



“According to a recent economic analysis [by E2], the value of this nation’s fishery resources would be nearly three times its current value if Councils dedicated their efforts to rebuilding stocks rather than allowing overfishing to continue.”

-Congressman Nick J. Rahall, Chair, House Natural Resources Committee

Congress Strengthens Fisheries Law

E2’s Fish Economics Report Helps Turn the Tide

Though the silent collapse of our nation’s fisheries had been increasingly well documented for years, powerful members of Congress opposed rules to rebuild those depleted fisheries and end overfishing. E2’s *Fish Economics Report* re-framed the debate and led to a legislative victory that will improve America’s fisheries.

A Bill that’s Good for Fish and Fishermen

In January 2007 the President signed a landmark bill to help protect and restore our nation’s fisheries. The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Reauthorization Act:

- Requires an end to overfishing
- Mandates that science – not politics – dictates how many fish can be caught and calls for a system of accountability to ensure that those limits are not ignored
- Strengthens penalties for illegal fishing in international waters
- Provides incentives for conservation

Situation: A Perilous Decline in Fish Populations

The decline in our fisheries is clear. Independent reports from the Pew Oceans Commission and the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy have documented the pollution, overfishing and habitat destruction that are pushing our oceans toward a silent collapse. Over 1/3 of our nation’s fish stocks are at dangerously low levels.

Strong Opposition to New Regulations

In early 2006 some members of Congress and regulators were pushing to soften protections for U.S. fisheries. They wanted to weaken the requirement to rebuild depleted fish populations, undercut support for marine sanctuaries and bypass standard environmental review procedures.



Turning the Tide on our Nation's Fisheries

E2 Strategy: Fish Economics

In 2005, E2 commissioned a report from independent economists to study the economic impact of rebuilding depleted fish populations. The report showed that by simply enforcing the rebuilding requirements already on the books, fishing would be three times more profitable.

A Visit With Key Members of Congress

Armed with the report, an E2 delegation – including Paul Sellw, whose family had been in the fishing industry for four generations and Lisa Suatoni, co-author of the report – met with key members of Congress and their staffs. Our members made a persuasive economic argument in favor of fisheries restoration.

Battle in the House Committee on Resources

While the Senate passed a strong bill with bi-partisan support, the House debated removing many of the protections the Senate bill embraced. E2 followed up with a campaign of letters and phone calls. In New England, the home of several key House members, E2 held in-district meetings with members and their staffs.

The Result: A Positive Bill

In the waning hours of the 109th Congress, a bill passed that takes a critical step forward in protecting and restoring our nation's oceans. *The E2 Fish Economics Report* was cited by congressional staff and members as evidence of the economic upside to improving management of our fisheries.



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