

Expanding Electronic Reporting: The MRIP Action Plan

Advancing electronic technologies has been an ongoing focus of NOAA Fisheries and our recreational fishing stakeholders. For more than a decade, MRIP has explored how electronic technologies can enhance our data collection efforts in ways that are scientifically sound and statistically robust. In 2018, we updated our Electronic Reporting Action Plan to include the four steps described below.



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ACTION 1: Examine New Private Angler ER Options

Fishermen in Mississippi and Alabama are currently using tablet and smartphone apps to complete mandatory reporting of their red snapper fishing. MRIP is evaluating successes and lessons learned from these and other programs to determine the feasibility of expanding app-based reporting to different states and fisheries.

ACTION 2: Advance For-Hire ER

Several MRIP partners are working to develop, test, refine, and implement ER program designs for federally permitted charter boats. Our For-Hire Road Map—which is based on more than a decade of studies and field work—helps guide this process.

ACTION 3: Develop ER Options for the FES

We are field testing a “push to web” option that will allow private recreational anglers to use online reporting as one way to respond to the Fishing Effort Survey.

ACTION 4: Strengthen Stakeholder Engagement

Strong partnerships are key to MRIP's success. We will continue to build on our communication and education activities to keep stakeholders informed and engaged as we identify appropriate and effective uses for ER in marine recreational fisheries.



Better **Data,**
Better **Fishing**
You make it possible

YOUR FISHING COUNTS

As a recreational angler, you play a central role in making sure there are quality fishing opportunities available today, and for generations to come.

Anglers are ...

- **People who care deeply about the resource.** Decisions about how you fish and what you keep have a major impact on the sustainability of fishing.
- **Advocates at council and commission meetings** where fishing regulations are set.
- **A crucial source** of recreational fishing data.

That's where the **Marine Recreational Information Program** comes in. MRIP is the state-regional-federal partnership responsible for estimating the amount of recreational saltwater fishing activity happening in our nation.



What Happens to Your Data?

The data you provide today influence short- and long-term decisions in the ongoing cycle of science, management, and public engagement used to set effective fishing regulations.

Learn more at countmyfish.noaa.gov

What Does MRIP Do?

On the Atlantic and Gulf coasts and in Hawaii, MRIP conducts surveys of anglers and for-hire operators to estimate:



Catch Rate

How many fish anglers catch on each trip.

Here's how it works:

Specially trained samplers working for state agencies are assigned to specific public access fishing sites on certain days for specific time intervals.

The samplers intercept **shore, private boat, and charter boat anglers who have just finished fishing** for the day and ask to interview them about their completed trip.

Samplers **identify and count** all landed fish available for inspection, **measure and weigh** a representative sample, and **ask anglers to report** any additional fish caught, including those released at sea.



Effort

How many fishing trips anglers take.

Here's how it works:

Households in coastal states are sampled at random from a national database of mailing addresses supplemented with recreational fishing license and registration information. They receive a survey in the mail asking them to report the number of fishing trips they've taken over the past two months.

For-hire operators are sampled at random by telephone each week, and asked to report the number of trips their vessels made during the prior week.

Catch Rate x Effort = Estimated Total Catch

The results of tens of thousands of catch rate and effort survey responses are combined to create estimates of total catch by two-month wave, state, type of fishing, and species of fish.

Specialized surveys: In addition to our general surveys, specialized surveys are being used in some states to estimate catch for specific species. Pairing our general surveys with specialized surveys can allow us to develop more precise catch statistics for those species.

Fishing activity is counted through surveys conducted with tens of thousands of recreational anglers.

Total catch estimates are **combined** with other data from the fishery, such as **commercial catch, biological factors, and direct observation.**

Scientists consider all these factors to **determine fishery health.**

They send their evaluations to the **councils and commissions** that **manage our fisheries.**

Managers work with **fishermen** and other **involved citizens** to set rules that keep **stocks sustainable.**

Look inside to follow the process from start to finish.

The process continues as we assess and respond to the **health of our fisheries.**



**NOAA
FISHERIES**



Better Data, Better Fishing.

NOAA Fisheries and our partners gather data about how often anglers fish and what they catch through the **Marine Recreational Information Program**—a collaboration of federal, regional, and state fishing agencies. We interview tens of thousands of anglers each year to produce an estimate of total recreational catch.

Collect **First, we collect information about how many fishing trips take place, and how many fish are caught on those trips.**

How do we get information from fishermen?

Because each fishery is different, the way we collect information from anglers varies from region to region, state to state, and, in some cases, species to species. Our methods allow us to obtain information from large groups of fishermen, who represent the entire saltwater recreational fishing population.

On the Atlantic and Gulf coasts and in Hawaii, private anglers' catch is measured through shoreside interviews, and effort is measured through mail surveys. In some states and regions, alternative survey designs are used; in others, specialized surveys are used to collect data for particular fisheries or during select fishing seasons.

For many charter fleets, we measure *catch* by interviewing anglers, and we measure *effort* through a combination of charter boat operator surveys and logbook reporting.

Several studies are underway to expand the use of electronic technologies to gather catch and effort information for private anglers and for-hire operators and anglers.

Why haven't I ever been surveyed?

NOAA Fisheries and state agencies conduct tens of thousands of in-person, telephone, and mail surveys every year, but we could never reach each of the millions of anglers out on the water. That's why we use surveys, designed with input from independent statisticians, to interview a sample of fishermen that represents the whole population.



Quality Control

Working with state natural resource agencies, shoreside samplers are assigned to survey anglers and collect fishing trip data. To ensure these data are of the highest quality:

- State-based interviewers are highly trained.
- The information collected is reviewed for accuracy.
- State supervisors perform field observations and follow-up checks to ensure interviewers are following detailed instructions when conducting the shoreside surveys.



Calculate **Next, we combine the data from the catch and effort surveys to build an estimate of overall fishing activity.**

Data Inspection



State and regional partners review the data for quality and accuracy before delivering to NOAA Fisheries to generate estimates.

Total Catch Estimate



These estimates are reported by two-month wave, state, type of fishing, area fished, and species of fish.



Quality Control

- Experts use visual and computer inspections to review the data before NOAA Fisheries generates preliminary estimates.
- These preliminary estimates are then reviewed by scientists from our regional science centers.



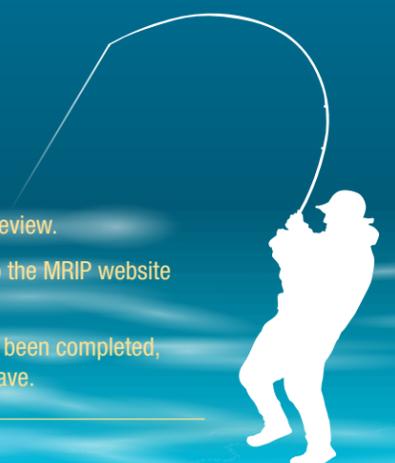
Report **We then make the data available to the public online.**

By taking a few minutes to share information about your fishing activity, you play a vital role in the ongoing process to ensure access to healthy and productive fisheries, now and for generations to come.



Quality Control

- Preliminary estimates undergo internal review.
- Preliminary estimates are then posted to the MRIP website for each two-month reporting period.
- Once all quality control procedures have been completed, final estimates are published for each wave.



Better data, better fishing.

You make it happen. Learn more at countmyfish.noaa.gov