

## **Operations Team Meeting Summary April 12, 2007**

The call convened at 2:00 PM ET. The following members were present: Rob Andrews, Dave Donaldson, Russell Porter, Jason Didden, Rob Kramer, Graciela Garcia-Moliner, Megan Caldwell, Bob Clark, Richard Cody, Guillermo Diaz, Gary Shepherd.

The Marine Recreational Improvement Program, Operations Team convened via conference call on April 12, 2007. The objectives of the meeting were to introduce the members of the Team, review the Team's charge, review the Team's membership and develop a list of recommended additions to provide to the ESC, and discuss future tasks and deadlines.

Following introductions, a request was made that a list of members be distributed to the Team. R. Andrews agreed to develop and distribute a list. The group then reviewed and discussed the charge to the Team. A question was asked about criteria for prioritizing recommended improvements. Specifically, it was asked if the Team should develop a single, generalized list of priorities that includes all recommendations, or if recommendations should be prioritized independently for each region. R. Andrews stated that he believes it will be up to the Team to determine the best strategy for prioritizing recommendations, and that a strategy may become clearer once the group has had an opportunity to review the list of recommendations. However, he will request clarification from John Boreman, the Chair of the ESC. A second question was asked about opportunities for constituent and industry input into the process. Specifically, will the ambitious schedule allow for adequate public review and input? Based upon his understanding of the Development Plan for Improving Recreational Fisheries Statistics, R. Andrews stated that he believes constituents will have opportunities to provide input through several avenues, including membership on the ESC, Operations Team, and working groups, as well as through advisory groups and public forums. R. Andrews also stated that the ESC has created an independent team that will be dedicated to communications and education. R. Andrews will seek additional clarification from J. Boreman to clarify the role of constituent input into the process.

Following review of the charge, the group reviewed the current membership of the Operations Team and discussed potential additions. A team member recommended that someone be added to represent New England and/or Mid Atlantic state interests. Specific candidates included Dave Simpson (CT DEP), Paul Caruso or Mike Armstrong (MA DMF), and Brandon Muffley or Jeff Brust (NJ DEP). Another team member noted that the ASMFC also supports this recommendation. R. Andrews commented that the ESC discussed adding an economist to the team. Potential candidates included Cindy Thomson (NMFS SWC), Scott Steinback (NMFS NEC) and Eric Thunberg (NMFS NEC). The team noted that Cindy Thompson has extensive experience with recreational fishing issues and is a member of the Pacific Fishery Management Council Statistics Subcommittee and the Pacific RecFIN Technical Committee. R. Andrews also suggested adding a member with HMS expertise and suggested Ron Salz (NMFS HQ). The team

suggested Craig Brown (NMFS SEC) as a candidate with HMS expertise. The team suggested adding a representative from TX, possibly Mark Fisher (TPWD). Finally, R Andrews recommended adding another member from the recreational fishing community and suggested Dick Brame (CCA). Following a discussion of the potential candidates, the group agreed to request that the following individuals be added to the Team; Cindy Thomson, Ron Salz, Mike Armstrong, Mark Fisher, and Dick Brame. R. Andrews will submit the request to the ESC.

The meeting concluded with a discussion about the Team's next task, which is to develop a prioritized list of recommendations for upgrading current data collection programs. A team member has developed a list of recommendations resulting from the NRC review and the Denver workshop and has agreed to review the list and consolidate recommendations where appropriate. The group had a discussion about the criteria for prioritizing the recommendations. It was suggested that we first attempt to categorize the recommendations, followed by a ranking of recommendations within each category, as well as a ranking of the categories. R. Andrews agreed to take a first cut at categorizing the recommendations. To facilitate completion of the next task, R. Andrews had proposed a face-to-face meeting on April 18-19 in Silver Spring. Based upon Team member's availability to participate in person or via conference call, the group agreed to proceed with the meeting. R. Andrews will develop and submit a draft agenda.

Being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 4:30 ET.

### **Action Items**

1. R. Andrews will compile a list of Operations Team members and submit to the group (COB, April 13).
2. R. Andrews will request clarification about prioritizing recommendations and public input into the process from J. Boreman (suggest having J. Boreman address these issues at the meeting next week).
3. J. Didden will review the list of recommendations resulting from the NRC review and the Denver workshop and consolidate where appropriate (submit to R. Andrews by COB, April 13).
4. R. Andrews will categorize the consolidated list of recommendations (submit to group by COB, April 16).
4. R. Andrews will develop a draft agenda for next week's meeting and submit it to the group (COB, April 16).
5. R. Andrews will submit the Operations Team's recommendations for additional team members to the ESC (due to ESC by April 23<sup>rd</sup>).