Julia,

Thanks for the opportunity to comment.

I have been a constant supporter of elimination of discards.

The recreational saltwater registration program gives a teaching opportunity to reduce discards. A few basics of handling and proper release techniques and other pertinent cause and detrimental effects can enlighten novices and old salts. (Specifically release grips, no ragging and appropriate hook sizes.) Ultimately, to obtain the registration you must answer a multiple-choice questionnaire correctly. The correct answers are in the statements above. Repetition each year will increase compliance.

I never understood why we never demanded the commercial fishermen to reduce discards. The easy solution has been to allow culling and discarding. If instead, all targeted species regardless to size must be retained and counted against the quota, it will likely cause reduction of the offload value. Successful fishermen will change the method of operations to eliminate those fish that return lower value, todays discards. Not being a netter, I believe that many tweaks (such as speed, net emptying frequency and mesh size) can be employed to allow the discards to escape. As a commercial hook and line fisherman, I use larger hooks, so I reduce handling the smaller (discard) fish.