



NOAA FISHERIES

NOAA Fisheries is an agency within the Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). NOAA's mission is to understand and predict changes in the earth's environment and conserve and manage coastal and marine resources to meet our nation's economic, social and environmental needs. The NOAA Fisheries Service provides world class science and stewardship.

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www.CountMyFish.noaa.gov

Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office MRIP Fact Sheet

Marine Recreational Information Program

The Marine Recreational Information Program, or MRIP, is the new way NOAA Fisheries is collecting, analyzing and reporting recreational fishing data. The program brings scientists, managers, fishermen, state and federal agencies, and other stakeholders together to evaluate the way we've done things in the past and constantly work toward more reliable and trusted data.

A 2006 independent review of NOAA Fisheries data collection methods serves as the blueprint for improvements under MRIP and priorities for moving forward. These are evaluated on an ongoing basis and presented annually in MRIP Implementation Plan updates. Plan updates are available at www.countmyfish.noaa.gov. Milestones to date have included:

- Creation of the National Saltwater Angler Registry, currently being tested for use as a component in replacing the Coastal Household Telephone Survey.
- The re-estimation of catch estimates to correct for potential sources of bias in the way we have historically collected data from anglers.
- Completion of a comprehensive, online, interactive register of all recreational fishing sites from Maine to Louisiana. This was the first implementation step in our complete overhaul of angler catch surveys.
- An improved angler catch survey that removes potential sources of bias from our survey design by sampling during all parts of the day and reducing sampler latitude regarding which sites to sample and in what order.

Implementation in the Greater Atlantic Region

MRIP is a series of regionally-based data collection programs, all adhering to a set of rigorous national standards. We are working alongside the Greater Atlantic Regional Office to implement improvements to the way data is collected and reported. Key MRIP projects and activities in the Greater Atlantic include:

- New weighted estimation methods have been completed and adopted for estimation of catch rates from intercept data.
- Key decisions for shore and private boat mode intercept survey design have been made and are reflected in recently updated ACCSP targets.
- In the for-hire mode, studies are underway to determine the merits of making improvements to current sampling and estimation methods, or switching to an electronic logbook-based design.
- MRIP is developing modeling tools to evaluate tradeoffs among cost, precision, and timeliness in the delivery of preliminary estimates.
- Decisions on improvements to effort survey methodology. MRIP has started side-by-side testing of Coastal Household Telephone Survey and the new mail-based Fishing Effort Survey for shore and private boat fishing on the Atlantic and Gulf coasts.

MRIP-funded Projects in the Greater Atlantic Region



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The Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) is the new way NOAA Fisheries is counting recreational catch.

MRIP is about:

- Getting better numbers through better science and statistics.
- Building greater confidence by involving anglers and others in every step of the process.
- Providing in-depth public access so people can see for themselves what we're doing, why we're doing it, and help guide our course.

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Ongoing Projects



- **Electronic data collection in Atlantic coast Access Point Angler Intercept Survey (APAIS)** will develop software that is adaptable for use in 15 states with flexible questionnaires suitable for use on a mobile tablet, demonstrate that APAIS intercept survey data can be successfully collected using a tablet under typical field conditions, and increase efficiency in the overall process of collecting and entering data.
- **Recall Error in a Recreational Fishing Effort Survey - Testing the Impacts of 1-Month Waves** will assess the potential for bias resulting from measurement error in the newly implemented, for benchmarking purposes, mail-based Fishing Effort Survey as well as assess the impact of one month reference waves on the precision and timeliness of recreational fishing effort estimates.
- **North Carolina For-Hire Logbook: Implementation, Validation, and Survey Standardization** is developing a logbook reporting program for the North Carolina for-hire industry that can be used to conciliate any existing federal logbook reporting. Logbooks will contain records of catch, effort, and discards at a trip level submitted weekly from the guide, charter, and dive boat sectors of the industry to obtain precise estimates of effort and catch and eliminate duplicative reporting.
- **Estimating Recreational Fishing Effort through Onsite and Follow-Up Mail Surveys (Year 2)** is testing approaches for improving the current APAIS to obtain more accurate/precise effort estimation through a pilot onsite survey by investigating the factors that affect the accuracy of effort estimates and a follow-up mail survey to the proposed FES to measure public and private access fishing. The results of this pilot survey will help address issues concerning the adequacy of the current APAIS design for effort estimation.
- **Determining Optimum Sample Sizes for the Atlantic For-Hire and Large Pelagics Telephone Surveys** will examine different sampling strategies to determine sample size requirements and identify optimal sampling allocations for achieving precision requirements in the most cost-effective manner.
- **For-Hire Programs: Inventory, Certification and Integration Planning** will update the Atlantic coast inventory of for-hire data collection programs. The updated inventory will include clarification of program requirements and data needs to support agency specific objectives, providing background for a workshop to identify opportunities to promote data availability, improve data timeliness, and reduce the reporting burden by integrating the various data collection programs in a statistically valid design.
- **Testing for Measurement Error in a Recreational Fishing Mail Survey** will identify potential measurement error in mail survey designs by quantifying the extent to which respondents provide accurate responses. This validation study will include follow-up telephone interviews with mail survey respondents to ensure that reported information is accurate and that respondents fully understand the survey questions and instructions.

MRIP-funded Projects in the Greater Atlantic Region







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Ongoing Projects (continued)

-  **Simulation Study to Evaluate Alternative Estimators of the Mean Avidity of Marine Recreational Fishing Participants from Access Point Survey Data** is evaluating the relative robustness of both the un-weighted MRFSS APAIS estimator and a new weighted APAIS estimator of angler avidity. The results will be used to better evaluate possible sources of bias in the MRFSS estimator of angler avidity, as this could be used to produce revised participation estimates for prior years and allow a good evaluation of the magnitude and direction of any bias in the past MRFSS estimates.
-  **Proportional Standard Error (PSE) and Management Uncertainty in Recreational Data Collection on the Atlantic Coast** brings together science and management to develop recommendations for PSE standards. The goal of the project, led by the Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program, is to determine how different levels of precision of the point estimates of recreational catch affect fishery stock assessment outputs, and to establish recommended PSE standards that will result in levels of scientific and management uncertainty that meet the needs of fishery managers.

Completed Projects

-  **Finalize Design of MRIP Fishing Effort Surveys** tested the effectiveness of a revised effort survey sampling design, as well as the feasibility of a single-frame, stratified sampling design for collecting recreational fishing effort data and estimating fishing effort by mode.
-  **Characterizing Discards on Headboats** compared self-reported data collected from dockside headboat interviews to data collected by at-sea observers in order to quantify differences in catch rates and species composition between the two approaches. This project aimed to identify biases in dockside data collection methods.
-  **Development of Improved Estimation Methods for the Access Point Angler Intercept Survey** responded to a chief National Research Council concern by changing the estimation design for our shore-side survey to correctly match to the data collection design.
-  **Implementation of Improved Protocols for the Access Point Angler Intercept Survey** eliminated potential design biases in the APAIS by removing sampler latitude in site and mode selection, assigning samplers to specific time blocks, conducting intercepts during all day parts, including trips ending at night, and incorporating other changes.

For more information about these MRIP-funded projects and others, please visit www.countmyfish.noaa.gov.

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