



**ICAST 2011 State of the Industry Breakfast
Board of Directors and President and CEO's Remarks
Las Vegas Convention Center
July 13, 2011**

Jeff Marble, ASA Chairman of the Board, CEO, Frabill, Inc.

GOOD MORNING, everyone.

It's my pleasure to welcome you to Las Vegas for the 54th International Convention of Allied Sportfishing Trades, better known as ICAST. I'm Jeff Marble, CEO of Frabill and the current Chairman of the Board for the American Sportfishing Association.

This is my first ICAST as board chairman and I'm honored to kick off this year's Industry Breakfast where we'll talk about what's going on in our industry and the actions that ASA, OUR trade association, is taking on OUR behalf to help ensure our business future including an update on KeepAmericaFishing and our membership efforts. We'll also hear about some of the innovative efforts that the Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation is using to get more people engaged in fishing and boating.

Our guest speaker this morning is Michael Colopy, a world-recognized expert in global trade, particularly China.

There are a number of you in the room who will remember Michael when he spoke during the Sportfishing Summit several years ago. Like many of you, my business takes me to China several times a year. And, like you, I am always interested in learning more about this ever-evolving trade and business partner. Michael, thank you for being with us this morning.

Like global trade, there are some challenges our industry is facing that are frankly bigger than us. Clearly the US economy is still seeking equilibrium and everyone is grappling with a consumer mindset that is vastly different than it was even just five years ago. We are all experiencing firsthand just how uneven – and protracted - this recovery continues to be. But the economy is bigger than us.

All we can do is manage our businesses prudently, take advantage of the opportunities that rise before us and prepare for the future. Last year, the unprecedented oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico and its impact on recreational fishing was a major topic of conversation and concern as we met for ICAST 2010.

I clearly remember the clapping and cheering on the show floor when Ray Scott announced that the gusher had finally been capped. The economic impact of that disaster went well into the tens of billions and fishing was particularly hard hit.

And while our industry did our part, this too was bigger than us and something we needed to manage through. But for now, I'd like to ask you to set aside those problems and focus on what we CAN do and one of those things is producing a successful trade show.

ICAST is the world's largest sportfishing trade show. Even with an expanded show floor, coming into the show we had an exhibitor wait list.

We are clearly defying the downward trend other trade shows are experiencing as ICAST continues to grow in size and attendance. In terms of attendance, this year's show looks to be every bit as strong with registered buyers and media on track - and even outpacing - the 2009 and 2010 shows.

And we plan to keep it that way. Next year we return to Orlando and the following year, in 2013, we'll be back in Las Vegas. I want to thank the Show Committee and the ASA staff for all the hard work they put into producing ICAST. Leading the effort on behalf of the membership is Show Committee Chairman Dave Bulthuis from Costa and from the ASA staff is Maria del Valle Hamilton. Let's give them a hand!

But ASA's business is so much more than just producing a trade show. Years back there was concern over the decline of fishing participation. ASA led the effort to pass the legislation that created the Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation with its own funding stream to get more people on the water.

At Frabill, there are a lot of things I can do to position our products for the marketplace but I have limited control over the health of our nation's fisheries and access to fishing. A strong resource and open access to fishing will do more to enhance our business than any promotion or new product launch we initiate. ASA has long been our lobbying force at the federal level in Washington, and does a great job protecting our business interests with a limited amount of funding. But now the challenge is rising exponentially. We have more battles to fight at the federal, state and local level than we have the resources to go into combat. ASA's board has responded to the challenges but the momentum continues to build.

We simply don't have the resources to successfully intervene on every front. What we needed was help. We needed to tap into the collective strength of the tens of millions of anglers in this country who want to keep America fishing.

Last year, during the Industry Breakfast, we launched a national angler advocacy and fundraising effort to mobilize the 'silent majority' of our nation's 60 million anglers and begin turning them into an organized force of voices and votes that can provide the muscle behind our government affairs efforts and provide a source of funding. And that, my friends, is KeepAmericaFishing.

At Frabill, we are actively engaged in raising awareness of KeepAmericaFishing. We've placed the FISH logo on our bait buckets and we're placing a KeepAmericaFishing hangtag on thousands of landing nets that will hit the market in the coming year.

ASA's President and CEO Mike Nussman is going to tell us more about KeepAmericaFishing in his remarks. But I am asking each and every one of you here today to pledge your support for KeepAmericaFishing. I'd like everyone to take it one step further.

Ladies and gentleman, for 78 years ASA has been watching out for our best interests. This is OUR trade association, directed by us. It's up to US to be vigilant, united and mobilized in identifying and combating efforts that jeopardize recreational fishing and our industry. An informed and active ASA membership gives us our best chance to meet the challenges ahead. Your attendance at ICAST and this breakfast demonstrates that you are interested in what is happening at ASA and the industry.

Get involved! Join us in our passion to ensure our industry thrives and prospers for another 78 years. Together we can make a difference in the future of fishing!!! We can Keep America Fishing. Thank you for your time and attention.

At this time I'm going to turn the podium over to Mike Nussman.

Mike Nussman, President and CEO, American Sportfishing Association

Thank you, Jeff, and good morning. Let me echo Jeff's opening remarks and say it's my pleasure to welcome you to Las Vegas and ICAST 2011. As Jeff noted, we've got a strong show floor and solid attendance from buyers and media alike.

You know, our uneven economy tells us that you have to be smart about where and how you do business; and you're telling us that once again ICAST is a smart place to be! We've got a lot to fit into our program this morning, but before I go on, I'd like Chairman Jeff Marble and our Board of

Directors to stand and be recognized for their dedication and for their support of the American Sportfishing Association.

Another person I'd like to note is long-time outdoor journalist and conservation writer Frank Sargeant. Last night during the New Product Showcase Reception, the Professional Outdoor Media Association and ASA awarded Frank the 2011 Homer Circle Fishing Communicator Award for his life-long dedication to our sport.

Please join me in a round of applause. Congratulations, Frank.

Each year as we get close to ICAST, I think about how I would like to frame my remarks for this Breakfast.

This year I kept thinking back to past Summit speaker David Martin. You remember Mr. Martin headed the firm that created the "Virginia is for Lovers" campaign. At our business meeting several years ago, I listened as David talked about branding. He used the shortest, clearest definition of brand that I had ever heard and I've remembered it ever since.

He said that a "brand" is "an expectation of performance." So that got me thinking....what does the ASA brand stand for? What is your expectation of our performance?

Certainly, you have an expectation that your association will look out for your best business interests. That ASA will be there to help ensure that there are healthy fish and clean waters, places to fish and people who want to enjoy the sport.

You have an expectation that we will provide information and opportunities that help you manage and grow your business. You have an expectation that we are clearly communicating the importance of being an ASA member and extending that invitation to everyone in the industry.

And you have an expectation that ICAST will be a productive and beneficial investment, that the show will run smoothly, and that ASA staff will be here to ensure that.

But before I discuss how we are striving to meet your expectations, I have a special announcement I'd like to make. Over the past 17 years, there is one person who has continually strived to meet – and exceed – your expectations for a successful trade show.

Certainly, I've come to rely on her good judgment and common sense. But, as we all know, the only thing constant in life is change.

So, after 17 years of dedicated service, ICAST Director Maria Hamilton will take off her ICAST hat after this show and embark on her next exciting life adventure.

Her husband has been assigned a position in the Middle East and she is accompanying him there. Maria, would you please come up on the stage. Ladies and gentlemen, would you please join me in recognizing someone who embodies excellence. Maria...

Thank you, Maria.

I'd like to go back to my opening statement about expectation of performance. One of the most crucial areas in which we look out for your business interests is in Government Affairs.

Here, we have long argued for better federal fisheries management. But exactly what does that mean...better fishery management?? Well, as you all know, good business management requires a constant, measurable evaluation of business processes to ensure that work is progressing to achieve set goals.

In addition, management decisions must be made on the basis of reasonable data, rather than guesswork. Unfortunately, these same standards have long been missing from the way our federal marine fisheries are managed.

Legislation was recently introduced in the House, and soon in the Senate, to address this issue. This bill will inject balance and commonsense in federal marine fisheries management where arbitrary deadlines are being allowed to trump good science.

Another area where we've been working to improve our effectiveness is in industry data. I'm inviting you to join other ASA members in a members-only service that will allow you to compare your company's performance to industry averages.

In partnership with Southwick Associates, ASA has launched a monthly survey for companies such as yours to report changes in tackle sales. At the end of each month, Southwick collects and analyzes this confidential information.

Companies that participate then receive the analysis with which they can compare their own specific data. Because of the confidential nature of this survey, no company sees another company's data, only the broader aggregated data.

We currently have nearly 20 companies participating and obviously, the more companies that participate, the better the data will be. Rob Southwick will be around the ASA booth for much of the show if you would like to discuss this initiative.

You also have an expectation that we are clearly communicating the importance of being an ASA member and extending a membership invitation to the broader industry. Membership Committee Chairman Ken Hammond and Board of Directors Vice Chairman Gregg Wollner are spearheading our member recruitment effort which we are debuting here today.

Please turn your attention to the screen.

We're very excited about this new campaign.

Ken and Gregg, thank you for making it your personal mission to engage the sportfishing community in ASA. You'll all be hearing a lot more about this as the year progresses.

Which brings me to another important topic – participation in our sport. Twelve years ago, ASA spearheaded legislation that established the Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation with dedicated funding to get more people fishing and boating.

RBFF's president and CEO Frank Peterson and his friend – the AI Bassador – are going to provide us an update.

Frank, take it away... Thank you Frank.

I think you can all see the progress we're making in promoting our sport. But we all know there are more challenges out there.

Whether it's the State of California trying to ban recreational fishing from their coastal waters, which by the way we're suing them over, or the challenges brought by invasive species like Asian carp in the Great Lakes or even the National Park Service closing angler access to surf fishing along North Carolina's Outer Banks, we know that if our public waters are going to remain open and healthy for recreational fishing, the industry **and** anglers alike need to tell public officials that recreational fishing must be a federal, state and local priority.

During last year's Industry Breakfast, I announced our plan to unite and give voice to our nation's 60 million anglers through KeepAmericaFishing. Today, I'm proud to report on the progress we've made over the past 12 months.

Our first priority was to build a powerful community of anglers. We all know it's a numbers game in Washington and in state legislatures around the country.

When our government affairs team is fighting the good fight to keep our waters open and healthy, they are always asked "How many voters do you represent?"

To give our Government Affairs team the tools to affect change, we need anglers from around the country to stand up and to tell policy makers what's important to them. And, when legislators or agencies such as the EPA are flooded with 45,000 emails about a proposed ban on lead fishing tackle, believe me, they stop and listen.

And we did just that.

Since last July, KeepAmericaFishing's database has grown from under 20,000 anglers to over 450,000 salt water and fresh water fishermen. And they're an avid bunch as well, with more than 80 percent saying they fish more than 30 days a year.

Our next priority was to educate and empower anglers about the challenges facing their ability to fish. During last year's Sportfishing Summit, we launched an updated KeepAmericaFishing website that is now the hub of our angler advocacy efforts.

Over 30,000 anglers visit the website each month, up from 5,000 this time last year. Our third priority was to ask anglers to contribute financially to our efforts. Let's be honest. One of the main reasons we launched KeepAmericaFishing was to generate the additional money we need to address the growing number of threats to ban or restrict recreational fishing.

This past January, KeepAmericaFishing launched its first fundraising campaign and I'm happy to report that anglers are contributing to our cause in many ways. They are going online to donate their hard earned dollars to our efforts.

They are inviting fellow anglers to visit our website and learn more. And they're buying our FISH! decals to show their support and help spread the word.

But this association could not and did not do this alone. Many of you contributed to the launch and success of KeepAmericaFishing. Each company listed on the screen has made supporting KeepAmericaFishing a priority for their business.

My thanks go to everyone who is doing their part. If you're not involved, get involved. Get your business involved. Every angler - novice and avid alike - need to know about KeepAmericaFishing. We need your help!!

Another challenge that has captured our attention is the emergence of China on the world stage and the many changes that are taking place there today. In fact, this issue has been the focus of several sessions at past ASA summits.

Some of us have had the pleasure to meet and listen to the thoughts of Michael Colopy at one of these events. Since we both spend time in Washington, I've gotten to know Michael a bit and find his thoughts on foreign affairs to always be fascinating. He has advised our government on these issues as well as a number of corporate clients, including GE and Bell South. He possesses a wealth of knowledge on world events and, in particular, on China's cultural and business climate.

This morning, he'll speak to us on how these matters are impacting the global economy and our industry.

Please welcome Michael Colopy.

Jeff Marble

Michael, thank you very much for being here this morning.

I'm looking forward to hearing much more during the October Sportfishing Summit. Folks, please reserve October 12-14, and attend our Industry Summit this coming October in New Orleans. Last years' Summit proved to be extremely insightful to all who attended and this year will be even better.

It's also my pleasure to invite all of you to this evening's "Chairman's Industry Awards Reception" which is hosted by Frabill. This is where we'll announce the Best of Show honors in the New Product Showcase competition. The party starts at 6:00 in this room and everyone is invited.

There's a lot going on at ICAST and in our industry. If you'd like to better understand what your trade association is doing for you, stop by the ASA Resource Center at Booth 1727. If you want to learn more about Keep America Fishing come to the seminar this morning at 11:00 a.m. in room N260.

In conclusion, I challenge all of us to not simply observe what ASA is doing but to get involved. Thanks everyone! Go have a great show!