



Tips for working with recreational fishers



If you've got a message you want to get across to recreational fishers then you need to remember that recreational fishers are a group of people who share only one thing: *they go fishing*.

They have little in common with each other and there's no such thing as a 'typical recreational fisher'. There are only two things that apply to most fishers: the majority are men and most don't belong to a fishing club. Fishers can be any age, come from a wide range of education and economic backgrounds and fish as often as several times a week to only once a year. They also have a wide range of motivations for going fishing: it's not just about catching fish; it's about relaxing, being outside, spending time with friends or family, having fun and the possibility of landing a fish. It's the *whole experience of fishing* that's important.

Tips



Provide material online

Fishers prefer to source information online. They'll then go and talk with other fishers about it.



Keep printed materials simple, to-the-point and relevant

Draw the line between your message and fish and fishing.

If you are targeting older fishers, more of them prefer printed materials than in other age groups (but online is still the preferred medium in all age groups).



Provide practical examples and experiences

Show how your information or message works in the real world. Include demonstrations or hands-on activities if working with fishers in a face-to-face situation. Show what you did, how you did it and what the results were.



Get known & build relationships

Take the time to get to know the fishers you hope to work with or influence. Give talks at club meetings (including non-fishing clubs like Rotary), local events, schools. Be accessible. Listen to how they respond to you.



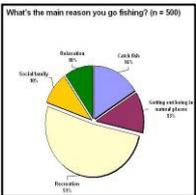
Give fishers the opportunity to talk with other fishers

Fishers trust information from other fishers more than any other source. They are likely to trust someone they know and perceive to be a 'good' fisher. They also want to hear from fishers who have actually been involved in the work you are talking about.



Use case studies

Focus on the activities of fishers who are involved in specific projects. Let them use their own words. Use lots of visuals, especially photos, to make your points. Keep diagrams simple and relevant. If there's lots of data, log this online and direct people to that site or provide separate printed material.



Data is important

Fishers are looking for credible data, especially in relation to how changes to fishing practices or habitat affect fish numbers. BUT, data needs to be presented clearly and to the point. Direct people to summaries, scientific reports or papers rather than include lots of information. Present data visually.



Spread the net wide

Talk with clubs, deal with more than one recreational fishing representative organisation, get information on various fishing sites, get to know local fishing writers and broadcasters, get articles in local newspapers and perhaps most importantly tell local fishers with whom you have a good relationship.



Fishers love freebies

Handouts and freebies are loved by fishers, just as they are by most people, and the more fishing-related the better.

For more information see *'More habitat ... more fish: A strategy for educating recreational fishers about habitat'* developed by Industry and Investment NSW and Southern Cross University and funded by the NSW Government through its Environmental Trust.

Available from: www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fisheries/habitat