Program Criteria

- Comply with Applicable Laws and Regulations
- Follow Established Policies, Recommendations, and Guidelines for Responsible Angling
- Voluntarily Exceed Standards Specified by Law, Policies, and Guidelines to Promote Responsible Stewardship of Fisheries Resources
- Participate in Trainings
- Conduct an Onboard Educational Briefing
- Provide Outreach and Education Materials
- Promote the Blue Star Fishing Guide Program
- Participate in at Least One Conservation-Related Activity per Year
- Require Captains and Mates to Attend a Continuing Education Opportunity Once per Year
Periodic Evaluations and Trainings

Initial Evaluation

- Training workshop is available online
- Training is comprehensive and include aspects of inshore, offshore, and flats fishing, best practices, and information about different habitats and wildlife within FKNMS
- Once training is complete, Blue Star coordinator evaluates and certifies the operator

Annual Evaluation

- Refresher training will be available online
- Annual evaluation will be conducted through: in-person or online client evaluations, secret shopper-style evaluations, or prearranged, voluntary ride alongs.
Incentives to Participate

- Recognition of participating guides by NOAA
- Receive educational materials for clients
- Networking with other guides, agencies, advisory council
- Marketing opportunities through articles, radio shows, outreach, website promotion, etc
Looking Ahead - Next Steps

- Community working group creates recommendations to agency to develop Blue Star Fishing Guides
- Secure funding sources for initial program year
- Agency staff finalize program framework, create outreach materials, begin marketing the program

- Recruit, certify, and recognize participants
- Adapt program as necessary for following program years
Recognized Charters

Forever Young Charter Company
Islamorada, FL

First Choice Charters
Islamorada, FL

More than 15 operators have begun process to recognition
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