

MRIP Work Group Chairs Conference Call
4/29/2008

The call convened at 10:00AM. The following work group chairs were present: Kathy Knowlton, Ron Salz, Beverly Sauls, Mike Murphy (for Linda Barker). 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 continuing to conduct 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. To date, the group has conducted listening sessions in the Western Pacific Region, the Southeast Region (SERO and SAFMC), the Northeast Region and the Pacific Coast Region. Upcoming listening sessions will be conducted in cooperation with ASMFC (May 8) and the Alaska Region (June 16-20).

The listening sessions have revealed no great surprises. Consistent themes include the need for increased temporal sampling, faster turn-around of estimates, assessment of potential biases associated with exclusion of private access and night fishing and improved discard data. Generally, listening session participants seem to think that MRIP is on the right track and that current projects will address fundamental issues. B. Sauls and K. Knowlton participated in the SERO and SAFMC sessions, respectively, and agreed that the sessions have been well received and appreciated.

2. R. Andrews provided an update on efforts to secure statistical contract support for MRIP projects. Support has been secured for all projects with the exception of the FHWG review. ST1 staff are still trying to identify and secure reviewers for this project. K. Knowlton indicated that the DMSWG may request additional funding to extend contractor support for documenting survey programs in the Western Pacific Territories. R. Andrews asked that the request come through the work group and that it include the rationale for extending the support as well as a list of tasks to be completed.

3. R. Andrews provided an update on efforts to create an MRIP FACA committee. This effort has been delayed pending a discussion at the upcoming Council Coordinating Committee meeting. In the meantime, the following rules apply to non-FACA exempted members (council staff and industry representatives) of MRIP teams and working groups: 1) Individuals are free to offer input but they cannot participate in deliberations if there is disagreement among work group members, 2) Town-hall style meetings are acceptable, but consensus agreement is not, 3) Dissent among work group members should be noted in meeting summaries or minutes.

4. R. Andrews provided an update on the status of Gulf FIN funding. It is anticipated that funds will be available the first week of May.

5. The OT recently received a request to add industry representatives from the Western Pacific Territories to several of the work groups. P. Pate requested feedback about

current industry participation on work groups and/or projects from the work group chairs. The WG chairs unanimously agreed that industry representatives were providing good input into the process, particularly at the project level. None of the chairs objected to adding industry representation from the Western Pacific. However, a suggestion was made that the newly appointed individuals need to make an effort to familiarize themselves with progress to date. That should be easily possible given the documents on the collaboration tool website. P. Pate will move forward with granting the request to add industry representatives from the Western Pacific Territories.

6. K. Knowlton mentioned that she has never heard from one of the industry representatives on the DMSWG and asked if she should continue to include him on WG correspondence. R. Andrews will follow-up with G. Colvin and F. Darby to get their input on this particular individual.

7. Project Updates:

- DMSWG: Project 1 (documentation) has been slightly delayed. The group is hoping to complete data entry by the end of May. Initiation of project 2 is dependent upon completion of project 1. K. Knowlton is still hopeful that project 2 will be completed by November.
- FHWG: The inventory of current for-hire data collection programs is still being produced. Draft sections for most programs have been completed and submitted to the project lead. Several members of the project team were meeting this week in Silver Spring to conduct a comparison between independent data collection programs for head boats in the Southeast Region. Initiation of project 2 (independent review of for-hire data collection programs) is dependent upon the acquisition of consultant support and completion of project 1.
- HMSWG: 1) Tournament Sampling: The project team has completed a kickoff meeting. Two tournament directors have been recruited to participate in the project and the contract for statistical consultant support is being finalized. 2) Puerto Rico HMS: A kickoff meeting was conducted in cooperation with Puerto Rico DNER and fishing industry representatives. The project is waiting for funding through Gulf FIN. 3) Florida Pilot Studies (For-Hire and Private Boat): Dockside and telephone sampling has begun for both studies. 4) SE HMS Characterization: A Request for Quotes to conduct the study was issued on May 1. The project team hopes to initiate data collection in August or September.
- DAWG: 1) Estimation Procedures: Two statistical consultants from Colorado State University have been retained to support this project. The project team will be conducting a kickoff meeting May 13-14 in Silver Spring, MD. 2) Discard Project: Waiting for the availability of consultants support to move project forward. Data needs assessment occurring as party of MRIP Listening Sessions. 3) Coverage Issues (private access and night fishing): The project team has been analyzing existing data in an effort to characterize private access and night fishing. The project leader and project team members from ST1 participated in a

conference call with 2 statistical consultants on May 1. The team is planning to hold a kickoff meeting in late May. 4) License Frames: Documentation for existing programs that use angler license databases as sampling frames has been compiled and distributed among project team. Team has conducted preliminary analyses assessing the quality of sampling frames. The team is trying to arrange a conference call with statistical consultants for the week of May 5-9.

8. The new MRIP website will be launched as soon as it receives final approval from ST.
9. B. Sauls requested an update on the status of the federal angler registry. P. Pate will get an update from G. Colvin, chair of the Registry Team.