



**RETURN 'EM
RIGHT**

Return 'Em Right

Gulf States Marine
Fisheries Commission
Commission Business
Meeting

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Goals

- Reduce post-release mortality
- Increase the health of fisheries
- Improve angler experiences

Objectives

- Provide tools and training
- Measure prevalence of use and trends
- Validate mortality rates and effectiveness of release treatments



Studies

- Four collaborative studies to assess impacts of release methods on survival
- Wide geographic range
- High priority reef fish species
- Anticipated completion in 2024



Monitoring

- Gulf At-sea Observer Program
 - Completing 3rd year – FL, AL, MS
 - 1,152 for-hire recreational trips observed
 - Coordinating expansion in LA and TX
- State reef fish validation surveys
 - >3,500 trips surveyed
- Southeast Region Headboat Survey
 - Completing 2nd year
 - 8,955 trips reporting information



Outreach & Education

- Collaboration with FL Sea Grant
- 15-min online training course
- Complimentary descending devices
- Over 38,000 Gulf reef fish anglers
- Publishing the Best Release Practices Manual for Reef Fish

<https://training.returnemright.org/>



Next Steps

- Expand and enhance data collection in Gulf
- Complete research studies
- Finalize at-sea database and build out more
- Follow-up human dimensions survey 2024
- Awareness of best release practices





Questions?