

IMPROVING MARINE RECREATIONAL FISHING INFORMATION



Council Chairs and Executive Directors
Dr. John Boreman, Chair, Executive Steering Committee
January 2008

THE INITIATIVE

**Build a new program to improve
the collection, analysis, and
use of recreational data**



OUR GOAL: To become the trusted source for saltwater recreational fishing data.

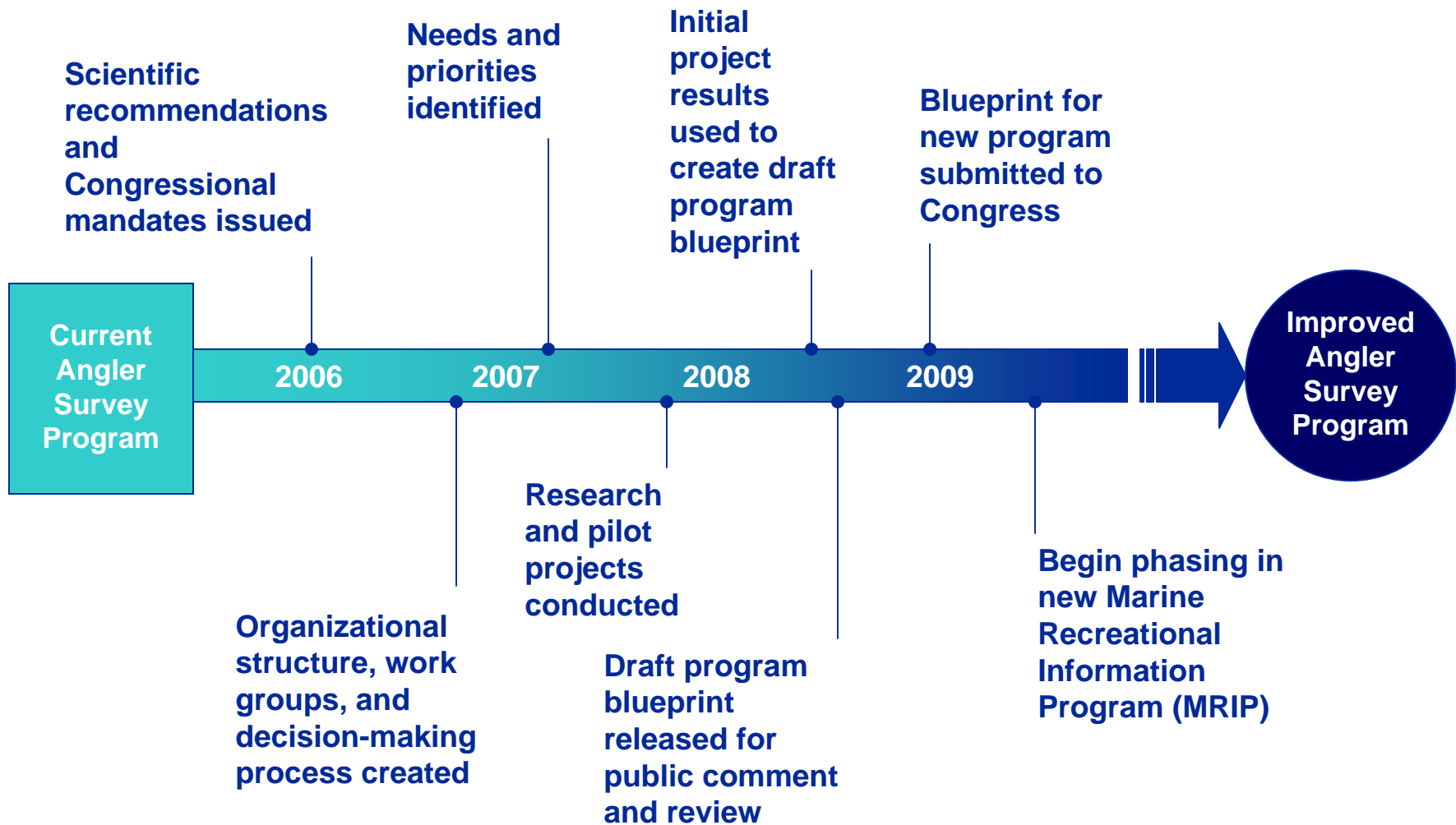
WHAT'S THE ISSUE?

**Ever-greater demands for more
timely and accurate data**

THE APPROACH

- 1. Get Funding**
- 2. Bring the best minds together**
- 3. Answer the important questions**

INITIATIVE TIMELINE



ANSWERING THE IMPORTANT QUESTIONS

Just a few of the issues we're looking at:

- Can we better estimate catch and release mortality?
- How do we better capture non-tournament HMS trips?
- Are there ways to increase angler participation in the data collection?
- What's the best way to use registries or fishing licenses to sample anglers?

ANSWERING THE IMPORTANT QUESTIONS

NOAA Fisheries recently approved funding for 16 research projects including:

- a nationwide project to explore new methods of estimating catch and effort
- a nationwide project to develop common data standards across all saltwater recreational data collections programs
- a regional project to experiment with new ways to count released fish
- a regional project to conduct effort surveys using a list of anglers

PROJECT SELECTION CRITERIA

- Consistent with recommendations from:
 - Operations Team
 - St. Pete Workshop participants
 - Magnuson-Stevens Act
 - National Research Council
- Significance of results
- Applicability to national/regional program
 - Phase I: National
 - Phase II: Regional
- Practicality
- Relevance to scientific or management needs

DESIGN AND ANALYSIS WORK GROUP

Issue: Reduce bias in catch and effort estimates

Projects:

- STATISTICAL ESTIMATION: Assess appropriateness of estimation procedures
- CATCH ERROR: Develop studies to account for anglers not included in catch sampling frames (private access, night fishing, tournament fishing)
- EFFORT ERROR: Develop studies to account for anglers not included in effort sampling frames (non-coastal, no phone, no license)
- CATCH AND RELEASE: Examine alternate methods for collecting information about discarded catch

DATA MANAGEMENT AND STANDARDS WORK GROUP

Issue: Improve standardization of surveys among regions, between state and national surveys

Projects:

- **INVENTORY DATA COLLECTION PROGRAMS:** Identify existing data collection programs and categorize common data elements
- **MINIMUM DATA ELEMENTS AND STANDARDS:** Establish minimum data elements and Regional / National standards

FOR-HIRE WORK GROUP

Issue: Survey methods and reporting requirements should be different from private anglers

Projects:

- CARIBBEAN PILOT PROJECT: Pilot electronic reporting program for Puerto Rico for-hire catch and effort data
- DOCUMENTATION AND REVIEW OF FOR-HIRE DATA COLLECTION PROGRAMS

HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES WORK GROUP

Issue: Improve HMS data collection programs

Projects:

- FOR-HIRE SECTOR: Pilot study to characterize HMS charter boat fishery in GOM and South Atlantic
- ANGLING CATEGORY PERMIT: Pilot study to characterize HMS angling category fishery in GOM and South Atlantic
- TOURNAMENT DATA: Evaluate LPS tournament data

ANSWERING THE IMPORTANT QUESTIONS

**Research projects form
the foundation for the new program**

**They are the major activities
of the work groups**

ON THE HORIZON

1. **Regional listening sessions** (Winter/Spring 2008)
2. **Proposed Rule on the National Saltwater Angler Registry** (Winter 2008)
3. **New program blueprint released**
(Summer 2008)

WHY REGISTER ANGLERS?

1. Creates a Universal Sampling Frame

A phonebook of people who fish

2. Improves Efficiency

Contacts only those people that went fishing

3. Reduces Bias through Better Coverage

Reaches anglers outside of just coastal counties

KEY TO SUCCESS

Registry Needs to be Complete



The registry doesn't improve the surveys unless the sampling frame is complete; i.e., unless every angler can somehow be accounted for.

BUILDING A COMPLETE REGISTRY

**State license exemptions
pose a challenge**



**States would need to get data on certain anglers
who are exempted from state license requirements**

RESOLVING THESE CHALLENGES

Cooperation with the States

- NOAA must work in partnership with those who know their anglers best – the states
- States can provide contact information from their license data bases
- It will take time for states to adopt licenses or modify current license programs to ensure we have a complete registry

Please Stay Connected



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