



Conservation Equivalency Guidance Document

ISFMP Policy Board

October 2023

CE Review Process



- The application of conservation equivalency (CE) is described in the Conservation Equivalency Policy and Technical Guidance Document
- The Executive Committee and a subset of MSC Committee members provided information that informed staff revisions to the CE Guidance Document
- The Policy Board Reviewed the draft in August and provided guidance for changes

Document Sections



- Background
- General Policy Guidance
- When CE is not allowed
- State Proposal standards
- Review Process
- Coordination Guidance with Federal Partners

Proposed Changes



- **Option 1.** CE is not permitted if the stock is overfished
- **Option 2.** CE is not permitted if the stock is overfished, depleted or unknown
- **Option 3:** CE is not permitted if the stock is overfished, unless allowed by board via 2/3 majority vote (the rules on voting in Article II. Section 1. apply)
- **Option 4.** Board Discretion: species board will consider the use of CE programs based on stock status (e.g. CE is not allowed if overfishing is occurring).
 - If a board implements a stock status restriction for CE, it may choose to apply that restriction to the entire fishery or to some parts of the fishery (e.g., specific sector).
 - If a board decides not to implement a stock status restriction for CE, the board will provide rationale (via meeting proceedings) as to why such a CE restriction is not needed for that species.

Non-Quantifiable Measures



Non-quantifiable measures could include circle hooks, non-targeting zones/period, no gaffing, outreach promoting best practices for release, and other measures expected to reduce release mortality or overall discards.

- Option1: Include the sentence above
- Option2: Do not include the sentence above

Proposed Changes



When evaluating closed periods, availability will be considered (even within a month, availability can be very different, particularly when comparing the beginning and end). **Any closed period must come from a period of high availability and include at least two consecutive weekend periods (Friday, Saturday and Sunday).** Pooling of several years' worth of data should be encouraged for evaluation.

- Option 1: Delete the bolded closed period should come from a time of high availability
- Option 2: Keep the bolded closed period should come from a time of high availability

Proposed Changes



If a CE is reviewed each year, does a CE proposal need an end date?

Board Action Today



Consider approval of the Conservation
Equivalency Policy and Technical Guidance
Document



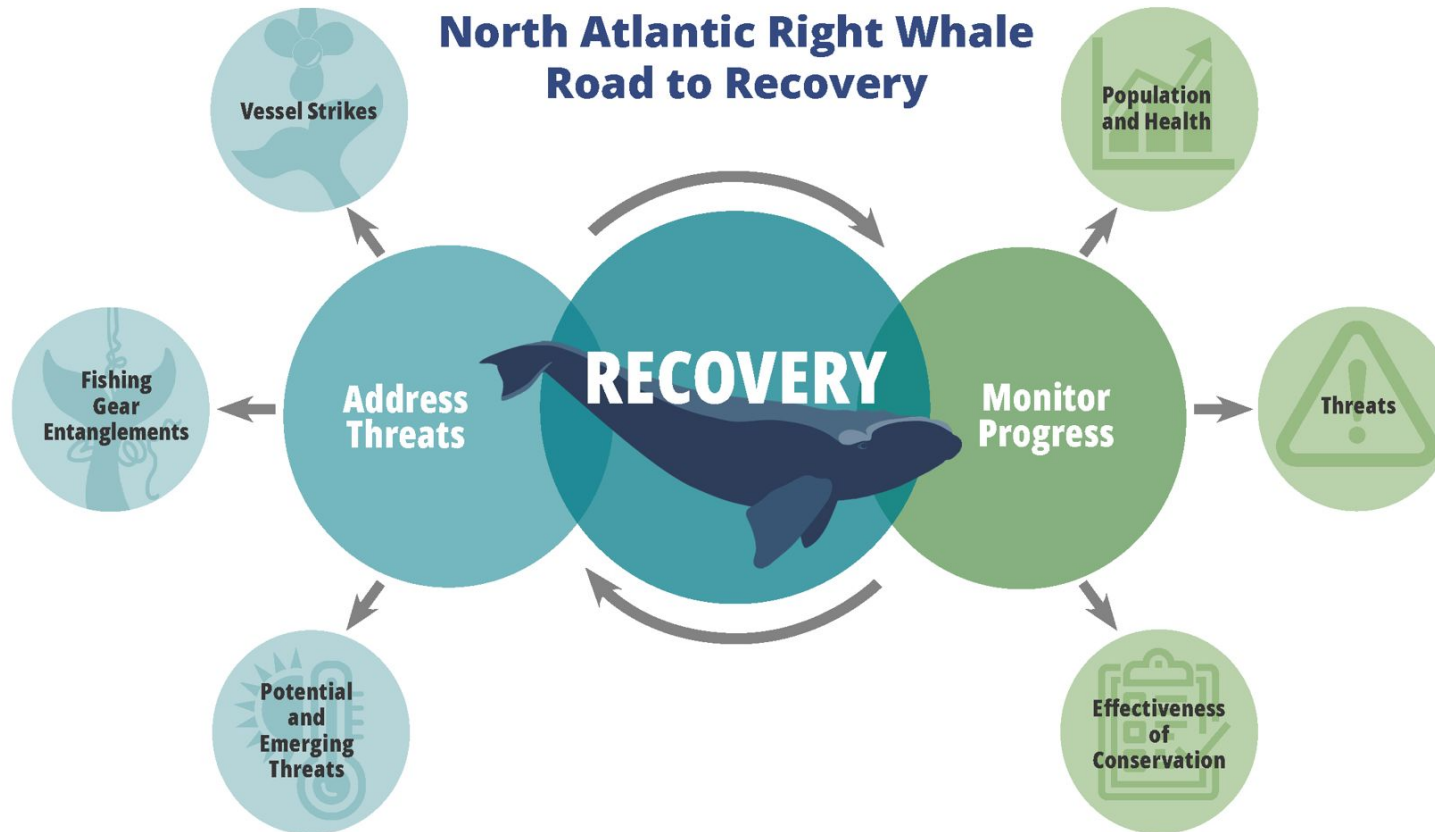
NOAA
FISHERIES

IRA/CRF: North Atlantic Right Whale Program

September 2023



North Atlantic Right Whale Program



Topical structure of the NARW Program follows the [Road to Recovery](#)

IRA funding focuses on developing and implementing transformative technologies and approaches as part of the Road to Recovery

IRA funding will complement and leverage other funding sources

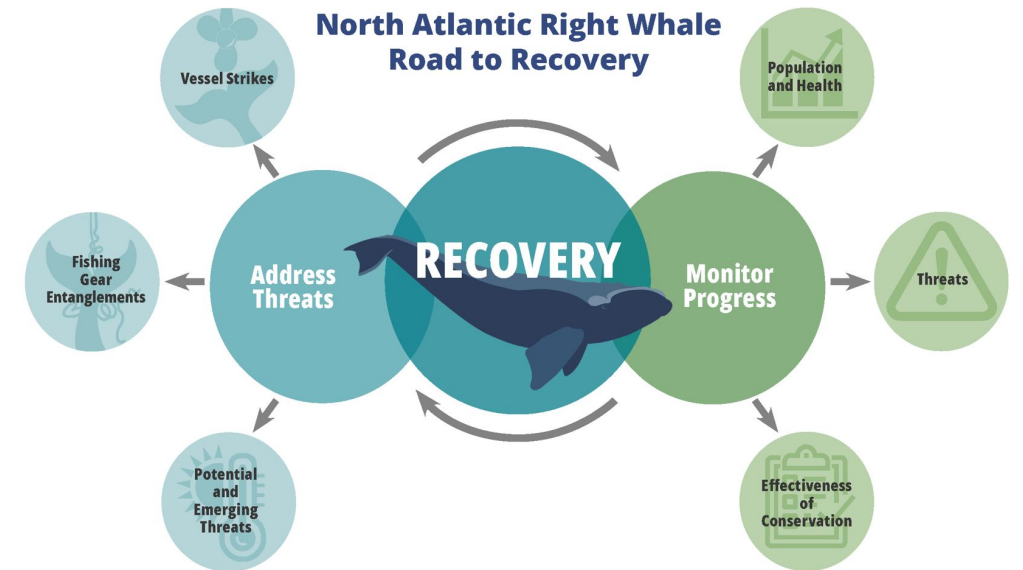
IRA Enables Transformative Investments

- **Developing/advancing technologies and new approaches for dynamic management based on more informed understanding of spatial/temporal distribution and enabling timely responses where whales are detected**
 - **Deploying existing and developing new detection technologies for NARW**
 - **Integrate detection technologies in risk models / assessments to support more dynamic management**
 - **Partnerships** with multiple industries to co-develop technologies
 - **Funding** across the NOAA Fisheries NARW Program to enable advanced science, management, and enforcement activities



IRA Funding

North Atlantic Right Whale Inflation Reduction Act Funds*		
* All amounts approximate		
General IRA Support	Administrative support, project coordination and management	\$3.2M
Monitoring and Modeling	Passive Acoustic Monitoring (PAM)	\$17.3M
	Satellite Tagging	\$3.5M
	Uncrewed Systems (UxS) Development	\$4.2M
	Modeling Advancements	\$5.2M
	Very High Resolution Satellite AI	\$5.6M
Vessel Strike Risk Reduction	Vessel strike risk reduction technology and development, technology implementation, additional support	\$20.1M
On-Demand Fishing	Developing interoperability standards, training for use of systems, additional support	\$17.9M
Enforcement	Equipment and Operations	\$5M





NOAA
FISHERIES

An aerial photograph of a whale breaching the ocean surface. The whale's dark, wet back is visible as it cuts through the greenish-blue water, creating a large splash. A thin, white rope or line trails behind the whale's head, curving across the water's surface. The whale's tail is visible in the lower left corner of the frame.

Questions



Assessment Science Committee Update

October 19, 2023



Changes to the Stock Assessment Schedule

- River Herring
 - Presented to the Board in May 2024 instead of Feb 2024
 - Based on Assessment Workshop in August 2023, SAS decided that they needed more time
- Spot and Croaker assessments uncoupled
 - Croaker to be completed in 2024
 - Spot will be moved to 2025
 - Lack of stock synthesis modeler
 - Spot project at UMCES with concurrent timeline
- Seeking support from the Board for the changes presented today



Species	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
American Eel					Benchmark				
American Shad			Benchmark						
American Lobster			Benchmark					Benchmark	
Atlantic Croaker							Benchmark		
Atlantic Menhaden		Benchmark			Update			Update	
Atl. Menhaden ERPs		Benchmark						Benchmark	
Atlantic Sea Herring	Benchmark		Update		Update		Update	Benchmark	Update
Atlantic Striped Bass	Benchmark				Update		Update		*Update
Atlantic Sturgeon							Update		
Black Drum					Benchmark				
Black Sea Bass	Update	Update		Update		Benchmark		Update	
Bluefish	Update	Update		Update	Benchmark	Update		Update	
Coastal Sharks			Benchmark			Benchmark			
Cobia		Benchmark						Update	
Horseshoe Crab		Benchmark					Update		
Horseshoe Crab ARM				Benchmark		Update	Update	Update	Update
Jonah Crab						Benchmark			
Northern Shrimp	Benchmark			Update			Update		
Red Drum					Benchmark		Benchmark		
River Herring							Benchmark		
Scup	Update	Update		Update		Update			
Spanish Mackerel					Update				
Spiny Dogfish	Update				Benchmark				Update
Spot								Benchmark	
Spotted Seatrout									
Summer Flounder	Benchmark			Update		Update		Update	
Tautog				Update				Update	
Weakfish		Update						Update	
Winter Flounder			Update		Update		Update		Benchmark



Law Enforcement Committee Report to ISFMP Policy Board

October 19, 2023

Species Discussion

- Tautog - We have provided comments to the Tautog TC in reference to tag types and duration of the study.
- Atlantic Striped Bass – commented to the PDT on proposed regulatory language in reference to filleting at sea and the consideration of “For Hire” participants to have specific regulatory options in draft Addendum II.
- American Lobster - Addendum XXVII . Specifically, the consideration and timeline of gauge size and escape vent changes in LCMA 1.

LEC Business Session



- Review of the Guidelines for Resource Managers on the Enforceability of Fishery Management Measures (August 2015)
- NACLELA / ICCA Wildlife Officer Exchange Program – Belize Fisheries Compliance and Enforcement Agency
- Interstate Wildlife Violators Compact

Notable Case Work

- Maine Marine Patrol
 - Trap Limits , Halibut and MMPA
- Georgia DNR
 - Seabass, Grouper and TEDS
- Rhode Island Environmental Police
 - Striped Bass and Tautog



Questions?



Report to the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

ISFMP Policy Board

October 19th, 2023

ACFHP Steering Committee



Met October 16 & 17, 2023 at annual ASMFC Meeting in Beaufort, NC

- Reviewed 2023 – 2024 Action Plan
 - accomplishments and next steps
- Updated sub-committee/working groups
- Discussed fundraising strategies, business plan, and BIL/IRA funding opportunities
- Finalized FY25 ACFHP funding application

Guest speakers

- Todd Miller, North Carolina Coastal Federation
- Jason Olive, National Fish Habitat Partnership / USFWS
- Ryan Roberts, National Fish Habitat Partnership / AFWA

BIL/IRA Funding Opportunities



NOAA Climate Resilience Regional Challenge

- 8 projects (Florida -> New Hampshire)
- Oyster reef restoration & underserved community engagement
- \$24,582,681
- Not successful

*NOAA Transformational Habitat Restoration (Nov. 17th)

- \$1,000,000 - \$25,000,000
- Target: \$15,000,000
- Multi-habitat restoration projects in focused watersheds (GA, DE, NH)
- Hopefully successful?

FY25 ACFHP Funding Application



- Opens Oct. 31st, 2023
- Closes Jan. 31st, 2024

- Fish habitat conservation projects (any phase)
- No upper limit on funding request
- Must have 1:1 non-federal match (Tribes exempted)

- Similar requirements to previous year
- Online application form
- More emphasis on DEIJ & public access



Habitat Committee Report

Presented to ASMFC Policy Board

October 19th, 2023

ACFHP Steering Committee



Met October 18 & 19, 2023

- Habitat Hotline
 - Discussed format, topics, and need for follow up with commissioners & broader audience regarding most applicable content
- Habitat Management Series
 - Acoustics Impacts & topics for next issue
- Fish Habitats of Concern (completed)

Guest speakers

- Bill Crowell, Albemarle-Pamlico National Estuary Partnership
- Judd Kenworthy, Albemarle-Pamlico National Estuary Partnership

Fish Habitats of Concern



- Habitat Committee drafted FHOC designations for all Commission-only managed species (plus Atlantic sturgeon)
- FHOC designations based on:
 1. *the importance of the ecological function provided by the habitat,*
 2. *the extent to which the habitat is sensitive to human-induced environmental degradation,*
 3. *whether, and to what extent, development activities are, or will be, stressing the habitat type,*
 4. *the rarity of the habitat type*

Spot (FHOC)



- For larvae: brackish and saltwater marsh, SAV in mesohaline and polyhaline waters
- For juveniles from DE to FL: low salinity bays and tidal marsh creeks with mud and detrital bottoms that contain their epifaunal and infaunal prey. SAV in Chesapeake Bay and NC.
- For YOY in early spring: seagrass habitats
- For adults: tidal creeks and estuarine bays with mud and detrital substrates which support abundant prey.
- Bottom-tending fishing gear may impact spot FHOCs.