

SHIMANO AMERICAN CORPORATION

News Release

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FEDS TO 60 MILLION AMERICAN ANGLERS: WE DON'T NEED YOU

IRVINE, Calif. USA – October 5, 2009 – A recently published administration document outlines a structure that could result in closures of sport fishing in salt and freshwater areas across America. The White House created an Interagency Oceans Policy Task Force in June and gave them only 90 days to develop a comprehensive federal policy for all U.S. coastal, ocean and Great Lakes waters. Under the guise of ‘protecting’ these areas, the current second phase of the Task Force direction is to develop zoning which may permanently close vast areas of fishing waters nationwide. This is to be completed by December 9, 2009.

Dave Pfeiffer, President of Shimano American Corporation explained, “In spite of extensive submissions from the recreational fishing community to the Task Force in person and in writing, they failed to include any mention of the over one million jobs or the 60 million anglers which may be affected by the new policies coast to coast. Input from the environmental groups who want to put us off the water was adopted into the report verbatim – the key points we submitted as an industry were ignored.”

Recreational fishing generates a \$125 billion annual economy in the United States and supports jobs in every state according to government figures. Through the Sport Fish Restoration program, anglers have provided more than \$5 billion through excise taxes on fishing tackle to fishery conservation and education for decades.

In addition to the economic aspects, anglers lead the nation in volunteer conservation efforts on behalf of improving fish habitat, water quality and related environmental areas. “There was no mention of the fishery conservation efforts which anglers have led for over 50 years in every state – an environmental success story that has no equal in the world”, said Phil Morlock, Director, Environmental Affairs for Shimano.

“The Task Force did not make any distinction between the dramatic differences between harmful commercial fishing harvest methods and recreational fishing, even though we spelled it out for them in detail,” added Morlock.

Claiming to be the result of a public consultation process the report states, “Having considered a broad range of public comments, this report reflects the requests and concerns of all interested parties.”

The original White House memo and not surprisingly the Task Force report contains multiple references to developing a national policy where Great Lakes and coastal regions are managed, “consistent with international law, including customary international law as reflected in the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea” - a 300-page treaty the U.S. has never ratified.

“We question what implications there will be for state authority and jurisdiction in the Great Lakes and coastal regions if the U.S. adopts the U.N. Treaty,” said Pfeiffer.

The report makes it clear that future authority for implementing the policy for coastal and inland waters will fall under White House jurisdiction with a new National Ocean Council comprised of over 20 federal agencies at Cabinet Secretary or Deputy Secretary level. No reference to Congressional jurisdiction is indicated.

“This significant change in U.S. policy direction is the result of a 90-day fire drill process as ordered by the President that, not surprisingly, lacks balance, clarity and quality in the end product,” said Morlock. “People who simply want to take their kids fishing on public waters deserve better from their government,” he added.

Shimano is joining with other members of the recreational fishing industry to urge anglers to contact their members of Congress and the administration to request this process be required to adopt the economic, conservation and social contributions of recreational fishing as key elements of the policy. It is critical that we ensure Congressional oversight and state jurisdiction and management continues.

E-letters can be sent to the administration and members of Congress by visiting KeepAmericanFishing.org. The future of fishing is in your hands.

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Editor's Note: Phil Morlock is attending Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus functions this week in Washington, DC, but will make himself available for questions, interviews on this. Contact John Mazurkiewicz with Catalyst Marketing for arrangements.