



## 8th World Recreational Fishing Conference

### Improving Recreational Fisheries Management: Some Thoughts from the Dismal Science

*Josh Abbott*

*Associate Professor, School of Sustainability, Arizona State University*

Most important questions in recreational fisheries policy amount to questions of allocation. Resource managers may be driven by complex, multidimensional goals (e.g., stock sustainability, enhancing angler welfare, raising revenues), but the means by which these ends are attained always involve the explicit or implicit allocation of scarce fish or fishing opportunities across sectors and between anglers. In this talk, Josh Abbott discusses how the science of the allocation of scarce resources, economics, has been used (and, at times, abused) to inform policy debates in recreational fisheries. To ground his remarks, Josh will draw upon his own recent research in the U.S. Gulf of Mexico red snapper fishery. Using survey evidence gathered from for-hire anglers and vessel owners, Josh will demonstrate how many workaday policies in recreational fishery management “ration” fishery resources in a way that is both economically suspect and arguably unfair. Finally, Josh will present the results of a 2-year “policy experiment” in the same fishery that addresses these criticisms by selectively adapting rights-based approaches utilized in many commercial fisheries to the recreational context.

#### About Joshua Abbott

Joshua Abbott is associate professor of environmental and resource economics in the School of Sustainability at Arizona State University, where he has resided since 2007. He utilizes bioeconomic modeling and econometric methods to help foster the design and evaluation of economically and ecologically sustainable resource governance systems. He conducts research in a variety of fisheries topics including recreational fishery policy, aquaculture, rights-based management, spatial closures, multispecies fishery management and bycatch, and the valuation of marine species as “natural capital.” He has collaborated extensively with colleagues in government, non-governmental, and international organizations. He is editor in chief of *Marine Resource Economics* and is a co-editor for the *Journal of the Association of Environmental and Resource Economists*. His work has been published in prominent journals in economics, ecology and policy, including the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, *Nature Climate Change*, *Ecological Applications*, *Journal of the Association of Environmental and Resource Economists*, *Journal of Environmental Economics and Management*, *Fish and Fisheries*, and the *Review of Economics and Statistics*.