

No. 77	Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council Liaison	Fred Harris
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MEMORANDUM TO: John Boreman, President
FROM: Fred Harris, Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council
DATE: August 6, 2013

- I. Motion Report – None
- II. Activity Report - I have attended two SPFBPC related meetings in 2013. Our main activities were as follows.

The renewal of the Boating Infrastructure Grant We submitted our recommendations for the 2nd round of FY 13 projects to Director Ashe.

Fisheries Vision We completed a fisheries vision to guide the FWS in developing a new strategic plan for fisheries and other aquatic resources and are submitting it to Director Ashe and Secretary Jewell.

FWS Refuge System Strategic Plan We are reviewing the hunting and fishing section of *Conserving the Future: Wildlife Refuges and the Next Generation*. In particular we are making recommendations regarding actions that will expand and enhance fisheries and the enjoyment of aquatic resources on the National Wildlife Refuge System.

Idle Iron The Council convened a meeting last year attended by government officials, industry representatives and anglers concerning the fate of decommissioned oil and gas platforms (idle iron) in the Gulf of Mexico. Following this meeting the Council made several recommendations to the Director of Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement for modifications to the policy for evaluating proposals to convert obsolete, offshore oil and natural gas production platforms into artificial reefs. In June Director Watson issued an interim policy that included several of the Council's recommendations including the following:

- The allowance for a case-by-case review possible reefing opportunities.
- The elimination of the requirement for a 5-mile buffer between reefing areas.
- The consideration of Special Area Reefing Sites that would allow for reefing in place.
- The allowance of a time extension on removing a structure if a reefing option is being actively pursued.