Transition Survey Discussion Webinar with Consultants

Alabama Snapper Check

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Alabama anglers have been required to report red snapper landings prior to landing fish in Alabama since 2014.

NOAA and MRIP consultants held a series of meetings to review Snapper Check methods.
• Snapper Check was conditionally certified in 2018 based on modifications applied in 2017.
  • Modifications primarily constituted the collection of missing angler information during dockside survey. Needed for determining full sample weights - Probability Proportional to Size

Vessel registrations on landing reports and surveys are compared to a master list of charter vessels and reported trip status may be changed according to list.
Snapper Check estimation utilizes a capture-recapture survey method of anglers (vessels) at public access points with offshore fishing activity.

- Non-response estimates are calculated using SAS Proc surveymeans statement and applied to landing report data.
- NOAA staff generate monthly site assignment draw file using the same selection program and site pressure frames used in MRIP APAIS assignment draw process.

Staff conduct dockside surveys using same basic sampling protocols as APAIS survey.

- Stay on site for designated assignment duration (3 or 6-hr time blocks).
- Count missed anglers and anglers with no reef fish at landing for sample weighting.
- Survey anglers to gather trip metrics and biological information.

Information from the dockside survey (capture) would be compared to the same information on all landing reports (recapture) to determine a “match” between records.

Dockside data are QA/QC’d after entry into a database.
Dead discards removed from matching algorithm.
• Reported discard information is subject to significant variation from time of report to time of survey.

Options to report landings have been reduced since the start of Snapper Check.
• Toll-free telephone number was discontinued prior to the 2017 season.
• Paper reports available at popular access points were discontinued prior to the start of the 2021 season.
  Both telephone and paper reports accounted for less than 10% of all reports at time they were discontinued

Reef Fish Endorsement required of all anglers targeting or possessing Gulf reef fish in 2019.
• Annual cost of $10/angler.
• Establishes a database of reef fish participants for future surveys (i.e. Release ‘Em Right program).
• Funding mechanism – 54,596 sold in LY2021 (preliminary). Endorsements are included in license sales bundles.

Kayak and shore anglers were provided the ability to report harvests for the 2020 season.
• The Conservation ID (unique code) can be used in instead of vessel registration in landing report.

Requirement to report Gray Triggerfish and Greater Amberjack prior to landing added in 2021 (voluntary in 2020).
SNAPER CHECK ESTIMATION PROCESS

Landing report and dockside survey matching algorithm:
- Date
- Vessel registration /Cons. ID
- No. Anglers
- No. Harvested fish
- Time (+/- 3.5 hours of survey time)

Dead discard was removed from algorithm.
from matching to landing reports.

Adjustment Factor = \[
\frac{1}{\text{No. Fish from Matched Dockside Surveys & Landing Reports}} - \frac{1}{\text{No. Fish from All Dockside Surveys}}}

AL DCNR/Marine Resources Division
Snapper Check Issues

Main areas of concern during consultant’s initial program review:

Independence of sampling and reporting
   No improvements have been made

Improvements to non-sampling error
   Improving data quality
      App was upgraded to allow for submission of report when out of cell service

Low compliance rates
   MRD has advertised Snapper Check reporting in local media (radio, print, online)
Ratio estimators may be influenced by weather and pandemics.

Weather during 2018 was very good but not as good in 2019. Poorer weather conditions may influence decision to fish among less avid anglers. Season closed in 28 fishing days in 2018 and 35 days in 2019.

COVID-19 occurred in early 2020 and travel options were curtailed. After a short quarantine period people were encouraged to participate in outdoor activities. The season was temporarily closed after 25 days and reopened in October for an additional 19 days.
Daily vessel landing reports received as a percent of total during season. First 100 days of season is shown.

In 2017, a 3-day federal season was originally announced (Day 7-9) and an additional 39 federal season encompassing three-day weekends was announced and began mid-June (Day 21). Three-day (Fri.-Sun.) weekend seasons in 2018.
RESPONSE AND NON-RESPONSE SUMMARY

Daily landing reports received as a percent of total during season. First 100 days of seasons shown.

Three-day weekend (Fri.-Sun.) openings during 2019 and four-day (Fri.-Mon.) openings during 2020.
RESPONSE AND NON-RESPONSE SUMMARY

Daily landing reports received as a percent of total during season. Entire red snapper season shown.

Four-day (Fri-Mon.) openings during 2021 season. Tropical weather impacted the first part of the 2021 season.
Mean number of vessels reports have been increasing for vessels indicating trips returned to private access locations.

Surveyed vessels were removed from Access Type analysis.
### RESPONSE AND NON-RESPONSE SUMMARY

Percentage of trips by vessels reporting red snapper by access type and percentage of trips by vessels that were surveyed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Access Type</th>
<th>No. Unique Vessels</th>
<th>1 Trip</th>
<th>2 Trips</th>
<th>3 Trips</th>
<th>4 Trips</th>
<th>5 Trips</th>
<th>6 Trips</th>
<th>7 Trips</th>
<th>8 Trips</th>
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Surveyed vessels were removed from Private and Public Access analysis.
Surveyed vessels were removed from Access Type analysis.
In Alabama, there are two passes to the Gulf of Mexico; Mobile Pass and Perdido Pass.

A survey is proposed by Marine Resources to better estimate fishing effort during peak fishing season. Cameras would be used to count vessels and a survey on the water to identify vessels fishing.
In spring of 2021, cameras were installed near points of each pass where vessels were captured departing and returning from port.

These cameras, coupled with AI technology, were used to count and identify vessels. In 2022, AI will attempt to capture distinct features such as hull type and length to help with categorization.
Camera clarity allows for determination of vessel type.

Departing

Returning

Returning
In addition to collecting vessel information from the cameras, a survey has been proposed to complement camera information.

The survey will collect similar catch and effort information as the dockside validation survey in addition to asking state and county of residence of each angler on trip along with vessel landing location.

The survey information will provide information on catches and angler demographics for vessels using Private access sites.
Draft survey protocols were developed and several assignments were attempted in May and June using the protocols.

- 4 assignments were completed at Perdido Pass using the time blocks of 0800-1400 and 1100 to 1700.

- 43 vessels were intercepted.
  - 39 private
  - 1 charter
  - 3 pleasure cruising

- Out of 39 vessel trips
  - 21 vessels used private access points

- Camera footage has not been analyzed
Questions?

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