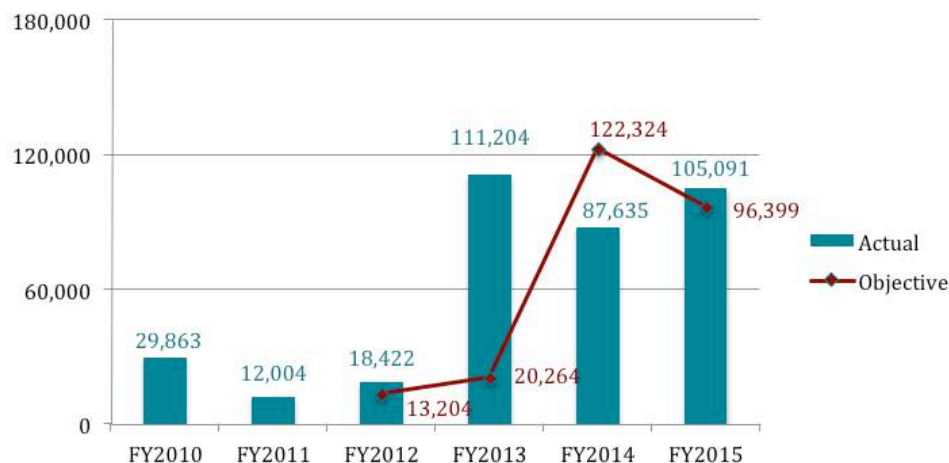
Boat Registration Paid Search	FY13	FY14	FY15	Percent Increase
Referrals from search engines to TMF.org	109,224	152,776	97,270	-11%
Budget	\$69,739	\$90,429	\$133,101	91%

RBFF suggests that the explanation for the drop in boat registration referrals is the same as for fishing license referrals described under Table 6 above.

**METRIC:** Increase referrals from TMF digital assets (i.e., web, mobile, apps and future digital assets) to DiscoverBoating.com by 10% annually from the FY 2011 baseline of 12,004.

DiscoverBoating.com is a website which educates the public on recreational boating, with the goal of creating interest and participation in recreational boating. RBFF exceeded its objectives for this measure by five fold in FY 2013, dropped below goal in FY 2014, and then exceeded the objective once again in FY 2015 (Figure 13). RBFF usually purchases adwords to meet this goal, but in 2014, Discover Boating requested that RBFF not purchase adwords in February or March. This prevented RBFF from meeting its annual goal, but the goal was met (on a pro rata basis) for all of the months in which adwords were purchased. This collaboration between RBFF and DiscoverBoating.com is an excellent example of the coordination needed between organizations to maximize the effectiveness of marketing efforts. RBFF and Discover Boating are commended for their cooperation on this effort.

**Figure 13: Referrals from TMF to Discover Boating**



Source: RBFY yearly reports to the SFBPC and the FWS

RBFY decreased SEM spending directed toward increasing referrals to Discover Boating between FY 2013 and FY 2015 (Table 7). RBFY is reducing SEM budgets over time because its search engine optimization efforts have been showing increased volume of unpaid traffic, lessening the need for paid marketing here and allowing those resources to be used elsewhere.

**Table 7: RBFY Search Engine Spending – Discover Boating**

Discover Boating Paid Search	FY13	FY14	FY15	Percent Increase
Number of referrals	111,204	87,635	105,091	-5%
Budget – All boating key words	\$405,412	\$313,278	\$192,007	-53%
Budget – Discover Boating specifically	\$182,435	\$78,069	\$57,284	-69%

**METRIC:** RBFY will conduct an annual survey of people who have contact with Take Me Fishing/RBFY programs and products to determine if use of/contact with those programs or materials influenced the user’s decision to boat or fish. RBFY will establish a baseline on the influence of Take Me Fishing in FY 2012 and establish hard metrics for improvement over that baseline.

Measuring the influence of the Take Me Fishing campaign includes assessing the level of influence exerted on the target audience. This measurement of influence of the TMF campaign was developed in 2011 to measure the extent to which the use of/exposure to the TMF advertising campaign has achieved its desired results of influencing a respondent’s behavior. It specifically measures the percentage of people exposed to the TakeMeFishing-branded messages who said they were more likely to participate in fishing and boating because of their exposure to the messages.

The ad influence metric shows the overall impact of an ad campaign element on consumers as measured across four categories:

- a. Relevance—does the target audience find the ad relevant to them?
- b. Comprehension—is the message easy to understand?
- c. Attention—does the ad cut through the clutter and grab the viewer’s eye?
- d. Behavioral Impact—does the ad stimulate intent to participate?

A numerical score is assigned to each category based on consumer survey data; these scores are then averaged to develop a metric for overall ad impact. RBFF runs this calculation by media type, i.e., print, TV, radio, online, etc.

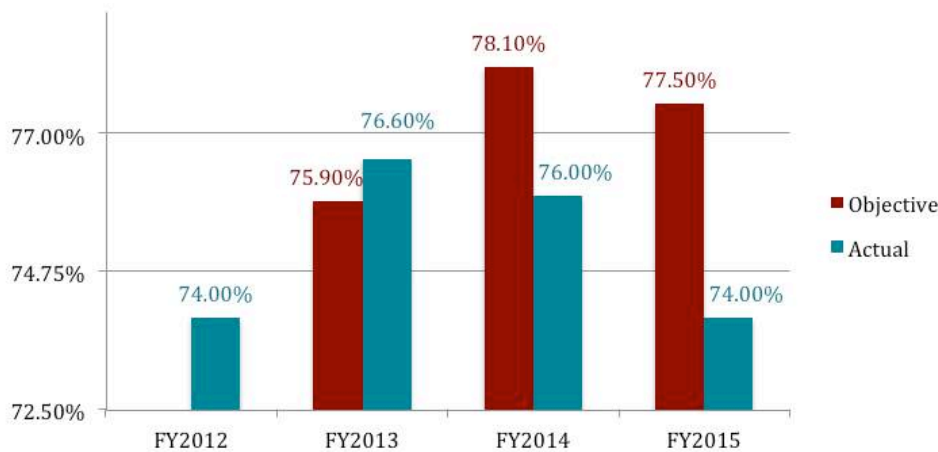
This metric was developed by EurekaFacts and is based on William McGuire’s article “An Information Processing Modeling of Advertising Effectiveness.”<sup>6</sup> It can be compared from year to year as the advertising campaign is modified in terms of content or message, targeted to new sub-groups via differing media placement strategies, or expanded via increased budgets/expenditures.

In its first year having a specific objective for TMF’s influence upon visitor behavior, RBFF exceeded its goal, but has fallen short since then (Figure 14). It should be noted that although the actuals were less than objectives, they were always within a couple percentage points. Also, this is another metric where continued increases over time are probably not realistic. RBFF should work with its partners to review the usefulness of this metric and its stated objectives, to find values that will be meaningful and useful in future assessments.



PHOTO: RECREATIONAL BOATING AND FISHING FOUNDATION

**Figure 14: TMF Influence on a Person’s Behavior to Boat or Fish**



Source: RBFF yearly reports to the SFBPC and the FWS

<sup>6</sup> McGuire, W. (1978). “An Information-Processing Model of Advertising Effectiveness.” In Behavioral and Management Science in Marketing, eds. Harry L. Davis and Alvin H. Silk. New York: Ronald Press, 156-80.

## Findings and Observations

The Assessment Team congratulates RBFF for meeting or exceeding five of the eight consensus metrics in this section. Even the declines in the other three metrics are likely explained by RBFF's transition to a different tracking system that will now provide more realistic and consistent results across all digital assets, which is a positive outcome.

However, there are ongoing issues and concerns with the quality of some of the "where-to" data on TMF digital assets, such as the mapping functions. When initially created, the mapping functionality on TMF.org far exceeded many states' capabilities and capacities. However, as technology has progressed, so too have states' individual mapping tools. Although the mapping functionality is a priority offering for many state stakeholders, some stakeholders have raised concerns over the accuracy of the data on TMF.org. In addition, those states that have their own mapping function prioritize using their limited staff and resources to maintain and augment their state-specific site compared to providing and/or updating data on TMF.org. There is a great need for

RBFF to collaborate closely with individual state agency partners to determine which information should be hosted on TMF and/or the state's website.

During its review, the Assessment Team expressed the desire to engage an independent research firm to conduct focus groups or other customer testing among average anglers and boaters in selected areas, for the specific purpose of testing the functionality of the "how-to" and "where-to" features of TMF.org. The purpose would be to ask average anglers and boaters if they are able to find information of interest to them in a reasonable amount of time, and to spot check the accuracy of existing information on the site. This would provide an independent evaluation

of the concerns of the past two assessment teams that the website has problems in this area. If problems are found, it would also serve to guide efforts to correct them. It would be best if these studies were conducted by an independent research firm with specific expertise in this field.

Although the current consensus metrics in this section provide an index of user engagement with TMF resources, they are not sustainable over time, and they do not address the core outcome of increasing the public's knowledge of how to boat and fish, or the public's awareness of boating and fishing locations and opportunities. The Assessment Team reiterates Recommendation 1 above, and encourages RBFF and its partners to look for metrics that get closer to measuring those outcomes. The committee that is developing new consensus measures should consider the issue of search engine optimization. The Assessment Team noted that when RBFF applies budget to SEM (in an effort to achieve current metrics) it often gives the TMF page higher search engine priority than the state agency page that actually sells the licenses. Is that the intended outcome? Is that what the community wants?



PHOTO: RECREATIONAL BOATING AND FISHING FOUNDATION

Now that RBFF has implemented Google Tag Manager, and will have more reliable data on referrals to state licensing and boat registration pages, it should begin reporting the number of referrals on a state-by-state basis. It will be useful for state agencies to know how many people are coming to their websites from TMF.org. In addition, state agencies should work with RBFF to develop systems that allow them to track the users that come to their sites from TMF.org. An understanding of how many of these referrals actually buy licenses or register boats, and how they go about it, will be extremely useful to inform future marketing efforts.

### **Recommendations to Increase Reach and Impact**

4. For TMF.org pages that include state information, there is an opportunity for RBFF to work with states to highlight those programs and resources that states may want to promote (e.g., banners with links to state program sites). When states do not have the capacity for state-specific information, RBFF should work closely with these states to ensure information posted on TMF.org is available and accurate. RBFF could make state-specific banner ad space available on TMF.org state pages to highlight state events and add links from RBFF “Where-to” pages to the most accurate state resources. One potential way to measure the success would be to track the number of referrals from the TMF website to state-specific resources.
5. RBFF should begin reporting the number of visitors that are referred to each state licensing/registration page. In addition the RBFF should work with state agencies to encourage development of systems that would allow state agencies to track users that are referred to fishing license and boat registration pages from TMF. (A system is currently being pilot-tested in Florida.) If/when such systems are in place, RBFF should report state-by-state referrals and outcomes as part of its consensus measures.

### **:: Question 4 ::**

### **How has RBFF enhanced the public’s understanding of aquatic resources?**

#### **BACKGROUND**

One of the fundamental goals of the Sportfishing and Boating Safety Act is to “enhance the public’s understanding of aquatic resources and sportfishing, and to promote the development of responsible attitudes and ethics toward the aquatic environment.”

Since its inception, RBFF has worked to achieve this goal through design and implementation of education programs—many aimed at youth—including development of best practices, educational grant programs and teaching materials. The current assessment period has seen some significant changes in these programs.

In FY 2013, the RBFF board decided to end its partnership with Discovery Education’s *Explore the Blue* program. It also discontinued the RBFF education grant program after FY 2015. At the same time, RBFF repurposed funds from those cancelled efforts into several new programs, including the Hispanic program, a partnership with Disney Corporation and a renewed partnership with Boy Scouts of America.



## ASSESSMENT

### Past programs for enhancing public understanding

Throughout 2013, RBFF staff and board had ongoing concerns regarding RBFF's inability to thoroughly evaluate the long-term effectiveness of the education grant programs it had funded over the years. After reviewing results of a Youth Initiatives Task Force that was formed to explore the issue, the board voted in January 2014 to eliminate the education grants program effective FY 2015.

Similarly, FY 2013 was the final year of RBFF's partnership with Discovery Education and its *Explore the Blue* program. The *Explore the Blue* program provided educators

with online aquatic-themed education resources designed to teach students an appreciation of the outdoors through boating and fishing classroom-based activities. The resources leveraged Discovery Education's nationwide capacity to work with schools and educational systems. The program reached more than a million youth.



PHOTO: ALAN TUNNICLIFFE/FLICIKR

Despite its reach and the national reputation of Discovery Education, the program was terminated by the RBFF board due to concerns about the overall effectiveness of the program to recruit youth into fishing and boating. In particular, the board expressed concerns about the program's lack of actual fishing and boating opportunities. As a result, RBFF did not renew the partnership and at the June 2013

meeting, RBFF's board made the decision to eliminate the *Explore the Blue* campaign. The board felt that this program was not directly increasing participation because it had no "on the water" component and there was no way to measure its ability to create future anglers and boaters. Funding for this program was redirected to the Hispanic campaign (see below).

The *Best Practices in Boating, Fishing, and Aquatic Resources Stewardship Education* workbook, the *Best Practices Evaluation Guide* and the *Passport to Boating and Fishing* are longstanding programs and tools that continue to be available online at [TMF.org](http://TMF.org).

### Programs for enhancing public understanding—reboot

RBFF's strategy for engaging youth in fishing and boating activities is an important part of its consumer engagement strategy, which is described in the latest RBFF Strategic Plan:

*Increase Participation in recreational boating and fishing by recruiting new audiences to the sport through a national marketing and communications campaign designed to increase awareness of fishing and boating and natural resource conservation, dispel negative stereotypes and encourage consideration, trial and ultimately participation.*



To engage youth, RBFF is working to engage the families that provide the support, coaching and encouragement that create lifelong boaters and anglers. Because of the changing demographic profile of the U.S., RBFF is striving to engage families across all ages, genders and cultures.

Through a partnership with the Disney Corporation, seven resort locations offer Take Me Fishing-branded fishing and/or boating experiences at Walt Disney World in Orlando, Florida. Additionally, RBFF has sponsorships on Disney Channel, Disney XD and ESPN, as well as Take Me Fishing messaging in Disney's online content and mobile apps. These branding efforts result in tens of millions of media impressions and thousands of fishing experiences.

In FY 2015 RBFF launched its Hispanic campaign *Vamos A Pescar*.™ This campaign targets the growing, younger Hispanic community in the United States and is designed to inform the community about and engage it in fishing and boating. The campaign features a Hispanic-focused website, [VamosAPescar.org](http://VamosAPescar.org). In FY 2015, the Hispanic campaign was a pilot project in Florida and Texas using digital advertising, radio advertising and celebrity DJ endorsements, events and PSAs. The campaign was expanded to California, Illinois and New York in FY 2016, thereby reaching over 68 percent of the Hispanic population of the US.

In FY 2015, RBFF established the George H.W. Bush *Vamos A Pescar*™ Education Fund through donations from Bass Pro Shops owner John Morris and The Walt Disney Company. The Fund's mission is to implement a state-managed grants program to fund youth and family fishing and boating education programs in predominantly urban and minority communities. The fund continues to grow, consisting entirely of non-federal donations, and will make its first grants in FY 2016.

During the current assessment period, the Boy Scouts of America developed its BSA Certified Angling Instructor program curriculum with RBFF funding assistance. RBFF renewed support for this program in FY 2016, with the goal of doubling the number of certified instructors from 500 to 1,000.

### Looking ahead

Though not part of the assessment period, the Assessment Team notes that RBFF is planning to conduct the following activities in FY 2016 that will continue to seek new ways to reach its multicultural youth and families target audience:

- RBFF is partnering with the Aquatic Resources Education Association and the Wildlife Management Institute to establish angler recruitment, retention and reactivation (R3) guidelines for state agencies. This program includes a comprehensive review of existing state agency aquatic education programs in order to develop current R3 best practices and will build upon RBFF's *Best Practices Workbook for Boating, Fishing and Aquatic Resources Stewardship Education*.



[VAMOSAPESCAR.org](http://VAMOSAPESCAR.org)

- RBFF has established a task force that will work with existing teaching materials from RBFF, states, USFWS, NGOs and other partners to develop standard modules that take target audiences through a progressive learning experience from beginner to advanced. The curriculum will afford multiple hands-on experiences, with goals and objectives that are measured over a defined period of time, including both fishing and boating. Using partners that have infrastructure and staff in place, the curriculum will be rolled out in two pilot TMF/VAP-branded learning centers in 2018, with the ultimate goal being implementation of multiple centers across the US.

### Findings and Observations

During the assessment period, RBFF made major changes in education programming, funding, and partnerships, including terminating major partnerships and creating new ones. The Assessment Team respects RBFF's expertise in marketing and its discretion to make programmatic changes, and the new programs are without a doubt creating significant interest in boating and fishing and generating large numbers of impressions within and among some key target audiences.

However, the Team was unable to objectively evaluate the significant changes that occurred during the assessment period because the consensus measures and metrics do not provide specific goals, objectives, or criteria for developing, implementing, and evaluating the new initiatives. RBFF currently tracks several metrics for the new programs, such as media impressions, click-throughs, and e-mails received, but like other consensus metrics, these are outputs and do not directly answer any of the five questions from the legislative mandate.

From April through August 2015, RBFF fielded a media survey to assess the impact of the Disney campaign on brand awareness, intent to go fishing/boating, familiarity and favorability on data screens (TV, online, etc.) and the impacts of various screen combinations. The results of this survey will be used as a baseline that RBFF can use to measure against in the future, but was not available during the 2013-15 assessment period.

The Assessment Team recommends that goals, objectives, and criteria be developed and RBFF rigorously evaluate current and future initiatives based on specific metrics. This will help future assessment teams, the Council, FWS, and other stakeholder to objectively and fairly evaluate the effectiveness of programs, and will assist RBFF in its future decisions regarding major programming changes.

## Recommendation to Increase Reach and Impact

This recommendation is unchanged from the 2012 assessment report.

6. RBFF, AFWA, FWS, and SFBPC should work together to establish specific goals and objectives and a process for rigorously evaluating and reporting on RBFF's effectiveness at enhancing the public's understanding of aquatic resources and sustained participation in boating and angling. (For example, how will RBFF evaluate the effectiveness of the Disney and Hispanic campaigns and measure success?)

### :: Question 5 ::

## Have RBFF products and activities increased conservation and responsible use of aquatic resources by boaters and anglers?

### BACKGROUND

Aquatic resource stewardship is synonymous with the conservation and responsible use of aquatic resources. These concepts are ingrained in the Sportfishing and Boating Safety Act of 1998 and the Strategic Plan for National Outreach and Communication Program. The Sportfishing and Boating Safety Act calls for an outreach program "to promote conservation and the responsible use of the nation's aquatic resources." The first two guiding principles for all outreach activities outlined in the 1998 strategic plan are: 1) recognize, reinforce, and commit to the importance of sustainable aquatic habitat and natural resource conservation; and 2) emphasize that boaters and anglers are conservationists by demonstrating their commitment and contribution to conservation efforts. The 1999, 2009, and 2016 memoranda of understanding between RBFF, FWS, SFBPC, and AFWA mirror the Act's conservation and responsible use language.

The cooperative agreements between FWS and RBFF state a performance goal of "increasing public participation in recreational fishing and boating activities and thereby increasing public awareness of the need for aquatic resource conservation."

### ASSESSMENT

There are four consensus metrics that address this question.

**METRIC:** Increase total visitors to TMF Conservation Pages by 10% annually from the FY 2011 baseline of 32,058.

RBFF exceeded objectives for this metric in all three years of the assessment (Figure 15).

**Figure 15: Increase Total Visitors to TMF Conservation Pages**



Source: RBFF yearly reports to the SFBPC and the FWS

**METRIC:** Increase conservation and responsible use message delivery in earned PR articles and impressions of delivered messages by 10% annually.

This metric has two components: number of stories/articles and total number of impressions. RBFF exceeded its goal for delivering earned PR stories promoting conservation in FY 2013 and FY 2014, but fell short in FY 2015 (Figure 16). RBFF is actively pitching stories on a variety of topics, but strives to include conservation-specific messages in all PR outreach, and does at times pitch conservation-specific stories. The actual numbers in Figure 16 represent the total number of stories, including the total number of times a single story appeared in different print and online publications. RBFF does not separately track the number of distinct stories generated. According to RBFF, all the stories reported here included conservation and/or responsible use messaging. It should be noted that RBFF no longer actively tracked the stories metric after 2013, because it felt that the impressions metric was much more representative and useful. For example, the stories metric assigns equal weight to publications with small distribution as it does to those with extensive publication, which gives a skewed view of effectiveness. Future consensus metrics should consider eliminating the stories metric, but the Assessment Team has retained it here because it has never been formally retracted.

**Figure 16: Conservation Earned Media Stories from PR**



Source: RBFF personal communication

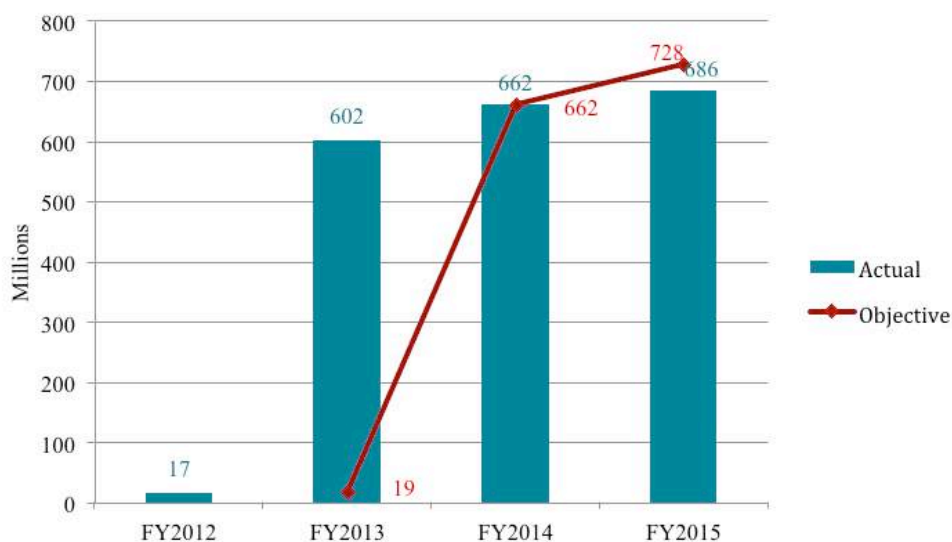
The second component of this metric is to increase conservation-related earned media impressions, which are defined as the estimated number of people exposed to an article that contained conservation content.

Since the Council established the conservation impressions objective in October 2011, RBFF has been using the following key words and phrases to define conservation and/or responsible use messages within media stories:

- Conservation
- Conservation through participation
- Clean water
- Safe/responsible use of natural resources
- Safe/responsible use of aquatic resources
- Value of clean and healthy natural resources
- State conservation projects
- Environmental stewardship
- Resource stewardship
- Protection of aquatic natural resources
- Restoring aquatic natural resources
- Keeping water clean and accessible
- Sport Fish Restoration

This objective was exceeded in FY 2013, met in FY 2014, and not quite realized in FY 2015 (Figure 17).

**Figure 17: Conservation Earned Media Impressions**

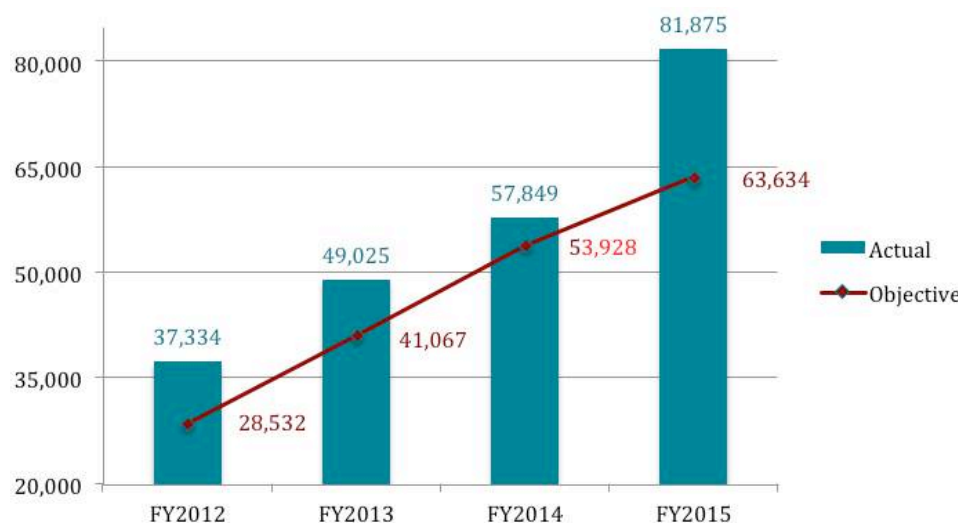


Source: RBFF yearly reports to the SFBPC and the FWS

**METRIC:** Increase page views to the boating and fishing safety pages by 10% annually from the FY 2011 baseline of 25,939.

RBFF exceeded its objectives for page views of boating and fishing safety pages in all three years of the assessment period (Figure 18).

**Figure 18: Page Views of Boating and Fishing Safety Pages**



Source: RBFF yearly reports to the SFBPC and the FWS

During the assessment period, boating safety information was presented more prominently on TMF’s website home page than fishing safety, and most of the pages within the boating safety section had high quality video content. While fishing safety was not displayed directly on TMF.org’s homepage, there was a fishing safety page found under “Fishopedia.” In general, the content for fishing safety heavily relied upon text and was not as engaging as boating safety material, with less use of images and video. In addition, TMF mobile only contained boating safety information and VamosAPescar.org combined fishing and boating safety information, rather than treating them separately. Finally, the number of page views for boating and fishing safety was only a tiny fraction of the page views received by TMF overall.

**METRIC:** Use of SFR logo on all RBFF printed and digital materials.

RBFF reports that it includes the Sport Fish Restoration logo on all its materials. This has become common practice for RBFF. This metric, however, has limited value for measuring whether or not RBFF’s products and services have increased conservation and responsible use of aquatic resources.

### Findings and Observations

RBFF has met or exceeded its objectives for increasing visitors to conservation pages and boating and fishing safety pages in all three years of the assessment. The Assessment



Team congratulates RBFF for this significant accomplishment, which reflects effective use of social media and marketing strategies. As with previous sections of this report, and echoing the findings of the 2012 assessment, the Assessment Team cautions that 10% annual increases in these metrics are not sustainable over time, and the metrics themselves are based on outputs that have only vague connection with the questions the assessment is trying to answer. RBFF is eager to work with its partners to develop better, more meaningful metrics.

The Assessment Team reiterates the findings of the 2012 assessment that RBFF update its conservation pages to include more dynamic information and further leverage stakeholder content to do so at little cost. The number of visits to safety and conservation pages pales in comparison to the overall number of visitors to TMF. The Assessment Team recognizes that most TMF visitors are not coming to the site to look for conservation and safety information, but feels that this is a good opportunity for RBFF to proactively provide this information to this audience by including conservation and safety messaging in more/all of its outreach and communications efforts.

RBFF has successfully integrated the SFR logo into all its materials, and is incorporating conservation and safety messaging into many of its outreach efforts. The Assessment Team commends RBFF for this progress and assumes these practices are now part of RBFF's standard operating procedures. Consequently, the Assessment Team recommends that the use of the SFR logo should no longer be used as a metric for conservation and responsible use of aquatic resources. Rather, RBFF should work with its partners to develop new metrics, which more directly measure the intended outcomes.

## **Recommendations to Increase Reach and Impact**

These recommendations are unchanged from the 2012 Assessment Report.

7. RBFF should work with SFBPC, FWS, and AFWA to develop a communications plan to proactively integrate conservation and safety messaging with all fishing and boating messages and increase prominence of conservation messaging in RBFF communications.
8. The Assessment Team commends the quality of the images provided by RBFF and recommends that the image library be regularly updated (e.g. diverse ethnicity, urban backgrounds in shots, updated PFD styles, etc.).
9. Work with SFBPC, FWS, and AFWA to develop one or more metrics to measure the outcomes of RBFF's activities on conservation and responsible use of aquatic resources by boaters and anglers.



PHOTO: MATT HARLOW, DJ CASE & ASSOCIATES

## APPENDIX A: NATIONAL MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING  
Between the  
United States Fish and Wildlife Service  
the  
Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council  
the  
Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies  
and the  
Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is entered by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), the Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council (SFBPC), the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA), and the Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation (RBFF).

### I. Authorities

The Sportfishing and Boating Safety Act of 1998 (the Act), Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, 16 U.S.C 4601, and the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), 5 U.S.C. App.1.

### II. Purpose

The purpose of this MOU is to establish a framework for a collaborative effort to implement the National Outreach and Communications Program (Program), pursuant to the Act and Presidential Order 12962, with the goal of increasing public participation in recreational fishing and boating activities and increasing public awareness for aquatic resource conservation. Under the Act, the Secretary of the Interior is charged with developing and implementing, in cooperation and consultation with the SFBPC, a national plan for outreach and communications. RBFF was established in October 1998 to implement the Program and a Strategic Plan was developed and approved by the Secretary on February 23, 1999. The Program is designed to improve communications with anglers, boaters, and the general public regarding angling and boating opportunities, to reduce barriers to participation in these activities, to advance adoption of sound fishing and boating practices, to promote conservation and the responsible use of the Nation's aquatic resources, and to further safety in fishing and boating.

### III. Statement of Principles

The Service and its aforementioned partners mutually benefit from a strong constituency of recreational anglers and boaters.

Citizens who participate in recreational fishing and boating activities tend to place a higher value on aquatic resources. They are also more likely to develop a personal conservation ethic and to support fish and wildlife conservation efforts, including those of state and Federal resource agencies. Because of this increased awareness of the need for conserving aquatic resources, the

Service and State resource agencies are better able to accomplish their missions for conserving, protecting, and enhancing fish and wildlife and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people.

Recreational anglers and boaters help fund state and Federal conservation efforts benefitting aquatic resources through excise taxes on angling equipment and motorboat fuels. These funds are collected and then apportioned to the states and territories under the Sport Fish Restoration Program. A strong partnership of boaters, anglers, industry, and conservation groups supports the Sport Fish Restoration Program and the state-managed aquatic resource conservation program it funds.

Outreach and communications are tools for maintaining an active constituency investing in these natural resource conservation efforts. The Program is designed to complement ongoing outreach, communication and conservation work by the signatories.

#### IV. Undertakings of the Agreement Participants

The Service, under the authority of the Act, provides management connectivity between signatories, the various Federal agency programs, and the grant recipient (grantee) selected that are necessary to implement the Program. The Service's Fish and Aquatic Conservation Program manages and coordinates the administration of the discretionary grant, selects processes necessary to determine the grantee, and liaisons with the grantee who implements the Program. In addition, the Fish and Aquatic Conservation Program provides a detailed accounting of the program and its activities to the Secretary for annual publication in the Federal Register; manages and coordinates communication with the signatories, partners, and stakeholders; and continuously seeks opportunities to expand awareness and communications of this program to the American public.

The Program is funded by a discretionary grant awarded through a competitive grant process and in 2013 RBFF was awarded a five-year grant to implement the Program.

RBFF contributes professional expertise and experience necessary to implement the Program. The staff is responsible for daily operations of the Program; financial management/accounting; sub-grant and contract administration; annual work plan development; and annual budgeting. Per the RBFF Board Chairman, the President/CEO of RBFF is the primary point of contact for the Program.

The SFBPC will monitor the progress of the Program, will evaluate effectiveness of the program by communicating regularly with its stakeholders and will regularly report findings to the Secretary and the signatories of this agreement. The Program plan shall be reviewed periodically by the SFBPC but not less frequently than once every three years. In accordance with the FACA, the Service provides staff assistance to the SFBPC, a federally chartered advisory committee. The Service's Fish and Aquatic Conservation Program coordinates all interactions necessary to fulfill the advisory responsibilities of the SFBPC under the Act. SFBPC, under the authority of the Act and the Federal Advisory Committee Act, provides advice to, consults and collaborates with the Secretary of the Interior, through the Director of the Service. Consultation, collaboration, and advice will be

provided to the Secretary in order to oversee implementation of the Program in a manner to satisfy the needs of the Secretary's recreational fishing and boating constituency. The SFBPC will facilitate the exchange of information and ideas between the Secretary and the SFBPC's mutual constituents. The SFBPC Chairman is the primary point of contact for the Program.

AFWA will serve as the liaison with the States and the signatories of this agreement. AFWA will assist in the facilitation and coordination of State Outreach Plans with the Program required under the Act. AFWA's Executive Director is the primary point of contact for this Program.

#### V. Conflict of Interest Provisions for Service Participation

To avoid the possibility of an actual or apparent violation of ethics laws and rules, when official time is used for service as a member of the Board of Directors for the RBFF, the following will apply:

- a. Federal employees may not represent anyone other than the United States before an agency or court in connection with a particular matter in which the United States is a party or has a direct or substantial interest (18 U.S.C. section 205).
- b. Unless waived under applicable procedures, Federal employees are required to refrain from working on particular matters as a Government employee when the employee is serving as an officer in a private organization and the organization in which he is serving has a financial interest in those Government matters (18 U.S. C section 208).
- c. If a Federal employee's participation in a project undertaken in conjunction with a private organization was done as part of his official duties, the employee is prohibited from sharing in any compensation by the dual compensation provisions of the law (18 U.S.C. section 209).
- d. Federal employees are prohibited from using official time and Government equipment to lobby on any issue pending before the Congress (18 U.S.C. section 1913; see also the Omnibus Consolidated Appropriation Act for Fiscal Year 1999, Public Law 105-277, Division A Title III, Section 303).
- e. Federal employees are prohibited from controlling or assuming any measure of practical responsibility for the fund raising activities of private individuals or organizations (E.O. 12731); see also 5 C.F.R. § 2635.808.

Federal employees must consult their agency Ethics Office and Solicitors Office if they have any questions about the scope of the restrictions.

#### VI. Period and Terms of Agreement

This MOU will be in effect from the date of execution until March 31, 2018. Authorized officials of the Service, SFBPC, or AFWA may terminate this Agreement, or any renewals, within 60-days written notification to the parties, or as otherwise required by law.

Transfers of funds, contracts, or other assistance will be executed in separate written instruments in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations.



The parties may revise this MOU as necessary through the issuance of a written amendment signed and dated by authorized officials.

The parties shall comply with all federal laws pertaining to discrimination. These laws include but are not limited to: Title VI of Civil Rights Act of 1964, (42 U.S.C. 20000d-1), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S.C. 794); the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended (42 U.S.C. 601 *et seq.*); and applicable regulatory requirements to the end that no person in the United States, on the grounds of race, color, national origin, disability or age, will be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity conducted within the scope of this agreement.

The relationship between the Service and the other participants under this agreement is intended to enhance service to the American public through more efficient application of Service programs. All actions will be directed toward attainment of that mutually beneficial goal.

Nothing in this MOU may be construed to obligate the Service, Department of Interior, or the United States to any current or future expenditure of resources in advance of the availability of appropriations from Congress.

No Party shall be authorized to bind any other Party without specific prior written consent of the Party to be bound.

This MOU is not intended to, and does not create, any right, benefit, or responsibility substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or equity against any Party, its agencies, or instrumentalities, its officers, employees, or any other person.

Public Statements and Written Materials. All Parties shall have the right to publicize its participation in this MOU.

Logos of the Parties. No Party shall make public use of any other Party's name, logo, trademark, official seal or logos associated with any Party (collectively referred to as "logo" hereafter) without obtaining prior written consent of such Party within a reasonable period of time before materials and publications are to be published and distributed unless otherwise stipulated in this MOU.

Use of Logos. Each Party may use the other Party's logo only in the forms provided electronically or hard copy by the owning or controlling Party of such logo. Except for size and subject to restrictions herein such logos may not be altered in any manner, be it proportion, color, movement, element, animated, morphed, or otherwise distorted in perspective, dimension or appearance. Any changes in the size of a Party's logo made by the other Party shall retain the full graphical integrity of the original image. Use of the Parties' logos shall not occur in any of the following situations, such use shall be taken down immediately and may result in immediate termination of the MOU and other associated agreements notwithstanding termination provisions otherwise agreed to:

- a. In a product name or publication title, or to identify a product or service not owned, controlled or approved by the Party with rights to the logo used



- b. In or as part of another Party's own logo
- c. In a manner likely to cause confusion by the public
- d. In a manner that disparages the other Parties
- e. In a manner that expresses or might imply another Party's affiliation, sponsorship, endorsement, certification, or approval other than as contemplated by this MOU or other related agreements

Freedom of Information Act. The Parties understand that any information furnished between the Parties under this MOU or related agreements is potentially subject to disclosure pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act 5 U.S.C. §552, et seq.

Privacy Act. The Parties understand that any information protected under the Privacy Act of 1974, 5 U.S.C. §552a will be treated in manner consistent with that Act.

Use of Data. All data gathered, associated with or shared among the Parties shall be used for the sole purpose of carrying out services and activities in support of this MOU or related agreement. All parties agree to maintain appropriate confidentiality over such data consistent with applicable laws, regulations, and respective policies. The parties agree to properly dispose of such data at the termination of their relationship, consistent with applicable laws, regulations, and respective policies.

Benefit. No member or delegate of Congress shall benefit from this MOU either directly or indirectly.

Endorsement. The Parties shall not imply Federal endorsement of any Party's, or related entity's product or service.

Entire Agreement. This MOU constitutes the entire understanding of the Parties with respect to their individual and collective roles and responsibilities in carrying out the terms of the MOU, and supersedes any prior or contemporaneous agreements or understandings.

## VII. Principal Contacts

The following individuals will be the principal contacts for their respective organizations; however, any party may substitute other individuals upon written notice to the other parties.

Steve Guertin, Deputy Director  
 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
 1849 C. Street NW, Room 3238  
 Washington, DC 20240

Scott Kovarovics, Chair  
 Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council

5275 Leesburg Pike, Mailstop FAC  
Falls Church, Virginia 22041

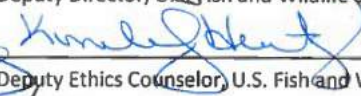
Ron Regan, Executive Director  
Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies  
1100 First Street, NE  
Suite 825  
Washington, DC 20002

Ken Hammond, Chair  
Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation  
500 Montgomery, Suite 300  
Alexandria, Virginia 22314

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the participants hereto have executed this MOU as of the date first written above.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

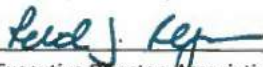
1/25/16  
Date

*Acting*   
\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Ethics Counselor, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

12 Feb 2016  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Chair, Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council

1/25/16  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Executive Director, Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies

2/12/16  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Chair, Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation

1/25/16  
Date

## APPENDIX B: CONSENSUS MEASURES

Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council  
RBFF “Measures of Success” Team

### FINAL SUGGESTED OBJECTIVES/GOALS/MEASURES

**Objective 1: Increased participation in recreational angling and boating.**

#### SUGGESTED MEASURES

1. Increase fishing license sales as reported by the FWS in 2015 by 5% over 2010 levels, and in 2020 by 10% over 2010 levels.
2. Increase boat registrations as reported by the USCG in 2020 by 5% over 2010 levels.

**Goal 1:** Communicate with anglers, boaters, and the general public to increase awareness of: angling and boating opportunities, boating and fishing techniques, and the availability of and access to boating and fishing locations thereby reducing barriers to participation in angling and boating.

#### SUGGESTED MEASURES

1. Increase unique visitors and return visitors to TMF.org digital assets (i.e. web, mobile, apps and future digital assets) by 10% annually from the FY2011 baseline of 3,399,941 and 896,028, respectively.
2. Increase page views to the ‘where to’ pages of the TMF.org digital assets by 10% annually from the FY2011 baseline of 1,103,956 and ‘how to’ pages of TMF.org digital assets by 10% annually from the FY2011 baseline of 2,133,371.
3. Increase referrals from TMF.org digital assets (i.e. web, mobile, apps and future digital assets) to state fishing license purchase pages by 10% annually from the FY2011 baseline of 815,081.
4. Increase referrals from TMF.org digital assets (i.e. web, mobile, apps and future digital assets) to state boat registration pages by 10% annually from the FY2011 baseline of 57,939.
5. Increase referrals from TMF.org digital assets (i.e. web, mobile, apps and future digital assets) to DiscoverBoating.com by 10% annually from the FY2011 baseline of 12,004.
6. RBFF will conduct an annual survey of people who have contact with Take Me Fishing/RBFF programs and products to determine if use of/contact with those programs or materials influenced the user’s decision to boat or fish. RBFF will establish a baseline on the influence of Take Me Fishing in FY2012 and establish hard metrics for improvement over that baseline.

**Note:** As states develop capability to track referrals to resultant sales and provide this data back to RBFF, the measure should change to measure sales as a result of referrals from TMF.org digital assets. RBFF and States should work aggressively toward this.

**Goal 2:** Collaborate with State agencies, industry and stakeholders in developing and implementing marketing and outreach strategies to recruit and retain boaters and anglers as described in the National Outreach & Communications Program.

**SUGGESTED MEASURES**

1. Engage all 50 states in an annual marketing improvement enhancement effort produced by RBFF designed to upgrade the marketing skills and tools of state agencies responsible for fishing and boating.
2. Demonstrate improving stakeholder satisfaction annually through a consistent satisfaction survey of stakeholder groups that is executed by an independent third party.

**Goal 3:** Develop and implement strategies to ensure that RBFF has sufficient funding to achieve its objectives.

**SUGGESTED MEASURES**

1. Annually raise non Federal Dollars and in-kind contributions (not including value added in purchased media buy) to equal 25% of federal dollars received.
2. The non-Federal dollars raised as part of #1 must be at least \$1.5 million in total for FY2011 to FY2013 combined.

**Objective 2: Increased public awareness of sound fishing, boating and conservation practices.**

**Goal 1:** Promote the conservation and responsible use of the Nation's aquatic resources by anglers, boaters and the general public.

**SUGGESTED MEASURES**

1. Increase total visitors to TME.org Conservation Pages by 10% annually from the FY2011 baseline of 32,058.
2. Increase conservation and responsible use message delivery in earned PR articles and impressions of delivered messages by 10% annually over the FY2012 baseline.

**Goal 2:** Promote safe fishing and boating practices.

**SUGGESTED MEASURES**

1. Increase page views to the boating and fishing safety pages by 10% annually from the FY2011 baseline of 25,939.

**Goal 3:** RBFF's communications will improve the public's understanding of the contribution of recreational angling and boating to the conservation of aquatic resources.

**SUGGESTED MEASURES**

1. Use of SFR logo on all RBFF printed and digital materials.
2. Increase conservation and responsible use message delivery in earned PR articles and impressions of delivered messages by 10% annually over the FY2012 baseline.

## **APPENDIX C: 2010-2012 ASSESSMENT TEAM RECOMMENDATIONS**

Following are recommendations from the 2012 Assessment, for reference. RBFF did not have time to respond to these recommendations prior to the 2015 assessment, and the 2015 Assessment Team makes reference to these throughout this document.

1. RBFF, SFBPC, FWS and AFWA should review the metrics for each consensus measure to ensure they remain up-to-date and relevant. As part of this process, the parties should focus on revising existing and/or developing new metrics to ensure they measure outcomes and sustained participation in angling and/or boating over time. One example of a metric that meets both criteria is fishing license renewals.
2. The SFBPC, AFWA and FWS should work with RBFF to identify surrogates for certified license sales data and boat registration data that would allow RBFF to more quickly respond to changing market conditions and modify its recruitment and retention programs.
3. To improve overall stakeholder satisfaction and the effectiveness of programs designed to increase recruitment and retention, RBFF should engage in a genuinely collaborative and ongoing partnership with stakeholders about how to improve programs to increase and sustain participation in boating and angling in the United States. The collaboration process should include identifying specific stakeholders and their specific goals and needs. To foster stronger collaboration, RBFF should establish a process for face-to-face dialogue with stakeholders, such as through focus groups or personal interviews, to better solicit feedback on specific wants and needs. RBFF should consider third-party facilitators for these meetings, which will allow RBFF to have greater participation in the discussion, and will eliminate any perceptions that RBFF is steering the process toward some particular outcome.
4. RBFF should work with the SFBPC, FWS and AFWA to re-assess the metric of all 50 states participating in RBFF programming and consider metric(s) that more directly measure outcomes and effectiveness of programs such as lift or ROI. In addition, RBFF should proactively pursue opportunities to collaborate with states that want more customized services, including alternatives to the current lapsed angler program and additional contractual services such as enhanced state agency marketing.
5. For TMF.org pages that include state information, there is an opportunity for RBFF to work with states to highlight those programs and resources that states may want to promote (e.g., banners with hotlinks to state program sites). When states do not have the capacity for state-specific information, RBFF should work closely with these states to ensure information posted on TMF.org is available and accurate. For example, make state-specific banner ad space available on TMF.org state pages to highlight state events and add links from RBFF “Where-to” pages to the most accurate state resources. If appropriate, a potential way to measure the success would be to track the number of referrals from the TMF state-specific resources.”

6. RBFF, AFWA, FWS, and SFBPC should work together to establish specific goals and objectives and a process for rigorously evaluating and reporting on RBFF's effectiveness at enhancing the public's understanding of aquatic resources and sustained participation in boating and angling. (For example, if the Disney and/or Hispanic campaigns are intended to achieve this, how will RBFF measure success?)
7. RBFF should work with SFBPC, FWS, and AFWA to develop a communications plan to proactively integrate conservation and safety messaging with all fishing and boating messages and increase prominence of conservation messaging in RBFF communications.
8. The Assessment Team commends the quality of the images provided by RBFF and recommends that the image library be regularly updated (e.g. diverse ethnicity, urban backgrounds in shots, updated PFD styles).
9. RBFF should work with SFBPC, FWS, and AFWA to develop one or more metrics that begin to measure the outcomes of RBFF's activities on conservation and responsible use of aquatic resources by boaters and anglers.



## APPENDIX D: RBFF RESPONSE TO 2012 ASSESSMENT REPORT



July 29, 2015

Mr. Scott Kovarovics  
Chair, Sport Fishing & Boating Partnership Council  
Executive Director, Izaak Walton League of America  
707 Conservation Lane  
Gaithersburg, MD 20878

Dear Scott:

On behalf of the Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation's (RBFF) Board of Directors, thank you for giving us the opportunity to provide feedback on the Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council's (SFBPC) assessment of RBFF's activities for fiscal years 2010 through 2012.

RBFF understands the spirit in which the assessment is intended; to assist RBFF to be even more successful going forward. We also appreciate your taking the time to present the assessment findings at our recent strategic planning meeting.

The RBFF board and staff have carefully reviewed the assessment and are herein providing our official response along with the status of efforts already underway to achieve the eight recommendations provided by the SFBPC.

1. *RBFF, SFBPC, FWS and AFWA should review the metrics for each consensus measure to ensure they remain up-to-date and relevant. As part of this process, the parties should focus on revising existing and/or developing new metrics to ensure, to the extent possible, they measure outcomes, sustained participation in angling and/or boating, and improved public understanding and conservation of aquatic resources over time.*

RBFF has already named its three representatives to participate in a metrics working group, along with representatives from SFBPC, FWS and AFWA. The working group will review current consensus measures and develop revised and/or new measures as recommended by the SFBPC. The working group will utilize a facilitator (to be engaged by the SFBPC) to ensure that the process of developing these measures is efficient and is completed by the end of calendar year 2015.

2. *The SFBPC, AFWA and FWS should work with RBFF to identify, to the extent possible, surrogates for certified license sales data and boat registration data that would allow RBFF to more quickly respond to changing market conditions and modify its recruitment and retention programs.*

The metrics working group described under Recommendation #1 will address this task also.

500 Montgomery Street, Ste 300  
Alexandria, VA 22314-1657  
Ph: 703.519.0013  
Fx: 703.519.9565

- 3. RBFF should engage in a genuinely collaborative and ongoing partnership with stakeholders about how to improve programs to increase and sustain participation in boating and angling in the United States. The collaboration process should include identifying specific stakeholders and their specific goals and needs. In addition, RBFF should proactively pursue opportunities to collaborate with states that want more customized services, including alternatives to the current lapsed angler program, and additional contractual services such as enhanced state agency marketing.*

At the recent RBFF Strategic Planning meeting in which you participated, the RBFF Board and staff agreed fully with the recommendation to engage with stakeholders in a more customized manner. RBFF will organize a task force to create a plan, identify stakeholder needs and goals and to engage with them on a more custom basis. Five board members and two former board members have already volunteered to join the task force. We have decided to start initially with individual state stakeholders and then proceed to meetings with boating and fishing industry stakeholders.

- 4. For TMF.org pages that include state information, there is an opportunity for RBFF to work with states to highlight those programs and resources that states may want to promote (e.g., banners with links to state program sites). When states do not have the capacity for state-specific information, RBFF should work closely with these states to ensure information posted on TMF.org is available and accurate. For example, make state-specific banner ad space available on TMF.org state pages to highlight state events and add links from RBFF "Where-to" pages to the most accurate state resources. If appropriate, a potential way to measure the success would be to track the number of referrals from the TMF.org to state-specific resources.*

RBFF is currently wrapping up a project to update all body of water and fish species data on TMF.org to assure that they agree with the corresponding data on each state's website. State-specific data will be monitored on an ongoing basis to assure it is consistent with the states' own data on public waters and excludes private waters. RBFF is also currently working with several states which are running banner ads on TMF.org to promote state events and state-sponsored fishing and boating recruitment, retention and reactivation (R3) efforts.

- 5. RBFF should establish specific programmatic goals and objectives and a process for rigorously evaluating and reporting on the effectiveness of programs designed to enhance public understanding and conservation of aquatic resources and/or sustain participation in boating and angling.*

RBFF is developing a survey to establish a baseline conservation awareness level among avid anglers and boaters and among RBFF's target audiences. Current TMF.org pages dedicated to conservation and safety receive relatively few visits and are not frequently search targets. The redesigned TMF.org which will be rolled out this year will integrate conservation and safety messaging throughout the website. Subsequent annual surveys will allow RBFF to determine whether conservation awareness is increasing, particularly among RBFF's target audiences.

6. *RBFF should work with its partners to better define and communicate its vision for youth recruitment into fishing and boating.*

RBFF will develop materials defining our vision of the importance of youth recruitment and participation, focusing on RBFF's corporate alliance with Disney, establishment of the George H.W. Bush *Vamos A Pescar*™ Education Fund and support of the Boy Scouts Certified Angling Instructor training program. We will communicate this vision through our websites, newsletters and other communications channels.

7. *RBFF should work with SFBPC, FWS, and AFWA to develop a communications plan to proactively integrate conservation and safety messaging with fishing and boating messages and increase prominence of conservation messaging in RBFF communications.*

This recommendation will be addressed as discussed under Recommendation #5 above.

8. *The Assessment Team commends the quality of the images provided by RBFF and recommends that the image library be regularly updated (e.g., diverse ethnicity, urban backgrounds in shots, updated PFD styles).*

RBFF will continue to update the image library on a regular basis. In addition to the professional photography currently featured in the library, RBFF has begun to leverage social media tools and campaigns to develop user-generated images that will update the library with ethnically diverse images at a low cost.

RBFF's Board of Directors and staff look forward to implementing the SFBPC's recommendations and to working closely with our stakeholders to increase participation in boating and fishing and to continue making the public aware of the need to protect America's precious waterways. We would like to thank the SFBPC for the time and effort put into developing these recommendations. We would also like to request that future assessments be completed in a timely fashion, preferably within six months of the closing of the last fiscal year under assessment.

Sincerely,



Kenneth Hammond  
RBFF Chairman

Cc: Brian Bohnsack  
Frank Peterson



# APPENDIX E: RBFF FY 2017-2019 STRATEGIC PLAN



## Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation (RBFF) FY2017-2019 Strategic Plan

### Purpose

This strategic plan is intended to set the future direction for the Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation (RBFF) and identify key objectives and strategies to achieve its mission "to implement an informed, consensus-based national outreach strategy that will increase participation in recreational angling and boating and thereby increase public awareness and appreciation of the need for protecting, conserving, and restoring this nation's aquatic natural resources." The plan is built around three core objectives: Consumer Engagement, State Agency Engagement and Industry Engagement. Each objective contains specific strategies to achieve measurable success. The Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council's (SFBPC) strategic plan developed in 1998 continues to be the framework from which we develop our strategy.

While designed to focus on long-term mission, vision and goals, the strategic plan will be reviewed annually and adjusted to meet the changing needs of RBFF's current environment. It will also establish the baseline for annual budgets for the next three fiscal years.

### Mission, Vision and Goals

#### RBFF MISSION

- To implement an informed, consensus-based national outreach strategy that will increase participation in recreational angling and boating and thereby increase public awareness and appreciation of the need to protect, conserve and restore this nation's aquatic natural resources.

#### RBFF VISION

- RBFF is committed to spreading the joy of fishing and boating to all ages, genders and cultures; we envision one nation united in our passion for fishing and boating. A nation committed to the pursuit of leisure activity on the water. A nation that embraces our fishing and boating heritage, and conserves, restores and protects the resources that sustain it.

#### RBFF GOALS

- Increased participation in boating and fishing.
- Increased public awareness of sound fishing, boating and conservation practices.

#### STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

- Mobile First
- Cross-Channel Engagement
- Multicultural Mindset
- Emphasis on Rich Content
- Proactive Communication
- Debunking Stereotypes

### Assumptions:

1. United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) funding continues at current levels (\$12 million per year) over the next three fiscal years.

### Appendix:

1. SFBPC "Measures of Success"
2. RBFF Future Vision



## Background

This strategic plan is the result of a six-month process that included RBFF staff, board members, state agency stakeholders, boating and fishing industry stakeholders, and USFWS personnel.

RBFF engaged Benefactor Group, a national consulting firm, in early spring 2015 to facilitate its strategic planning process. Benefactor Group reviewed numerous documents and websites, including the following:

- RBFF's FY 2014 - 2016 Strategic Plan
- RBFF's 2013 and 2014 *Special Report on Fishing*
- RBFF FY15 End of Year Metrics Report and FY16 Metrics To-Date
- Websites ([www.TakeMeFishing.org](http://www.TakeMeFishing.org) and [www.VamosAPescar.org](http://www.VamosAPescar.org))
- A variety of market research reports commissioned by RBFF

The Benefactor Group met with staff leaders and interviewed key stakeholders. A total of 12 individual interviews were conducted either in person or by phone. Working closely with RBFF senior staff, Benefactor Group developed objectives for the retreat and a preliminary list of pre-reading for retreat participants.

A strategic planning workgroup, composed of current board members and staff, was assembled to help guide the retreat planning process. The workgroup met by conference call eight times to affirm the current strategic direction, align key objectives, and discuss strategies to achieve goals to guide the development of the retreat agenda and outcomes.

Sixteen board members, eight staff members, various stakeholder representatives and the USFWS participated in the strategic planning retreat on June 23-24, 2015 in Alexandria, VA. Benefactor Group facilitated various exercises, subject matter experts gave presentations, and several small group discussions occurred. Through the information gathered at the retreat and the discussions with the planning workgroup, RBFF staff and the Benefactor Group affirmed the current direction with the addition of some new strategies.





**Objective #1: Consumer Engagement**

Increase participation in recreational boating and fishing by recruiting new audiences to the sport through a national marketing and communications campaign designed to increase awareness of fishing and boating and natural resource conservation, dispel negative stereotypes, and encourage consideration, trial and ultimately participation.

STRATEGIES	DESCRIPTION
1.1 Continue national marketing campaign (to drive awareness and engagement with general market and Hispanic growth segments)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Year-long integrated marketing and advertising campaign (Take Me Fishing™ &amp; Vamos A Pescar™)</li> <li>• Evolution of creative/message platforms</li> <li>• Year-long PR activities</li> <li>• Year-long social media activities</li> <li>• Multi-channel content strategy</li> <li>• Conservation PSAs</li> </ul>
1.2 Disney Strategic Alliance (to drive awareness of fishing and boating among target audiences)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic marketing alliance to grow awareness of fishing and boating (focused on family and youth) through the use of Disney media properties (Disney XD, Disney Channel, ESPN &amp; Disney.com) and Walt Disney World Resort branding</li> <li>• Evolve media buy and refresh creative</li> </ul>
1.3 Continue Boy Scouts of America Certified Angler Instructor (CAI) Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partnership to train more CAI instructors</li> <li>• Update/evolve curriculum as needed</li> </ul>
1.4 Develop Learning Centers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and test Learning Centers to serve as a place where kids and families can participate in hands-on opportunities and learn fishing and boating skills</li> </ul>

**KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

*Unless otherwise noted, goal is to achieve growth in all areas*

- Annual fishing and boating participation levels
- Conservation awareness among target audiences
- Marketing campaign awareness and brand influence
- Digital asset traffic and conversions
- Retail value of PSA placements
- Double CAI trainers over next 3 years from 500 to 1,000



**Objective #2: State Agency Engagement**

Grow the number of anglers and boaters by working in collaboration with state agencies to develop, implement and evaluate innovative recruitment, retention and reactivation (R3) activities. Share results and details of R3 efforts with all state agencies so that each individual agency can successfully implement these programs.

STRATEGIES	DESCRIPTION
2.1 Develop, implement and test R3 programs to help state stakeholders recruit, retain and reactivate anglers and boaters.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evolve fishing license and boat registration marketing programs to reactivate lapsed anglers and boaters</li> <li>• Expand retention pilot programs; grow to national</li> <li>• Expand innovative R3 grants program to support additional state agency programs</li> <li>• Establish state R3 guidelines through Aquatic Resources Education Association (AREA)/Wildlife Management Institute (WMI) partnership</li> <li>• Communicate pilot results/learnings with states</li> </ul>
2.2 Establish task force to identify states' wants and needs related to R3 activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Task force to examine better ways to collaborate with state agencies around R3 activities</li> </ul>
2.3 Implement fishing license and boat registration referrals program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drive website visitors to state agency websites for fishing license and boat registration information</li> <li>• Explore/expand state partnerships to track visitors and conversions to license sales from RBFF digital assets to state sites</li> </ul>
2.4 Hold annual State Marketing Workshop and quarterly webinar series	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grow and evolve annual workshop to impart marketing, communications, and customer service best practices (R3 activities)</li> <li>• Evolve and expand quarterly webinar series to give state agency employees tips/tools for implementing and evaluating R3 activities</li> </ul>
2.5 Expand George H.W. Bush <i>Vamos A Pescar</i> ™ Education Fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement state-managed grant program to fund youth and family fishing education programs</li> <li>• Grow funding for program</li> </ul>

**KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

*Unless otherwise noted, goal is to achieve growth in all areas*

- Fishing license and boat registration sales
- Retention rates
- Fishing license and boat registration referrals
- Conversion rates
- Funding for GHWB VAP Education Fund
- Overall state stakeholder satisfaction



**Objective #3: Industry Engagement**

Partner with industry manufacturers and retailers to develop and implement marketing projects designed to increase category growth, while simultaneously, through research; develop consumer insights, knowledge and tools that industry can use to grow its individual brands.

STRATEGIES	DESCRIPTION
3.1 Continue market/consumer research and insights to help industry stakeholders understand the demographics of the sport, new markets and customer trends	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evolve research agenda to provide industry stakeholders with timely and actionable information they can implement in their own business</li> <li>• Disseminate key learnings/insights through educational webinars, meetings, conferences and trade media</li> </ul>
3.4 Continue to leverage industry partnerships to reach new markets and engage consumers in fishing and boating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue Discover Boating referral program to provide boat manufacturer leads from RBFF digital assets; continue the sharing of Search Engine Marketing (SEM) keywords to maximize budget efficiencies</li> <li>• Expand usage of TMF Places to Boat and Fish Map widget to additional industry websites; evolve map features and offerings</li> <li>• Work with industry to expand efforts to create a one-stop resource for beginning anglers/boaters in a retail environment (e.g., merchandise centers similar to SouthBend/Walmart end caps)</li> <li>• Create task force of industry stakeholder representatives to help develop industry priorities</li> <li>• Explore new industry partnership opportunities to grow category</li> </ul>

**KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

*Unless otherwise noted, goal is to achieve growth in all areas*

- Overall industry stakeholder satisfaction
- Discover Boating referrals
- Increase industry partnerships



## APPENDIX:

### *Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council*

#### RBFF "Measures of Success" Team

#### FINAL SUGGESTED OBJECTIVES/GOALS/MEASURES (Updated July 20, 2012)

\*NOTE – These measures were developed by the SFBPC in 2012, and are being re-evaluated in 2015 as a result of the Programmatic Assessment for RBFF's FY2010-2012. RBFF anticipates receiving new measures in FY2016-2017.

#### OBJECTIVE 1: Increased participation in recreational angling & boating

##### Suggested Measures

1. Increase fishing license sales as reported by the FWS in 2015 by 5% over 2010 levels and in 2020 by 10% over 2010 levels.
2. Increase boat registrations as reported by the USCG in 2020 by 5% over 2010 levels.

**Goal 1:** Communicate with anglers, boaters, and the general public to increase awareness of: angling and boating opportunities, boating and fishing techniques, and the availability of and access to boating and fishing locations, thereby reducing barriers to participation in angling and boating.

##### Suggested Measures

1. Increase unique visitors and return visitors to TMF digital assets (i.e. web, mobile, apps and future digital assets) by 10% annually from the FY 2011 baseline of 3,399,941 and 911,709, respectively.
2. Increase unique page views to the 'where to' pages of the TMF digital assets by 10% annually from the FY 2011 baseline of 1,442,105 and 'how to' pages of TMF digital assets by 10% annually from the FY 2011 baseline of 2,177,110.
3. Increase referrals from TMF digital assets (i.e. web, mobile, apps and future digital assets) to state fishing license purchase pages by 10% annually from the FY 2011 baseline of 853,313.
4. Increase referrals from TMF digital assets (i.e. web, mobile, apps and future digital assets) to state boat registration pages by 10% annually from the FY 2011 baseline of 2,861.
5. Increase referrals from TMF digital assets (i.e. web, mobile, apps and future digital assets) to DiscoverBoating.com by 10% annually from the FY 2011 baseline of 12,004.
6. RBFF will conduct an annual survey of people who have contact with Take Me Fishing consumer outreach efforts (e.g. Take Me Fishing advertising and marketing campaign) to determine if contact with these efforts influences a person's behavior to boat or fish.

**Note:** As states develop capability to track referrals to resultant sales and provide this data back to RBFF, the measure should change to measure sales as a result of referrals from TMF digital assets. RBFF and States should work aggressively toward this.



**Goal 2:** Collaborate with State agencies, industry and stakeholders in developing and implementing marketing and outreach strategies to recruit and retain boaters and anglers as described in the National Outreach & Communications Program.

**Suggested Measures**

1. Engage all 50 states in an annual marketing improvement enhancement effort produced by RBFF designed to upgrade the marketing skills and tools of state agencies responsible for fishing and boating.
2. Demonstrate improving stakeholder satisfaction annually through a consistent satisfaction survey of stakeholder groups that is executed by an independent third party.

**Goal 3:** Develop and implement strategies to ensure that RBFF has sufficient funding to achieve its objectives.

**Suggested Measures**

1. Annually raise non Federal Dollars and in-kind contributions (not including value added in purchased media buy) to equal 25% of federal dollars received.
2. The non-Federal dollars raised as part of #1 must be at least \$1.5 million in total for FY 2011 to FY 2013 combined.

**OBJECTIVE 2: Increased public awareness of sound fishing, boating and conservation practices.**

**Goal 1:** Promote the conservation and responsible use of the Nation's aquatic resources by anglers, boaters and the general public.

**Suggested Measures**

1. Increase total visitors to TMF Conservation Pages by 10% annually from the FY 2011 baseline of 32,058.
2. Increase conservation and responsible use message delivery in earned PR articles and impressions of delivered messages by 10% annually over the FY 2012 baseline.

**Goal 2:** Promote safe fishing and boating practices.

**Suggested Measures**

1. Increase page views to the boating and fishing safety pages by 10% annually from the FY 2011 baseline of 25,939.

**Goal 3:** RBFF's communications will improve the public's understanding of the contribution of recreational angling and boating to the conservation of aquatic resources.

**Suggested Measures**

1. Use of SFR logo on all RBFF printed and digital materials.



## ***RBFF Future Vision***

*RBFF is committed to spreading the joy of fishing and boating to all ages, genders and cultures; we envision one nation united in our passion for fishing and boating. A nation committed to the pursuit of leisure activity on the water. A nation that embraces our fishing and boating heritage, and conserves, restores and protects the resources that sustain it.*

### ***Continued focus on R3: Recruitment, Retention, Reactivation***

#### **1 RECRUITMENT**

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Increase participation by introducing new audiences to the sport through the development and implementation of an enhanced national marketing and communications campaign designed to increase awareness of fishing and boating, dispel negative stereotypes, encourage consideration, trial and ultimately participation.

*With the goal of recruiting 5.0 million new participants annually by 2020.*

#### **2 RETENTION/REACTIVATION**

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Working in collaboration with AFWA, State Agencies and AREA develop, test and implement retention and reactivation programs designed to improve retention rates by providing regular and ongoing communications with existing participants.

*With the goal of improving retention rates by 50%, roughly 2.5 million participants annually, by 2020.*

#### ***New Ideas***

#### **3 LEARNING CENTERS**

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Working in collaboration with State, Federal Agencies, Industry and NGO's, develop and implement multiple Learning Centers in major metropolitan areas across the country. These centers will provide hands-on opportunities for new participants to learn fishing and boating skills along with a conservation ethic. Just as organized youth sports foster participation, these centers would create the "place" for newcomers to learn and develop their fishing and boating skills.

*With the goal of implementing the concept in two locations by 2018.*

#### **4 STANDARDIZED LICENSE SYSTEM**

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Working in collaboration with AFWA, provide consumer insights and technical consulting into the development and implementation of a standardized 50 state license system that conforms to best retail practices, utilizes the latest Customer Relationship Management (CRM) tools and provides all participants with an improved customer buying experience.

*With the goal of testing the new system in two states by 2020 and achieving a 25% increase in conversion rates from all traffic sources.*





## 5 MERCHANDISE CENTERS

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Working with industry retailers and manufactures develop and implement merchandise centers that provide introductory to novice equipment and simple instructions to improve the customer's on-the-water experience. Manufacturers and retailers would work together to provide customer service training to retail staff and work closely with state agencies to promote license sales.

*Goal would be to test this concept at a retail location by 2017.*



## APPENDIX F: STATE-BY-STATE FISHING LICENSE AND BOAT LICENSE REFERRALS

### FISHING LICENSE REFERRALS BY STATE - BREAKDOWN FY15

State	TMF/VAP	TMF MOBILE	BANNERS	TOTAL
AK	2,111	447	49	2,607
AL	19,532	8,281	704	28,517
AR	5,194	2,421	208	7,823
AZ	5,200	2,454	376	8,030
CA	26,752	13,733	931	41,416
CO	15,715	7,393	778	23,886
CT	9,322	3,129	512	12,963
DC	748	280		1,028
DE	3,945	1,155	107	5,207
FL	41,252	20,967	2,338	64,557
GA	22,056	8,024	1,387	31,467
HI	877	439	76	1,392
IA	3,699	2,126	187	6,012
ID	3,712	1,379	100	5,191
IL	12,649	5,372	1,206	19,227
IN	13,951	4,976	806	19,733
KS	3,180	1,679	14	4,873
KY	9	3,806	228	4,043
LA	21	3,339	17	3,377
MA	18,627	4,809	1,654	25,090
MD	11,182	3,969	697	15,848
ME	6,729	1,658	263	8,650
MI	16,276	8,551	733	25,560
MN	8,765	3,850	382	12,997
MO	9,064	4,061	349	13,474
MS	3,107	1,711	121	4,939
MT	4,535	1,292	102	5,929
NC	22,890	9,167	1,191	33,248
ND	1,753	784	74	2,611
NE	5,861	2,542	279	8,682
NH	6,422	1,270	282	7,974
NJ	11,702	4,460	1,165	17,327
NM	5,601	2,544	277	8,422
NV	3,991	1,586	212	5,789
NY	35,068	10,417	2,263	47,748
OH	24,234	9,878	1,613	35,725
OK	7,980	4,457	263	12,700
OR	9,110	3,868	837	13,815
PA	16,348	5,761	1,344	23,453
RI	2,172	929	174	3,275
SC	9,207	4,295	429	13,931
SD	3,705	1,119	90	4,914
TN	15,329	6,817	667	22,813

TX	23,039	15,480	1,496	<b>40,015</b>
UT	5,734	2,404	226	<b>8,364</b>
VA	14,818	5,299	773	<b>20,890</b>
VT	3,639	807	170	<b>4,616</b>
WA	9,341	4,271	525	<b>14,137</b>
WI	14,182	4,561	20	<b>18,763</b>
WV	4,575	1,630	166	<b>6,371</b>
WY	4,549	1,300	1	<b>5,850</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>529,460</b>	<b>226,947</b>	<b>28,862</b>	<b>785,269</b>

**PLEASE NOTE:** This report is to be used only as a general guide about license referrals from TMF Digital properties. However, these numbers are not absolute and may be different than what's reported elsewhere due to several factors: 1) gathering numbers from several different systems (including but not limited to Google Analytics, Advertising Management Tool, One Click Outdoors); and 2) algorithms in Google Analytics that produce different totals depending on the date ranges, filters and segmenting being used.

**BOAT REGISTRATION REFERRALS BY STATE - BREAKDOWN  
FY15**

State	TMF/VAP	TMF MOBILE	BANNERS	TOTAL
AK	260		19	279
AL	1,349	463	264	2,076
AR	496		189	685
AZ	2,490	139	318	2,947
CA	1,494	463	590	2,547
CO	496	394	364	1,254
CT	479	93	155	727
DC	113	23		136
DE	407	93	54	554
FL	595	1,344	1,400	3,339
GA	14	3,058	897	3,969
HI	118		42	160
IA	473	324	121	918
ID	733	162	1119	2,014
IL	5	834	608	1,447
IN	948	255	292	1,495
KS	806	324	2700	3,830
KY	0	139	113	252
LA	1,849	348	288	2,485
MA	2,543	695	534	3,772
MD	1,415	301	307	2,023
ME	1,656	185	76	1,917
MI	1,303	278	271	1,852
MN	2,625	417	187	3,229
MO	665	185	199	1,049
MS	1,158	394	128	1,680
MT	262	70	39	371
NC	2,886	880	493	4,259
ND	496	70	58	624
NE	616	93	105	814
NH	1,583	255	101	1,939
NJ	341	116	477	934
NM	2	23	73	98
NV	307	232	105	644
NY	124	463	721	1,308
OH	3,240	973	679	4,892
OK	380	255	114	749
OR	4,804	440	880	6,124
PA	6,126	1,228	755	8,109
RI	736	209	70	1,015
SC	1,613	324	208	2,145
SD	189		49	238
TN	2,390	950	421	3,761

TX	994	1,622	875	<b>3,491</b>
UT	378	185	118	<b>681</b>
VA	1,664	463	482	<b>2,609</b>
VT	520	23	85	<b>628</b>
WA	695	139	299	<b>1,133</b>
WI	2,812	834	301	<b>3,947</b>
WV	260	116	73	<b>449</b>
WY	0	139	37	<b>176</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>57,908</b>	<b>21,013</b>	<b>18,853</b>	<b>97,774</b>

**PLEASE NOTE:** This report is to be used only as a general guide about license referrals from TMF Digital properties. However, these numbers are not absolute and may be different than what's reported elsewhere due to several factors: 1) gathering numbers from several different systems (including but not limited to Google Analytics, Advertising Management Tool, One Click Outdoors); and 2) algorithms in Google Analytics that produce different totals depending on the date ranges, filters and segmenting being used.











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