



NEWSCAST

The Newsletter of the Marine Recreational Information Program

**NOAA
FISHERIES**



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Updates on the Fishing Effort Survey

The **Marine Recreational Information Program**, or **MRIP**, is the state-regional-federal partnership responsible for developing, improving, and implementing surveys that measure how many trips saltwater anglers take, and how many fish they catch. This vital information – combined with other data, such as commercial catch and biological research – enables scientists and managers to assess and maintain sustainable U.S. fish stocks.

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Transitioning to the New Recreational Fishing Effort Survey

For the past year, MRIP has continued a series of studies and benchmarking activities to help ensure a smooth transition from the current [Coastal Household Telephone Survey \(CHTS\)](#) to the new mail-based [Fishing Effort Survey \(FES\)](#), which uses saltwater fishing license and registration information as one source of contact information. We just released two reports that provide updates on our efforts and confirm that we are on track to fully transition to the Fishing Effort Survey by 2018, as outlined in our [three-year Transition Plan](#).

The FES will significantly improve the accuracy of private/rental boat and shore fishing effort estimates on the Atlantic and Gulf coasts.

Results from the [FES Progress](#) and [Calibration Scenarios](#) reports clearly indicate that there is no need to make any changes to our Transition Plan or the corresponding timeline as we shift from using the CHTS to the FES. It's important to note that results from the Calibration Scenarios report will not be used for any science or management purposes, and that the FES only applies to shore and private boat recreational fishing effort for states on the Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico coasts.

The three-year Transition Plan outlines a series of necessary steps and activities, including these reports, needed to ensure a smooth shift to the new survey method, while taking the necessary time and effort to properly incorporate new estimates into the science and management processes. These specific checkpoints provided an opportunity to see if the plan or the timeline needs to be modified.

The FES Progress report details the results from the first full year of a three-year side-by-side CHTS:FES comparison and also provides an update on the status of the shift to the FES. The primary goal of the Calibration Scenarios exercise was to identify any technical complications that could possibly delay the transition to the FES.

We will not fully implement the new survey until we can explain any differences and determine how the new numbers can be used in stock assessments and for catch accounting, slated for 2018. We will continue to provide updates as we transition to the Fishing Effort Survey.