

MEETING SUMMARY
MRIP Executive Steering Committee
April 9 2019; 4:00 pm EDT

In attendance:

Executive Steering Committee members and participants: Ned Cyr, Chair; Gordon Colvin, Executive Secretary; Clay Porch; Bob Beal; Dave Donaldson; Russ Dunn; Jenni Wallace; Steve Williams for Randy Fisher; Doug Mecum; Kitty Simonds

Presenters and Guests: Dave Bard; Dave Van Voorhees; Karen Pianka; Lauren Dolinger Few; Tom Sminkey; John Foster; Josh DeMello; Chris Wright; Kelly Denit; Catherine Krikstan

I. ACTION-Call to Order, approve Agenda: Ned Cyr

The agenda was approved without revision.

I. ACTION-FY 19 MRIP Spend Plan: Dave Van Voorhees

Dave Van Voorhees reviewed the FY 19 Spend Plan spreadsheet (attachment 1 hereto), and described differences between the FY 18 and FY 19 plans.

Steve Williams asked where the plan provided for funding for MRIP expert consultants. Dr. Van Voorhees responded that funding for MRIP contractual support is included in lines 43 and 44. Funding sufficient to cover the MRIP external expert team through the end of CY 19 is primarily included in the line 43 amount of \$210,000. For 2020 and beyond, a new contracting vehicle, ProTech, will be utilized for contract support of NOAA programs.

There were no suggested revisions or objections to proceeding with the Spend Plan as presented.

II. ACTION-FY 19 MRIP Implementation Plan: Gordon Colvin

Gordon Colvin reviewed the FY 19 Implementation Plan structure and highlighted actions.

There were no questions or suggested revisions. Accordingly, the IP will now be adopted as final.

III. INFORMATION-Modernizing Recreational Fisheries Management Act Implementation Plan: Gordon Colvin, Lauren Dolinger Few

Gordon Colvin reviewed the primary components of the "Modern Fish Act" and the plan developed by the MRIP Program Management Team to address each of them. Mr. Colvin emphasized that the PMT will be working closely with the MRIP Regional Implementation Council to develop plans for addressing key sections of the act, including the state programs, the best practices, and state program funding. He noted that a contract for the required National Academies of Science study of recreational data and in-season management is close to being completed, and will be organized much like the recent MRIP review study.

Kitty Simonds noted that, for the Pacific Islands, the Council's SSC is making recommendations to address the Sec. 102 requirement that will be presented to the Council in June. She also noted that with respect to the MRIP Regional Implementation Team, the State of Hawaii's program has a number of

vacancies and is struggling to keep up with agreed data collection priorities of the regional Fisheries Coordination Committee.

There were no other comments or questions regarding the overall plan. The PMT will keep the ESC updated as it moves forward.

Mr Colvin also outlined the provisions of the FY 19 appropriations act that provides “up to” \$3.0 M for grants to states for projects that address the 2017 National Academies of Science review of MRIP, subject to a 50% non-federal match requirement. He asked the Interstate Commission Director members to help seek advice from the states as to their degree of interest in seeking such grants.

Bob Beal asked by when input is needed, and suggested it would be helpful to receive guidance on the program to show the states very soon. Dave Donaldson agreed with that view and suggested including the FIN directors in the discussion. Steve Williams noted the RecFIN Technical Committee meets in two weeks, so there is some urgency to get information on that agenda. Mr. Colvin will send the three Commission directors and FIN directors the necessary supporting information within a week.

IV. INFORMATION-Transition Planning and State Survey Certification

- FES Transition Plan Status: Dave Van Voorhees, Kelly Denit

Dave Van Voorhees reviewed the status of execution of the Transition Plan for the Fishing Effort Survey. The plan is generally on track, and the Science Centers and ASMFC are utilizing the calibrated estimates for updating stock assessments. There are some complications with new state survey data in the Gulf states, and we are working with the Center, the states, and our consultants to address them.

- State Survey Certification and Data Integration: Richard Cody

Dave Van Vorhees reviewed the handout on the status of state survey certification prepared by Dr. Cody. (attachment 2).

- NMFS Policy Directive on Transition Planning and Certification: Gordon Colvin

Gordon Colvin provided a heads up to the committee that NMFS will soon be seeking input from key stakeholders on new Policy and Procedural Directives that include both the existing Transition Policy and a new section that covers the details of the process and requirements for survey certification.

V. Communications and Outreach

- MRIP Communications Activities: Dave Bard, Catherine Krikstan

Dave Bard and Catherine Krikstan reviewed Communications and outreach team initiatives, including:

- MA DMF/ACCSP initiative to produce messages that will help to improve for hire intercept performance;
- MRIP/GASRFO Port Agent partnership effort;
- Participation in sportfishing trade shows in the northeast;
- New MRIP brochure (and other products), content informed by MRIP Road Show feedback and regional partner input;
- MRIP Road Show for South Atlantic and Gulf now being planned for this fall;

- MRIP participation in MREP in the northeast and southeast;
 - Social Network Analysis
 - Partner and Customer Satisfaction Assessment
 - State Partner website updates
- What are you hearing? All

Dave Bard led a discussion of what ESC members are hearing. Dave Donaldson and Clay Porch reported that there is considerable frustration among states and council members regarding how state survey data will be incorporated into federal stock assessment and management (primarily in the Gulf), and that the frustration is also fueled by the perception that the FES-based estimates are unrealistically high. Dave Bard stated that the MRIP staff has established a FES response team that is developing responses to the concerns we are hearing, and we will begin to report on those at this week's South Atlantic Council SSC meeting. Ned Cyr pointed out that we have heard the concerns Mr. Donaldson and Dr. Porch described and are working to finalize and execute plans to understand the differences between the state and MRIP estimates, and to more effectively communicate about the subject. Mr. Donaldson emphasized the need for a communicating these actions quickly.

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 pm EDT.