September 30, 2026

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President of the United States
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

On behalf of the undersigned recreational fishing and boating organizations, thank you for issuing Executive Order 14430, "Restoring American Saltwater Angling and Recreation." Your direction to elevate recreational fishing in federal decision making, improve the data used to manage our fisheries, expand fishing opportunities, and invest in habitat offers a consequential opportunity for anglers, coastal businesses, and the resources on which they depend. We appreciate your recognition that sound conservation and recreational access are not mutually exclusive but rather are inextricably linked.

You have a strong implementation team with Commerce Secretary Lutnick, Interior Secretary Burgum, and NOAA Administrator Jacobs. Our organizations stand ready to work with them and other federal partners to turn your order into durable, practical improvements. We respectfully request an early meeting with agency leadership and the White House officials coordinating implementation. To help focus that discussion, we offer these initial recommendations:

1. **National Standards Guidelines (section 2(b)).** We enthusiastically welcome the direction to examine National Standards 1 and 2, including how optimum yield accounts for recreational benefits and how timely state data can inform federal decisions. Because the order says the review must address those standards "at a minimum," we encourage Commerce to consider other National Standards Guidelines where revisions could enhance consistency with the Modernizing Recreational Fisheries Management Act of 2018 (Public Law 115–405) and better reflect the characteristics of recreational fisheries. In addition to National Standards 1 and 2, we have recommendations for other National Standards as well. We strongly encourage NOAA Fisheries to establish and publicly communicate a clear schedule that moves promptly from the 180-day review to proposed revisions, public input, and implementation.

2. **Recreational data modernization (section 3).** We are encouraged by NOAA Fisheries' initial progress under its Recreational Angler Partnership Improvement Directive (RAPID) initiative. We urge agency leadership to empower the staff doing this work to identify and implement meaningful improvements in catch and effort estimates, data timeliness, state-federal integration, and the usefulness of new reporting technologies. Anglers and for-hire operators should help shape tools that produce reliable information and are practical to use.
3. **Priority species and new pilots (section 4(c)).** We support the order's call for focusing at least two new pilot programs on key recreationally important species. Please invite recreational fishing organizations and states to help select species and design the pilots, with early priority for fisheries in which NOAA has a direct management role and can put results into practice. Species managed principally through other authorities, including Atlantic striped bass, may benefit from federal scientific support, but should not displace federal fisheries where these pilots can directly improve management and access. The pilots should be genuinely new and have measurable objectives, timelines, and paths to adoption.
4. **Economic data and the five-year strategic plan (section 4(d)).** We welcome the direction to develop a five-year plan with clear milestones for improving how recreational fisheries economic data are collected, analyzed, and used. We urge Commerce to engage the recreational angling community and shoreside businesses in identifying data gaps and developing true measures of economic value and economic impacts that capture behavior, trips, durable goods, and the benefits of reliable seasons. The direction to incorporate electronic reporting by anglers provides an excellent opportunity to collect recreational behavior and expenditure data quickly and effectively. The plan should outline when updated economic information will be available and how NOAA Fisheries and the fishery management councils will incorporate recreational economic information in decisions about optimum yield, management alternatives, and harvest opportunities.
5. **Regulations that restrict marine infrastructure and access (section 5(a)).** We would welcome the opportunity to help the administration, including the Departments of Commerce, Interior, Agriculture, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and other federal agencies identify barriers that burden boaters, anglers, and outdoor businesses, including recreational marine manufacturers and marina operators, from maintaining and expanding access to our public waterways. We look forward to working with you to ensure that marina infrastructure investments are encouraged, modern technology applications are recognized, and marine manufacturers are provided regulatory certainty to support business competitiveness.
6. **Marine mammal avoidance (section 5(b)).** We would welcome the opportunity to help Commerce, NOAA, and the Coast Guard evaluate and deploy technologies that further reduce the extremely low risk of recreational vessel-strikes while maintaining safe access to the water. The Whale and Vessel Safety (WAVS) Task Force has developed ideas and partnerships that can greatly inform this work. Recreational boaters, marine manufacturers, scientists, and conservation partners should have a meaningful role in testing voluntary, workable solutions.

7. **Existing permits (section 5(c)).** We support longer terms and simpler renewal for existing authorizations where these changes reduce burdens. We ask the agencies to clarify which permits and recurring problems this provision is meant to address and to consult affected permit holders before making changes. We are hopeful that implementation will not be read to create a new federal permit requirement for recreational anglers or to impose mandatory catch reporting as a condition of a permit where no such obligation otherwise applies.
8. **Reef-in-Place Program (sections 6(a)–(c)).** We strongly support retaining suitable offshore structures as productive artificial reefs. We offer to work with the Marine Minerals Administration, the Army Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Coast Guard, coastal states, and other partners to improve the efficiency of the current Rigs-to-Reefs program by establishing more effective coordinated reviews and firm decision deadlines under existing law. An efficient process should give the Corps the information needed to complete its applicable review promptly, while satisfying navigation, environmental, and safety requirements.
9. **Artificial reefs in protected marine areas (section 6(d)).** We welcome a transparent path for compatible artificial reef projects in National Marine Sanctuaries and Marine National Monuments. We can help NOAA and Interior develop proposed changes to Special Use Permit policies and other applicable authorization procedures so appropriate projects can be deployed to enhance fisheries, habitat, recreational fishing opportunities, and other compatible public uses within National Marine Sanctuaries and Marine National Monuments.
10. **Depredation reporting (section 7(b)(ii)).** Practical, standardized tools for reporting shark depredation could give managers a clearer picture of the problem and support effective responses. We encourage exploring the use of, and integration with, existing state and federal platforms, simple reporting fields, and feedback to participating anglers. Any new protocol should be designed with users while avoiding onerous, broadly imposed mandatory reporting requirements.
11. **Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund (section 8(a)).** We welcome the order's attention to delays in disbursing these funds. We can offer specific ideas to ensure timely, full Sport Fish Restoration apportionments and strengthen the National Outreach and Communications Program. We also encourage Interior and the Fish and Wildlife Service to review the full suite of Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund programs for avoidable administrative delays and improve programmatic efficiencies, while preserving their statutory purposes and funding protections.
12. **Restoration coordination (section 8(b)).** The National Fish Habitat Partnership (NFHP) program already connects federal agencies with state, regional, tribal, and local partners across freshwater, estuarine, and marine habitats. We recommend that the Make America Beautiful Again Commission build on that network as the practical foundation for its Restoration Coordination Working Group, using its existing partnerships and project knowledge to coordinate investments, reduce duplication, and measure benefits to fish habitat and abundance. The Commission will be instrumental in the development of a formal structure for the working group while drawing directly on the established capacity of NFHP.

The order's near-term deadlines make early consultation especially valuable. We would appreciate a meeting with leadership from Commerce, NOAA Fisheries, Interior, and other relevant agencies to discuss these proposals, identify points of contact, delve further into the details of our recommendations, and establish a continuing dialogue with the recreational fishing community. Thank you again for your leadership and for the opportunity to help deliver results for American anglers and the fisheries that sustain them.

Sincerely,

Glenn Hughes, President
American Sportfishing Association

Jim McDuffie, President and CEO
Bonefish & Tarpon Trust

Jeff Angers, President
Center for Sportfishing Policy

Patrick Murray, President
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Jeff Crane, President and CEO
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Robyn Boerstling, Senior Vice President of Government Relations & Chief Advocacy Officer
National Marine Manufacturers Association

cc: Secretary of Commerce
Secretary of the Interior
Administrator, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service