

*Science, Service, Stewardship*



# MRIP Effort Survey Briefing

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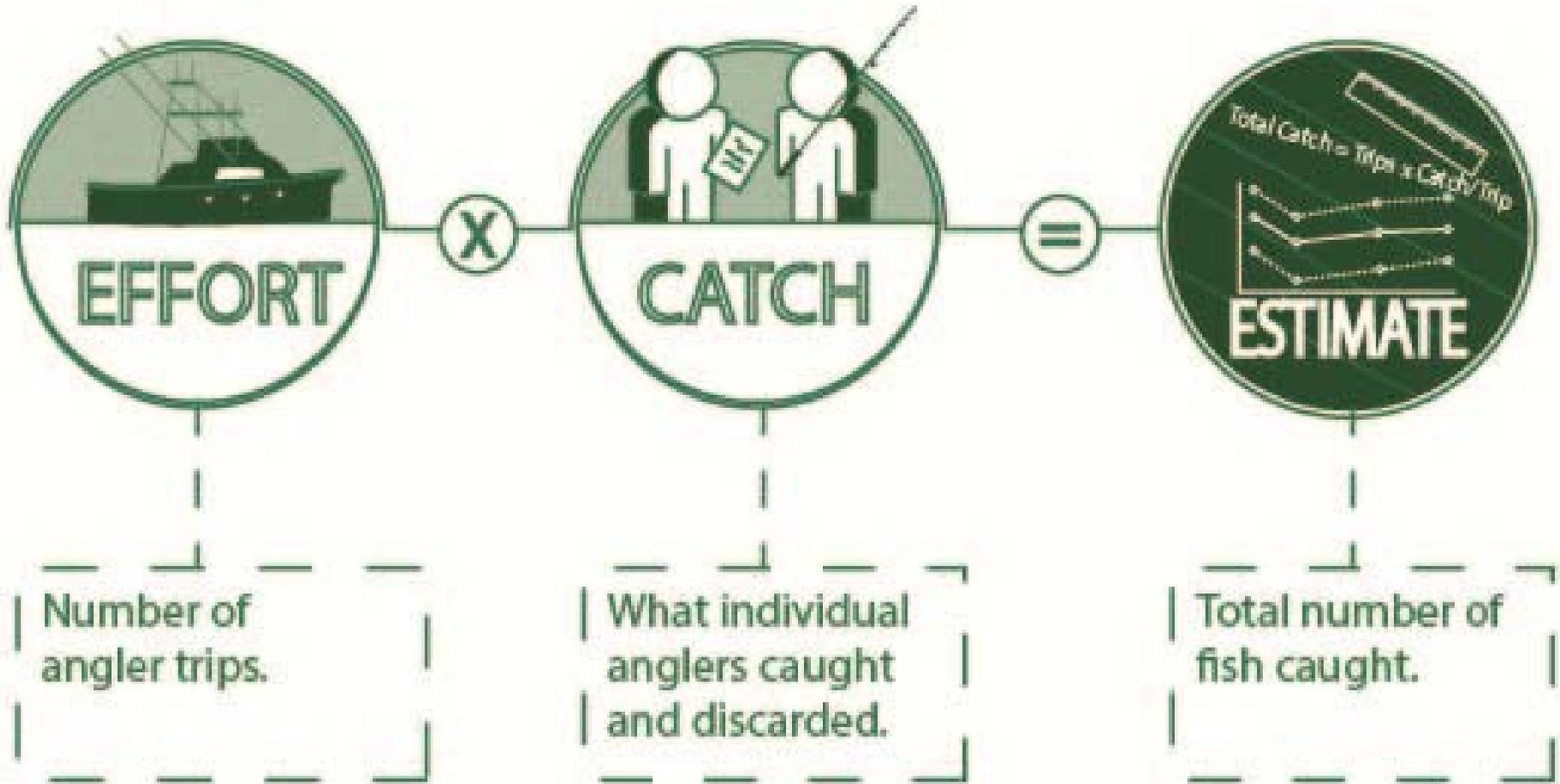
**NOAA  
FISHERIES  
SERVICE**

NOAA

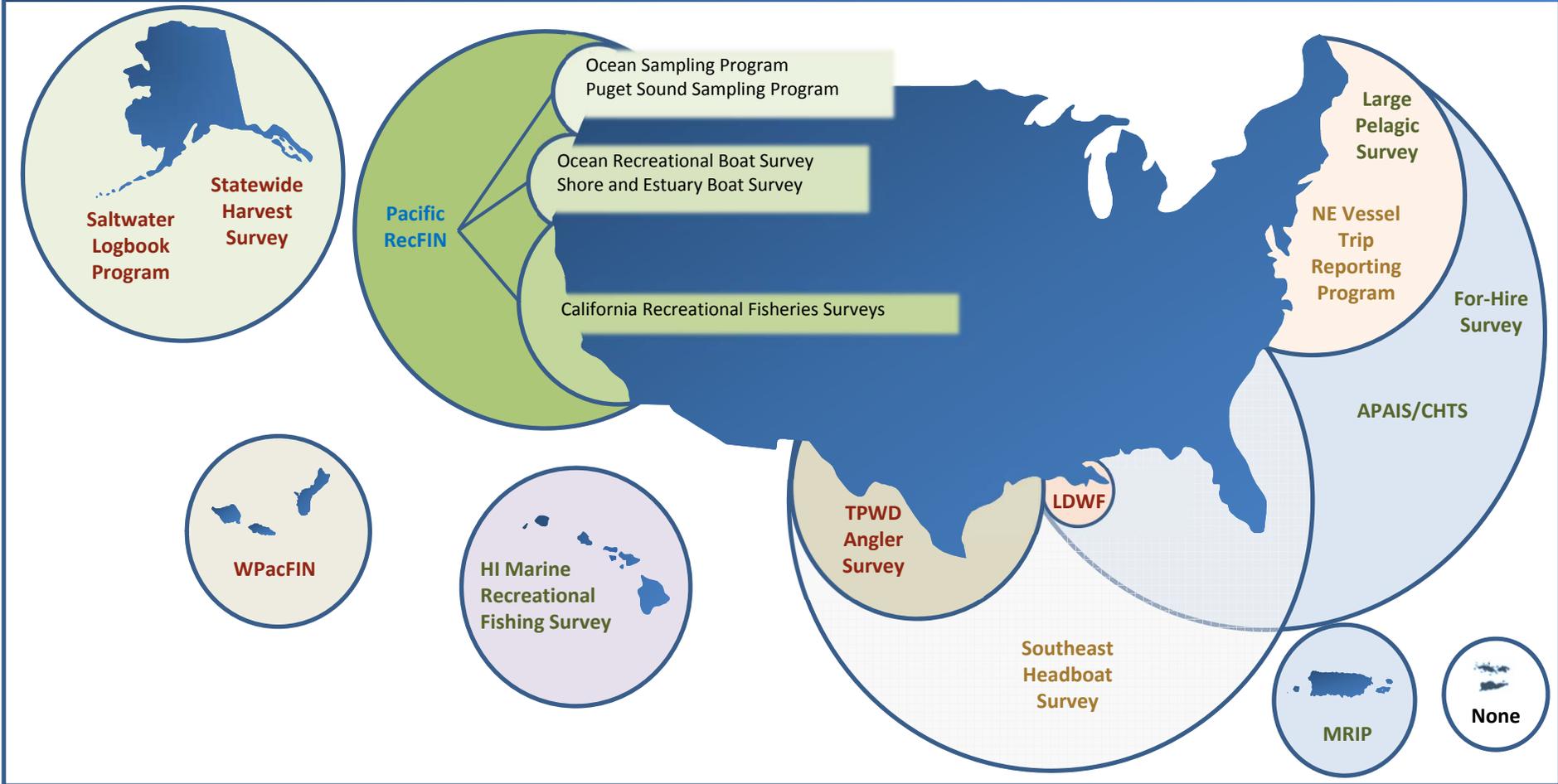
# Key Takeaways

- NOAA Fisheries has released a **draft report** on a new, more accurate, method of surveying recreational anglers on their fishing trips (effort)
- The new survey will result in **higher estimates** of the number of fishing trips
- The new survey will not be implemented for management purposes until we can more fully **explain the differences** between the old and the new estimates and align the new estimates with the historical data series
- A **transition team** with representatives from NOAA Fisheries, Councils, Commissions, and state partners has been formed to design an implementation plan

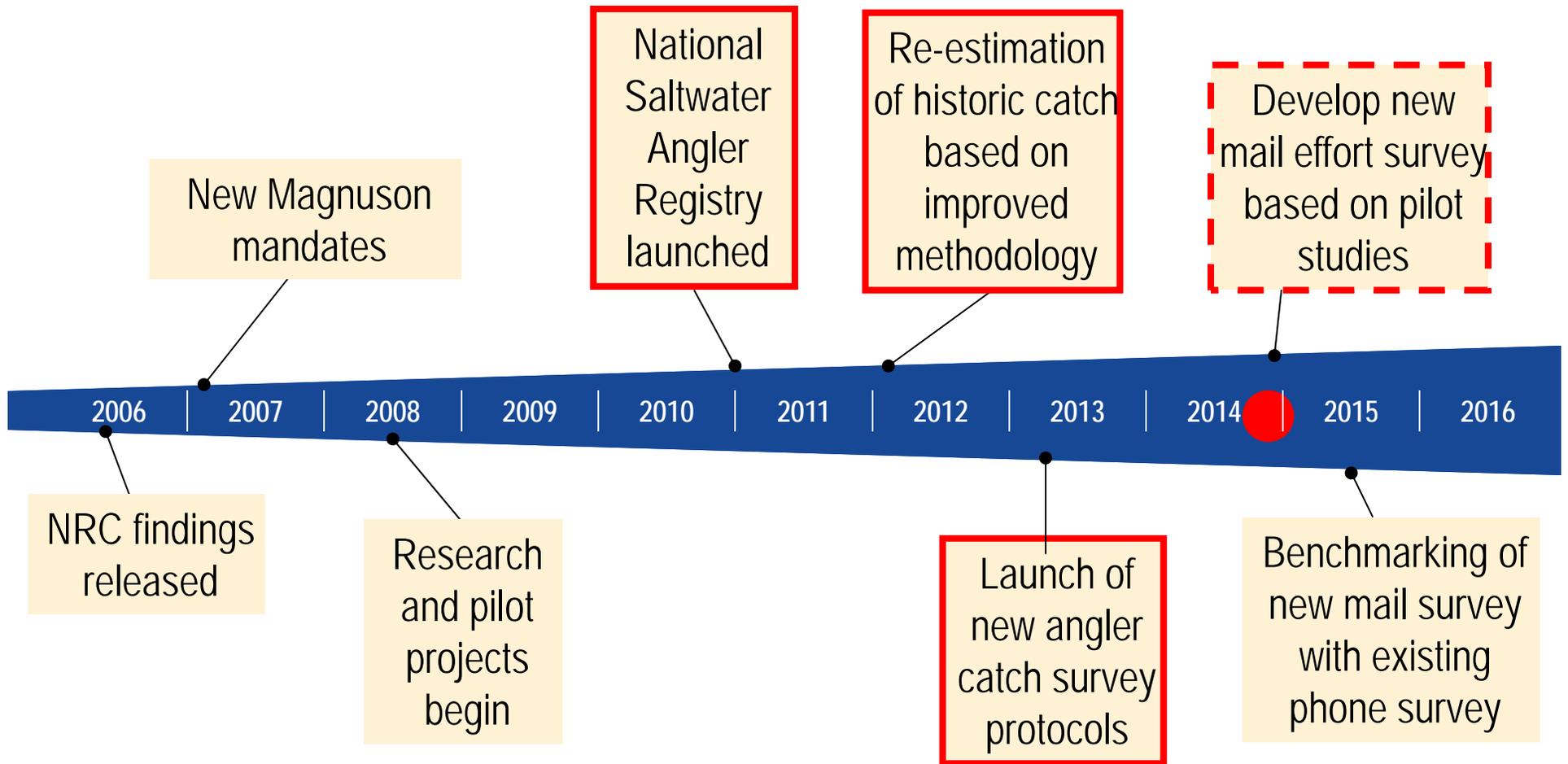
# Estimating Recreational Fishing Activity



# Regional Recreational Angler Data Collection Programs



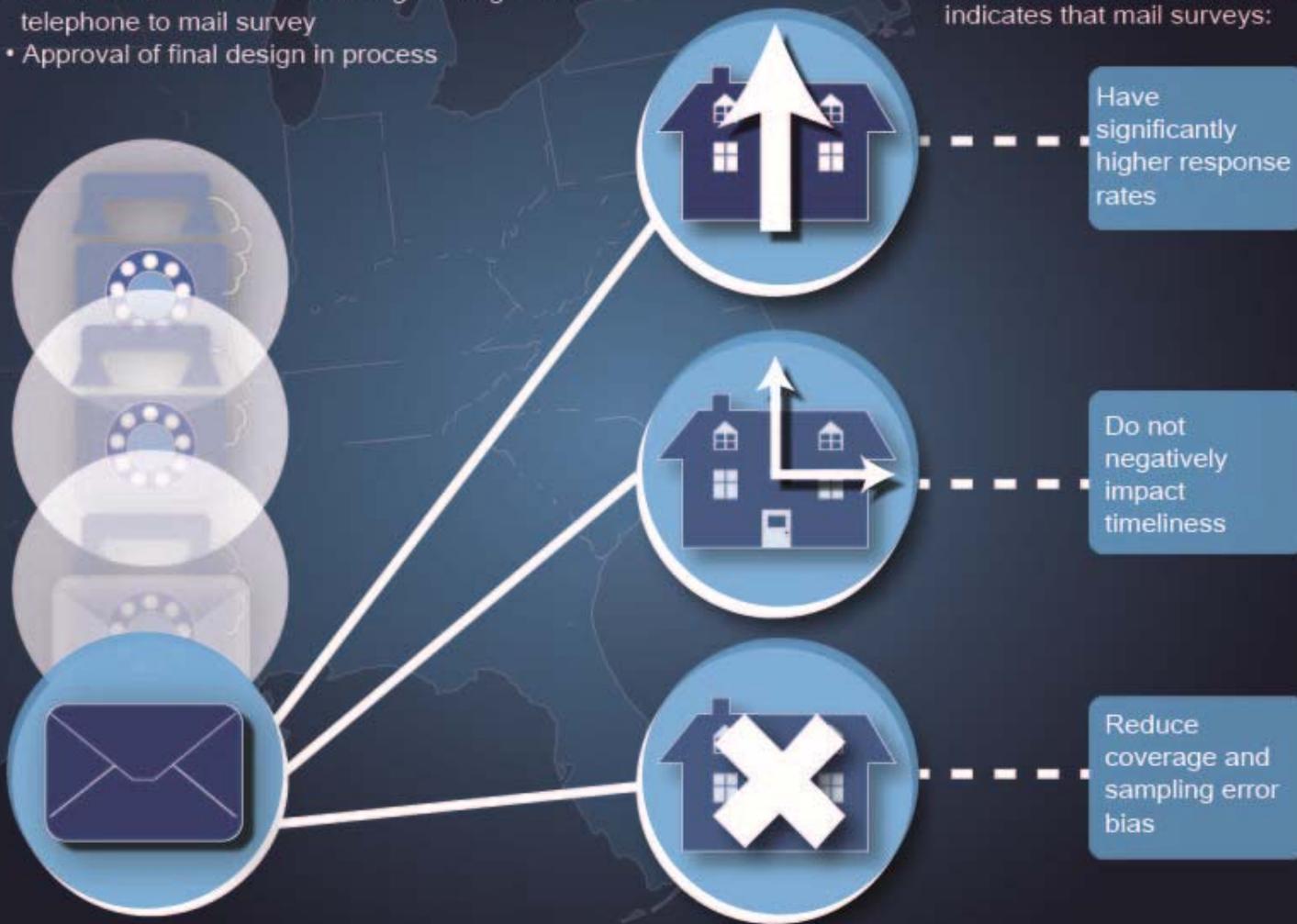
# MRIP Milestones



# New Mail Effort Survey

- Series of pilot studies initiated beginning in 2009
- Recommend fundamental design change from telephone to mail survey
- Approval of final design in process

Extensive pilot testing, validated through independent peer review, indicates that mail surveys:



# New Effort Survey Pilot

- Self-administered mail survey
- Tested in MA, NY, NC, and FL (2012-2013)
- Applicable to shore and private boat modes of fishing only



# New Effort Survey

## Abandons Random-Digit Dialing of Coastal Households

- RDD is an inefficient means of contacting anglers
  - Make numerous calls to households where no fishermen are present
  - Does not reach anglers – including tourists and inland sport fishing enthusiasts – who live in non-coastal counties
- Industry-wide, response rates for telephone surveys are dropping precipitously
- 40% of US households do not have land lines

# New Effort Survey

## Moves Away from Telephone Surveys

- Extensive pilot testing, validated through independent peer review, indicates that:
  - Mail survey response rate (40.4%) nearly 3X greater than telephone survey response rate (14.4%)
  - Do not negatively impact timeliness – results from the mail survey can be delivered on the existing telephone survey schedule
  - Reduce coverage error



# New Effort Survey

## Uses Multiple Databases

- USPS address database covers virtually all persons living in the United States and will be used to randomly sample residents of coastal states
- The National Saltwater Angler Registry will be used to enhance the efficiency surveying coastal state residents and to sample anglers who are not residents of coastal states

# New Effort Survey

## Preliminary Findings

- In the four states covered in the pilot study, mail survey estimates of total effort were 2-6 times higher than Coastal Household Telephone Survey (CHTS) estimates
- This will result in higher catch estimates for all species
- Degree of increase varies between states and fishing modes
- Increase is driven by a higher proportion of households reporting fishing activity, not higher reported trips per household

# New Effort Survey

## Preliminary Findings

- Wireless-only households more likely to report fishing than landline households
- Mail surveys responses are likely more accurate than telephone survey responses
  - More likely that the angler in the home is answering the survey (gatekeeper effect)
  - More time to consider the survey request
- The new design less susceptible to error than CHTS
- The new design is more efficient at reaching anglers than CHTS



# Review Process

- Internal and external peer reviews - complete
  - Very supportive of mail survey design
  - Suggested additional analysis and follow-up studies to further explain the differences between the mail survey and the CHTS
- Scientific quality review by the MRIP Operations Team – in progress
- Next steps:
  - Review by MRIP Executive Steering Committee
  - Review by NMFS Leadership

# Moving Forward

- A common currency is needed for catch monitoring, stock assessments, and ACLs.
  - Catch estimates based on a new survey design will differ from previous survey estimates.
  - Therefore, catches based on a new design should not be the “best available” to compare with existing ACLs that were based on estimates from the old design
  - Differences between new and old survey designs must be evaluated and properly incorporated into stock assessments and the setting of ACLs before new design estimates can be considered available for use in management decisions.
  - Transition planning is needed to ensure that new designs are properly implemented to support effective management.

# Transition Team

- Include representatives from NMFS Science Centers, NMFS Regional Offices, Councils, Commissions, and state partners
- Developing the most appropriate way to shift from the CHTS to the new effort survey, given the potential impact that shifts in catch estimates may have on management and assessment activities



# Transition Strategy

- Step 1: State and regional input
- Step 2: Benchmark new design side-by-side against old design
- Step 3: Develop a calibration method to adjust the historical time series to align with the catch estimates from the new methodology
- Step 4: Incorporate new catch estimates into stock assessments
- ***Only after all four elements have been achieved*** will we use the estimates from the new methodology in the management process
  - This process will take several years. At least two years of benchmarking will be needed and additional time may be needed for calibration and incorporation into stock assessments.

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# Questions & Discussion

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