



WILDLIFE FOUNDATION OF FLORIDA  
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# Florida Marine Fisheries Enhancement Initiative (FMFEI)

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# What is FMFEI?

A multi-year, multi-partner program to create a statewide system of distributed hatcheries and interlinked eco-centers integrating stock enhancement and habitat restoration

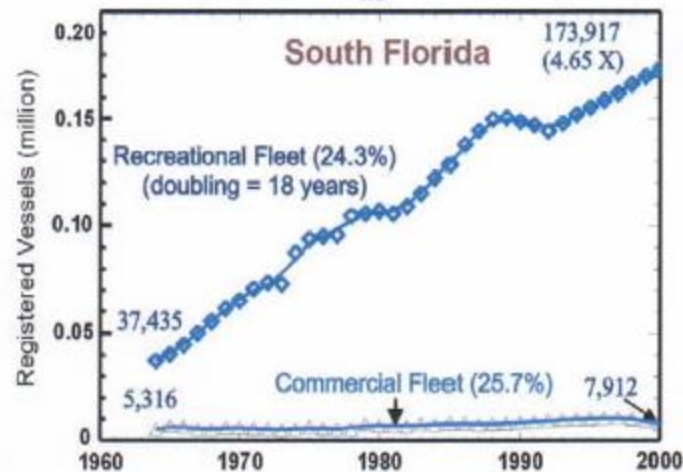
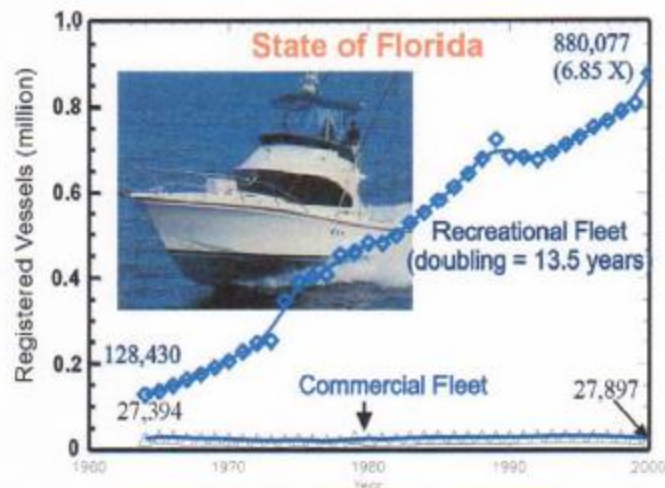
(go to [www.fmfei.org](http://www.fmfei.org) for more details)





# Florida Fisheries

- Recreational fishing is a big business in Florida
  - \$6-8 billion industry
  - About 40% of all U.S. saltwater recreational fishing trips originate in Florida





**The result...**





# Integrated Fisheries Management Approach

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- Fishing regulations
- Stock enhancement
- Habitat conservation and restoration





# Brief Review of Marine Stock Enhancement in Florida

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- FWC has operated a saltwater hatchery in Tampa Bay since 1988—more than 5 million red drum have been released statewide
- Focus has shifted over the past 10 years from production-oriented stocking to an assessment-driven, accountability-based approach:
  - Adoption of the “Responsible Approach” (Blankenship & Leber, 1995)
  - Bringing stakeholders directly into the planning process through the establishment of the Marine Stock Enhancement Advisory Board (MSEAB)
  - Development of a pilot study to evaluate optimum release protocols: **Project Tampa Bay** (determine the most cost-effective strategy for large-scale releases)





# Rationale for Pilot Studies to Optimize Release Protocol

**SURVIVAL IS  
HIGHLY  
DEPENDENT  
UPON RELEASE  
STRATEGIES**

**Release Habitat**

**Size-at-Release**

**Release Season**

**Interactive Effects**



**Hatchery Production**

**Health  
Assessment**

**Fisheries Independent  
Assessment**

**Project Tampa Bay**

**Genetics  
Assessment**

**Fin Clip Program  
& Sonic Tracking**

**Fisheries Dependent  
Assessment**

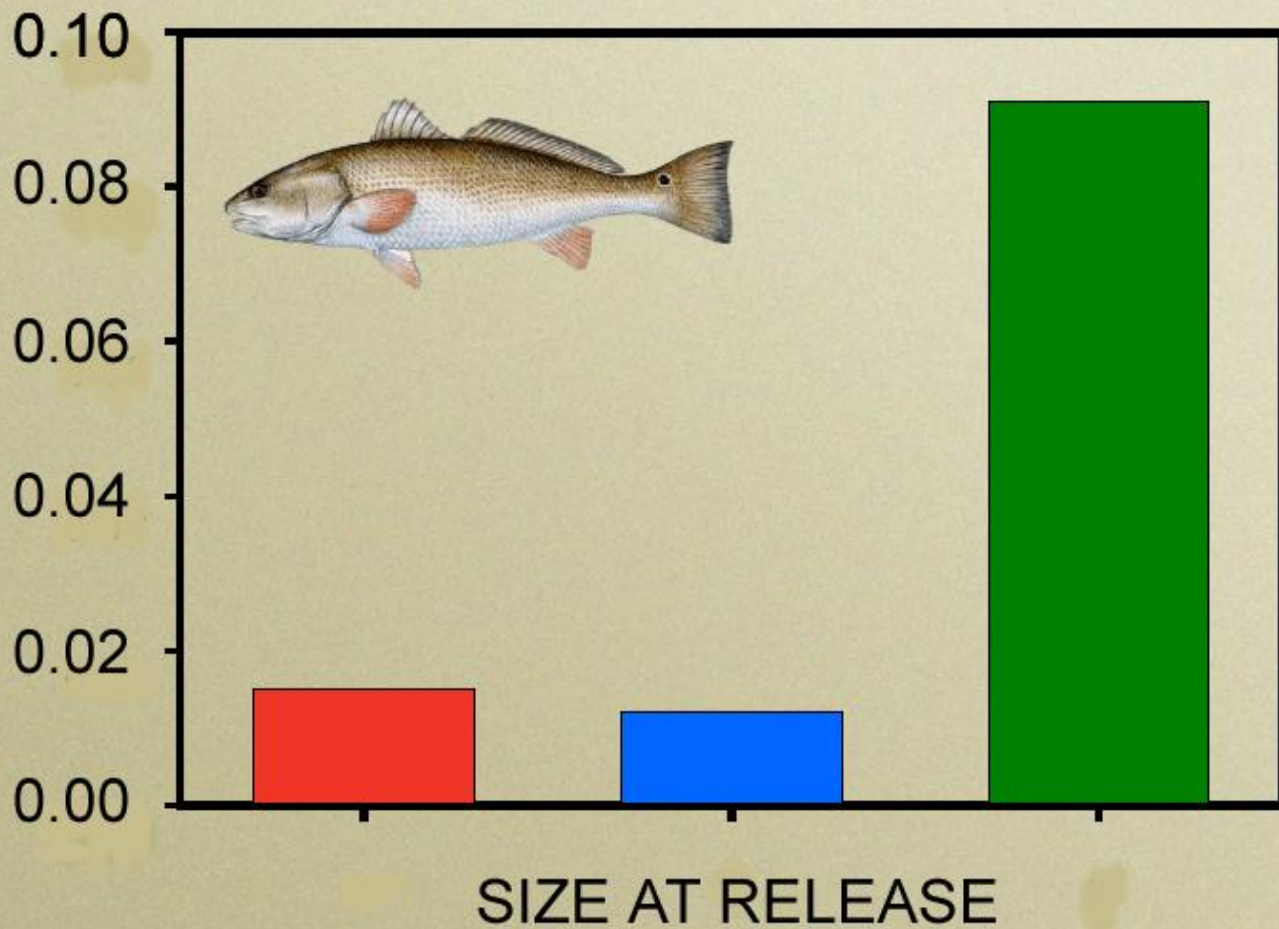




# Fisheries Monitoring Programs







# released	<b>1,340,098</b>	<b>173,926</b>	<b>72,368</b>
# recap	<b>202</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>66</b>
% recap	<b>0.015</b>	<b>0.013</b>	<b>0.091</b>
Ave cost/fish	<b>\$0.15</b>	<b>\$0.45</b>	<b>\$1.58</b>



# FWC/Mote Partnership on Snook Stocking



Pilot Releases to  
Assess Stocking  
Effectiveness



# In Summary

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- FWC and key partners have adopted a multi-disciplinary, quantitative approach to develop effective strategies for integrating stock enhancement into traditional fishery management
- Direct stakeholder involvement has been an important component of the program's success
- FMFEI expands Florida's saltwater stock enhancement program to a statewide implementation scale
- The ultimate goals are:
  1. Develop economically successful and ecologically sound stocking technologies for replenishing depleted fish stocks
  2. Integrate stock enhancement with habitat restoration and other ecosystem components





# Visit FMFEI's website at [www.fmfei.org](http://www.fmfei.org)



## Florida's Marine Fisheries Enhancement Initiative

Search this site:

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### Support Florida Sportfish

- Home
- About the Initiative
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- About the Wildlife Foundation of Florida
- Economic Stimulus Proposal
- March 6, 2009 Partner's Meeting

### Press (Click for Full Update List)

- Title: Harbor Branch Hatchery Operations  
Post date: 02/26/2009 - 12:46
- Title: Shoreline Restoration Underway at Mosquito Lagoon  
Post date: 06/16/2009 - 16:26

### My Links

- Recent posts

### Florida Marine Fisheries Enhancement Initiative

*Strengthening the Future for Sportfishing Along Florida's Vast Coastal Waterways.*

#### A Brief Description

The Florida Marine Fisheries Enhancement Initiative is a multi-year, multi-partner program vital to sustaining our saltwater sportfish populations and the natural habitats of our precious marine life.

Our first saltwater hatchery helped keep the red drum population healthy and available in the Tampa Bay area. New technology and scientific insight have enabled the construction of even more effective marine enhancement centers that can provide a variety of game fish, at different stages of development.

#### THE BIG THREE



Red Drum



Snook



Spotted Sea Trout

To help bolster Florida's sportfish populations that may otherwise be reduced by current demand, fishery scientists and managers advise creating a series of strategically networked hatcheries and grow-out facilities on both the Atlantic and Gulf coasts. This network, combined with parallel habitat restoration, will be most the efficient model for sustaining healthy sportfish populations.

Florida is the most popular sportfishing destination in the country and that popularity contributes about \$5 billion to Florida's economy annually. Maintaining healthy fish populations and habitats is critical to the continuation of that success. That is why we urge everyone who lives, works or plays in our beautiful state to help us make this initiative a reality and **Support Florida Sportfish**.

#### A Team Effort

Construction of these innovative marine propagation and ecosystem restoration facilities will only be possible through teamwork. In addition to the partners already involved in the initiative, the team must include support from government, non-profit, academic and private fisheries research institutions and from concerned citizens and other stakeholders. We also want to work with interested communities to design a localized program that can involve all interested residents. Your



A network of saltwater hatcheries with diverse capabilities will be built along the east and west coasts

