

MRIP Work Group Chairs Conference Call
3/13/2008

The call convened at 10:00AM. The following work group chairs were present: Kathy Knowlton, Linda Barker, Ron Salz, Beverly Sauls. Pres Pate and Rob Andrews were present representing the Operations Team (OT).

1. P. Pate provided an Operations Team update. The MRIP team leads are conducting listening sessions with regional partners (NMFS Regional Offices and Science Centers, State Agencies, Regional Councils). The purpose of the sessions is to identify specific needs for recreational catch and effort data for stock assessment and management. Many of the sessions will also include informal outreach events with industry representatives. The schedule of listening sessions is as follows:

Western Pacific Region – February 4-8
Southeast Region – March 17-19 (St. Petersburg, FL)
Southeast Region II (SAFMC) – March 26 (Charleston, SC)
Northeast Region – April 2 (Providence, RI)
Pacific Region – April 15 or April 22 (Location TBD)
Mid Atlantic Region – May 8 (Alexandria, VA)
Alaska Region – June 16-19 (Juneau, AK and Anchorage, AK)

P. Pate provided an overview of the Western Pacific Region listening session. The session provided valuable feedback from regional partners and highlighted the uniqueness of the region.

2. K. Knowlton provided a summary of the ACCSP Operations Committee meeting (3/11-3/12). During that meeting M. Cahall (ACCSP executive director and OT member) provided an update of MRIP activities. He mentioned that he has not received any updates about MRIP activities since the OT meeting in Santa Cruz in November, and suggested that the program has not delineated a clear strategic plan. K. Knowlton defended the process and Work Group progress in just six months, suggesting that the program is relatively new and will develop a clear strategy as it evolves. R. Andrews suggested that M. Cahall's comments highlight the need for better communication and organization. Hopefully, both will be addressed as the OT develops its progress report / program document (see below).

The Committee also suggested the possibility of ACCSP serving as the repository for the Atlantic Coast angler registry. S. Sauri (DMSWG, Registry Group) is getting Geoff White (DMSWG, ACCSP) involved in the Registry Development Work Group.

3. P. Pate provided an update on the upcoming MRIP schedule. The OT is planning to develop and submit an MRIP progress report / program document to the Executive Steering Committee (ESC) sometime in July. The document will include a description of the MRIP process, a review of OT and working group activities and projects, plans for implementing new survey methodologies and practices, and priorities for the coming

year. The OT would like to hold a meeting sometime in late June or July to review the document and establish new project priorities. Work Group chairs would also be invited to attend this meeting. Upon approval by the ESC, the document will be submitted to the National Research Council (NRC) for review.

4. R. Andrews provided an administrative update. Funding being provided through GulfFIN should be available to spend in early April. R. Andrews will confirm this with Dave Donaldson. The process to procure statistical consultant support is moving forward. NMFS ST has compiled a list of available consultants. R. Andrews will distribute an updated list to WG chairs. A contractor has been secured to provide documentation and data entry support to the DMSWG. Specifically, the contractor will be documenting recreational data collection programs in the Western Pacific Territories. There was discussion about the funding for this position (Note: R. Andrews and K. Knowlton had a follow-up discussion and the issue has been resolved).

5. R. Andrews provided an update about ST's efforts to create an MRIP advisory committee. Advisory committee's to the Federal Government are subject to the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA). We are in the process of formalizing an MRIP advisory committee. ST is hopeful that the committee can be established by late spring or early summer.

6. Work Group Collaboration: Apparent overlap between work group activities recently led to some confusion about work group responsibilities. Specifically, there was confusion about which group should be responsible for documenting for-hire and HMS data collection programs. To ensure consistency, the OT decided that the DMSWG will ultimately be responsible for documenting all data collection programs. In the interim, the FHWG will document for-hire data collection programs to the extent that they need information for their independent review. R. Salz indicated that ST should be able to provide and enter all necessary documentation for HMS data collection programs that are run by ST.

Currently, the DMSWG is documenting all existing "accepted" data collection programs. K. Knowlton will provide a list of these programs to the WG chairs. As the MRIP moves forward, care will need to be taken to ensure that program changes resulting from work group projects are fully documented. The documentation will be the responsibility of the DMSWG, but all work groups will be responsible for communicating project results and resulting changes to the DMSWG. Documenting changes that result from current or future projects may be a future funding priority (future project for the DMSWG).

7. Project Updates:

- DMSWG: Milestones for Project 1 (documentation) have been updated and submitted to R. Andrews. This project will ultimately result in 1) a final report that will be submitted to the OT, and 2) the MRIP Data Management System (MDMS) application. S. Sauri and G. White are working on updating the task list for Project 2 (initiating standards review and developing preliminary requirements document); specifically addressing who's doing the work and how that work will

be funded. The work group determined that a face-to-face meeting is not necessary in the immediate future. C. Hanson is moving forward with preliminary stages of the “sampling protocols” project.

- FHWG: The Work Group is moving forward with its inventory of existing for-hire programs. Draft procedures have been submitted for several regions. B. Sauls requested that L. Barker provide documentation for the MD for-hire logbook program and that R. Andrews and/or T. Sminkey provide documentation for the FHS/MD logbook program integration. Documentation for the existing regional programs will be consolidated into a single document that can be provided to the review panel. T. Sminkey has developed a statement of work (SOW) for the independent review. The SOW has been distributed to the rest of the work group for review. R. Andrews will send the list of potential consultants to B. Sauls. B. Sauls requested that someone from TX be added to the work group. She will provide a recommendation to P. Pate for OT consideration.
- DAWG: 1) Estimation Procedures: A draft of current results has been submitted to the project team for review. Comments are due back by the end of March. Stewart Allen (NMFS Pacific Islands) has joined the project team. 2) License Frames: Project is moving forward. Documentation and preliminary analysis for each of the programs is due by April 1. 3) Night Fishing: The project team has completed a preliminary analysis, which has been submitted to the team for internal review. 4) Discards: Preliminary analysis of Atlantic Coast at-sea headboat interview data is ongoing. Results will be submitted to the project team within the next couple of weeks. Consultants will help identify alternative data collection programs. 5) No update for Guide Fishing and Private Access Fishing projects. L. Barker will follow-up with project team leader.
- HMSWG: 1) FL For-Hire and Private Boat Pilot Studies: Full start-up by May 1 (wave 3). Questionnaires and site registers are being developed. The project team will get a jump-start on the characterization component by implementing an add-on to the for-hire survey beginning next week. 2) SE HMS Characterization: A request for quotes has been submitted to the NMFS Contract’s Office. A request to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for approval to conduct the study, as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA), has been initiated; a Federal Register notice describing the project has been posted, initiating a 60-day public comment period. 3) HMS Tournament Sampling: The project team is adding new members; constituents from NJ and MA have been added. A request to modify an existing PRA approval has been submitted to OMB. 4) Puerto Rico: PRDNER is conducting outreach with industry. An April kick-off meeting is anticipated.

8. WG chairs agreed that the current practice of reporting project progress during conference calls is satisfactory and should continue.

Action Items:

1. WG Chairs: Please send R. Andrews an email indicating which weeks in late June or July that you are available to participate in the OT meeting.

2. R. Andrews will send updated list of consultants to Chairs.
3. R. Andrews will ask Scott Sauri to expand read (and download) privileges on the Collaboration Tool so that all work group members can access all work group directories.
4. K. Knowlton will provide a list of all of the data collection programs that are being included in documentation project.
5. L. Barker will follow-up with Richard Cody to determine status of Private Access and Guide Fishing projects.
6. L. Barker will provide B. Sauls with a description of the MD for-hire logbook program.
7. R. Andrews will provide B. Sauls with a description of the procedures used to integrate MD logbook data into the FHS.