

# SARASOTA BAY FISHERIES FORUM: MEETING 5 SUMMARY REPORT



# SARASOTA BAY FISHERIES FORUM

Proactively addressing fisheries management issues in the  
Sarasota Bay area with the intent to affect change.



6 – 8:30 p.m. on Tuesday,  
August 4

Mote Marine Laboratory's  
Keating building (3<sup>rd</sup> floor)

1599 Ken Thompson Parkway,  
Sarasota, FL 34236

## Sarasota anglers: Your knowledge can help our fisheries thrive.

Join local researchers for the next meeting of the Sarasota Bay Fisheries Forum — an independent, community discussion to help inform fisheries management and science.

**Meeting Goals:** To further narrow down and decide on key topics.

**FREE ADMISSION • RSVP REQUIRED BY JULY 31**

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FACEBOOK: [www.facebook.com/SarasotaBayForum](http://www.facebook.com/SarasotaBayForum)

Forum Partners:

**UF** UNIVERSITY of  
FLORIDA



**Sea Grant**  
Florida

**Sarasota Bay Fisheries Forum 5 – August 4<sup>th</sup>, 2015.**  
**Mote Marine Laboratory**  
**1599 Ken Thompson Parkway, Sarasota, FL. 34236**

**Report**

On Tuesday, August 4<sup>th</sup>, 2015, Mote Marine Laboratory and the University of Florida (UF) convened the meeting to facilitate the development of the Sarasota Bay Fisheries Forum. The meeting in Sarasota Bay, Florida, was open to the general public and participants were invited through emails, local media, fliers distributed locally, and personal invitations.

In total, 13 fisheries stakeholders attended the second forum meeting (“stakeholders” is defined as anyone who has an interest, or stake, in fish, fishing, and fisheries). Local Mote Marine Laboratory researcher Dr. Ken Leber led and facilitated the meeting. UF researchers Dr. Kai Lorenzen and graduate student Taryn Garlock were also present.

The Sarasota Bay Fisheries Forum is a collaborative effort to provide a venue for public engagement in local fisheries issues and build links between stakeholder knowledge, science, and management. The objectives of this meeting were to continue discussion and further narrow down on key topics for the forum to focus.

After research team introductions, Dr. Ken Leber explained the meeting agenda and objectives, and ground rules for the meeting were agreed upon. Next, participants introduced themselves and briefly explained how they are connected with Sarasota Bay fisheries. Dr. Kai Lorenzen then presented a short overview of the project objectives, followed by a summary of the previous forum discussions led by Dr. Ken Leber.

**Forum activities:**

Group discussions were led by Dr. Ken Leber on the list of potential forum topics assembled from the small groups consensus during the Forum # 4 meeting (June, 2015) and compared to the results of an on-line survey previously distributed to forum participants by UF researchers. The two main topics that emerged from the small group consensus and the survey were:

1. Fisheries regulations and
2. Habitat management/conservation.

Participants came to a consensus that habitat conservation/restoration and regulatory issues were the top priorities. Participants also recognized that a number of the habitat-related topics were very similar and had a lot of overlap. Because the fisheries regulation topic was not well defined, the group wanted to develop a list of more specific issues.

The following regulatory issues were developed during the meeting:

1. The need for localized regulations (reflecting local estuary and habitat)
2. Commercial and recreational conflict (particularly red snapper allocation)
3. Quality of stock assessments-lags in data, doesn't match reality
4. Recreational sector has little control/influence in federal management
5. Ecosystem approaches to management
6. Need for slot limits on gag and red grouper

Participants also came to a consensus that moving this forward before the next meeting was a good idea. Researchers suggested an online survey that would get participants to think about the key topics. It was agreed that the researchers would be open to include what they want in the survey.

Survey questions to be considered for the key topics defined:

1. What is the specific issue?
2. How does it affect fisheries and how much?
3. What do we want to achieve/what is our goal?
4. What can realistically be achieved?
5. How do we achieve our goal?
6. Who should be involved?
7. What knowledge gaps exist? (Thinking of potential guest speakers).

In addition, participants suggested using google docs page to define a problem statement and many liked the idea. Researcher Richard Flamm (from FWC) offered to set up the google docs page. Research team members will send an email out, informing participants to send Richard their email address if they want to participate in the google docs page.

However, researchers suggested that the survey would be more productive at developing a topic and thinking about those 7 questions. The group decided to move forward with both ideas. Some felt the survey would be a good thought motivator and would help them to better contribute to defining the problem statement on the google docs page. The main idea was to get stakeholders to think about the 7 questions regarding the fisheries regulatory and habitat issues that have been proposed.

### **Next Steps: where do we go from here?**

For the next forum meetings:

1. Participant suggested inviting a speaker from DEP to talk about coastal habitat protection
2. Several participants suggested thinking about what species/species complexes were a top priority for the group (both economically and emotionally) and move forward from there to define what issues are most important for that species.

### **Forum evaluation and feedback:**

The final activity of the meeting was a series of evaluation questions to assess the success of the meeting and to gather participants' suggestions on how to improve future meetings.

### **Next Forum: October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2015**

Participants decided to return the forum to the first Thursday of every other month.