



NEWSCAST

The Newsletter of the Marine Recreational Information Program

NOAA
FISHERIES



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The Marine Recreational Information Program, or MRIP, is the way NOAA Fisheries is counting and reporting marine recreational catch and effort. It is a customer-driven initiative that not only produces better estimates, but does so through a process grounded in the principles of transparency, accountability and engagement.

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2014 Approved MRIP Projects Announced

The Operations Team has announced their approved projects for the 2014 proposal cycle. Below are the 16 projects that were funded along with brief descriptions of each project.

Greater Atlantic

- **Determining Optimum Sample Sizes for the Atlantic For-Hire and Large Pelagics Telephone Surveys** will examine different sampling strategies to determine sample size requirements and identify optimal sampling allocations for achieving precision requirements in the most cost-effective manner.
- **For-Hire Programs: Inventory, Certification, & Integration Planning** will update the Atlantic coast inventory of for-hire data collection programs. The updated inventory will include clarification of program requirements and data needs to support agency specific objectives, providing background for a workshop to identify opportunities to promote data availability, improve data timeliness, and reduce the reporting burden by integrating the various data collection programs in a statistically valid design.
- **Testing for Measurement Error in a Recreational Fishing Mail Survey** will identify potential measurement error in mail survey designs by quantifying the extent to which respondents provide accurate responses. This validation study will include follow-up telephone interviews with mail survey respondents to ensure that reported information is accurate and that respondents fully understand the survey questions and instructions.
- **Estimating Recreational Fishing Effort from Onsite Survey Data** will evaluate the possibility of using the current Access Point Angler Intercept Survey (APAIS) to estimate effort, develop potential APAIS design improvements for assessing effort, and explore the use of instantaneous angler count data to improve the accuracy of effort estimates generated from offsite surveys (e.g., mail or telephone).
The ultimate goal is to assess the feasibility of enhancing estimates derived from offsite methods with information collected through the APAIS.
- **Simulation Study to Evaluate Alternative Estimators of the Mean Avidity of Marine Recreational Fishing Participants from Access Point Survey Data** is evaluating the relative robustness of both the un-weighted MRFSS APAIS estimator and a new weighted APAIS estimator of angler avidity. The results will be

used to better evaluate possible sources of bias in the MRFSS estimator of angler avidity, as this could be used to produce revised participation estimates for prior years and allow a good evaluation of the magnitude and direction of any bias in the past MRFSS estimates.

- **Additional Large Pelagics Telephone Survey (LPTS) Data Collection to Address Potential Biases with the Large Pelagics Intercept Survey (LPIS)** is increasing sample sizes and expanding catch questions in the LPTS, allowing for more meaningful comparisons of catch rates (and other trip attributes) across different types of fishing activities (e.g., public vs. private access fishing trips). This will result in a better understanding of bias in the LPIS resulting from non-coverage and other potential sources of error.

Southeast

- **Private Recreational Angler Electronic Census Reporting of Red Snapper Catch Data in Alabama** is developing an electronic application which will allow private recreational anglers fishing for red snapper to report their harvest easily and conveniently. This application could provide important information about this rare-event fishery, which is difficult to sample through a general angler intercept survey. In addition to providing a reporting mechanism, the project will develop procedures to validate self-reported landings information and monitor compliance with reporting requirements.
- **For-Hire Electronic Census Reporting of Red Snapper Catch Data in Alabama** aims to develop and implement a mandatory electronic reporting system, whereby representatives of for-hire vessels licensed in Alabama report catches of red snapper after each trip. Similar to the Private Recreational Angler Electronic Census Reporting of Red Snapper Catch Data in Alabama, the proposed reporting system will require significantly less resources to operate and represent a minimum reporting burden to the participant compared to more traditional logbook programs.
- **Implementation of the iSnapper smartphone application to collect data across all recreational sectors in the Gulf of Mexico** is testing the utility of an online application, iSnapper, as a potential supplement to MRIP data and estimates. The project will compare estimates from a panel of anglers who submit data through iSnapper to estimates obtained through the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department creel survey.

West Coast

- **Electronic Data Collection Expansion – Washington** will assess the durability, reliability, efficiency, accuracy, and ease of using electronic mobile devices for conducting angler interviews. Currently being tested in California, this project has modified the data collection application to be Washington-specific and if successful could make the data recording and analyzing process more efficient.
- **A Video Monitoring System to Evaluate Ocean Recreational Fishing Effort in Astoria, Oregon** will install a multi-camera, video monitoring system at three major access sites in the lower

Columbia River estuary to track the number of boats departing from these sites. This new method will be compared to the current on-site boat count for this region to evaluate the accuracy, efficiency, and reliability of the boat counting method for estimating fishing effort.

- **Pacific Coast Fish Identification Application** proposes to design and develop a fish identification application that can be used on mobile devices by samplers and anglers to aid in accurately identifying observed and reported catch. An application like this could decrease the number of "unidentified" classifications of fish caught, as these are unhelpful for management of protected species.
- **Electronic Data Collection for Angler Intercept Surveys: Expand and Extend** is a continuation and expansion of a MRIP project funded in 2012, [*Electronic Data Collection for Angler Intercept Surveys: A Pilot Project*](#), which developed an electronic data collection tool for samplers surveying anglers in California. This new project is focused on making additional enhancements to the pilot project application, and also to create new spin-off versions of the application to be used in all fishing modes (e.g. shore, charter boat, etc.) and by other Pacific coast states.
- **Electronic Data Collection by Groundfish Observers - Pilot Project** will develop and implement the use of electronic data collection by observers of the Oregon recreational groundfish fishery. Using electronic devices, as opposed to paper, could provide a more efficient and accurate (e.g. automatically collecting GPS data while at sea) method of collecting at-sea data used for stock assessments.

Pacific Islands

- **Developing and implementing specialized surveys to document fishing methods and events not adequately addressed by the existing creel survey** will design and conduct a complementary survey to capture pulse/rare event fishery data and fishing methods that are rarely encountered in the current creel survey. Assessing if these methods and fisheries are adequately represented in current data collection designs is a first step in determining if estimates for certain species are accurate.
- **Pilot surveys of shoreline fishing effort for Hawaii Marine Recreational Fishing Survey** is designing and testing a modified creel survey and a mail survey to assess fishing effort on Oahu. The new methods will be conducted simultaneously with the current methods to assess accuracy and efficiency.

For more information on all the Operations Team projects and to monitor their progress, please visit

<https://www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/mdms/public/public.jsp>

In the Next Newscast:

For the second installment of our Effort Survey Series:

*Using license and registration information for sample frames
What's the best way to reach anglers in the digital age?*

Ask MRIP

Do you have questions about MRIP or our surveys? Ask us and we'll answer your question in an upcoming newsletter. If you've got a question about MRIP that you'd like answered, please e-mail Leah Sharpe at Leah.Sharpe@noaa.gov.

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