

Commercial Fishing License Reform Initiative -- Phase II

Work Plan

Intergovernmental Working Group on Fisheries Management
August 2001

Goal: Develop proposals for improving marine fisheries management in RI, in accordance with the legislative mandates of the *Rhode Island Marine Fisheries Management Modernization Act of 2001*.

Objectives:

1. Enact a process for developing proposals that is fair, open, inclusive and participatory, and gives balanced consideration to all user/interest groups.

Target: overall work plan developed and finalized by 9/1/01

2. Develop a recommended set of goals and principles to guide the development and implementation of a restructured marine fisheries management system.

Targets: draft by 9/1/01; public review, discussion and finalization by 10/1/01

3. Develop recommended options and a proposed plan for restructuring commercial fishing licenses that address such issues as data collection and management, regional and federal requirements, effort control, opportunities for new entry, license eligibility, and quota management.

Target: draft options by 10/1/01; final options by 12/1/01; final recommendations by 1/1/02

4. Develop revised approach for managing commercial aquaculture operations.

Targets: draft revisions by 10/1/01; final revisions/recommendations by 1/1/02

5. Develop a proposal for establishing a marine recreational fishing licenses system.

Targets: draft proposal by 2/1/02; final proposal by 4/1/02; enactment by 4/1/03

Strategy:

General Process:

- ✍ The URI Coastal Institute will hold monthly plenary meetings from September through December to keep all participants informed on the status of the overall process and the various proposals and issues that are being addressed.
- ✍ The Intergovernmental Working Group (IWG) will introduce the process at the first meeting in (mid) September.
- ✍ Through the Coastal Institute, 6 sub-committees will be established to guide the development of proposals in the following 6 areas:
 - License Restructuring/Data Collection and Management
 - Lobster Management
 - Finfish Management
 - Shellfish Management
 - Aquaculture Management
 - Recreational Licensing
- ✍ The charge of the sub-committees will be to guide the development of reform proposals that meet the legislative mandates and improve fisheries management consistent with the state's goals and principles.
- ✍ The sub-committees will be co-chaired by an IWG member and one or more industry representatives; DEM and URI staff will provide technical and scientific advice and assistance.
- ✍ Each sub-committee will be staffed and coordinated by a Coastal Institute contractual employee.
- ✍ The sub-committee chairs will appoint members (10-15 per sub-committee) in such a way as to ensure balanced representation among all principal stakeholders. Members will be asked to represent the views of the groups, gear types, or fisheries that they represent. All sub-committee meetings will be open to the public, and all times/dates, agendas, and minutes will be posted on the web site maintained by the Coastal Institute. Each sub-committee chair will provide ample opportunity for public comment as draft proposals are reviewed and developed.
- ✍ The sub-committees will be called upon to meet on a bi-weekly basis, from mid September through mid November (i.e., 4 meetings over an 8-week period)

- ✍ Working in close coordination with the sub-committees, and drawing upon the Phase I Report, DEM will develop draft proposals for review and consideration, and then refine the proposals in accordance with subcommittee recommendations.
- ✍ If consensus cannot be reached, the sub-committees will be tasked with developing a preferred approach and an alternative approach.
- ✍ The sub-committees will be called upon to report their progress at the monthly plenary meetings, at which time overlapping issues will be identified and addressed. The sub-committees will be called upon to report out their final proposals by December 1.
- ✍ The Coastal Institute will synthesize the sub-committee proposals and develop a comprehensive final report, which will then be used by DEM to develop final recommendations for the IWG by January 1, 2002.

Roles and Responsibilities:

- ✍ The Intergovernmental Working Group (IWG) will take the lead in developing and overseeing the process. The IWG will essentially serve as the steering committee. The functions of the IWG will include:
 - ✍✍ Guiding the development and implementation of the overall process
 - ✍✍ Ensuring consistency with legislative mandates
 - ✍✍ Ensuring that all relevant interests are brought to bear on the development of the proposals
 - ✍✍ Co-chairing the sub-committees
 - ✍✍ Taking the recommendations that emerge in January 02, developing them into a legislative proposal, coordinating legislative briefings, and pursuing passage
- ✍ DEM will take the lead in implementing the process. DEM's functions will include:
 - ✍✍ Working with the sub-committees to develop draft proposals for review and consideration
 - ✍✍ Providing guidance and technical assistance to the sub-committees
 - ✍✍ Briefing and seeking input from the Marine Fisheries Council
 - ✍✍ Based on the outcome of the Coastal Institute proceedings (i.e., the final report prepared by the Coastal Institute), preparing and presenting final recommendations to the IWG in January 02
- ✍ The URI Coastal Institute will take the lead in facilitating discussions associated with the public review, consideration and development of proposals. The Coastal Institute's functions will include:

- ☞☞ Providing a neutral setting for meetings and discussions
- ☞☞ Coordinating all meetings; taking minutes; developing agendas; compiling and posting information on the web site
- ☞☞ Maintaining open lines of communication with all interested groups and individuals
- ☞☞ Preparing and presenting a comprehensive final report that summarizes the Phase II proceedings, incorporates relevant background information, and synthesizes the recommendations of the sub-committees