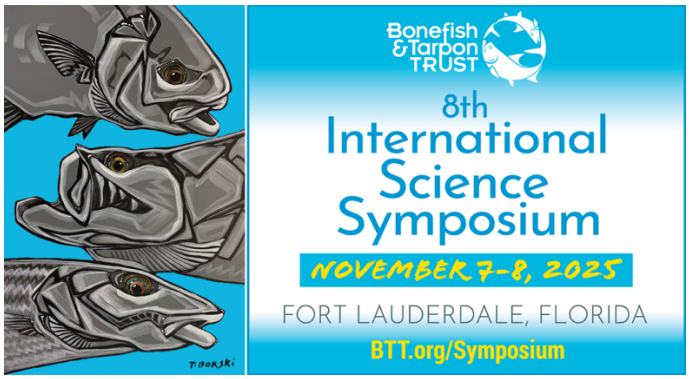


Abstract Title: Mangrove Restoration as a Case Study to Examine the Connections Between Science, Education and Policy Work for a Wholistic Approach to Flats Conservation in the Bahamas

Nina Sanchez

Abstract:

Bonefish & Tarpon Trust's work in the Bahamas balances the use of scientific research, outreach and education, and policy advocacy to preserve and protect the Bahamian flats fishery. Although the Bahamas is known internationally as one of the top bonefish destinations in the world, and the bonefish fishery generates over $169 million annually, many Bahamians have not had the opportunity to explore and learn about these ecosystems and their inhabitants. Noting that in the Bahamas, themes such as geography and city life play a role in people's relationship with the flats fishery. BTTs work in the Bahamas aims to strategically address these gaps using science, policy, education, and advocacy to engage and empower communities. Often, science, education, and policy work are divided into three distinct categories that can often overlook the ways that they are interconnected. Shifting away from thinking of these themes in silos allows for a more wholistic approach to flats conversation. BTT's Bahamas Outreach & Education program goal is to create a more informed and empowered society that supports the recreational bonefish fishery as a sustainable industry in The Bahamas. Scientific research plays a role in the nexus of science, education, and policy, as the actionable knowledge found through quality scientific research feeds into the outreach & education program and policy efforts when advocating for legislative protection of flats habitat. Habitat restoration programs, such as mangrove restoration, display how restoration activities fueled by science can be used as an education tool to empower communities to take responsibility and ownership of their marine environments. Using case studies such as mangrove restoration to examine these connections between science, education and policy has allowed for effective conservation action in the flats fishery in the Bahamas.

Format preference: Oral

Presenter: Nina Sanchez