

Meeting Summary
MRIP Executive Steering Committee Conference Call
April 4, 2014

In Attendance: MRIP ESC members John Boreman (Chair), Gordon Colvin, Emily Menashes, Randy Fisher, Gregg Bray (for Dave Donaldson), Bonnie Ponwith, Ned Cyr, Pat Campfield (for Bob Beal), Doug Mecum. MRIP ESC Participants Miguel Rolon, Kitty Simonds. From NMFS ST: Lauren Dolinger Few, Preston Pate, Leah Sharpe, Tom Sminkey. From partner agencies: Toni Kerns (ASMFC), Steve Williams (PSMFC)

Chair John Boreman reviewed the agenda, which was accepted. He also noted that ESC Participant Ken Franke (MAFAC Recreational Fisheries Subcommittee Chair) was stepping down from his participation with the ESC due to time commitment limitations. Ken asked Dick Brame if he would be willing to take on his role, and Dick agreed. Dick will join the ESC as of its next meeting.

1. Review/approve the Terms of Reference for the new MRIP Transition Team (draft attached). Discuss Team membership.

John Boreman outlined the draft Terms of Reference (ToRs, attached) for the new MRIP Transition Team. He also reviewed two suggested revisions resulting from the April 3 meeting of the MRIP Team Leads: (1) assure that the ToRs do not suggest that “calibration” is inevitable, but is a tool to be applied when achievable and required; (2) more broadly characterize the process for deciding when new methods are introduced, rather than refer to a “stopping rule” or to “bundling”. Gordon Colvin noted that the ESC had reviewed a charge from the NMFS leadership to MRIP at its January 24 conference call, and had agreed to establish the new Transition Team to develop the products that will fulfill the charge. The ESC agreed that the draft be revised to address the Team Leads’ suggestions and re-circulated for final review and approval. John Boreman will revise the ToRs and distribute it to the ESC for review and approval shortly.¹

Ned Cyr announced that he had asked David Van Voorhees, Division Chief for the Fisheries Statistics Division of the Office of Science and Technology, and Galen Tromble, Division Chief for the Domestic Fisheries Division of the Office Sustainable Fisheries, to co-chair the Team. David and Galen have agreed, and will begin to recruit the Team as soon as the ToRs are approved.

Gordon Colvin outlined the recommendations from the Team Leads for membership of the Transition Team. The Team Leads recommended:

¹ Update: On April 14, the revised and updated ToR were approved by the ESC.

GARFO & SERO SF ARA's (Vice-Darcy, Steele)
NEFSC & SEFSC Deputy Directors or Assessment Team Leaders (Rago, Porch?)
WCR SF ARA
PIFSC Deputy or Assessment Team Leader
Councils: at least 1 from Atlantic and 1 from Pacific
Interstate Marine Fisheries Commissions: (Williams; Bray; Kerns/Campfield)
GCF: consider
States: ask the Commissions to get input on whether their senior staff participation is sufficient or if it would be better to include a few selected state managers

Kitty Simonds stated that the Western Pacific Council plays a key role in coordination of partners' efforts to implement ACLs and AMs for the region, and should therefore have a member on the Team. She recommended Marlowe Sabater from the Council staff.

The ESC agreed to ask the new Team Leads to recruit the Team members along the lines as recommended. The ESC members also agreed not to include GCF on the Team, but to ask them to name a representative to provide advice and support when the Team has proposals for review.

2. Review revised Communications and Education Team Re-Boot Strategy and Charge (attached).

Leah Sharpe outlined the revised Communication and Education Team (CET) "reboot" strategy and the revisions that had been made in response to the ESC's comments on its January 24 conference call. She also outlined the proposed charge to the reconstituted CET and the suggested membership for the National and Regional Teams.

The ESC discussed the revised version. Kitty Simonds stated that it was good to see that there is a place for the Councils on the CET. Randy Fisher acknowledged that the new version addresses some of his concerns, but that it will be essential that the process involve and address the primary needs of the West Coast states, and not be driven or limited by a national agenda. Leah responded that this is exactly what is intended for the regional efforts.

The "reboot strategy" and suggested CET membership were approved by the ESC.

ESC members suggested that the proposed charge be expanded to add content that preserves the original education part of the CET's (and MRIP's) mission. Leah will revise the charge to include that additional content and send it to John Boreman for distribution to the ESC for final review and approval.

3. FY 14 Spend Plan update.

Tom Sminkey reviewed an updated MRIP FY 14 Spend Plan. The FY 14 appropriation is approximately back up to the pre-sequester level: \$10.01 M. All Operations Team projects are funded. Funds for implementation of new MRIP-developed methods are set at approximately \$4.1 M. There is currently a non-committed balance of \$1.862 M.

Attachment 1

MRIP Transition Team

Terms of Reference

1. Develop and recommend to the NMFS Regulatory Board and Science Board, through the MRIP ESC, a standardized process for transitioning from the use of estimates produced with current survey design and estimation procedures to the use of estimates resulting from new or modified survey designs/estimation in fishery management and stock assessment applications. The recommended process will describe and provide for consistency in the approach and methods to be used to assess and determine when and how Councils, Interstate Commissions, and Regions apply recreational catch estimates derived from new or improved approaches for: setting annual catch limits; monitoring catch against catch limits; assessing the need for and selection of accountability measures; and conducting analyses leading to the adoption of recreational regulations. The process description will include flow diagrams and timelines to illustrate the transition process.
2. Recommend methods to be used to compare legacy estimates with estimates produced using new or modified MRIP designs in a statistically robust manner, for the approval of the MRIP ESC and transmittal to the NMFS Science and Regulatory Boards.
3. Develop approaches to conduct quantitative comparisons of catch and effort data using new or revised methods with legacy data.
4. Identify the requirements and methods for conducting calibration studies or analyses and will oversee calibration efforts when they are required per the requirements.
5. Establish guidelines, in consultation with Regional Implementation Teams, to facilitate decisions on when to delay or to bundle implementation of changes to survey methods in order to minimize the loss of coherence in long term data streams for stock assessments and annual catch monitoring.
6. Report to the Executive Steering Committee on the status of the transition and any impediments to progress, along with suggestions for overcoming the impediments, at least on an annual basis.

In carrying out its work under these Terms of Reference, the Transition Team will consult with the MRIP Regional Implementation Teams and with the affected NMFS Regional Offices, Fisheries Science Centers, States, Interstate Commissions, and Regional Fishery Management Councils. The Team may establish one or more Work Groups to develop proposed processes, analytical methods, and calibration exercises.

Attachment 2

CET Reboot

The CET, as it currently functions, mainly comprises NMFS Headquarters staff and contractors and has taken a Headquarters perspective to communications and outreach issues. As regional outreach has been undertaken, the CET has relied on *ad hoc* networks of regional contacts. Now MRIP is shifting from development to implementation of new survey methods, and we recognize that regional outreach is becoming a higher priority requiring increased effort within the regions and increased coordination between the regional outreach efforts and the national-level MRIP CET. Additionally, national-level outreach should become more focused on meeting the well-defined and tailored requirements of the various regions and having stronger connections to other, related national programs.

To this end, the CET is proposing an expansion into a two-tiered structure, which will mirror the national team/regional teams approach being taken in the MRIP Implementation Plan. The national team will be led by staff from F/ST, have representatives from other national programs (e.g., NMFS Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS Communications, Sea Grant, NMFS Regional Recreational Coordinators), representatives from the regional FINs, and representatives from each regional team. The regional teams would include (as appropriate) representatives from the MRIP Regional Implementation Teams (i.e., the FINs or counterparts), the States, the Councils and the Interstate Marine Fisheries Commissions, the NMFS Science Centers and Regional Offices, the NMFS Regional Recreational Coordinators group, and other groups as appropriate. The Regional MRIP teams will work with communications networks already established in the regions, such as the NMFS regional communications teams and FIN and Council outreach teams. The regional MRIP teams are designed to bring together and work with those groups currently engaged or interested in recreational fishing outreach and to help coordinate their efforts and improve delivery of MRIP-related communications and outreach, not to create new layer of bureaucracy or replicate existing groups.

The goals of the expanded CET are to: (1) continue to develop and achieve better flow of national messages to regional audiences; (2) improve coordination among the various parties concerned with recreational fishing outreach; (3) better understand regional MRIP outreach messaging needs; and (4) develop communications tools that meet regional needs. Currently, communication between MRIP and other national programs and MRIP and the regions happens on an as-needed, topic-by-topic basis. The expanded CET aims to put in place the structure needed to facilitate consistent, two-way and multi-way communications between and among these groups and give a larger voice to the States and associated regional entities.

To move forward in this expansion, we will undertake the following:

1. The current CET will draft a Charge for the expanded national team and invite new national members to join.
2. The expanded national team will meet to:
 - a. Define the relationship between and among the national and regional teams;
 - b. Draft a template regional team Charge;
 - c. Support an annual in-person meeting of all CET members;

- d. Determine whether an annual RFP to distribute funding for regional outreach projects would be useful;
 - e. Decide how to proceed with a national partner engagement strategy;
 - f. Identify the CET's key priorities for the remainder of year (these will be based on the stated priorities outlined in the Implementation Plan Update, but will not be restricted to them); and
 - g. Determine what, if any, metrics would be appropriate for assessing the CET's work at the end of the year.
 3. The template Charge for regional teams will be distributed to regional partners for customization based on the special communication and outreach needs in their respective regions, and proposed regional team members will be invited to participate in the regional team.
 4. Each regional team will meet to:
 - a. Determine the most effective way to operate within the region's current outreach partnership structure and operating environment;
 - b. Customize the template Charge to meet their specific needs;
 - c. Discuss regional outreach priorities and their relationship to the stated national outreach priorities;
 - d. Identify gaps that should be addressed at the national and regional levels;
 - e. Identify opportunities for collaboration at the regional level; and
 - f. Identify next steps for moving forward on regional joint communication priorities.
 5. The regional teams will work directly with F/ST CET members to:
 - a. Conduct outreach activities in the regions to aid state partners in identifying outreach needs and improving messaging (e.g., the 'Road Shows' that, with partner cooperation, were conducted on the East Coast and are being planned for the West Coast);
 - b. Develop outreach materials that address regional communication needs;
 - c. Support outreach events that address regional communication needs; and
 - d. Support the regional teams in their other activities on request.

Proposed National Team:

NMFS/ST: Sharpe, Bagwill

NMFS Regional Recreational Coordinators: Rioux

NMFS Communications: Darby

NMFS/SF: ?

NOAA Sea Grant: Elizabeth Ban

NE Regional Team Rep: (TBD)

SE Regional Team Rep: (TBD)

WC Regional Team Rep: (TBD)

PI Regional Team Rep: (TBD)

FIN Reps: McElhaton (ACCSP); TBD (Gulf FIN); TBD (RecFIN)

Consultants: Ward

Northeast Team:

GARFO
NEFSC
NEFMC
MAFMC
Sea Grant
ACCSP
ASMFC
State Reps

Southeast Team:

SERO
SEFSC
SAFMC
GOMFMC
GSMFC/GulfFIN
CFMC
Sea Grant
State Reps

West Coast Team:

WCR
SWFSC
NWFSC
PFMC
PSMFC/RecFIN
Sea Grant
State Reps

Pacific Islands Team:

PIRO
PIFSC
WPFMC
Sea Grant
State Rep

Attachment 3

**Communications and Education Team Charge
Marine Recreational Information Program**

Mission

The Communications and Education Team (CET) provides expertise that fosters productive, collaborative relationships, both internally among MRIP teams and NOAA leadership and

externally with key constituencies who have valuable contributions to offer in the development of MRIP. To accomplish this, the Team carries out strategic communications to:

- Ensure information is flowing effectively among MRIP team members;
- Ensure that partners and constituents are: 1) engaged in the design, testing, and implementation processes; 2) kept well informed of opportunities to participate; and 3) kept updated on the MRIP's progress; and
- Ensure that the MRIP Teams at Headquarters are kept informed about regional concerns and questions, and act to address those concerns and support regional outreach efforts.

The primary target audiences for MRIP outreach include:

- Internal stakeholders – MRIP team and work group members, NOAA staff and leadership.
- Data partners and primary customers – state agencies, stock assessment scientists and fisheries managers; fisheries management councils; interstate marine fisheries commissions.
- Constituents – opinion leaders in the fishing community; angling organizations and clubs; regional and national conservation and environmental organizations; coastal communities and ocean recreation enthusiasts; and print, online, and broadcast outlets for reaching the broader angling public.

The CET will maintain close coordination with other MRIP teams to ensure that the broader conversation about improving the quality of recreational fishing catch and effort data collection, reporting, and implementation meets audiences' information needs and reflects the current state of MRIP development and implementation.

The purpose of the CET is to build awareness and support in key stakeholder communities so that MRIP's conversation with our data customers shifts from a conversation about the data's reliability to a conversation on management approaches and how the data supports those approaches. To achieve this, the CET will:

- Communicate the important role each audience plays in the ultimate success of MRIP;
- Lead the communications efforts required to facilitate smooth implementation of improved survey methods as they are certified for use;
- Develop outreach partnerships among data partners, customers, and constituents as a means of both sharing and receiving information about MRIP, and fostering productive working relationships;
- Foster stronger connections between and among national-level partners and region-specific partners, and support regional partners as they take the lead on regionally-relevant communications work;

- Maintain the MRIP website as a complete and fully transparent one-stop-shop for all MRIP documentation, products, and outreach materials;
- Develop, test, and deploy to partners MRIP outreach materials, including presentations, pamphlets, and other handouts, and videos that meet their outreach and communication needs.
- Manage and continually enhance internal communications to facilitate intra-agency coordination and ensure that important information is reaching audiences and partners in a timely manner; and
- Empower and provide NOAA staff, MRIP work group members, and outreach partners with “big picture” MRIP information that they can carry to other audiences.

The CET will periodically keep the Executive Steering Committee and other MRIP teams apprised of progress and plans for furthering MRIP implementation, and to receive feedback on ongoing activities.

Structure and Membership

The Communications and Education Team structure consists of:

- A **national team** that focuses on overarching national communications strategies and that produces materials for use at the national, regional, and local levels. The national team also maintains the MRIP website and interfaces regularly with the other MRIP teams. Members of the national team include communications and outreach professionals, representatives from related national-level programs from NOAA Fisheries and other NOAA branches, and representatives from the regional teams and other appropriate regional organizations.
- A **series of regional teams** that identify regional outreach priorities and their relationship to national priorities, gaps that should be addressed at the regional and national levels, opportunities for collaboration at the regional level, and the next steps for moving forward on regional and joint communication priorities. Members of the regional teams include representatives from state, council, and commission data partners, fishing organizations, and other stakeholder groups represented in or impacted by the MRIP process. The national team will support the work of the regional teams.

Meetings

The Communications and Education national team will meet bimonthly via conference call. Regional Meetings will take place on a schedule coinciding with other regional activities. In addition, the entire CET will meet once a year to set priorities for the upcoming year, discuss gaps in outreach, and develop recommendations for addressing those gaps.