Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program

2012

Fiscal Year in Review

ACCSP

Good Data, Good Decisions

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Philosophy

VISION

To be the principal source of fishery-dependent information on the Atlantic coast through the cooperation of all program partners in the collection and processing of common fisheries data and dissemination of the information for purposes of fisheries science and management.

MISSION

Produce dependable and timely marine fishery statistics for Atlantic coast fisheries that are collected, processed, and disseminated according to common standards agreed upon by all program partners.

VALUES

- Accurate data are required for good fisheries management decisions
- Coordination and collaboration amongst the program partners are essential for success
- The Program must be responsive to the changing needs for fisheries data
- Processes must be open and transparent, but confidential data must be protected
- Data shall be accessible and easy to use
- Responsibilities should be matched with available resources

Letter from the Chair

It is my pleasure, on behalf of all those involved with ACCSP, to present the 2012 Fiscal Year in Review. Given that the October 1995 signing of the original MOU is considered the Program's starting point, you'll notice we're just a few years away from a significant 20th anniversary. This report provides a colorful portrait of what 17 years of effort and dedication from the entire Program – from technical staff to directors - have been able to accomplish. This year I am honored to share two noteworthy and significant events from 2012.

First, the Coordinating Council approved the third edition of the Atlantic Coast Fisheries Data Collection Standards. This was the culmination of a collaborative effort, led by the Operations Committee that had its beginnings in 2010. The final product was perfected in early 2012 and approved by the Coordinating Council at its spring meeting. This document not only defines the policies and data collections standards for ACCSP, but also provides direction for evolving improvements to those standards. It is, quite literally, the operational cornerstone of ACCSP and forms the basis for the "good" in "good data, good decisions." I wish to thank everyone that was involved, particularly the committee chairs, committee work groups, and staff that did much of the heavy lifting.

The second major milestone is the Independent Program Review. This review of ACCSP is conducted "to evaluate its success in meeting the needs of fisheries managers, scientists, and fishermen." This review's planning also began back in 2010 with the formation of a Work Group led by Jack Travelstead. The Work Group, emphasizing the goal of an independent, critical, and thorough examination of the Program, developed and executed an approach that truly will be the model and standard for future reviews.

The outcome was 67 recommendations addressing the Program mission and organization, partner projects, data collection standards, data management, Standard Atlantic Fisheries Information System (SAFIS), and Program management. If I render all 67 down to a half-dozen classes of opportunities, these words come to mind: enhancement, focus, efficiency, innovation, visibility, and transparency. Just as I have immense gratitude to Jack, the Work Group, and the Panel for bringing this task to fruition, I have confidence in the program partners at all levels to take the next steps and make the most of these opportunities in the coming years.

The closing months of 2012 also brought the chill of a possible financial winter for ACCSP, as new terms like "sequestration" joined "rescission" and "continuing resolution" in our fiscal lexicon. Where we were once concerned about rising expenses and personnel costs in a world of level funding or minor rescissions, the real possibility emerged of major reductions in the Atlantic Coastal Fisheries Cooperative Management Act (ACFCMA) and the Fisheries Information Network (FIN) appropriation that make up the whole of the ACCSP budget. Considering that 75% of the funds directed toward partner projects is for recurring projects, that support ongoing data collection programs of many partners, the backsliding effect could be dire. Such cuts could also squelch innovation that is fostered by funds directed toward new projects each year. As I write this, it looks as if the reduction in the FIN portion of Program's funding will be modest and absorbable; but, we're still waiting to hear about ACFCMA ... and, we're hopeful for a quick and favorable resolution to the federal budget.

2012, like most years, has produced milestones, opportunities, and challenges. And, as in years before, the many people that comprise program partners and staff continually and adroitly turn opportunities into milestones and confront challenges with dedication and perseverance. I wish to thank everyone for the effort they brought to bear on the successes of 2012, and with which I'm confident they will face up to the challenges and opportunities of 2013. I mean this sincerely, for your commitment has made - and will keep - ACCSP a world-class model of data collection for effective fisheries management.

Regards,

Mark Alexander
Fisheries Biologist, CT DEEP
Chair, ACCSP Coordinating Council

Coordinating Council Members

Mark Alexander | **CT DEEP, Chair**

Robert E. Beal | **ASMFC**

Robert H. Boyles, Jr. | **SC DNR**

A.C. Carpenter | **PRFC**

Alex Chester | **NOAA Fisheries**

Louis Daniel | **NC DMF**

Paul Diodati | **MA DMF**

Jaime Geiger | **USFWS**

Mark Gibson | **RI DFW**

James Gilmore | **NYS DEC**

Peter Himchak | **NJ DFW**

Paul Howard | **NEFMC**

Pat Keliher | **ME DMR**

Bryan King | **DC FWD**

Robert Mahood | **SAFMC**

Jessica McCawley | **FL FWCC**

Chris Moore | **MAFMC**

Thomas O'Connell | **MD DNR**

Cheri Patterson | **NH FGD, Vice-chair**

Alan Risenhoover | **NOAA Fisheries**

Buck Sutter | **NOAA Fisheries**

Jack Travelstead | **VMRC**

Spud Woodward | **GA DNR**

Leroy Young | **PA FBC**

Background

The ACCSP was established in 1995 through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to address data deficiencies that constrained the management of fisheries along the Atlantic coast. These deficiencies included incompatibilities between state and federal data systems, a lack of standardized trip-level catch and effort reporting, a lack of universal permit and vessel registration data, and a general need for more and better data to support emerging fisheries management initiatives. The Program established four basic principles to ensure that fishery-dependent statistics are complete, accurate, consistent, and compatible:

1. Cooperative development and implementation across jurisdictional lines

2. Coastwide data collection standards and a single, integrated data management system

3. Data on all fishing activities (e.g., commercial, recreational, and for-hire fisheries)

4. Modular design for data collection and data management projects

The Program's 23 state and federal partner agencies (See page 8 for a list of program partners) had long recognized the need for complete, accurate, and timely fishery data. Partners especially wanted standardized fishery-dependent data, those collected on commercial, for-hire, and recreational fishing activity. When they signed the MOU, it was not yet clear which partner would provide the ACCSP with administrative support. In the mid-to-late 1990s, funds from partner contributions from the ACFCMA provided for a single employee and some committee work to design the program. The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) volunteered to host the staff and conduct the required meeting planning. The other partners agreed that ASMFC was the ideal choice since it had the flexible infrastructure to support the program.

In the mid-to-late 1990s, after the Program officially began, funding from ACFCMA contributions supported the establishment of committees to develop the first edition of the program design. The committees also created minimum standards and operating procedures. These committees included a variety of technical committees, an advisory committee, a steering committee (named the Operations Committee), and a policy level committee (named the Coordinating Council). The minimum standards that the committees were instructed to develop were based on needs for fisheries stock assessments and management. The committees were also instructed to evaluate current practices, not necessarily preserve the status quo, and were asked to give little weight to possible cost implications (See page 10 for a list of committees). New minimum standards included the type and resolution of data that should be collected, minimum data elements with standard codes, improved timeliness of data submissions, and quality control and assurance practices.

By 1999, data collection standards were nearly complete, and partners submitted their first funding proposals for implementing program standards. An increase in funding allowed the program and partners to begin implementation. ASMFC hired permanent staff to coordinate data collection programs, continue the evolution of standards, and create and operate the Data Warehouse. Projects were also outlined for areas where standards needed additional research. As the ACCSP and its federal appropriations continued to grow and with increased outreach efforts, the public became more aware of it. The Coordinating Council wished to address public concerns regarding the integrity of data collected by the same entities using it for fisheries management. Separation of the ACCSP from regulatory bodies, to the extent practical, was seen to help address those perception problems.

In 2001, the program partners recognized the need for stronger leadership at the staff level. The Coordinating Council voted to hire a Director. The Director, under the guidance of the Coordinating Council, would be given executive authority to manage ongoing development and operation of the program's standards and responsibility for day-to-day operations and staff oversight. Also in 2002, partners responded to fishing constituents' growing demand for landings data. The ACCSP announced the opening of the online Data Warehouse, which provided users with data contributed by partners that had implemented catch and effort data standards. Public users were allowed access to non-confidential summary data.

Several state partners still lacked the resources to imple-

ment the Program's commercial data collection standards, and with only $3.5 million to be shared by all 23 partners, a more efficient and economical solution was needed. In response, the program partners and staff developed SAFIS, a real-time, web-based data entry system for all catch and effort landings. SAFIS meant program partners could collect data from fishing constituents without the associated printing, mailing, and data entry costs (See page 30 for more on SAFIS). It also broadened the Program's scope would be broadened from a data storage entity to a data collection entity. While SAFIS allowed centralized data collection, those data were, and are, still collected under the authority of the associated program partners. Moreover, those partners check and approve their data before it is transferred, ensuring that the information found in the Data Warehouse are the best available data on the Atlantic coast (See page 24 for more on the Data Warehouse).

Beginning in 2007, the Program began working in cooperation with NOAA Fisheries to bring together commercial landings data from many program partners for inclusion in the annual publication Fisheries of the United States (FUS). Alan Lowther, statistician with NOAA Fisheries, spoke on the benefits on the collaboration, "I am pleased with the relationship ACCSP has developed with NOAA Fisheries and other partners to efficiently collect and disseminate data for the FUS publication. Each year there has been improvement in the data collection process. I look forward to continuing this positive collaboration and working together on future enhancements." (See page 28 for more on the FUS process).

In 2009, all federal dealers in the Northeast Region were using SAFIS, as well as most of the Northeast state fisheries agencies. SAFIS was expanded to not only collect commercial landings data, but also vessel trip reports, so that commercial and for-hire fishermen in states that use the tool can submit their data electronically as well. More recently, a new SAFIS application also made it possible for recreational anglers to log their fishing data.

All ACCSP-quality data collected by its partners can be integrated into the online Data Warehouse. Partners are responsible for benchmarking both recreational and commercial programs to allow maximum use of historical data while implementing the Program's standards. Benchmarking is necessary to ensure that data will be continuous, compatible, and useful for stock assessment and fisheries management purposes.

In early 2012, another major milestone of the Program was the release of the Atlantic Coast Fisheries Data Collection Standards. This document was the third iteration of the program design and illustrates the hard work that goes into the collaborative process of the Program. This document provides direction on future improvements for Atlantic coast commercial, recreational, and for-hire fisheries statistics, as well as defines policies, data collection, and data management standards for the ACCSP (See page 12 for more on the program standards). Also, in the fall of 2012, the Program completed an Independent Program Review. This process will help lead the Program in the next phase of strategic planning (See page 12 for more on the Independent Program Review).

In early 2013, ACCSP staff working with NOAA Fisheries Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Management Division released the highly anticipated application that allows dealers to submit HMS data electronically. The shift to electronic reporting for HMS dealers of these quota managed species will provide more timely data for use in monitoring landings (See page 32 for more on this application). In addition, a work group of the Operations and Advisory Committees came together to released a survey to collect opinions on fisheries electronic reporting applications on the Atlantic coast. This information will be used to guide a workshop in the fall of 2013 (See page 13 for more on this survey).

Program Partners

FEDERAL AGENCIES

NOAA Fisheries

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS)

COUNCILS & COMMISSIONS

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC)

New England Fishery Management Council (NEFMC)

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (MAFMC)

Potomac River Fisheries Commission (PRFC)

South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (SAFMC)

In 1995, the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, the three Atlantic fishery management councils, the 15 Atlantic states, the Potomac River Fisheries Commission, the D.C. Fisheries and Wildlife Division, NOAA Fisheries, and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service became the 23 program partners of the Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program.

STATE AGENCIES

Maine Dept. of Marine Resources (ME DMR)

New Hampshire Fish & Game Dept. (NH FGD)

Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries (MA DMF)

Rhode Island Division of Fish & Wildlife (RI DFW)

Connecticut Dept. of Energy & Environmental Protection (CT DEEP)

New York State Dept. of Environmental Conservation (NYS DEC)

New Jersey Division of Fish & Wildlife (NJ DFW)

Delaware Division of Fish & Wildlife (DE DFW)

Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission (PFBC)

Maryland Dept. of Natural Resources (MD DNR)

District of Columbia Fisheries & Wildlife Division (DC FWD)

Virginia Marine Resources Commission (VMRC)

North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries (NC DMF)

South Carolina Dept. of Natural Resources (SC DNR)

Georgia Dept. of Natural Resources (GA DNR)

Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission (FL FWCC)

Potomac River Fisheries Commission

Committee Overviews

Since its inception, the ACCSP has been a committee-based organization. Committees are responsible for setting program policies and standards, deciding annual funding allocations, and planning and coordinating data collection and data management programs. Committees, composed primarily of representatives from the partners, provide the framework for the collaborative processes that create and manage the standards and govern the Program. Technical committees create and manage the program standards with guidance from the Operations and Advisory Committees. The Coordinating Council provides general oversight to the Program and sets overall policies.

COORDINATING COUNCIL

The Coordinating Council is the governing body of ACCSP - establishing policies to guide the Program and overseeing program standards and implementation. Every fall, the Council approves the Program's budget for the following year. In 2012, a work group of the Coordinating Council worked to complete the Independent Program Review (See page 12 for more on the Independent Program Review).

OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

The Operations Committee guides the development of program standards and serves as the review body for annual project funding priorities. The Operations Committee provides recommendations to the Coordinating Council. In 2012, the Operations Committee worked on the Atlantic Coast Fisheries Data Collection Standards in May (See page 12 for more information on the program standards). It also was instrumental in developing the survey to collect opinions on electronic reporting for Atlantic coast fisheries in the fall of 2012 (See page 13 for more information on the electronic reporting survey).

ADVISORY COMMITEE

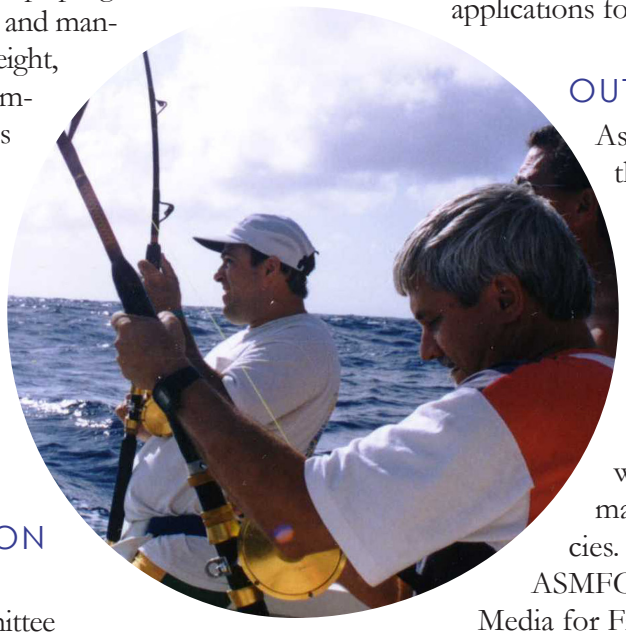
The Advisory Committee was established to ensure, to the greatest extent practicable, that all aspects of the fisheries data collection and dissemination products are considered in development and implementation. Industry advisors serve an important role by providing recommendations to the Program. The Advisory Committee includes representatives from the commercial, recreational, and academic sectors. At least one member of this Committee also sits on each technical committee to provide industry feedback. The committee also reviews and prioritizes project proposals with funding recommendations forwarded to the Coordinating Council. In 2012, the advisors worked to complete a set of guidelines describing the duties, responsibilities, and expectations of the Advisory Committee which will be finalized in early 2013. The Advisors also collaborated with the Operations Committee in the release of an electronic reporting survey collecting opinions on electronic reporting for Atlantic coast fisheries.

TECHNICAL COMMITTEES

Behind the scenes of ACCSP are six committees that develop or revise standards which in turn are reviewed by the Operations and Advisory Committees and submitted to the Coordinating Council for final approval. Here is a quick synopsis of each of those committees.

BIOLOGICAL REVIEW PANEL

The Biological Review Panel develops program strategies and standards to collect and manage biological data (e.g., length, weight, ageing). The Panel biennially recommends target species and compiles sampling levels for biological sampling and works with the Bycatch Prioritization Committee to integrate data collection protocols. Currently, the Panel is finalizing the data elements of the biological module and determining initial data sets for loading.



BYCATCH PRIORITIZATION COMMITTEE

The Bycatch Prioritization Committee develops and updates data collection standards and biennially ranks species for data collection priority based on statutory requirements, as well as stock assessments and industry needs. The Committee is currently revising the priority matrix to use defined fishing fleets.

COMMERCIAL TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

The Commercial Technical Committee develops catch and effort data standards for all species commercially harvested on the Atlantic coast and is responsible for updating and miantaining codes to improve reporting systems. In 2011, the Committee sponsored a project, "Validation of Commercial Finfish and Shellfish Conversion Factors: US East Coast Cooperative Project," and the sampling phase was completed this year. In 2013, the Committee will synthesize project results and will work with the Information Systems Committee to implement new conversion factor standards.

INFORMATION SYSTEMS COMMITTEE

The Information Systems Committee guides and advises the development of information systems supporting the implementation of program standards. This past year the Committee reviewed the existing SAFIS applications, as well as the newly implemented HMS component to ensure that upgrades in technology are factored into new design. Additionally, the Information Systems Committee has been working to review third party hand held applications for trip reporting.

OUTREACH COMMITTEE

As 2012 saw the conclusion of the 2008-2012 Outreach Strategic Plan, ACCSP staff began working with the ASMFC to form the Atlantic Coastal Fisheries Communications Group to increase networking opportunities with outreach and public affairs contacts within the state and federal marine fisheries resources agencies. In January 2013, ACCSP and ASMFC hosted a workshop on "Social Media for Fisheries Communication" in Arlington, VA (See page 13 for more information on the workshop).

RECREATIONAL TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

The Recreational Technical Committee develops data collection standards for monitoring catch and effort of recreational and for-hire fisheries. In 2012, the Committee finalized a report on a project for telephone surveys in the Mid-Atlantic region during January and February (i.e., wave 1), developed priorities for implementation of recreational data standards, and continued to support additional at-sea headboat sampling and dockside intercept sampling for charter boats from New Hampshire to Florida. Also, the Recreational Technical Committee sponsored six states (Rhode Island, New York, New Jersey, Maryland, Virginia, and South Carolina) to participate in two meetings to review the preliminary estimates from MRIP for March - December.

Highlights from 2012

INDEPENDENT PROGRAM REVIEW

Throughout 2012, an independent panel of reviewers, composed of experts with an extensive knowledge of fisheries management and, in particular, fisheries data collection, conducted a thorough evaluation of the Program. This review is a standard Program requirement, which includes formal reviews at least every ten years to evaluate the Program's success in meeting the needs of fisheries managers, scientists, and fishermen.

A Work Group of the Coordinating Council developed Terms of Reference for the review early on with input from the Independent Program Review Panel. The process also involved the expertise of SRA International, Inc. to collect broad stakeholder feedback on the Program. The final report produced by the Independent Program Review Panel greatly benefited from the results of SRA's stakeholder engagement activities, including an online survey of over 40 mid-level scientists, fishery managers, and other ACCSP customers, as well as 26 interviews with upper management officials and their staff from state and federal fisheries agencies. Additional information was solicited from 15 experts who were asked to provide more in-depth information (e.g., successes, challenges, and recommended next steps) on specific topics. The Independent Program Review Panel also convened a workshop in September 2012 to round out stakeholder input with ACCSP staff's own evaluation of Program successes and challenges. The final report will be integral in developing a new strategic plan for ACCSP. The report can be found at *www.accsp.org/programdocument.htm*.

"The 2012 ACCSP review was the most comprehensive and complete review of the organization to date. I am certain implementation of the review findings will result in great improvements to the Program. I want to commend those who served on the Work Group and Panel for their service and for their commitment to providing a review that will strengthen ACCSP, making it more capable of achieving its goals."

Jack Travelstead (VMRC), Chair of the Work Group for the Independent Program Review

ATLANTIC COAST FISHERIES DATA COLLECTION STANDARDS

In May 2012, the Program released the latest edition of the Atlantic Coast Fisheries Data Collection Standards. This document is considered the blueprint for ACCSP and will be used to direct partner data collection over the next several years. Mark Alexander (CT DEEP), Chair of the Coordinating Council, had this to say about the process "The Atlantic Coast Fisheries Data Collection Standards are significant because they've been compiled by all of the Atlantic coast federal, state, and regional fisheries agencies. This collaboration speaks to the comprehensive nature of the data collection standards. We hope that all data collectors will use this document as a guide to collect information that can be used to make sound and thorough fisheries management decisions."

Major updates of this third edition of the Program standards include a call for more timely data, specifically:

- Changing the frequency of calculating catch and effort estimates within the recreational (private and rental boat and shore-based fisheries) and for-hire fisheries to a 1 month collection period versus the current 2 month collection period.
- Accelerating data availability (data collection and processing prior to initial review) for the recreational and for-hire fisheries to 38 days (preferably 30 days) versus the current recommendation of 45 days.
- Collecting biological data every 30 days versus the current 6 month cycle.

The Atlantic Coast Fisheries Data Collection Standards can be found at *www.accsp.org/programdocument.htm*.

SURVEY ON FISHERIES ELECTRONIC REPORTING

In October 2012, members of the ACCSP Operations and Advisory Committees came together to create recommendations and identify frequently asked questions on current electronic reporting programs and approaches, evaluate the real costs and benefits of these systems, as well as improve outreach and public understanding of electronic reporting systems. The final product will be a report planned for released in the spring of 2014.

The first phase of this project included the distribution of a survey to collect attitudes and opinions from Atlantic coast fishermen and dealers about the current state of electronic reporting. By February 2013, over 1,000 responses were collected coastwide. John Carmichael (SAFMC), Project Leader, shared this about this project, "Information from this survey will be critical to addressing the concerns of the end users as future electronic reporting programs are considered. A great aspect of the project is how scientists and fishery representatives are working together. For example, the questions asked in the survey, and how they are worded, were largely determined by the fisheries representatives. This gives a bit of a different, and I think appropriate, tone to the survey than other efforts fishermen may have encountered."

The survey titled, "Improving Our Understanding of Atlantic Coast Fisheries Electronic Reporting" will be collecting responses until May 31, 2013. The next phase of the project will be a workshop in the fall of 2013 reviewing this survey information, as well as other surveys and papers on the subject of fisheries electronic reporting.

SOCIAL MEDIA FOR FISHERIES COMMUNICATION WORKSHOP

In early 2012, the Program and the ASMFC came together to form the Atlantic Coast Fisheries Communications Group to increase networking opportunities with outreach and public affairs contacts in the state and federal marine fisheries resource agencies. During the initial meeting in March of 2012, it was widely recognized that social media is an influential tool used to communicate changes to amendments, research, and other useful information in a quick and effective manner. In an effort to learn more on how other fisheries agencies successfully utilize social media, a workshop was planned and held in Arlington, VA on January 10-11, 2013.

The purpose of the Social Media for Fisheries Communications Workshop was to bring natural resource communicators from Atlantic coast states, regional fishery management councils, federal agencies, as well as non-governmental organizations together to share their experiences with the use of social media platforms (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Blogs, Mobile/Phone Apps, Live Streaming, etc.). Also, particular emphasis was placed on the integration of social media tools in communication planning, including developing guidelines on best management practices and measures to track performance. Featured speakers includes staff from the American Association for the Advancement of Science, FL FWCC, Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, MAFMC, MD DNR, National Sea Grant Office, NOAA Fisheries, PA FBC, Pew Environment Group, SAFMC, SC DNR, and the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science. A final report will be released in May 2013. This report, as well as input from the Independent Program Review will guide the 2014-2018 Outreach Strategic Plan being developed.

Program Projects

The Program supports program partners in achieving fisheries data collection goals by awarding grants through a competitive process. The competitive process is linked with the data collection standards for various modules. Catch and effort data, biological data, bycatch/species interaction data, and then social and economic was the order of priorities for data collection projects in 2012. The objectives of these projects are varied, but may include expanding data collection using SAFIS, obtaining data for fishery management plans (FMP), increasing sampling for Marine Recreation Information Program (MRIP), and promoting compliance of fishermen and dealer reporting. Below is an overview of the projects funded in 2012. On the following pages, you can find detailed descriptions of the progress of each project.

2012 PROGRAM PROJECTS: AT-A-GLANCE

PROGRAM PARTNER	PROJECT TITLE	MODULE(S)	AWARD
ME DMR	Managing Mandatory Dealer Reporting in Maine *(ongoing since 2004)*	Catch & Effort, Metadata	$233,622
MA DMF	Continue Trip-Level Reporting for All Massachusetts Commercial Permit Holders *(ongoing since 2010)*	Catch & Effort	$76,050
RI DFW	Maintenance and Coordination of Fisheries Dependent Data Feeds to ACCSP from the State of Rhode Island *(ongoing since 2000)*	Catch & Effort	$99,379
NJ DFW	Continued Dealer Reporting, Trip-Level Reporting, and Biological Sampling for Commercial Fisheries in New Jersey *(ongoing since 2001)*	Catch & Effort, Biological	$178,584
NC DMF	Update Angler Contact Information for Grandfathered Lifetime License Holders in North Carolina *(new for 2012)*	Catch & Effort	$41,500
SC DNR	ACCSP Data Reporting from South Carolina's Commercial Fisheries, 100% Trip-Level Catch and Effort Data Collection *(ongoing since 2001)* and Biological Sampling for Hard Part/Ageing of Offshore Species *(ongoing since 2004)*	Catch & Effort, Biological	$186,558
ASMFC & MAFMC	Observer Program for Mid-Atlantic (New York, New Jersey, Maryland, Virginia) and Rhode Island Small Mesh Otter Trawls *(ASMFC ongoing since 2011; MAFMC since 2012)*	Biological, Bycatch, Catch & Effort	$378,500
NOAA Fisheries – Southeast Fisheries Science Center	Processing and Ageing Biological Samples Collected from U.S. South Atlantic Commercial and Recreational Fisheries in Response to ACCSP Bio-sample Targets *(new project for 2012)*	Biological	$236,440
ACCSP Recreational Technical Committee	Increase Intercept Sampling Levels for the For-Hire Survey (FHS) Charter Fishery on the Atlantic Coast (New Hampshire, Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey, North Carolina, and South Carolina) *(ongoing coastwide since 2003)*	Catch & Effort, Biological	$128,468
	Increase At-Sea Sampling Levels for the FHS Headboat Fishery on the Atlantic Coast (New Hampshire through Florida) *(ongoing since 2003)*	Catch & Effort, Biological, Bycatch	$159,573

MAINE DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES

Beginning in January 2008, ME DMR began collecting mandatory trip-level dealer reporting. For the first time, detailed data were collected on all of Maine's commercial fisheries. The objective of this project in 2012 has been to continue with the implementation of the comprehensive dealer reporting regulation for all 680 dealers that buy directly from harvesters. Below is a list of some of the major tasks executed by ME DMR staff to accomplish this objective. A table outlining the metrics of these tasks is below.

This data collection project is one of the best ways to monitor the health of Maine's fisheries - it's vital for observing changes in fisheries.

1. *Regulation enforcement:* Since 2009, ME DMR has made referrals to Marine Patrol four times a year. Many recent enforcement calls occurred during the northern shrimp season as ME DMR enforced a weekly reporting regulation for all shrimp dealers beginning in January 2013.

2. *Data entry:* Staff works to enter positive trip records into SAFIS and MARVIN (the database that houses all catch and sampling data for ME DMR). Also, staff typically uploads data to the Data Warehouse about twice a month in order to facilitate quota monitoring. Staff also works vigorously to maintain the accuracy of the data by checking for unknown harvesters, weights that exceeded a trip limit, high and low prices, wrong species-gear-disposition combinations, species caught outside of the season, and dealers who reported buying from unlicensed harvesters.

3. *Outreach:* In order to help industry understand the importance of accurate and timely reporting, staff often works with dealers to discuss options and provide training on software. Electronic reporting is encouraged for those still opting to report on paper. These data also are available to scientists, private organizations, industry, academia, and/or media that may have a specific question, or custom data request, on fisheries data in Maine.

This project helps ensure that fisheries managers have the most accurate and timely information available when fisheries-related decisions are made. A prelimi-

MAJOR TASKS IMPLEMENTED BY ME DMR FOR COMPREHENSIVE DEALER REPORTING

TASK	MEASUREMENT	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012*	2013*
Regulation Enforcement	*Dealer licenses rejected due to failure to report*	43	155	48	56	66	81	16	35	14	0
	Compliance calls to delinquent dealers					166	297	258	451	523	80
Data Entry	*Trip records by year landed in Data Warehouse*	16,518	27,455	57,608	163,515	448,653	447,573	477,782	475,770	408,536	0
	Positive trip records by year landed in MARVIN	15,830	31,488	61,656	76,742	197,283	159,432	143,953	124,057	94,610	131
	Positive trip records by year landed in SAFIS	21,045	22,632	53,456	88,598	250,093	286,456	329,238	348,363	358,054	7,977
	Frequency of data submitted by year landed	Yearly	Yearly	Yearly	Yearly	Yearly - 2X month	2X month	2X month	2X month	2X month	2X month
Outreach	*Dealers submitting positive reports in SAFIS*	68	77	97	141	203	228	273	290	310	163
	Custom data requests		11	95	155	204	269	274	281	298	35

* 2012 and 2013 data are incomplete

nary report issued by ME DMR in February 2013 showed that:

1. In 2012, Maine's commercially harvested marine resources exhibited a 10% increase in pounds landed and a 20% increase in value over 2011.

2. There were 7,266 active Maine commercial fishermen in 2012 (of those, 4,288 were active commercial lobster harvesters out of 5,963 lobster license holders).

3. The top five fisheries in terms of active harvesters included soft shell clams with 1,709, marine worms with 689, periwinkles with 648, and elvers with 565.

In the past five years the project has shown to be vital for monitoring changes in fisheries, providing knowledge of fleet characteristics, and ensuring accurate communications to NOAA Fisheries and ASMFC about Maine landings. The Department also uses the data submitted for socio-economic reasons. This data collection is one of the best ways to monitor the health of Maine's fisheries.

MASSACHUSETTS DIVISION OF MARINE FISHERIES

Starting in 2010, the MA DMF embarked on a new project, supported through the ACCSP, to achieve a goal common to all ACCSP program partners – to collect comprehensive, standardized trip-level catch and effort data from all commercial permit holders. Prior to that, MA DMF had collected catch and effort data from commercial harvesters using 19 different catch report types directed at specific fisheries. Some of the report types collected data at the trip-level, whereas some were submitted annually and summarized only on a monthly basis. Now the state-reporting harvesters can report one of two ways: (1) electronically through the use of the eTRIPS application or (2) via paper submission, which is delivered by mail, email, or fax (See figure above). Because many commercial permit holders are not capable of reporting electronically, paper submission is their only option, and thus MA DMF must accommodate handling the reports and entering the data submitted in this fashion. All data reported to MA DMF is then entered directly to SAFIS using the eTRIPS application, as is done by state-reporting harvesters reporting electronically. Thus, all state-reported catch and effort data ends up in the SAFIS database, regardless of how it is submitted. Catch and effort data reported by federally permitted vessels (i.e., VTR data), is maintained independently by NOAA Fisheries and those permit holders do not report to MA DMF. In 2012, 16% of commercial permit holders reported this way, whereas the remainder reported to MA DMF, with two thirds of the permit holders submitting paper reports.

This project, which collects comprehensive fishery-dependent data from harvesters - creates improvements in data quality, quantity, & timeliness.

MA DMF ISSUED COMMERCIAL PERMITS BY REPORTING TYPE & YEAR

During 2012, ACCSP staff completed the enhancement to the eTRIPS application to accommodate an easier way for MA DMF staff to enter catch and effort data received via paper reports. This was done through an eTRIPS file upload module where a comma separated

value (.CSV) file containing multiple trip records could be uploaded to SAFIS. This meant MA DMF staff could enter all data locally into a customized spreadsheet, taking advantage of copying repeatable trip based attributes across multiple records, which could then be transformed easily into a .CSV file for upload. This file upload dramatically improved the time to process and enter paper-based reports, compared to entering them one trip at a time through the eTRIPSs application.

This project, which collects standardized comprehensive fishery-dependent data from harvesters, creates improvements in data quality, quantity, and timeliness. Although this project only covers the activities of Massachusetts commercial harvesters, it does include the harvest of species which are managed regionally, such as lobster, striped bass, scup and sea bass. Thus, regional management bodies, such as ASMFC, benefit from having comprehensive fishery-dependent data from Massachusetts. MA DMF also has been collecting economic data on a year-end report about some of its fisheries, such as value of vessel, fuel used, value of gear, and can be provided to ACCSP when the socio-economic modules are ready to accept data.

RHODE ISLAND DIVISION OF FISH & WILDLIFE

RI DFW requires all seafood dealers holding a Rhode Island Seafood Dealer license to enter complete trip-level data into SAFIS every Monday and Thursday (RIMFC Reg section 19.14). State licensed and federally permitted dealers are given technical support upon request. Most of these requests concern the file upload process, conversion table updating, and general assistance with user applications. All new Rhode Island dealers are trained on SAFIS by staff. RI DFW Staff also processed the submitted logbooks, entered data directly into eTRIPS, and checked quality assurance for the 2011 and 2012 Catch and Effort Harvester Logbooks. Monthly compliance tracking for the Harvester Logbook was also carried out to monitor all license holders that are required to fill out the logbook for compliance with RIGL 20-2.1-4(d) & 20-4-5 including those fishermen who are authorized to enter their data directly into eTRIPS.

RI DFW continues to use SAFIS dealer landings as the primary source for quota monitoring data.

RI DFW continues to use SAFIS dealer landings as the primary source for quota monitoring data. Additionally, data requests of SAFIS dealer reports were processed frequently during this period; many requests were processed in support of ASMFC compliance reports and fishery management plans, shellfish management, enforcement, and commercial fishing license tracking. During the reporting period, 5,156 positive commercial trips were entered into eTRIPS for 2011 and 6,196 for 2012, which brings the total number of trips entered for Rhode Island to 25,308. There were 61 Dockside Sales Reports entered into an in-house database for 2012 from this period. Vessel trip reports were monitored for 137 vessels and their associated captains. Additionally, data requests relative to catch and effort of finfish, whelk, and crustaceans were completed for RI DFW staff and were used in progress reports, compliance reports, and in house stock assessment models.

Rhode Island utilizes a voluntary online saltwater recreational fishing logbook through the ACCSP application, eLogbook. In 2010, the RI DFW adopted Marine Fisheries Regulation 7.9.1-2 requiring any party and charter vessels that make tautog dedicated trips to fill out reports in the eLogbook application. This requirement allows RI DFW to be able to accurately quantify the landings, as well as the amount of fishing pressure tautog experiences from party and charter vessels. This data is useful in creating and developing updated regulations for the tautog fishing seasons, minimum sizes, and bag limits.

Currently, there are over 250 Rhode Island recreational fishermen using this application to record their trip-level catch and effort information. The RI DFW website and the ri.gov website have links to eLogbook and provide information on how to properly sign up and enter data into the application. Any recreational fishermen can sign up for this application (not just party and charter vessels that make tautog dedicated trips).

NEW JERSEY DIVISION OF FISH & WILDLIFE

Since 2001, several projects - which meet ASMFC fisheries management guidelines - have been and continue to be implemented in New Jersey through funds provided by the ACCSP. Below is a list of the projects and tasks that have proved to be invaluable in proactive management of the significant marine resources in New Jersey.

1. *Electronic Vessel Trip Reporting (eTRIPS)*: Staff has been working to standardize commercial trip-level landings electronically through the eTRIPS application. Since September 2010, New Jersey has acquired a total of 191 user accounts for individuals participating in the commercial blue crab and American eel fisheries. Staff continue to update user accounts, provide logistical support for fishers entering data, and supply new users with the tools necessary to report commercial landings successfully. A total of 242,166 trips have been recorded for New Jersey fishermen in the eTRIPS application.

2. *Biological Characterization of Commercial Fisheries*: There is continued implementation of biological sampling for ASMFC regulated species found in New Jersey (e.g., weakfish, Atlantic croaker, American shad, Atlantic menhaden, and American eel) through dependent port sampling. Also, summer flounder, black sea bass, and river herring (alewife and blue back) are sampled through the independent Ocean Trawl Survey.

This project provides an invaluable tool for proactive management of the marine resources in New Jersey.

3. *Fishery-Dependent At-Sea Observer Program:*
New Jersey ACCSP staff continue at–sea observer sampling for American lobster, black sea bass and tautog. Since 2008, ACCSP staff have participated in 69 observer trips for American lobster, characterizing and measuring over 47,000 individual lobsters. These data are the only source from waters off the coast of NJ (Lobster Conservation Management Areas 4 & 5). Since 2008, staff have participated in 5 at-sea observer trips for black sea bass collecting over 1,700 individual data points to contribute to our fishery dependent data. For tautog, data is collected from two primary sources: the commercial fishery, and the recreational party/charter boat sector. Both fishery dependent sources provide unique data points. This fishery-dependent data is critical to identifying trends in commercial landings and accurate management.

4. *Data Feeds:* Staff maintains data feeds to the ACCSP for inclusion into SAFIS and the Data Warehouse.

5. *Electronic Dealer Reporting (eDR):* There is continued implementation of the SAFIS electronic dealer reporting (eDR) application (See page 30 for more information of eDR) for state and federally permitted seafood dealers in New Jersey for the quota-based management of key regulated species including summer flounder, black sea bass, bluefish, and scup.

NORTH CAROLINA DIVISION OF MARINE FISHERIES

NC DMF began requiring a Coastal Recreational Fishing License (CRFL) in January 2007 for anyone fishing in coastal fishing waters defined by N.C.G.S. § 113-129 (4). North Carolina citizens, anglers, and fisheries managers expected that a CRFL would provide a sample frame of marine and estuarine anglers to increase the resolution, efficiency, and precision of recreational effort and catch estimates.

Results obtained from this survey are expected to increase the efficiency for counting and including saltwater anglers in future surveys.

The objective of this project is to conduct a large scale update involving lifetime license holders who were grandfathered into the CRFL. Once angling status is assigned, records for license holders who do not participate in saltwater fishing can be removed from annual updating priority. Those license holders who do saltwater fish will be added to the CRFL list and included in the cost-effective updating procedures currently being developed.

The benefits of the study are twofold. First, it will serve to identify saltwater anglers among the combination license holders and to update angler contact information. This information will be used to better meet the National Saltwater Angler Registry exemption requirements. Second, results obtained from the survey are expected to increase the efficiency of the database for counting and including saltwater anglers in future surveys. The survey will also obtain more precise and accurate estimation of fishing pressure placed on state and federally managed fisheries while making future data updating processes more time and cost effective.

The major tasks of the project include 1) determine subpopulation of residents of North Carolina, create a mail schedule, and identify materials needed; 2) conduct mail survey; 3) enter data; and 4) perform an analysis. Since the project began, a list of potential license holders was developed. The NC DMF has worked with NC Wildlife Resources Commission and run the 'National Change of Address' software against the subpopulation list to determine valid addresses. A sample of 50,000 addresses will be randomly chosen among those records deemed to have a valid address. The survey will be conducted, entered, and analyzed by June 30, 2013. A final report will include response rate, activity participation rates, demographic statistics, and evaluation of potential non-response bias.

SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

The first objective of this project is to collect and integrate trip-level catch and effort reporting for all South Carolina commercial fisheries. The 100% collection efforts for trip-level commercial landings data continued throughout 2012. Licensed wholesale dealers are required to report complete and accurate ACCSP compliant commercial fisheries data through state-provided trip ticket logbooks. These logbooks require the dealers to provide landings and price data, and collect effort data from the commercial fisherman at the time of the purchase. Dealers are tracked for monthly compliance of reporting deadlines, and those that are delinquent receive a warning letter with a secondary deadline to submit late trip tickets. If they fail to comply, SC DNR Law Enforcement is notified; the dealer may be cited, fined, or, if convicted, could have his license suspended for failure to report. Staff has taken a more proactive approach to communicate with dealers and fishermen about the importance of accurate and timely reporting, the consequences of failing to report, as well as identifying possible non-reporting issues.

Throughout 2012, data entry has continued and timeliness has improved. Staff continues to track compliance and

These data directly support stock assessment analysis for federally managed species.

code, enter, and edit data. The data from 2012 has been entered, verified, and submitted to the ACCSP by the March 1, 2013 deadline. These data are used to aid in the management of Atlantic coast fisheries.

The second objective of this study is to collect biological data samples, including age structures (e.g., otoliths, scales, spines) and length frequency, from South Carolina commercial fisheries. Sample collection from these representative species follows specific sampling targets compiled by ACCSP and sampling protocols for the Trip Interview Program (TIP) under the direction of the NOAA Fisheries Southeast Fisheries Science Center. These data directly support stock assessment analysis for federally managed species. Data assessments currently being conducted on these species show a need for more effective age/growth models, which requires additional biological sampling.

ATLANTIC STATES MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION & MID-ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

The purpose of the project is to collect biological and discard data for commercially and recreationally important species from the small mesh otter trawl fisheries in the Mid-Atlantic region and Rhode Island using at-sea observers. The project supports the need for collecting, processing, and ageing of samples from the existing ASMFC observer program, as well as samples collected in this expanded observer program through the hiring of personnel to carry out ageing.

Obtaining discard and biological information is criti-

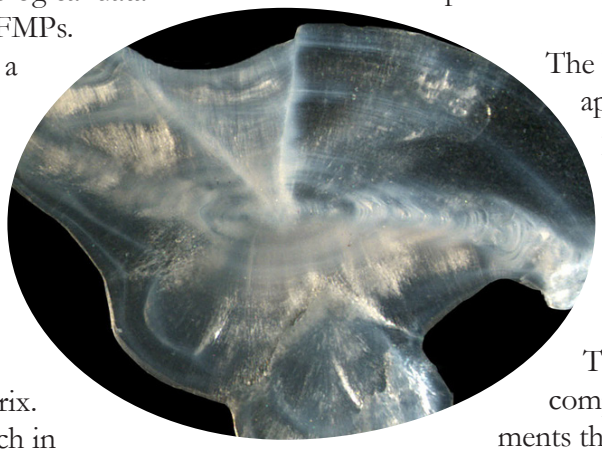
BENEFITS FOR STOCK ASSESSMENTS, FMPS, & ACCSP PRIORITIES FROM ASMFC/MAFMC PROJECT BY SPECIES

SPECIES	BENEFIT/RESULT	RESPONSE TO
American shad/river herring	*Provide data for determination of bycatch within state and ocean waters.*	ACCSP Bycatch Matrix, ASMFC research needs
	Additional fishery monitoring to determine the significance of river herring and shad incidental catch in mackerel, scup, butterfish fisheries	MAFMC Amendment 14
Black sea bass	*Increased age sampling across all components of the fishery*	ACCSP Biological Matrix, ASMFC research needs
Atlantic croaker	*Improve catch and effort statistics from the commercial and recreational fisheries, along with size and age structure of the catch.*	ASMFC research needs
Bluefish	*Collection of size and age composition data from the fisheries*	ASMFC research needs, MAFMC management board directive
Butterfish	*Improve precision of butterfish discard estimates*	MAFMC Amendment 10, stock assessment recommendation
Longfin squid	*Growth information, particularly for older L. pealeii, is still uncertain. Additional growth studies are required to better estimate average growth patterns and to discern seasonal patterns.*	ACCSP Biological Matrix, stock assessment recommendation
Scup	*Adequately characterize the quantity, length and age composition of fishery catches*	ACCSP Biological Matrix, stock assessment recommendation
	Increased observer coverage for Winter I period directed offshore scup fishery and bycatch squid fishery	ACCSP Bycatch Matrix, ASMFC research needs
Summer flounder	*Collection of age/length samples and catch/effort data from commercial fisheries throughout range. More comprehensive collection of otoliths*	ACCSP Biological Matrix, ASMFC research needs
Weakfish	*Collection of catch and effort data including size and age composition of the catch. Increase length frequency sampling, particularly in fisheries from Maryland and further north.*	ACCSP Biological Matrix, stock assessment recommendation

**The ACCSP Biological and Bycatch matrices can he found http://www.accsp.org/funding.htm.*

Obtaining discard and biological information is critical to adequately characterize the quantity, length, and age compositions of fishery catches.

cal to adequately characterize the quantity, length, and age compositions of fishery catches. A recurring high priority issue is to increase at-sea observer coverage for several species managed by ASMFC and MAFMC in order to obtain commercial discard and associated biological data for use in stock assessments and FMPs. Also, ASMFC recently developed a list of coast wide critical research priorities identifying the need for at-sea observer data of discards, age/length samples and/or catch/effort data for river herring, shad, and scup among other species. All of these species are indentified in the upper quartile of the ACCSP Biological Matrix. These species are caught as bycatch in fisheries in the Mid-Atlantic using small mesh (<5.5") otter trawls, the fourth highest priority fishery as identified in the ACCSP Bycatch Matrix. Additionally, a paper on river herring discards recommends increasing observer coverage, particularly in the Mid-Atlantic region, to determine adequate catch sample sizes and derive discard estimates. Additionally, the catch and effort data obtained from these trips will be supplied to the appropriate partner to be able to validate vessel reported and landings information. The data collected from this project will address many identified critical needs for advancing stock assessments and improving fisheries management across the Mid-Atlantic region. A table outlining the benefits of collecting this information for a specific species is below.



ASMFC and MAFMC set the schedule for the Northeast Fishery Observer Program (NEFOP) and these observed at-sea days supplement coverage for the Standardized Bycatch Reporting Methodology. Since the project began in August 2011, there has been an average of 16 at-sea days per month, and the first year of the program collected approximately 800 scale and 330 otolith samples. Data are collected and processed according to the NEFOP data collection standards.

NOAA FISHERIES - SOUTHEAST FISHERIES SCIENCE CENTER

Extensive collections of otoliths and spines dating back to the 1970s for many of the most important reef fish species of the South Atlantic are stored at the NOAA Fisheries Beaufort Laboratory. These collections have been greatly enhanced by sampling targets for biological samples that ACCSP compiles and distributes, including 20 species in the SAFMC Snapper Grouper FMP.

The Beaufort Laboratory receives approximately 20,000 age samples per year from commercial and recreational fisheries landings contributed by many agencies including the NC DMF, SC DNR, FL FWCC, NOAA Fisheries Headboat Survey, and TIP. These samples provide age composition data for stock assessments through the SEDAR process. The data associated with each sample are first verified, and then standardized to protocols outlined in the Atlantic Coast Fisheries Data Collection Standards, and finally logged into a bio-sample inventory.

Since the project began, the ageing laboratory (consisting of three staff contracted through ACCSP funds, two permanent staff, and one other contract staff) were able to process and age:

- 3,300 black sea bass (collected in 2011 and 2012)
- 3,117 blueline tilefish (collected in 2003 - 2011)
- 6,240 gray triggerfish (collected in 1990 - 2011)
- 2,400 snowy grouper (collected from 2010 - 2012)

These species are four of the species that are scheduled for a SEDAR assessment in 2013.

Another objective of this project is standardize processing techniques, be consistent in age determination analysis, and resolve ageing discrepancies between laboratories. Staff has

Since this project began six months ago, staff have processed & aged more than 12,000 samples from four species scheduled for stock assessments in 2013.

participated in ageing workshops for gray triggerfish and blueline tilefish with researchers from Old Dominion University and SC DNR. Reference sets were exchanged between the laboratories for analysis on consistency of age readings and to develop age error matrices for the stock assessments. The laboratory continues to receive 20,000 age samples representing about 73 different species per year.

ACCSP RECREATIONAL TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

The Recreational Technical Committee of the ACCSP sponsored a proposal to increase intercept sampling levels for the MRIP for-hire methodology of the charter boat and headboat fishery on the Atlantic coast. The need for precise regional estimates for recreational and for-hire fisheries have become increasingly more critical with the reauthorization of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. These samples are a benefit to recreational data users because they improve precision of catch estimates for charter boat and headboats and emphasize 'high priority' species for assessment updates. This project also increases collection of biological information (e.g., lengths, weights) using discards and harvested landings.

For 2011 (the last complete year of sample collection numbers), the ACCSP has been able to increase the samples for headboats by 43% and for charter boats by 62% along the Atlantic coast (See table below). This increase in samples ultimately reduces variance and allows for more precise estimates of recreational fisheries data. Also, improved precision of catch estimates allow for timely 'observed harvest' and 'released alive' information relevant to 2012 stock assessments.

CHARTER AND HEADBOAT SAMPLES FOR 2011*

STATE	HEADBOAT		CHARTER BOAT	
	NOAA Fisheries	ACCSP	NOAA Fisheries	ACCSP
NH FGD	*40*	*22*	*140*	*122*
MA DMF	*88*	*42*	*285*	*182*
NYS DEC	*100*	*26*	*325*	*142*
NJ DFW	*112*	*36*	*334*	*79*
DE DFW	*68*	*38*		
MD DNR	*84*	*42*		
VMRC	*68*	*32*	*237*	*188*
NC DMF	*112*	*52*	*406*	*374*
SC DNR			*290*	*204*
GA DNR			*245*	*115*
Total	*672*	*290*	*2,262*	*1,407*

** For March-December of 2011, the last complete year with reported data*

HEADBOAT SPECIES OF CONCERN

STATE	SPECIES OF CONCERN
MA DMF	Scup, winter flounder
NH FGD	Atlantic cod, Atlantic mackerel, haddock
NYS DEC	Atlantic cod, black sea bass, tautog
NJ DFW	Striped bass
DE DFW	Atlantic croaker
MD DNR	Tautog
NC DMF	Black sea bass*, gray triggerfish*, red porgy*, Vermilion snapper*
SC DNR	Black sea bass*, Vermilion snapper*
GA DNR	Black sea bass*, Red snapper*, Vermilion snapper*
FL FWCC	Black sea bass*, gag*, red grouper*, red porgy*, red snapper*,

** Indicates those species that have upcoming regional stock assessments, updates, or review.*

The Recreational Technical Committee also sponsored a proposal to increase at-sea sampling levels for the for-hire survey of the headboat fishery on the Atlantic coast. This project continues supporting a sampling level necessary to provide sufficiently precise estimates at the state level in the headboat mode of the Access Point Angler Intercept Survey. Specifically, this increase funds 285 at-sea sampling trips aboard party/headboats in New Hampshire, Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida. The headboat sampling allocations and funding are kept at sufficient levels to maintain the improvements accomplished at the state level for catch-per-unit-effort in headboat mode. This project preserves the only existing coastwide time-series on discarded catch from headboats. The table above highlights key state species harvested by headboats.

This project preserves the only existing coastwide time-series on discarded catch from headboats on the Atlantic coast.

Data Warehouse

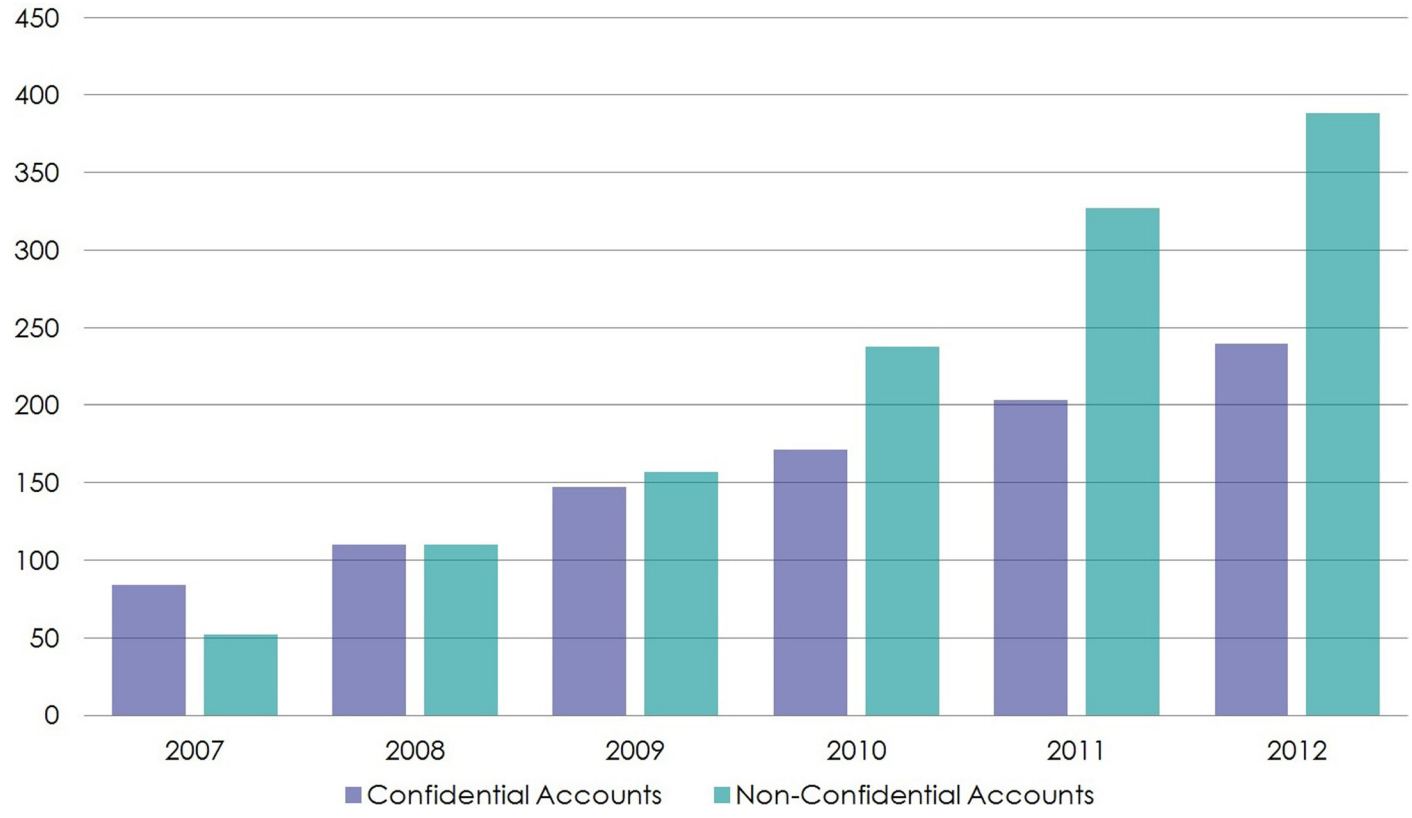
The Data Warehouse is an online database populated with Atlantic coast fishery-dependent data. It is one way the data collected from the projects described in pages 14 - 23 are organized and disseminated. The Data Warehouse contains commercial landings from Maine through Florida from 1950 through 2012 and recreational landings from Maine through Florida from 1981 through 2012.

What makes the Data Warehouse unique is that it harmonizes data received from program partners into one integrated set of codes for variables such as species, gear, and fishing area. Also, it gives users flexible and intuitive data queries to retrieve and download the information they need. Users of the Data Warehouse include anyone interested in Atlantic coast fishery-dependent data, such as fishery managers, stock assessment scientists, writers, historians, commercial and recreational fishermen, students, NGOs, as well as federal, state, or local government employees.

Most users access the Data Warehouse by requesting a confidential or non-confidential account. The Data Warehouse uses an online query tool that allows users to customize a number of prebuilt queries. The tool understands the user's level of access and presents only those data that are appropriate. The Program currently has approximately 625 accounts in the Data Warehouse. See the graph below illustrating the increase in accounts since 2007.

Custom data requests are another way of accessing the data in the Data Warehouse. Since 2008, over 200 custom data requests have been completed by the Data Team. In 2012, these requested data sets were used for a briefing for the Shrimp Advisory Panel of the SAFMC, to evaluating potential management actions for royal red and rock shrimp fisheries, to providing content to a film on conservation efforts for the Atlantic coast. In 2012, ACCSP also hosted several Data Warehouse webinars reaching over 80 individuals. The webinars provided an overview on how to effectively gain access to and navigate within the Data Warehouse, how to cite ACCSP data, as well as an in-depth look at the caveats that exist within the Data Warehouse.

DATA WAREHOUSE ACCOUNTS



WHAT DATA ARE IN THE DATA WAREHOUSE?

Commercial Catch & Effort

The goal of program partners is to advance the implementation and maintenance of trip-level reporting for all fisheries. At this time, the catch and effort data module is the most complete.

The chart below reflects the level of detail of the catch and effort data in the Data Warehouse. More importantly, this chart shows how collection methods have evolved. The broadest level of catch and effort data in the Data Warehouse is annual summaries dating back to 1950.

Recreational Catch & Effort

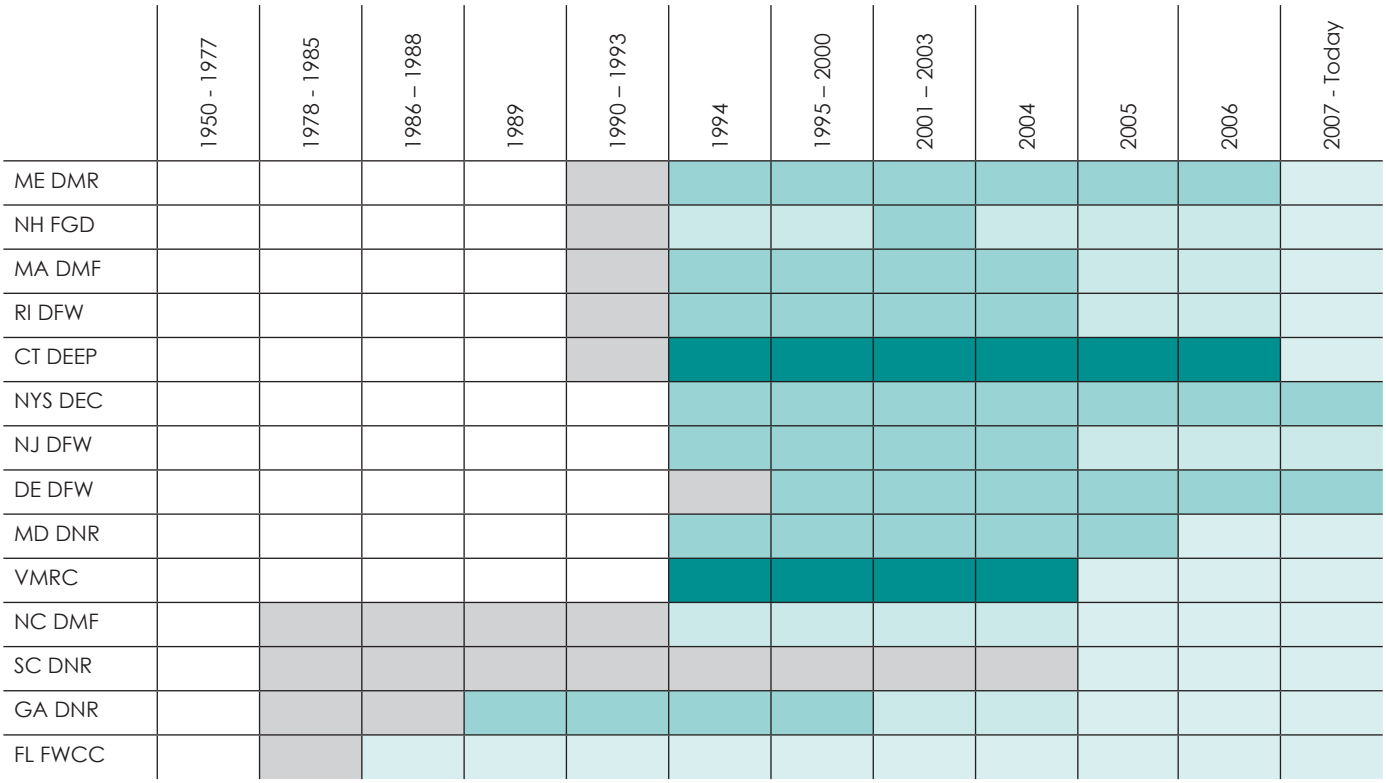
Data Warehouse users can also query or request recreational catch and effort data. The most recent data includes wave 6 (November - December) for 2012. The 2004 - 2012 data have been updated in conjunction with the new MRIP estimation methodology released in early 2012. This includes both the public estimates and the advanced queries for bag limit analysis and directed trips.

Biological Data

Additionally, users have access to available biological data. This biological data includes information on American lobster from 1981 - 2007 and Atlantic herring from 2002 - 2010. Currently, this information is only available through a custom data request.

STATUS OF COMMERCIAL CATCH & EFFORT DATA COLLECTION

The chart below illustrates how data are collected at the partner level and the level of detail at which those data are submitted to the Program. For example, 'Trip reports (presented as monthly summaries)' means that data were collected by partners at the trip-level and submitted as monthly summaries to NOAA Fisheries or ACCSP. The Program began receiving all data directly from partners in 2007.



WHAT DO THE COLORS REPRESENT?

Annual summaries	Monthly summaries	Trip reports represented as monthly summaries	Mixed trip reports and monthly summaries	Trip reports (all fisheries)

HOW ARE THE DATA LOADED INTO THE DATA WAREHOUSE?

Annual Commercial Catch & Effort Load Process

Commercial catch and effort data are loaded into the Data Warehouse by the Data Team twice a year. The preliminary load of the previous year's data occurs from February through April. These data are considered incomplete data due to known late reporting issues, but are still a good measure of landings. During the final load of the previous year's data, from August through September, updates are made to previously submitted data sets and late reports are added. Once this final load process is complete in September, the previous year's data is a robust and complete measure of landings.

Identify Data Sets & Consolidate Participant Files: The data load process begins each year when approximately 30 data sets (See page 28 for data sets collected by staff in the spring of 2012) are identified and individual participant files (e.g., dealers, fishermen, vessels) are submitted to ACCSP staff by the program partners. Staff then load the participant files for each data source and merge those data to remove duplicate entries and maintain a history of the individual permits.

Load Initial Data: Next, program partners submit trip-level data sets including dealer landings, as well as harvester and fishermen catch records. Before data submission, program partners are responsible for the first round of quality assurance and control measures. Each partner has its own unique set of measures. These submitted trip-level data sets include references to the previously loaded participant files (see *Identify Data Sets & Consolidate Participant Files*). At this point, the Data Team completes an initial load of the data sets. If the participant information is not linked, the landings are entered as "unknown". During this step, data sets are considered initial because there may be records that indicate dealer and fishermen information for the same fish being landed. However, this information is merged in the next step.

Merge Dealer and Fishermen Data & Load Secondary Data: Due to variations in reporting requirements along the coast, in some cases the most accurate accounting for landings is a combination of dealer and fisherman reports. Therefore, the Data Team has written software (customized to program partner requests) to merge records for six states that have both fishermen and dealer data reporting requirements. During this step, the Data Team completes a secondary load of all of the merged data. Also, there is a second round of quality assurance and control measures, as ACCSP staff validates poundage, price, and conversion factors. If any program partners have resubmitted data, it will be updated at this time.

Data Warehouse Views are Refreshed: Once the process is complete, there is a refresh of the Data Warehouse including the preliminary data sets from the previous year conducted in April and then again in September incorporating final data sets from the previous year. At either point in the process, confidential and non-confidential account holders can view the previous year's consolidated data sets in the Data Warehouse. Both the preliminary and final data sets are submitted to NOAA Fisheries for inclusion within the fisheries databases of the Northeast Fisheries Science Center, Southeast Fisheries Science Center, and Headquarters. The data are also incorporated in the annual Fisheries of the United States document (See page 28 for more information). Once preliminary or final data sets are uploaded to the Data Warehouse, quality assurance and control queries can be run by members of the ACCSP Commercial Technical Committee. If it turns out that partner data sets from any year need to be updated, those new data sets are integrated into the Data Warehouse after merges. If significant changes are incorporated to data sets, a refresh to the Data Warehouse will occur and partners are notified so that they can update the data in their systems. Please visit *http://www.accsp.org/login.htm* for the most up-to-date commercial catch and effort data.

Annual Recreational Catch & Effort Load Process

The data set for the recreational catch and effort data is the information gathered from MRIP. Recreational catch and effort data is loaded into the Data Warehouse by the Data Team one week after it is released by MRIP. MRIP releases data 45 days after each collection period, known as a "wave" is complete. Each wave is a two month interval (i.e., January and February = wave 1, March and April = wave 2, May and June = wave 3, July and August = wave 4, September and October = wave 5, November and December = wave 6).

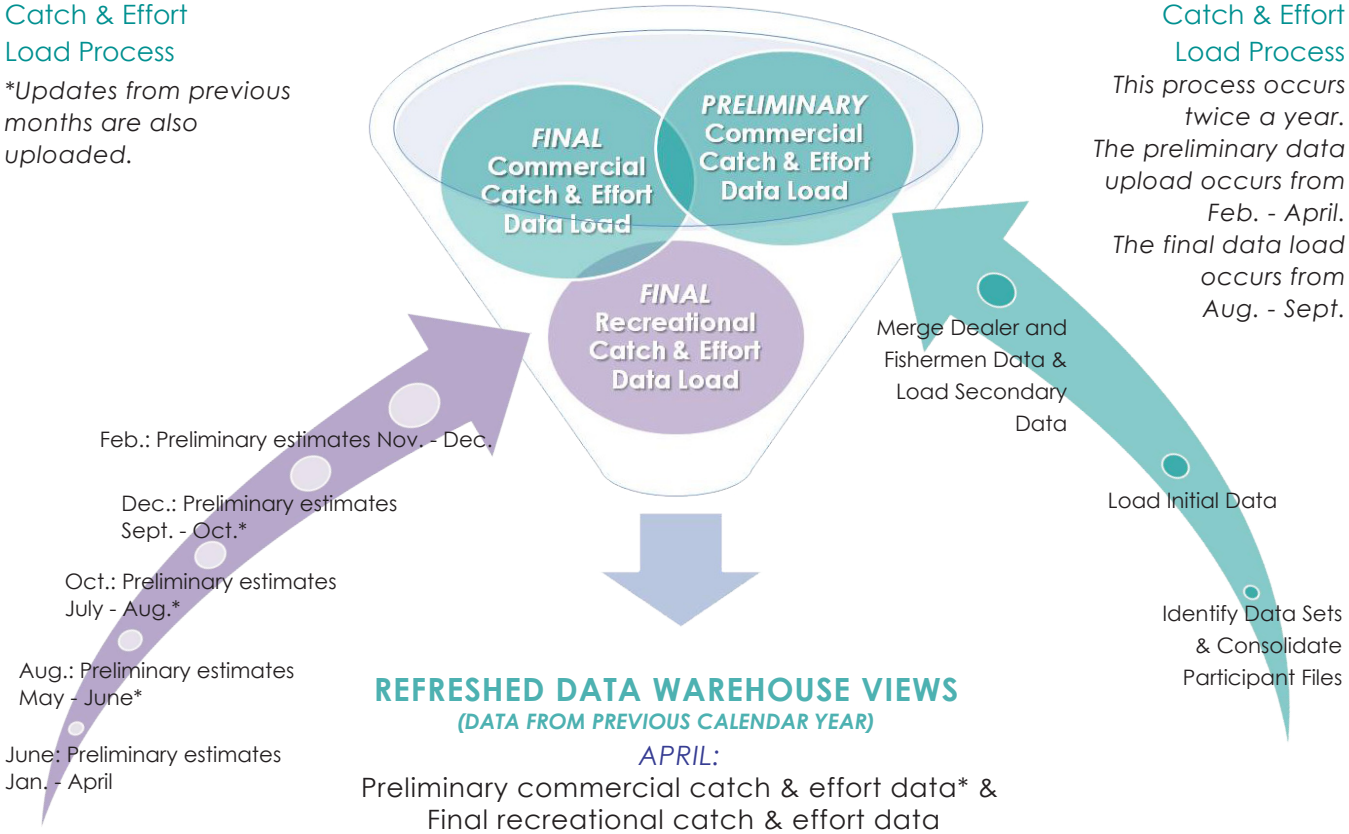
While the Data Warehouse stores the same information as MRIP, ACCSP provides added value to that information with time-saving tools (such as exporting pivot tables and the ability to email workbooks), attractive reports tailored to your needs, and the ability to create a query with a uniquely fine-tuned level of detail for Atlantic coast fisheries. Please visit *http://www.accsp.org/login.htm* for the most up-to-date recreational catch and effort data.

June: Load preliminary estimates from January - April
August: Load preliminary estimates from May - June and any updates to previous months
October: Load preliminary estimates from July - August and any updates to previous months
December: Load preliminary estimates for September - October and any updates to previous months
February: Load preliminary estimates for November - December
April: Load final estimates from previous year

ANNUAL COMMERCIAL AND RECREATIONAL DATA LOAD PROCESS

Annual Recreational Catch & Effort Load Process

**Updates from previous months are also uploaded.*



Annual Commercial Catch & Effort Load Process

This process occurs twice a year. The preliminary data upload occurs from Feb. - April. The final data load occurs from Aug. - Sept.

REFRESHED DATA WAREHOUSE VIEWS
(DATA FROM PREVIOUS CALENDAR YEAR)

APRIL:
Preliminary commercial catch & effort data* &
Final recreational catch & effort data

SEPTEMBER:
Final commercial catch & effort data

**These data are recognized as incomplete data due to known late reporting issues, but are still a good measure of landings.*

FISHERIES OF THE UNITED STATES

Since 2007, the Program has worked in cooperation with NOAA Fisheries to bring together commercial landings data for the annual publication Fisheries of the United States (FUS). By working with partners to develop the FUS data sets, the Program is able to populate the Data Warehouse at a finer resolution to further support the ACCSP mission.

In the spring of 2011, staff compiled and submitted approximately 30 data sets to NOAA Fisheries, including SAFIS dealer reports through an open and collaborative process led by ACCSP. These data sets were obtained in the spring as preliminary and were updated as final data in the fall of 2011 (See page 26 - 27 for more on the commercial catch and effort data load process). The process has been expedited because partners have elected to use SAFIS, which compiles many data sets into a single data set. With the implementation of SAFIS, data are more readily available - a benefit to partners when it comes time for reviewing data during stock assessments and developing fishery management plans.

Since 2007, ACCSP has been working with program partners to compile data sets for the NOAA Fisheries commercial landings publication, Fisheries of the United States.

For the FUS compilation process, the Data Team provides data from Maine to Virginia directly to NOAA Fisheries Headquarters, while data from South Carolina and Georgia is provided to NOAA Fisheries Southeast Regional Office. North Carolina and Florida provide data directly to NOAA Fisheries. It is important to recognize, that ACCSP does receive data sets directly from North Carolina and Florida and incorporates those data into the Data Warehouse during the commercial catch and effort data load process (See page 26 - 27 for more on the data load process), however, those data sets are not submitted by ACCSP as a part of the FUS process.

DATA SETS COMPILED BY STAFF IN SPRING 2012

SOURCE	DATA SET(S)
SAFIS	Dealer reports: ME DMR (state and federal), NH FGD, MA DMF, RI DFW, NYS DEC, NJ DFW, DE DFW, MD DNR, VMRC
	MA DMF swordfish canvas
	eTRIPSS: MA DMF (American eel), NYS DEC (Atlantic menhaden, horseshoe crab), NJ DFW (Blue crab, tautog)
NOAA Fisheries	Bluefin tuna and ocean quahog/surf clam ITQ (CODES): ME DMR, NH FGD, RI DFW, CT DEEP, NYS DEC, NJ DFW, DE DFW, MD DNR, VMRC, MA DMF
	Wreckfish ITQ
ME DMR	Supplemental & harvester records
NH FGD	Coastal harvester & lobster supplemental
CT DEEP	Dealer reports (SAFIS), VTR, eTRIPSS (provide merged data to ACCSP)
RI DFW	Horseshoe crab & lobster supplemental, aquaculture
NYS DEC	Crustacean, gillnet, horseshoe crab reports, Hudson River shad, lobster annual recall, shellfish data, striped bass tag reports
NJ DFW	Fishermen & dealer reports for eel and menhaden
DE DFW	Trip-level finfish & state level shellfish
MD DNR	Fishermen & monthly dealer reports, eel data from crabbers
PRFC	Fishermen reports
VMRC	VA fishermen reports
NC DMF	State trip reports
SC DNR	State trip reports
GA DNR	State trip reports
FL FWCC	State trip reports

STOCK ASSESSMENTS

Many custom data requests are used to aid stock assessments. To make sound and informed decisions for fish stocks and populations, there must be a fluid data review and assessment process between all those involved. Consequently, the Program has become an integral partner in the stock assessment process due to its ability to rapidly compile and disseminate fishery-dependent data for various audiences.

Throughout the data compilation process, ACCSP is available to guide scientists in properly submitting data requests, determining specialized formats for data tables, and providing details about particular records that were questionable. This helps the process move forward quickly. Not only does participation in the stock assessment process increase visibility for ACCSP, but the Data Team is able to see firsthand how the information in the Data Warehouse is used.

ACCSP helps scientists ensure all sources of commercial landings data have been accurately reported, vetted, and summarized prior to use in a stock assessment.

Genny Nesslage, Stock Assessment Scientist with ASMFC, states that "ACCSP is essential to the stock assessment process. ACCSP helps scientists ensure all sources of commercial landings data have been accurately reported, vetted, and summarized prior to use in a stock assessment. When necessary, ACCSP readily provides custom data queries and analyses that help scientists address vital questions about changes in fisheries dynamics."

During 2012, the Data Team provided 1) commercial landings and recreational indices for SEDAR 28 (Spanish mackerel and cobia) and also worked as the data collector for this stock assessment and 2) provided updates on recreational index for SEDAR 2012 of vermilion snapper.

DATA & CONFIDENTIALITY

Along with data dissemination comes the responsibility of protecting confidentiality. The Program strives to achieve the right balance between confidential and available data. Confidential data are data that can lead to the identification of the contributing individual or individuals. Federal and state laws prohibit disclosure of confidential data.

The Program uses the "rule of 3" for commercial catch and effort data. The "rule of 3" requires 3 separate contributors to fisheries data. This precludes the identity of a single contributor to fisheries data. In some cases, annual summary by state and species may still be confidential because only one or two dealers process the catch. Alternatively, if there is only one known harvester in a state, the harvester's identity is implicit and those data are confidential. Each partner is responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of its data. They decide who has access to their confidential data. Program partners grant individuals access to their data housed in the Data Warehouse.

The ACCSP policy for confidentiality requires that any data summary that is publicly disclosed must include landings from at least three dealers, three harvesters, and three vessels to be considered non-confidential.

SYSTEMS IMPROVEMENTS & AVAILABILITY

In 2012, the Data Team has made additional efforts toward improving data quality and accuracy. Staff implemented landings checks against NOAA Fisheries and other data sets and worked to update the Data Warehouse with partner data sets where discrepancies were found.

A less visible role of the Data Team is to ensure that all of the computer systems are online and available. To that end, regular maintenance continued on network stability, server hardware and software updates, database backups and file backups to tape. After two major storms in 2012 caused system outages for over 12 hours, ACCSP obtained a connection to backup generator power which extends system availability up to 18 hours. This past year, the Data Warehouse server and web-server were replaced and oracle database software updated. ACCSP staff also supported an email migration to Exchange. These upgrades resulted in improved performance, storage, and security at a reduction in power usage.

Standard Atlantic Fisheries Information System

In 2003, the program partners created SAFIS to meet the increasing need for real-time commercial landings data. With this system in place, ACCSP diversified from just a data storage program to include a data collection program. In the past ten years, SAFIS has grown to include five distinct applications - and not just for commercial landings, but also recreational. While SAFIS enables data to be transferred directly into the Data Warehouse, those data are still collected under the authority of the associated program partners (See page 24 - 25 for more on the data collection process).

Created by the program partners of the

To learn more on how program partners are effectively utilizing SAFIS for quota monitoring, fisheries management plans, and even pressure on select species on party and charter boats, please review pages 14 - 23.

It is important to recognize that while the five SAFIS applications (listed on this page) function independently, all are kept within the same database and share standards and codes that are ACCSP compliant. The Software Team (See page 36 for more information on the Software Team) works to coordinate the development and management of the software supporting SAFIS.

ELECTRONIC DEALER REPORTING (eDR)

eDR is a web-based application that allows dealers to enter an electronic dealer report. Fields that must be entered for a completed report include fisherman, port, date landed, time landed, date purchased, vessel number, species, disposition, gear, quantity, and price.

eDR has a unique price board feature that allows for the price of a species to be saved for 14 days. It will automatically be adjusted to all reports for that time frame and can be incorporated to any incomplete reports. After 14 days the price must be re-entered. When reports are completed electronically an interactive report can be made to view progress and history of landings.

ELECTRONIC TRIP REPORTING (eTRIPS)

eTRIPS is a web-based application that compiles catch and effort data from fishermen. Trip reports, or log books in some fisheries, provide catch and effort data from a permitted fishing entity (fishermen or a vessel) or a single vessel. Trips may be categorized as commercial, party/charter, or recreational.

This application allows fishermen to create trip reports after entering in the required fields in the trip, effort and catch categories. Similar to the eDR application interactive reports can be made to illustrate progress and history of catch and effort.

VOLUNTARY RECREATIONAL LOGBOOKS (eLogbook)

eLogbook is a web-based application that collects data from private recreational anglers on a voluntary basis. eLogbook formulates summaries of information on all species caught by the angler. This valuable tool is a way to provide narrow strategies for any given set of conditions and is a more efficient way for anglers to take a look at the past and save the daily entries.

SINGLE TRIP TICKET DEALER REPORTING (e-1Ticket)

e-1Ticket is a web-based application providing the ability to collect trip/effort/catch data and simultaneously create a dealer report.

SAFIS MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (SMS)

SMS is a web-based application providing administrative tools to SAFIS administrators for management of information such as user accounts, participants, or permits. It is often used to monitor quotas.

SAFIS APPLICATIONS SNAPSHOT

The chart below is a current overview of the number of records from the implementation date to February 2013 (i.e., the end of the ACCSP fiscal year) for each public application.

PROGRAM PARTNER	APPLICATION	IMPLEMENTATION DATE	TOTAL # OF DEALER RECORDS	TOTAL # OF TRIP RECORDS	TOTAL # OF ANGLER RECORDS	TOTAL # OF RECORDS BY STATE
ME DMR	eDR	April 2006	741,521			741,521
NH FGD	eDR	May 2004	25,270			25,270
MA DMF	eDR	May 2004	477,078			843,453
	eTRIPS	August 2008		365,382		
	eLogbook	May 2009			993	
RI DFW	eDR	Jan. 2004	180,699			209,618
	eTRIPS	April 2010		27,221		
	eLogbook	April 2010			1,698	
CT DEEP	eDR	May 2004	18,795			45,297
	eTRIPS	March 2009		26,502		
NYS DEC	eDR	Feb. 2007	13,200			29534
	eTRIPS	Oct. 2008		16,334		
NJ DFW	eDR	Sept. 2005	56			18,747
	eTRIPS	March 2008		14,797		
	eLogbook	Jan. 2008			3,894	
DE DFW	eDR	Feb. 2005	83			214
	eLogbook	January 2011			131	
MD DNR	eDR	May 2004	14,763			28,474
	eTRIPS	Jan. 2010		13,697		
	eLogbook	March 2010			14	
SC DNR	e-1 Ticket	March 2011		1,890		1,890
GA DNR	e-1 Ticket	June 2011		51		51
NMFS - NE	eDR	March 2004	2,844,096			2,844,096
NMFS - SE	eDR	Jan. 2011	2,060			2,151
	e-1 Ticket	June 2011		91		
TOTAL # OF RECORDS BY APPLICATION			4,317,621	465,965	6,730	4,790,316

WHAT ARE THE BENIFITS TO USING SAFIS IN YOUR STATE?

- Provides up-to-date information on species caught and their impact on fisheries and quotas
- Allows confidential access to data-of-record by fishermen and dealers
- Fulfills state and federal reporting requirements through online data entry and eliminates duplicative reporting
- Has the ability to collect highly migratory species data
- Has an integrated price board to automatically generate pricing information
- Allows for flexibility in creating favorites (e.g., species, gears, fishermen, dealers, and disposition) so reporting is quick and easier than ever
- Management tools facilitate maintenance of partner-owned data such as participants, online permits, and vessels

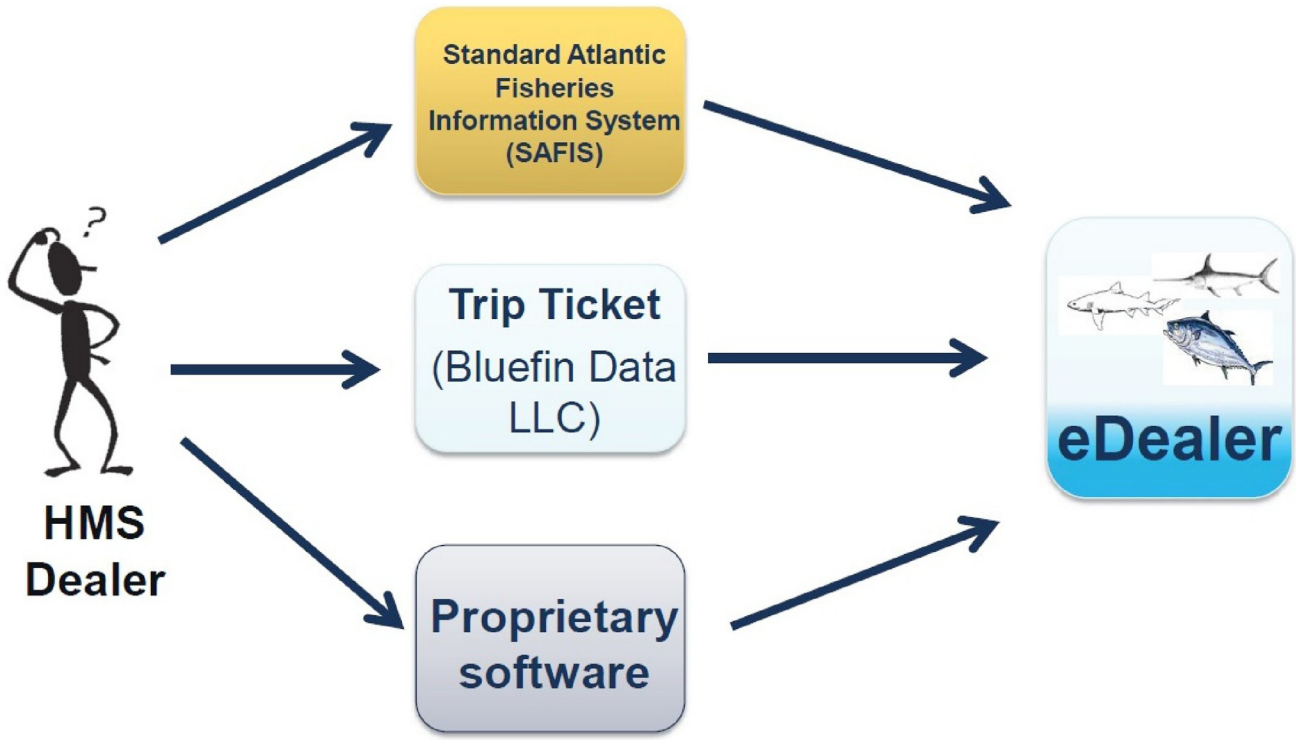
eDealer

In 2012, the Software Team worked with NOAA Fisheries Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Management Division on a module for dealers to electronically submit data to HMS. These new reporting requirements are a result of a final rule published in the Federal Register by the NOAA Fisheries (77 FR 47303) on August 8, 2012, that requires, among other things, federal dealers (except for dealers reporting Atlantic bluefin tuna) to report receipt of Atlantic sharks, swordfish, and BAYS tunas (bigeye, albacore, yellowfin & skipjack tunas) through existing electronic reporting programs. The shift to electronic reporting for HMS dealers of these quota-managed species will provide more timely data for use in monitoring landings.

All federal HMS dealers were required to begin reporting electronically on January 1, 2013. In order to minimize the impact to dealers, the HMS Management Division elected to utilize existing systems wherever possible. This means that dealers that were already reporting electronically (from Texas to Maine) continue to use the systems they already utilize with some modifications to cover additional HMS reporting requirements. The Software Team collaborated with the HMS Management Division, Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission, Bluefin Data LLC, and the Northeast and Southeast Fisheries Science Centers to successfully integrate the HMS enhancements into the existing electronic reporting programs, including eDR and e-1Ticket. There are several new data fields available, including sale price, areas where HMS are caught, and explanations for late reporting and modified data.

Jackie Wilson, Fisheries Management Specialist with the HMS Management Division, explains the benefits of electronic reporting for the dealers and how ACCSP staff was able to make it happen, "Electronic dealer reporting for Atlantic sharks, swordfish, and BAYS tunas will allow for HMS data to be submitted in a more timely basis--which is critical for more real-time quota monitoring. ACCSP has helped incorporate the new HMS dealer reporting requirements into existing electronic reporting programs like SAFIS, which eases the burden on dealers and allows them to report in one place. Behind the scenes, ACCSP has also been integral in developing more streamlined data transfers and data views between regions, helping with the processing of data and monitoring things like dealer reporting compliance."

HOW DOES eDEALER WORK?



The ACCSP worked with other organizations to create modifications of existing dealer reporting so it would be easier for dealers to report receipt of Atlantic sharks, swordfish, and BAYS tunas through one centralized electronic reporting system. *Image (c) NOAA Fisheries*

National Networking

The Program takes an active role in collaborating and advising on national fishery-dependent data collection programs. These networks bring together interstate Commissions, state fishery agencies, NOAA Fisheries, and regional councils to improve data collection and dissemination at the national level. Staff members serve on a number of different committees providing input in much the same way that the program partners participate in ACCSP.

MARINE RECREATIONAL INFORMATION PROGRAM

MRIP is a recreational data collection and analysis program instituted by NOAA Fisheries, participating state agencies and regional FINs that is designed to improve the collection and use of recreational data used for fisheries management.

In early 2013, MRIP introduced its latest intercept survey and estimation method along with tools to determine where intercepts will occur. This new approach is intended to provide a more accurate picture of the impacts of recreational fishing, while at the same time allowing for a more tailored approach based on regional needs. The Program has received funding from MRIP to do essential research on proportional standard error (i.e., a measure of how accurate the estimates can be) on management decisions. The results of this project will be integrated into the recreational standards and will help to guide future decisions.

ACCSP staff plays an integral role in this program, with Mike Cahall, Program Director, serving as a member of the Operations Team which provides overall guidance to the technical efforts of MRIP; Geoff White, Data Team Leader, serving as a member of the Information Management Team; and Ann McElhatton, Program Manager, serving as a member of the Education and Outreach Team.

FISHERIES INFORMATION SYSTEM

FIS is a collaborative project, led by NOAA Fisheries, which began based on the need for promoting timely and effective fisheries data collection to be shared within the national framework of a single system. The Data Warehouse is the Atlantic coast system for fishery-dependent landings for FIS (See page 24 for more on the Data Warehouse).

The following are the current goals of FIS as outlined by NOAA Fisheries:

- Expand and adapt data collection to meet current and future needs
- Build and integrate information management systems within and across region
- Establish regional and national standards (minimum guidelines) for data collection, management and dissemination to ensure, high quality, completeness, timeliness, and accessibility
- Implement and maintain effective partnerships to support collaboration among stakeholders, and to leverage investments across regions and the nation

Mike Cahall, Program Director, is a member of the Program Management Team which provides overall guidance to FIS. Karen Holmes, Software Team Leader, is a member of the Electronic Reporting Program Specialty Group and Geoff White, Data Team Leader, is a member of the Fisheries One Stop Shop (FOSS) Program Specialty Group. The FOSS application is produced by FIS. This application is intended to provide public access to U.S. commercial and recreational non-confidential landings (three or more vessels or companies) information for U.S. vessels, as well as U.S. landings in foreign ports.

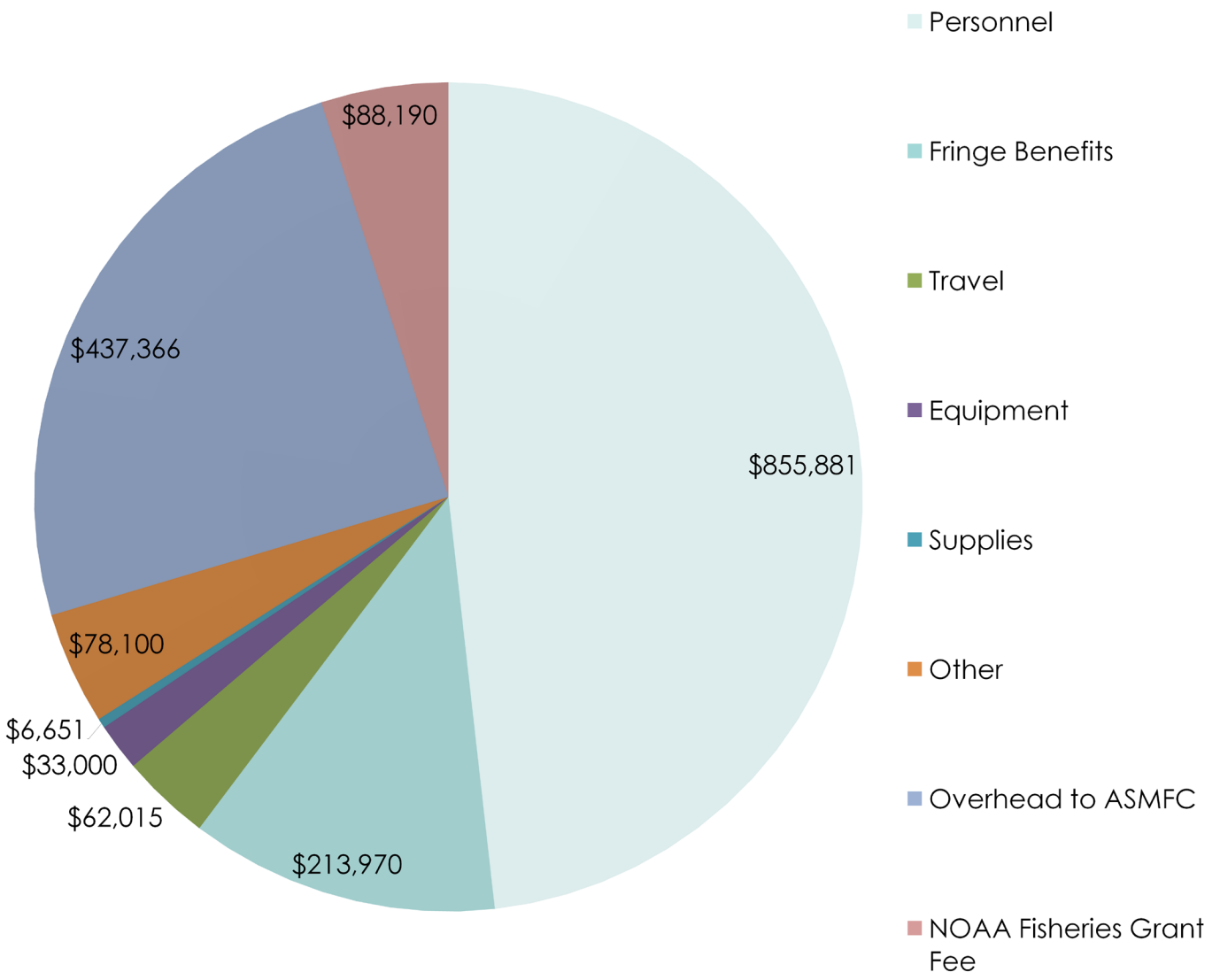
OUT AND ABOUT

Julie Defilippi, Data Coordinator, was an invited speaker at the 142nd Annual American Fisheries Society Meeting in St. Paul, MN and the annual meeting for the Organization of Fish & Wildlife Information Managers held in Ausitn, TX. Both events showcased fisheries data dissemination, building collaborative networks, and how the public consumes data.

Funding

As in previous years, a majority of the funds that are allocated to the Program are distributed to program partners for data collection projects (See page 8 for more details on each project).

The remaining funds, collectively known as the Administrative Grant, account for slightly less than 45% of the overall budget. The administrative grant budget allocates funds for staff support, information systems resources, committee travel, and various outreach projects. For 2012, personnel were the majority of the administrative budget followed by committee travel, and information systems. Overhead charged to the Program covers office space, utilities, and administrative support provided to the Program by ASMFC.



Staff

The ACCSP staff is separated into three teams to effectively advance the goals of the Program.

PROGRAM STAFF

Program staff is dedicated to maintaining ACCSP standards and handling administrative aspects of the Program, including outreach. This also includes monitoring the program projects that are funded each year.

- Michael S. Cahall, Director
- Ann McElhatton, Program Manager

DATA TEAM

The Data Team works with partners to identify, transform, and audit data sets so they can be included in the Data Warehouse. They also provide data services to partners by designing custom data requests and participating in data intensive fisheries activities, such as stock assessments.

- Geoff White, Data Team Leader
- Julie Defilippi, Data Coordinator
- Ed Martino, Data Coordinator
- Jennifer Ni, Information Systems Specialist

SOFTWARE TEAM

The Software Team designs and builds SAFIS applications for program partners, as well as internal systems that the Program manages or that support Program activities.

- Karen Holmes, Software Team Leader
- Nico Mwai, Fisheries Programmer

Pictured (left to right): Ann McElhatton, Julie Defilippi, Karen Holmes, Ed Martino, Michael S. Cahall, Jennifer Ni, Geoff White, Nico Mwai

Looking Forward

2012 was certainly a very busy and productive year. I have every expectation that 2013 will be even more so. In the upcoming year our major focus will be on reviewing and implementing the recommendations of the Program Review, moving forward on a number of exciting projects and, of course, continuing to provide support to our end users and constituents.

The Program Review resulted approximately 70 separate recommendations! Some were large and some were small. This presents a challenge in even reviewing them. We have asked our constituents and staff to respond to a survey that reviews each recommendation. Using the results of the survey, we will prioritize the recommendations and assign the resultant tasks to the appropriate entity.

We have already moved forward on a few of the recommendations. Using anticipated funding from the NOAA Fisheries FIS program, we hope to launch collaboration between the Program and the NOAA Fisheries Atlantic regional data centers to work through public data presentation issues so that end users get a more consistent picture regardless of where they go for data. We also plan to build a new public data query interface that should simplify access for those who have simple requests.

Also generating a lot of excitement is the hand held trip reporting project approved by the Coordinating Council during the 2013 ASMFC Annual Meeting in Philadelphia. Using cutting edge internet communications technology, we will be working with the RI DFW and the Rhode Island Party Charter Boat Association to develop a hand held reporting system the feeds the SAFIS trip reporting module. It will run on most hand held devices and allow recreational and commercial captains to report electronically before they even land.

Another highlight for the upcoming year is the ongoing recreational Proportional Standards Error (PSE) project. The Program received some additional funding from MRIP to complete this project which should result in a much clearer understanding of the impact of PSE on fisheries management. The project will also inform the Program standard for recreational data collection.

These and other projects will go a long way towards advancing the state of the art in fisheries data collection. The hand held project will serve as a model for future reporting development, while the PSE project will help to best target scarce data collection resources for maximum benefit. As I look back and I look forward I can't help but feel excited about what we've been able to accomplish even with limited resources and what we will be working on in the coming year.

Regards,

Michael S. Cahall
ACCSP Director

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