



An Introduction to the

## MARINE FISH CONSERVATION NETWORK



Recreational fishing for bluefish

Credit: John McMurray

### ABOUT THE MARINE FISH CONSERVATION NETWORK

The Marine Fish Conservation Network is a coalition of commercial and recreational fishing associations, regional and national conservation groups, aquaria, and marine science organizations. For the last two decades, we have united our members around a shared mission: **conserving and revitalizing wild ocean fisheries**. We aim to promote the long-term health of U.S. fisheries and strengthen the myriad of diverse small businesses that make up our fishing communities, while ensuring our oceans and those who rely upon them can successfully meet the emerging economic and environmental challenges of the future.

### OUR HISTORY

In 1993, the Network formed to secure passage of the Sustainable Fisheries Act of 1996, which amended the Fishery Conservation and Management Act of 1976 to include mandates for ending overfishing of U.S. marine fisheries. The law was also renamed the **Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act**, or Magnuson-Stevens Act. We were ultimately successful in that campaign because our diverse membership of fishing interests strongly supported meaningful, conservation-based federal fisheries policy. In the years since, the Network has pressed for full implementation of the science and conservation mandates enshrined in federal law through subsequent Magnuson-Stevens Act reauthorizations. We continue that effort today, defending against rollbacks to the federal fisheries law and advocating for new policies that strengthen conservation and science-based measures in fisheries management, which support fishing businesses and coastal communities.

### WHY WE CARE ABOUT U.S. FISHERIES

Our domestic fisheries support local fishing communities and coastal family businesses that are the backbone of America's commercial and recreational fishing economy. In addition, healthy oceans and productive fisheries are critical for the future of our planet and provide a sustainable source of food for billions of people.<sup>1</sup> Our nation's strong fishing tradition will continue as long as we responsibly manage this natural resource.

- **Fifty fish stocks** have been rebuilt since 2000.<sup>2</sup>
- According to NOAA's latest economics report, U.S. commercial and recreational fishing generated an estimated **\$321 billion in sales** and **2.3 million jobs**.<sup>3</sup>
- Both commercial and recreational fishing produce an **additional \$148.9 billion in value added impacts**.<sup>4</sup>

## WHY WE SUPPORT THE MAGNUSON-STEVENS ACT

The foundation for healthy oceans and productive fisheries that support U.S. fishing businesses is a strong and effective federal fisheries law. The law's science-based conservation requirements are essential to improving the long-term health and viability of our nation's marine ecosystems, ocean fisheries, and coastal small fishing businesses and communities. The U.S. has taken a leadership role in implementing science-based fisheries management with the Magnuson-Stevens Act, and **this federal fisheries law is working**. We are making steady progress in restoring the health of U.S. fisheries due in great part to Congress' foresight during the last two reauthorizations of the Magnuson-Stevens Act.

The Network urges Congress to preserve the science and conservation advancements already secured in previous reauthorizations of the Magnuson-Stevens Act. We also support improvements in the law that promote the long-term health of U.S. fisheries and oceans for the wellbeing of small and large, diverse fishing communities and future generations.



Commercial fishing in the  
Gulf of Mexico

Credit: NOAA

## GET INVOLVED WITH THE MARINE FISH CONSERVATION NETWORK

Please join us to ensure that U.S. ocean policy continues to support healthy oceans and productive fisheries for the benefit of our small businesses, coastal communities and marine ecosystems.

### Follow our blog, "From the Waterfront"

[conservefish.org/blog/](https://conservefish.org/blog/)

"From the Waterfront" shares stories of our fishing past, present, and future to demonstrate the invaluable role that well-managed fisheries play in healthy ocean ecosystems and our American fishing tradition.

### Join our *Waterside Chat*

[conservefish.org/resources/waterside-chat/](https://conservefish.org/resources/waterside-chat/)

Network Deputy Director Tom Sadler talks with guests about current ocean policy and fisheries management topics and what policy decisions mean for people's livelihoods, communities, recreation, and coastal ways of life. View our *Waterside Chat* on **YouTube**, or listen on **Spotify**, **Amazon Music**, or **Apple Podcasts**.

### Follow us on social media

Get the latest news and information on **Facebook** or **Twitter/X**: **@marinefishcons**.

### Contact the Network

For more information, please visit our website at [conservefish.org](https://conservefish.org), or email Executive Director Robert C. Vandermark at [info@conservefish.org](mailto:info@conservefish.org).

<sup>1</sup><https://www.msc.org/what-we-are-doing/oceans-at-risk/the-impact-on-communities>

<sup>2</sup><https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/sustainable-fisheries/status-stocks-2023>

<sup>3</sup><https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/resource/document/fisheries-economics-united-states-report>

<sup>4</sup><https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/resource/document/fisheries-economics-united-states-report>