

TIMELINE



2005 NOAA Fisheries engages the National Academy of Sciences' Natural Research Council to conduct an independent scientific review of the government's data collection programs related to saltwater sportfishing.

2006 The National Research Council releases its findings, recommending NOAA Fisheries and partnering state agencies dramatically redesign angler surveys to update data collection methods and analyses and foster positive relations with the recreational angling community and other stakeholders.

NOAA Fisheries convenes state and federal fisheries agency leaders, managers, and biologists in Denver, Colorado, to evaluate current data needs and review the National Research Council's findings. NOAA Fisheries is tasked with preparing, in cooperation with states and other partners, a blueprint for redesigning angler surveys by 2008. An executive steering committee is formed shepherd the process.

2007 The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act is reauthorized. The legislation echoes many of the concerns raised by the National Research Council in calling for redesigned angler surveys. It also includes a requirement for NOAA Fisheries to develop a new national saltwater angler registry as a key part of a broader redesign effort.

Teams of experts from NOAA Fisheries, state agencies, regional fisheries councils and commissions, and partner organizations are convened to deal with distinct aspects of the redesign process. Teams are tasked in these focus areas: Data Management and Standards, Design and Analysis, For-Hire Surveys, Highly Migratory Species Surveys, the Saltwater Angler Registry, and Communications. This approach promotes a survey redesign process that is inclusive and transparent.

2008 NOAA Fisheries finalizes a rule, developed by the Saltwater Angler Registry Team and updated based on public comments, outlining the national saltwater angler registry requirements and state exemptions. The Registry is designed to be a national "phone book" of recreational fishermen to be used in conducting surveys on recreational fishing catch and effort. The registry will both improve the efficiency of the survey process and broaden the sample set of anglers interviewed. Fishermen who live in states that already require saltwater fishing licenses and share data with NOAA are exempt from the registry.

A comprehensive implementation plan for MRIP is finalized. In keeping with the collaborative nature of MRIP, the Implementation Plan is developed as a dynamic tool that can be updated in response to emerging science or changing circumstances. To inform the plan's development, NOAA conducts a series of listening sessions with regional partners to learn about their fisheries and data needs.

Information starts coming in from pilot projects developed and launched to evaluate the most effective ways to gather, analyze, and corroborate recreational fishing data. Findings from the pilot projects will be used to inform the ongoing implementation of MRIP.

2009 A series of workshops are planned to share progress on MRIP to date and gather feedback from fishermen, state data partners, managers and other stakeholders.