

**MRIP Listening Session**  
**Atlantic Coastal States (ASMFC/ACCSP)**  
**Summary Report**

**Location:** Alexandria, Virginia

**Date:** May 8, 2008

**Purpose:** To gather input from the state partners to assure that the MRIP design we are developing is appropriately tailored to the specific fishery management and stock assessment needs of the region. Further, such an assessment will enable us to begin to identify and prioritize regional needs for MRIP projects for the next round of project funding, with FY 2009 funds.

**MRIP Team Members:** Gordon Colvin, Preston Pate, Forbes Darby, Scott Sauri

**Agencies/Groups Represented:** Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) Interstate Fishery Management Program Policy Board; Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP) Coordinating Council

**Attachments:** Agenda, list of attendees

**Major Points and Comments:**

1. In 2004 (updated 2006), the ASMFC conducted a workshop on recreational data needs for interstate Atlantic Coast fishery management and stock assessment. The summary results of the 2006 workshop (attached) were used during this Listening Session as a starting point for discussing current needs. For the most part, the needs identified in 2004 were reaffirmed and updated at this Session.
2. The primary needs are described as following two "critical paths". Critical Path 1 is: increase intercept and phone interviews to improve the data precision for all species. The suggested goal is to reach a PSE of 10-20 % for estimated catch/harvest of all managed species at the state level for active states, and 20-30% for *de minimus* states. Critical Path 2 calls for: decreasing the reporting and review time of the wave data to one month.
3. ACCSP has established standards for recreational data collection. MRFSS is the standard for the private/rental boat and shore modes and the For-Hire Survey is the standard for for-hire fisheries. ACCSP has specified a target of reaching three times the base-funded (via NMFS base fishery statistics budget) numbers of telephone and intercept surveys, and has allocated funds annually for a

number of years to increasing the level of sampling effort. Some state partners have also funded increases to the level of sampling effort and some have not.

### **Comments Specific to Data Needs:**

1. There is a need to conduct surveys that provide catch and effort estimates for diadromous fish in the river systems upstream from the extent of current MRFSS/FHS coverage. A watershed-based spatial segregation of such catch data (e.g. by using HUC codes) should be considered.
2. The angler registry may help to serve as a valid basis of identifying and contacting anglers who fish for diadromous fish in the rivers in order to collect fishing effort data. Limiting the federal registry to tidal sections of rivers may limit this prospective benefit.
3. Wave 1 data is needed at least through southern New England to document catch of a number of fisheries that are of growing significance in the winter . Wave 2 data is probably needed now for growing fisheries for cod and haddock north of Cape Cod. It may be possible to limit this sampling to for-hire vessels.
4. For stock assessment, it is important to get final annual estimates before the assessments are updated. In general, this is now possible. Otherwise, the assessments are updated on data that lags a year. For quota management, it would be desirable to significantly shorten the time for receipt of preliminary wave estimates. Some flexibility may be possible. For example, a two-month wave may be all that's needed for early or late year catch in the northern states, but monthly estimates may be needed for spring through fall months.

### **Comments Specific to Outreach:**

1. Include all Commissioners in distribution of MRIP Newscast. Also identify and include key state legislative contacts.

### **Future Funding Priorities:**

1. Develop a matrix of spatial and temporal distribution of Atlantic coast fisheries to facilitate an analysis of wave duration needs and related survey design/coverage needs. Such a matrix may have been generated for Protected Resources management.
2. Detailed "front to back" process analysis (if not previously done) for the purpose of identifying ways the collection and processing of data can be made more efficient and expedient.

3. Assure that current studies of night fishing (especially striped bass) are sufficient to address Atlantic coastal issues.
4. Consider a pilot to develop riverine surveys for diadromous fisheries.
5. Consider a focused new study on the differences between two-month and one-month recall periods on effort estimates, emphasizing east coast fisheries at different times of the year.
6. Pilot project to address non-telephone options for surveys.