

Kinsey Fikes

North American Association of Fisheries Economists Forum

La Jolla, California | March 24th – 27th

NAAFE Conference Travel Report

In March of 2025 I had the pleasure of attending the North American Association of Fisheries Economists Forum, to present a research project I have been working on with Dr. Brenna Jungers through the CALS/ MAFES Undergraduate Research Scholars Program. This presentation, entitled *Understanding Barriers to Participation in Recreational Harvest Incentive Programs for Invasive Species Control*, allowed me my first opportunity to present information in an academic setting, answer questions about our research, and call for suggestions on avenues to further our project. This opportunity to share something that I have worked tirelessly on allowed me to gain confidence in myself and the work that I have done, and to be able to communicate this information with such knowledgeable individuals meant a great deal to me.

While attending this conference, I had the opportunity to hear presentations from researchers and students from all over the world, learn more about pressing issues within the fisheries economics space, and connect with mentors. I had the opportunity to attend several sessions that I found interesting for future research, including talks about topics like the blue economy, network topology, the oceans response to climate change and bioeconomic modeling. While at the conference I was also paired with a mentor, who had valuable insight on potential career and graduate school options and was able to introduce me to professors from several graduate programs around the country. Overall, attending NAAFE was a wonderful experience, a great chance to explore what opportunities are available in the fisheries economics world and

incredibly valuable as I consider graduate programs. I am greatly appreciative of the Shackouls Honors College for allowing me this opportunity!