



## **Gilbert C. Radonski**

Gilbert C. Radonski has profoundly impacted fisheries management and careers of fisheries professionals worldwide. Perhaps his most visible accomplishment was critical leadership during the expansion of the Sport Fish Restoration Act. As president of the Sport Fishing Institute, Gil was one of the principal architects of the “SFI Compromise” that shaped the amendment into what is known today as Wallop-Breaux, thereby clearing an impenetrable blockage to the initiative. Then, using his industry network, Gil arranged a key Congressional hearing that had held up advancement of this legislation. Although Wallop-Breaux is a product of a coalition of organizations, Gil’s contributions were critical to the passage that tripled revenues, creating a solid foundation for state fisheries management programs. Countless fisheries professionals can thank Gil who fought for this program that provides revenues for their programs today.

While at the SFI, Gil and the SFI staff worked with many agencies to expand their programs, including the Forest Service’s Rise to the Future program, most Department of the Interior agencies, NOAA, international fisheries commissions as well as writing and championing many pieces of fisheries conservation legislation.

Gil was with the Sport Fishing Institute 1975-1994 (president 1981-1994), Chief Fishery Biologist for Ayerst Laboratories (1967-75), the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation, and private consulting. He has served on numerous boards and commissions, including: Year of the Ocean Foundation; Secretary, Sport Fishing Institute Fund; Living Lakes Foundation; Trustee of the Billfish Foundation; Chairman of the Natural Resources Council of America; Marine Fisheries Advisory Committee; Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council; Board of the National Freshwater Fishing Hall of Fame, and; Charter Member to the Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council. Gil has applied his professional talents worldwide, including as U.S advisor to the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization, the International Convention for

the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas, committee member for the European Inland Fishery Advisory Commission, and contributor to several World Recreational Fisheries Conferences.

Gil has been a member of the American Fisheries Society since 1962, is a Certified Fishery Scientist Emeritus, Fellow with the American Institute of Fishery Research Biologists, Past President of the Northeastern Division of AFS, and has served on numerous AFS committees.

Beyond these extensive broad scale contributions, Gil has contributed to many fisheries professionals' individual careers. Through the SFI Everett Hames endowment, Gil created a program that introduced young professionals to their inaugural positions in fisheries policy and founded the economics program for the sport fishing industry. Many young professionals who Gil recruited advanced to distinguished careers as fisheries professionals. His contributions have been acknowledged through listing among the "National Leaders of American Conservation."

Gil holds a Bachelor of Science in Fish and Wildlife Management from the University of Minnesota (1960). He resides with his wife Gail in Cape Carteret, NC. and has two children, Karen and Jeff.

Elected into the NATIONAL FISHERIES MANAGEMENT HALL of EXCELLENCE, 2015 Executive Committee, Fisheries Management Section, American Fisheries Society