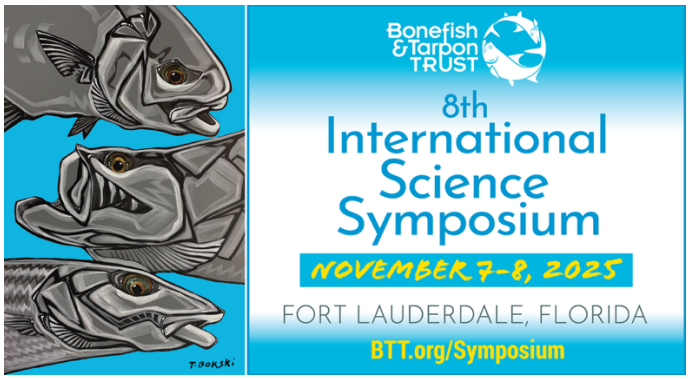


Abstract: Landscape and Sport Fish Conservation Connections from Around the Caribbean and Mexico

Michael K. Steinberg 1, Jordan Cissell 2, Sophie Williams 3, Kaitlyn Via 4

1 Department of Geography and the Environment, University of Alabama, Box 870322 Tuscaloosa, AL 35401, mksteinberg@ua.edu

2 Department of Geography and Sociology, Samford University, 800 Lakeshore Dr

Homewood, Alabama 35229

3 Researcher, University of Alabama 201 7th Ave, Tuscaloosa, Alabama 35487

4 Department of Biology and Marine Science, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa Alabama 35487

As has been documented by past Bonefish and Tarpon Trust research in Florida, there is a direct and strong connection between the health and resiliency of our sport fish and general coastal ecosystems with terrestrial landscape or watershed use. Florida is in many ways a severe example because of the intense development pressures and resulting wide-scale land use and water quality changes, but it is a harbinger for other locations undergoing rapid development and the importance of the links between the two worlds. This presentation discusses other land-water-sport fish connections in the larger Caribbean and Mexico. These observations are based on field and mapping research during the past 15 years in conjunction with the Bonefish and Tarpon Trust in Belize, Mexico, Cuba and Honduras. The research was specially focused on mangrove and sea grass mapping, but by scaling out this research we can make some important observations about terrestrial-marine connections. This research points to some successes and failures where sport fish resources would be better protected if there was greater connection and planning between land and water resource managers. Some locations are better positioned by simple geography against the impacts of poor watershed management, while other popular and important sport fish seascapes are not. This presentation will highlight the clear links

between sound watershed management and long-term sport fish population resilience using a case study approach.

Format: Oral presentation

Presenter: Michael K. Steinberg