



Sport Fish Restoration 75th Anniversary Recognition Communications



Office of
**CONSERVATION
INVESTMENT**

*Partnering to fund conservation
and connect people with nature*



Key Messages:

- Sport Fish Restoration Act funding provides Americans with the best sport fisheries in the world. For 75 years, eligible state, commonwealth and territory agencies have received more than \$12 billion to foster fisheries conservation and connect people with the outdoors.
- The Sport Fish Restoration Act turns 75 years old this year. It has been a cornerstone in ensuring that America's sport fish populations and aquatic habitats are healthy, sustainable, and accessible for all. The Sport Fish Restoration Act ensures that a 10% federal excise tax collected on most fishing equipment, paid by tackle manufacturers, is annually distributed to state and territorial fish and wildlife agencies to manage and enhance sport fish populations, provide aquatic education to the public, increase fishing participation, and provide safe boating and fishing access. This partnership between excise tax-paying manufacturers and fish and wildlife agencies has proven to be one of the most successful conservation models in the world.
- The Act transformed fisheries conservation funding in this country and led to unprecedented success towards enhancing America's sport fish populations and habitats. Since 1950, the Sport Fish Restoration Act has provided more than \$12 billion to state and territorial fish and wildlife agencies, and no other funding method has had the same longevity, consistency, and significance for fisheries management in the United States.
- The Sport Fish Restoration Act is vital to fishing and boating and its influence across the country is staggering. Fish and fishing are important in the lives and lifestyles of people; nationwide, more than 40 million over the age of six go fishing every year, and more than 43 million spend time on motorboats. Fishing enables participants to feed their families and communities and offers a way for people to connect with nature and create lifelong memories. People feel a connection with fish and their intrinsic, utilitarian, and cultural values.

- **Talking Points:**

- For 75 years, funding distributed through the Sport Fish Restoration Act has delivered public access to America's waterways, extraordinary angling opportunities, boating safety, fish habitat management, fish population management and research, clean water, and improved human health and well-being.
- The Sport Fish Restoration Act, often referred to as a key element of the American System of Conservation funding for fisheries management, is a cornerstone of American conservation. No other funding method has had the same longevity, consistency, and significance for fisheries management in the United States.
- Sport Fish Restoration Act funding provides Americans with the best sport fisheries in the world. For 75 years, eligible state, commonwealth and territory agencies have used these funds to foster fisheries conservation and connect people with nature by annually funding:
 - The maintenance and operation of 9,000+ public boating and fishing access areas
 - Operations of more than 320 state fish hatcheries that stock 1 billion fish annually
 - Aquatic education and an introduction to fishing to nearly 850,000 individuals.
- The state-industry-federal partnership established through the Sport Fish Restoration Act enables state fish and wildlife agency biologists to manage, study, and monitor more than 200 species of sport fish, including such iconic species as largemouth bass, striped bass, rainbow trout, tarpon, walleye, red drum, spotted seatrout, crappie, flounder, and many more.
- Fish are important in the lives of the American public. The *2022 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation* indicates more than 40 million people participate in fishing. Angling is an economic powerhouse. Anglers spent an average of 20 days in 2022 on the water, spent \$99.4 billion on equipment, travel, licenses, fees, and other costs.

- These expenditures support thousands of jobs and create important economic opportunities across the nation. A Study by Southwick and Associates calculates that in 2022, the U.S. GDP contributions of fishing and boating had and impact of over \$230 billion when considering the ripple effects throughout the national economy.

Sport Fish Restoration Act Helpful Background:

- *The Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Act, sponsored by Congressman John Dingell and Senator Edwin Johnson, was enacted in 1950. The Sport Fish Restoration Act was modeled after the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act, passed in 1937. Since 1950, the Sport Fish Restoration Act has been an extremely valuable source of funding for state, commonwealth, and territorial fish and wildlife agencies.*
- *The Act was amended in 1984 with sponsorship by Senator Malcomb Wallop and Congressman John Breaux. Wallop-Breaux drastically increased the amount of funds for sport fish management, habitat restoration, aquatic education, fish stocking, and mandated a minimum percentage be spent on boating access.*
- *Today, the Sport Fish Restoration Act authorizes a 10% federal excise tax on fishing equipment, a 3% tax on electric boat motors and tackle and fly boxes, import duties on tackle, pleasure boats and yachts, and a portion of the federal gas tax that is attributable to motorboats and small engines. The tax on equipment is paid by the manufacturer of these goods.*
- *These funds are apportioned to the states on an annual basis based on a formula. As of 2025, the Sport Fish Restoration Act has provided over \$12 billion in funds to states to support eligible activities like fish stocking, aquatic education, hatchery operations and maintenance, and boating access.*

SFR at 75 Communications Available

Videos:

1. [SFR Funding: The Cornerstone of Partnerships - Helping our Angling and Boating Resources Thrive](#)

Through the Sport Fish Restoration Act, manufacturers of fishing equipment play a pivotal role in the American System of Conservation Funding. The manufacturers that pay a federal excise tax on their goods, coupled with motorboat fuel taxes, fund the conservation work of state fish and wildlife agencies, supporting healthy fisheries, habitat management, clean water, boater safety, and public boating and fishing access. Join us in the celebration of the 75th Anniversary of the Sport Fish Restoration Act in 2025.



2. [Collaborating in Conservation: Partnering to Create Healthy Fisheries and Access for All](#)

Did you know that Sport Fish Restoration funds, generated by a federal excise tax on fishing gear and a portion of gasoline taxes attributable to motorboat fuel, play a crucial role in conservation? These funds help state fish and wildlife agencies maintain healthy fish populations, aquatic habitats, and support public access for fishing and boating. Check out this video showcasing the important partnerships between industry manufacturers and state and federal fish and wildlife agencies and see the incredible conservation efforts made possible through Sport Fish Restoration partnerships.



3. [Sport Fish Restoration Funding: The Cornerstone of Partnerships](#)

Sport Fish Restoration funding plays a vital role in sustaining partnerships that support our angling and boating communities. Through the Sport Fish Restoration Act, manufacturers contribute by paying a federal excise tax on fishing equipment. This funding ensures that U.S. waterways remain healthy and accessible for future generations, helping preserve the resources that make fishing and boating possible. Check out this video to learn more about Sport Fish Restoration.



Handouts:

1. [A REEL SUCCESS: Sport Fish Restoration Celebrates its 75th Year](#)

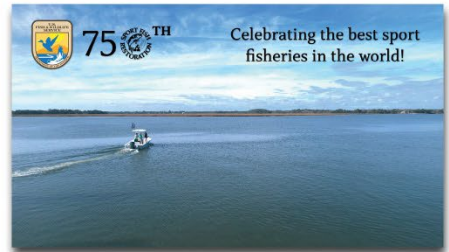
A one-page resource celebrating the Sport Fish Restoration Act turning 75 this year. It is a cornerstone of America's conservation heritage — and a promise for its future. This landmark legislation has ensured that the fish we catch and the waters we cherish stay healthy, sustainable, and accessible to everyone.

2. [Clean Water and Boating Access: Benefits of the Sport Fish Restoration Act \(SFR\)](#)

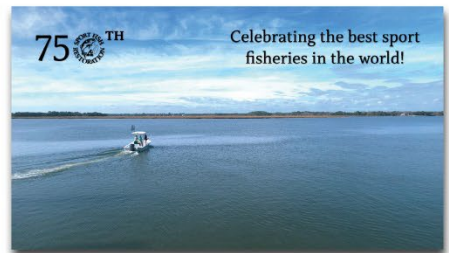
A one-page resource highlighting the critical role of the Sport Fish Restoration Act (SFR) in supporting clean water initiatives and improving boating access. Discover how programs like CVA and BIG fund essential infrastructure, reduce pollution, and enhance recreational boating experiences across the United States.

Virtual Meeting Backgrounds: [For use in Zoom and TEAMS Meetings - [Available in the SFR75 ShareFile](#)]

1. With Service Logo:



2. Without Service Logo:



Actions in place now:

- Webpage – [*SFR at 75*](#) on the Partner with a Payer™ website (Developed)
- Trout StoryMap (Available Summer 2025)
- Anniversary Poster (Available Spring 2025)
- Videos – 3 developed; 2 more in production
- Infographics – 2 Operational, more in development
- USFWS NCTC display development (Planning)
- State level legislative resolutions/recognition (Developed - Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation)
- Additional engagements via partners
- SFR reading list

Potential *Sport Fish Restoration 75th* Celebration Events:

Month	State	Event	Activity
February			
March			
April	Ohio	St. Mary's State Fish Hatchery Tour	PwP Event
April	Pennsylvania	Trout Stocking w/ PAFBC	PwP Event
May	Massachusetts	On The Water	PwP Event
May	Iowa	PureFishing	PwP Event
June	Missouri	Bass Pro Anniversary Celebration	TBD - Planning
July	Florida	ICAST (7/15 – 7/18)	SFR75 Conservation Forum
July	California	Diawa	
August	Texas	American Fisheries Society (8/10)	Conference plenary & Special Session
August	West Virginia	Special Anniversary Celebration	TBD - Planning