

REPORT

Fishers for Fish Habitat Forum 2011

SURVEY

Question 1-3 & 5 Respondents were asked four basic questions: their gender, their age (according to age class), how often they go fishing and if they belong to a club.

Results The majority of Forum participants were male (86.5 % versus 13.5 % female) in the age group 45-64 who fish once a month. Nearly a third of participants also fish about once a week (31%). The split between club and non-club members for Forum participants was very close with 56% a member of a club and 44% non-members.

What we learn from this

- The characteristics of Forum participants loosely reflects those found in the 2003 National Recreational and Indigenous Fishing Survey i.e. that there is a predominance of males involved in fishing.
- The age class of Forum participants is generally higher than that found in the wider fishing community (largest age group in the National survey 30-44 years). This age group is a notable absence in respondents and demonstrates that future fish habitat related engagement activities need to support current interested fishers and also target this large age group of recreational fishers.
- The majority of respondents were affiliated to a club which does not reflect the results of the national survey (only 5.6 % in NSW) demonstrating that engagement activities need to target both non-affiliated and club affiliated fishers.

Question 4 Respondents were asked what MOST appealed to them about fishing.

Results

Option	Preferred (%)
Catching a big or exciting fish	9
Catching a fish for eating	12
The thrill of the hunt	12
Being outdoors	19
Practicing techniques and trying out equipment	5
Being in beautiful natural surroundings and watching what's going on	27
Being with mates/family	16

What we learn from this

- For the majority of recreational fishers the enjoyment of the experience of being in the great outdoors and taking pleasure in being surrounded by the natural environment is what most appeals to them about fishing. Catching a big or exciting fish is one of the lowest priorities.
- It could be said fishers are in tune with the natural water environments and will only fish in 'good' habitat areas which they can enjoy and they know may harbour fish as opposed to 'poor' habitat areas which are largely devoid of sportfish.
- These preferences also reflect a survey conducted on Sydney based anglers in 2003 where fishing in an unspoiled natural environment was the highest priority

Question 6 Respondents were asked how they would prefer to access information about fish and fishing, selecting their top 2 preferences from a list.

Results

Option	1 st preference (%)	2 nd preference (%)
Online websites	36.5	21
Online chat or blog	2	2
Book	6	9
Magazine	11.5	21
radio	2	5
Another fishers that I know	21	16
TV shows	11.5	14
Other	9.5	12

What we learn from this

- Most prefer to access information about fish and fishing from online sources, but not necessarily other fishers chatting online.
- Interestingly, obtaining information from other fishers that they know i.e. from a source that they trust, is the second most preferred option.
- Printed material in magazines is the third highest overall preference.

Question 7 & 8 Respondents were asked if they access government websites for information on fish, fishing and habitat and if they did so, how useful they found these sites.

Results 48 % access Government sites for information fish species, 40 % access the sites for information on fishing and 40 % for information on habitat.

Of those who access these sites, 40 % find them very useful, 21 % find them somewhat useful and 36 % find them sometimes useful depending what they are looking for. The remaining 2 % were not bothered!

What we learn from this

- Nearly half of one of our key target audiences does not access Government websites for information, this may be due to lack of internet access, skills to use the web or disinterest in web-based services.
- Nearly a third found the information provided largely disappointing and perhaps did not find what they were looking for. More work is required to tailor information specifically for this stakeholder group.
- Government departments need to ensure information is accessible and useable for all sectors of the community. Careful attention needs to be paid to the development of web-based resources without forgetting the provision of non-web based material.

Question 9 & 10 Respondents were asked if they read fishing related articles (magazines, newsletters etc) and if they watched fishing shows on TV or listened to on the radio. Respondents were asked to list which ones.

Results 35 respondents (65%) said they read fishing related articles and 29 people (56 % of respondents) said they watched or listened to fishing shows. The 7 most commonly mentioned are listed, in order of popularity with respondents.

Articles (magazines, newsletters etc)	TV/Radio shows
Fishing World	IFish
Freshwater Fishing	Escape with ET
Fly Life	Fishing Australia
Local newspaper	The Big Fish ABC radio
Freshwater Fisher (CFA)	Fishing WA
Fishing Monthly	Rex Hunt
Modern Fishing	The Barefoot Fisherman

What we learn from this

- Over half of respondents enjoy accessing fishing information from the main stream media perhaps from known fishing identities or journalists they relate to or trust.
- Recreational fishers often enjoy the lure of the visual learning experience through 'glossy' magazine articles of TV adventures.
- Providing information in all mediums is important and should be included in any engagement strategy with recreational fishers.

Question 11 Respondents were asked where they would look for information if they wanted to get involved in a fish habitat rehabilitation project.

Results

Option	Preferred (%)
Other fishers that I know	13.7
Ask a question on an on-line chat/discussion	4.9
Search the web in general	11
Government websites	16.6
Ring someone I know/met who has been involved in a project	21.5
Ask amongst family, friends	3.9
Talk to someone in Local Council	14.7
Other	13.7

Other options that were noted included:

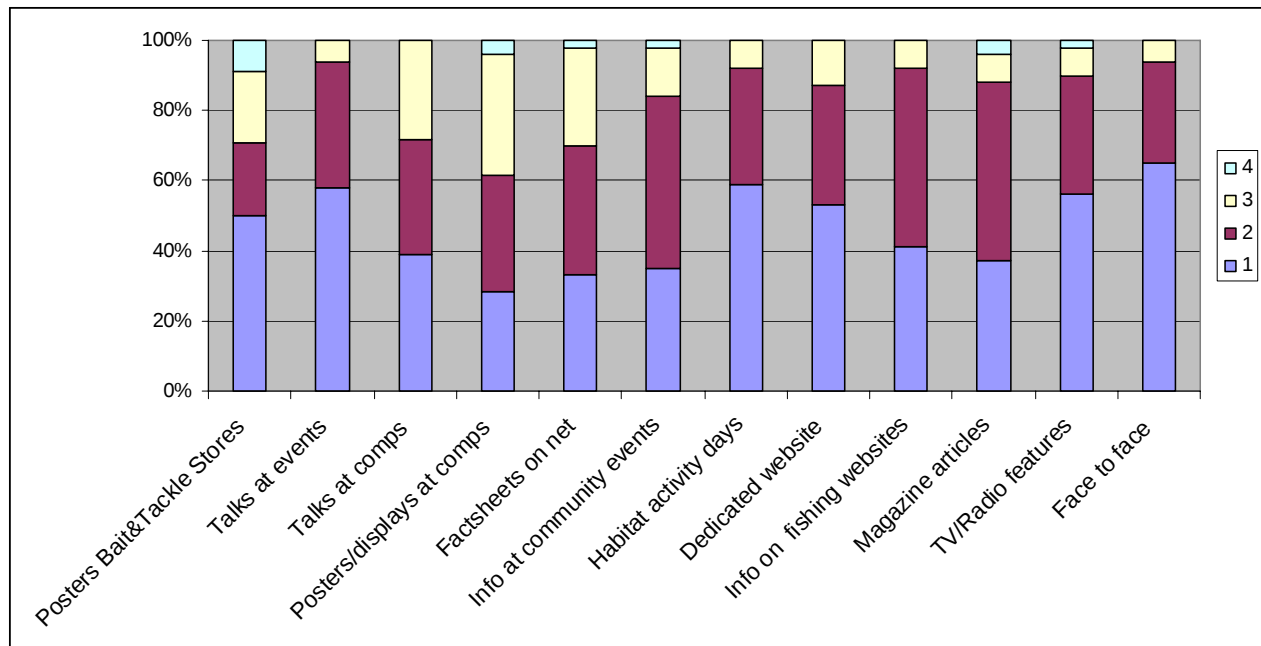
- contacting NSW DPI – fisheries conservation staff
- contacting my local Catchment Management Authority
- contacting local environment groups such as Landcare
- asking within my own fishing club

What we learn from this

- The findings support those in Q6 where accessing information from fellow recreational fishers is shown as a strong preference.
- Recreational fishers are also open and supportive of talking to professionals in government (state or local) who may have the skills and expertise required to answer their query and point them in the right direction.
- Supports the value of face-to-face meetings to initiate relationships and build on networks.

Question 12 Respondents were also asked for their thoughts on a number of options for spreading the message about fish habitat to other recreational fishers in the community. Respondents were asked to say how effective they thought the options could be (1 = great idea, 2 = worth trying, 3 = might work and 4 = waste of time and money)

Results



What we learn from this

- Face-to-face get togethers such as the Fishers for Fish Habitat Forum, were thought to be the most effective means of communication by recreational fishers.
- Talks at fishing club events such as meetings and dedicated fish habitat activity days (eg carp musters, tree planting) were also thought to be a highly effective means of communication. Again, this highlights that options which involve any form of face-to-face interaction are strongly supported.
- Posters and displays at fishing competitions was thought to be the least effective option.
- All options were supported with very few receiving the 'waste of time and money' score. This shows us and those wishing to engage with the recreational fishing sector that all levels and options for communication and engagement need to be explored widely.