

FISHING *FOR* BETTER *RESOURCES*

HOW GIVING BACK TO THE OCEANS HELPS
FISH, ANGLERS AND INDUSTRY

BY LENNY RUDOW

When anglers buy cool new tackle and accessories, or shop for a dream boat and outboard engine, they usually focus more on a brand's quality, value and functionality rather than philanthropy and community service. Yet, some marine-industry companies choose to lead by example — stand out by standing up — and identify their brand with good works and a social conscience.

Indeed, companies in all industries give money to worthy projects. But some stand taller than the norm. I found more than a dozen marine businesses whose efforts go above and beyond the call to contribute to our fisheries and our fishermen in ways that exceed self-serving interests. Because of space limitations, I could highlight only five (listed alphabetically). Here's what they do for our sport.

CARLO GIAMBARRESI



GRADY-WHITE BOATS

Greenville, North Carolina

Grady-White ranks among the most successful saltwater-fishing-boat builders in the nation, as well as among the most philanthropic. Like many companies, it donates money to causes that affect fisheries, but it goes far beyond merely stroking checks.

For instance, Grady sponsors the Dolphinfinh Research Program — a project that teaches anglers how to tag and report dolphin catches throughout the East Coast, Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean to improve knowledge about the popular species. But the company also takes measures to encourage Grady boat owners to tag the fish.

Grady-White also supports the Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation; Grady vice president of sales Joey Weller sits on the board of directors.

“The RBBF works hard to increase participation in recreational boating and fishing through cooperation with the marine industry and our government,” Weller says. “I’m very proud to be a part of this effort, and the result is creating more opportunities for families to enjoy all the amazing aquatic natural resources offered in the United States. Many on the Grady-White team have contributed or are currently contributing to help conserve and protect these resources in a variety of ways.”

As is often the case, the company ethic trickles down from its leadership. “The conservation of our fisheries resources for the generations to come is of upmost importance to all of us,” says owner Eddie Smith Jr. “We’re happy to have been able to play even a small role in that effort.”

Because Smith — and by extension, the entire Grady-White team — has always respected the environment and understood that outdoor recreation is a gift to be protected for the future, Grady says it will continue to be a steadfast advocate for, and contributor to, fisheries conservation, education and waterways management. The company’s core belief is that it’s an investment in enriching the lives of employees, customers, suppliers and the community as a whole.

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Grady-White Boats sponsors the Dolphinfinh Research Program, which studies this popular game fish species’ migrations and habits throughout the western Atlantic Ocean, Caribbean Sea and Gulf of Mexico.