

# Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

## Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program Coordinating Council

*May 7, 2025  
10:15 p.m. – 12:15 p.m.  
Hybrid Meeting*

### **Draft Agenda**

The times listed are approximate; the order in which these items will be taken is subject to change; other items may be added as necessary.

1. Call to Order / Welcome / Introductions (*G. White / K. Knowlton*)
2. Council Consent
  - Approval of Agenda
  - Approval of Draft Proceedings from October 2024
3. Public Comment
4. Consider Funding Decision Document and FY2026 Request for Proposals (*J. Simpson*) **Action**
5. Update on Program and Committee Activities (*G. White, J. Simpson*)
6. Other Business
7. Adjourn

The meeting will be held at The Westin Crystal City (1800 Richmond Highway, Arlington, VA; 703.486.1111) and via webinar; click [here](#) for details.

**DRAFT PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
ATLANTIC STATES MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION  
ACCSP COORDINATING COUNCIL**

**The Westin  
Annapolis, Maryland  
Hybrid Meeting**

**October 21, 2024**

These minutes are draft and subject to approval by the ACCSP Coordinating Council.  
The Board will review the minutes during its next meeting.

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1. **Approval of agenda** by consent (Page 1).
2. **Approval of Proceedings of April 2024** by consent (Page 1).
3. **Move to approve the ACCSP Administrative Proposal** (Page 5 ). Motion made by Brandi Salmon; second by Marty Gary. Motion passes by unanimous approval (Page 5).
4. **Move to approve the three (3) Maintenance Proposals as recommended by the Operations and Advisory Committees** (Page 5). Motion made by Carrie Kennedy; second by Ben Dyar. Motion passes by unanimous approval (Page 5).
5. **Move to approve the top four (4) ranking New Proposals, through the Maine Black Sea Bass project** (Page 5). Motion made by John Carmichael and seconded by Ron Owens. Motion passes by unanimous consent (Page 6).
6. **Move that the Maine halibut proposal remain above the line to be funded if additional funding become available** (Page 6). Motion made by Pat Keliher and seconded by Erika Burgess. Motion approved by consent. (Page 6).
7. **Move to adjourn** by consent (Page 14).

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## **ATTENDANCE**

### **Board Members**

Pat Keliher, ME (AA)	Carrie Kennedy, MD, proxy for L. Fegley (AA)
Renee Zobel, NH, proxy for Cheri Patterson (AA)	David Sikorski, MD, proxy for Del. Stein (LA)
Dan McKiernan, MA (AA)	S. Iverson-Cason, VA, proxy for J. Green (AA)
Ray Kane, MA (GA)	Ben Dyar, SC, proxy for Sen. Cromer (LA)
Jason McNamee, RI (AA)	Mel Bell, SC, proxy for Sen. Cromer (LA)
Eric Reid, RI, proxy for Sen. Sosnowski (LA)	Kathy Knowlton, GA, proxy for D. Haymans (AA)
David Borden, RI (GA)	Erika Burgess, FL, proxy for J. McCawley (AA)
Marty Gary, NY (AA)	Ron Owens, PRFC
Heather Corbett, NJ, proxy for J. Cimino (AA)	John Carmichael, SAFMC
Jeff Kaelin, NJ (GA)	Brandi Salmon, NCDMF
John Clark, DE (AA)	

**(AA = Administrative Appointee; GA = Governor Appointee; LA = Legislative Appointee)**

### **Staff**

Bob Beal	Tina Berger	James Boyle
Geoff White	Madeline Musante	Emilie Franke
Alex DiJohnson	Caitlin Starks	Katie Drew
Julie Simpson	Jeff Kipp	Jainita Patel
Toni Kerns	Tracy Bauer	Chelsea Tuohy

The Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program Coordinating Council of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission convened in the Capitol Ballroom via hybrid meeting, in-person and webinar; Monday, October 21, 2024, and was called to order at 1:00 p.m. by Chair Jason McNamee.

### **CALL TO ORDER**

CHAIR JASON McNAMEE: All right, everybody, I think we're going to get started here. Looks like we've got enough folks at the table. I'm calling to order the October 21, 2024 meeting of the ACCSP Coordinating Council, so welcome, everybody.

### **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

CHAIR McNAMEE: We'll start off with a couple of housekeeping items, the first is Approval of the Agenda.

Are there any additions, deletions, changes to the agenda that anybody would like to make? Looking around the room, not seeing any hands in the room, anyone online with a hand up, virtual hand? No one on line. I will propose that we approve the agenda as submitted, anybody willing to make that motion? Thank you, Pat. Motion made by Pat, is there a second? Thank you, Ray. Any objections to the motion? Seeing none; the agenda is approved.

### **APPROVAL OF PROCEEDINGS**

CHAIR McNAMEE: Next up is Approval of the Proceedings from our last meeting in April, 2024. Any edits, changes, additions, anything to the meeting minutes from the last meeting? Not seeing any in the room, any hands online? Okay, any objections to approving the minutes as submitted? No hands in the room, we'll consider the minutes approved as submitted.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

CHAIR McNAMEE: Next up is Public Comment. Is there anybody in the public, all three of you in the room that would like to say anything that

is not currently covered on the agenda? No hands in the room, any hands online? No hands online. Okay, with that let's get into the heart of our agenda here.

### **CONSIDER FY2025 PROJECT AND ADMINISTRATIVE PROPOSALS FOR FUNDING**

CHAIR McNAMEE: The first thing we're going to do is to Consider the FY2025 Project and Administrative Proposals for Funding, and I am going to turn that over to Julie to take us through. Thanks, Julie.

MS. JULIE DEFILIPPI SIMPSON: The first slide we're going to have, is the comparison of the rankings of the maintenance projects. It was important for the Operations and Advisors that we show you both of their rankings, because there were differences in how those turned out, although they did come to consensus on their recommendations.

The Operations Committee ranking is on the left-hand side and the Advisors ranking is on the right-hand side. For a little bit of ease, they are highlighted in the colors that match, so you can kind of cross the colors a little bit to see the order of the rankings. These are the three maintenance proposals. These were ranked using the consolidated rankings. For those of you that are familiar with that, there is less questions on that form, because not all of the funding was necessary to cover the maintenance proposals, not all 75 percent of that. The next slide gives the comparison of the rankings of new projects.

Again, these are in order by their rankings, with the Operations Committee on the left-hand side and the Advisors ranking on the right-hand side. Please note that the recommendation for funding is indicated by the dark green squares, so the projects that are recommended for funding are the top five on the left-hand column, and then the top four in Number 6 on the right-hand column.

The three projects that do not have green are not recommended for funding in the recommendations from the, it was consensus. The funding summary,

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we have an expected level of 3.5 million. The Administrative Proposal is 2.35 million, and then the three maintenance proposals come in at 602,000. Again, this is under the 75 percent rate.

Then the eight new project proposals come in at a little over a million dollars. The request for funding is at about 4 million, so that is about half a million more requested than what we have. We did want to note that the Administrative Proposal, and this will be part of our discussion later, is that the Administrative Proposal is now approximately 67 percent of the 3.5 million for ACCSP funding.

It is slightly larger than last years, but we have increases due to full staff support, and the ability for more in-person meetings. However, we also have significant increases in equipment and supplies, but it wasn't necessary to put those costs in the administrative branch, because we were able to secure funding for those things through IRA and FIS funding that ACCSP staff was able to arrange.

The average ranking of maintenance projects, all three projects were ranked for funding. Again, the maintenance proposals are 58 percent of the one million available for project funds, which is below the 75 percent split, and it is recommended that all the proposals be supported. We did also include in the titles for each proposal the year of funding that they're in.

Right now, the 100 percent lobster harvesting is in Year 4. You'll note that that is not an actual calendar year, it's Year 4 of funding, because there were years that Maine did not actually apply for that project. The Potomac River is in Year 5, so this is their first year of stepdown. They'll do stepdown again next year, and then no longer be eligible for funding.

The North Carolina Socioeconomic Database is in Year 2 of funding. We do want to note, however, that the cost on both this page and

the next page are different from your materials. Late last week, Maine did indicate that there has been a change in their indirect rate that decreased by about 8 percent, and that was across all three of their proposals.

That added about \$24,000.00 back into the pot, so thank you very much, Maine, for making that adjustment for us. That does adjust some of those numbers, and those are what appears on the slide, so that is why it differs slightly from your materials. In the average ranking for the new projects, the top three projects there did fall above the line. Then you'll see that the next two projects there on expanding the commercial fishery research foundations, black sea bass, and then also the Maine halibut fishery. Those are the ones in yellow. That is because they are recommended for funding, but there are not quite enough funds to make all of that, to actually fund all of those projects. That will have to be a discussion for today.

The Operations and Advisors, as I mentioned, did come to consensus on their average rankings. They recommend that all maintenance proposals and the administrative budget should be funded in full, and they recommend support for new proposals by the average rankings, with the suggestions below, to fund the top three projects. They did want to note that the Enhancing Recruitment and Retention for the South Atlantic Release Citizen Science Project was not ranked as highly by the Advisors as it was by the Operations Committee.

But the Operations and Advisory's Committees both agree that the following projects that are listed in priority or order, should be funded. That is 1, Expanding the Commercial Fisheries Research Foundation's Black Sea Bass Research Fleet into the Gulf of Maine, and then 2, Port Sampling for the Maine Halibut Fishery. I'm going to turn it back over to Geoff and Jay, thank you.

MR. GEOFF WHITE: Thank you, Julie, and thank you to both the Operations and Advisory Committee for preparing all this and doing all the hard work of the proposal reviews. On this slide, this gets a bit more to the conversation at Coordinating Council, of

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where to go with the funds. What I've done is remove the three projects at the bottom that were below the line for funding.

Again, because Maine has reduced their indirect rate, the Black Sea Bass Project, the fourth in the list is really what I would consider above the line for funding. It's just under \$6,000.00 short, but we can figure out that to make the Black Sea Bass one whole. The discussions about the Maine halibut fishery are really the focus for discussion. I wanted to extend the thought that at this point we are entering the fifth year of the ACCSP cooperative agreement.

There is the capability to extend that, but given the unknowns of what the fiscal climate is going to be in a few months, the question comes up of, where does the Coordinating Council want to go at this point, in terms of supporting the four projects that have expected available funding, assuming we are level funded at 3.5 million, or whether there is a desire to try and find the funds to include the halibut fishery proposal, and an additional \$30,000.00 for that.

Really, it's the question of, what if any buffer or reserve should be considered as halibut, kind of at the Admin Grant for unforeseen events. We've had a few of those this year, in the spring as well as what may happen with the fall election. Again, we're in the fifth year of this funding cycle.

Those were a few of the questions that I wanted to at least put forth for discussion, in terms of how far to go with this. As we are in the fifth year, I do want to remind folks that the savings that we had during years one through four was allocated to projects last year. That was an additional \$250,000.00 that was in the Admin Grant that was selected for project funding last year. With that I'm going to turn it over to Jay, to lead this discussion about where you all want to go in the balance of funding projects.

CHAIR McNAMEE: Great, thank you so much, Julie and thank you, Geoff, and thanks to the Ops Committee and the Advisors as well for those solid recommendations. I think at this point what we're looking for, one structure that we could use for this is to break this up into three separate motions.

One for the Administrative Grant, one for the Maintenance Proposals, and then the New Proposals there is some nuance there. That is where we're at. Do we have any questions from folks before we get into the deliberations on this? Anyone with questions? Yes, down in the back, and I apologize, I can't see your name.

MS. BRANDI SALMON: It's Brandi Salmon, sorry, I was trying to turn it earlier. Question about, if we decide to try to dedicate some funds for the new project, the fifth one, what does that look like if we can't find the funding for it? Like how does that play out in the long run?

CHAIR McNAMEE: Great question, Geoff or Julie, do you want to field that one?

MR. WHITE: I'll partially start with that and then hand it over to Mr. Keliher in Maine. The first question is really, we don't know at this point if the 3.5 million is what will actually come through as the funding, so there is a bit of a curiosity there, is it going to be 3.50, 3.53?

There is the opportunity to support the Ops and Advisors recommendation of, if there is available funding when we know what it is, to support the Halibut Project. If the available funding comes in lower, then we'll have to figure that out. I'm not expecting that finding this money would have to come out of the Other Projects at the moment, that you have other places to look. Pat, what would it look like if halibut was not funded?

MR. PATRICK C. KELIHER: I think from the state's viewpoint on the Halibut, first it's clear not looking for pulling money from other projects, so it's not my intent to go in that direction. I think I'm not quite understanding the timing Geoff, of when you might know about the full allotment that would come in,

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and whether we would have potentially any additional dollars that could fund halibut.

But from the state's perspective, I'm not going to be able to hire any contract staff, or do any staffing up of that project for the Port Sampling, until we know the data is coming. We're entering a very, very tight fiscal climate in the state of Maine. Any flexibility I would have with discretionary funds within the agency, I've got a tight hold on those right now, so I can't open the door to start funding, with not knowing that it's there. We're kind of in a wait and see mode.

MR. WHITE: Unfortunately, I can't answer the question of when we'll know, because that is up to Congress, unless, Bob, you have more information, possibly a crystal ball?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ROBERT E. BEAL: Yes, I can't predict Congress any better than anyone else here can. But if there is a continuing resolution, then theoretically we would be at the 3.5 million. If they get hung up and are unable to pass a new budget for this fiscal year, then we would continue the resolution would be good in a sense for this project or this program at 3.5. But we don't know. All we know is through mid-December right now, and we'll have to see what happens.

CHAIR McNAMEE: Great, thank you. Brandi, all set with that? Renee.

MS. RENEE ZOBEL: I just had a question, thinking kind of back on the history of this type of thing. I know there is a lot of precedent for us kind of supporting maintenance projects that fall below the line. But have we had this as a discussion before for a new project that was recommended, but fell below the line? This is not to poo-poo Mr. Keliher's project here; I know there is support for it. But I'm just trying to think back in discussions, sitting on Ops as well, whether we've had this scenario before where we say, oh, let's go look for money for a new project.

CHAIR McNAMEE: Geoff or Julie.

MR. WHITE: I would say yes, there is precedent to have the discussion. The Herring Proposal had come up several times in the past about how to fund staff to do herring sampling. In this case this is, I think all equipment for the aging, and the equipment can go with the Halibut fishery. This was a proposal that was submitted last year that happened to bump below the line, for what that matters. It has been discussed before, and it is up to the Coordinating Council to have the flexibility and latitude to decide where to go with these things.

CHAIR McNAMEE: Good Renee? Okay, anyone else with questions? All right, not seeing any around. Oh, yes, Carrie.

MS. CARRIE KENNEDY: I'm curious about Maine's timeline for meeting the materials, you know the equipment. What if we sort of hedged our bets and decided or recommended to maybe not immediately find the funds, but wait and see through some portion of the fiscal year, before it felt, I don't know, safe enough that those funds could be allocated to a project at a later time.

CHAIR McNAMEE: Able to respond, Pat?

MR. KELIHER: We would probably need to know sometime in February, in order to make sure its implemented prior to the halibut season.

CHAIR McNAMEE: Okay, not seeing any more hands around the table, any hands online? Oh, go ahead, Pat.

MR. KELIHER: I'm just thinking about the Administrative Proposal and I certainly don't want to discount the fact that we're dealing with cost increase. But I think what Julie mentioned earlier, that it's about 60 percent of the total, if I recall correctly. Has it always been greater than 50 percent? It seemed like the administrative side is growing, it's impacting the state proposals more and more. I don't think there is anything we can do about it now. I'm not here to speak against the

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administrative budget. I think it's just something we need to keep an eye on, just from the standpoint of, the states kind of losing out as the administrative side grows. If that is the case, then maybe we need to put this on our priority list from Congressional ask for money, because that is a good story to tell, I think, as far as our Hill visits.

CHAIR McNAMEE: Thanks for that, Pat. Did you need a response to the proportion there?

MR. KELIHER: In having an idea, I mean I didn't look it up, so having some idea would be great, I think.

CHAIR McNAMEE: Yes, so Geoff, Julie, the question is, if there has been like a trend in the Admin Grant over time. Is this the highest it's been?

MS. SIMPSON: Right now, it's at 67 percent. It is a trend, it has gone up, not in a completely linear fashion, but in kind of a very slow, slow fashion. But it did come up. In the joint meeting, but then also the Advisors have their own meeting, and they did bring up, they asked the question of when the last time ACCSP had an entry in our line item, and the answer is never. They were interested in how they could help with that, which is not easy to for that. But that is to answer your question.

CHAIR McNAMEE: Your comment is well taken, thank you, Pat. Not seeing any other hands around the table, what we're looking for are some motions. I'm looking for somebody to be bold here and offer a motion. We're looking one for the Admin Proposal, one for the Maintenance Proposals, and then maybe a more nuanced one with the new proposals. Okay, Brandi.

MS. SALMON: Yes, I **move to approve the ACCSP Administrative Proposal.**

CHAIR McNAMEE: Thank you, Brandi, seconded by Marty Gary, thank you, Marty. Any

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discussion on the motion? Brandi or Marty, anything you wish to offer? Pretty straightforward. Thanks for that. Can somebody flag me down if you need some time? I don't know that there is anyone for you to caucus with, now that I think about it.

Let's go ahead and vote. All those in favor of the motion, please raise your hand. Geoff is tracking it. Just to check. **That was 16 in favor. Is there anyone opposed? Same sign, I didn't think so. Any abstentions, just a check. Any null votes?** It's not possible here. Good, all right. **Unanimous approval of the motion**, thanks everybody. One motion down, two to go. Carrie, go ahead.

MS. KENNEDY: I **move to approve the three maintenance proposals as recommended by the Operations and Advisory Committees.**

CHAIR McNAMEE: Is there a second to that motion? Second by Ben. Thank you, Ben. Any discussion on the motion? Okay, maybe I can just do, are there any objections to the motion? Any hands online objecting? Okay, good. We'll consider that **motion approved by unanimous consent.** Two down, one to go. This is the more challenging one. John in the back, go ahead, John.

MR. JOHN CARMICHAEL: **Move to approve the top four ranking new proposals through the Maine Black Sea Bass Project.**

CHAIR McNAMEE: First, are you seconding, Pat? Okay, let me see if there is a second for John's motion first. Okay there is a second by Ron Owens, thank you. Pat.

MR. KELIHER: I'm just wondering if there is any willingness to, in case we get additional funds available through the appropriations process, that the Halibut Project could remain above the line, with the idea that it will not be funded unless available funds come into ACCSP.

CHAIR McNAMEE: We could do that in one of two ways. We could, if somebody would agree to add that into the existing motion. I'm not sure if you're offering that as an amendment.

MR. KELIHER: I would offer it as a friendly. I mean it's been motioned and second, so the motion now belongs to the Board, so however you want to handle it. Do you want to use Pat's Rules of Order or Roberts Rules of Order? It all depends.

CHAIR McNAMEE: Maybe because I am not good enough at that stuff to know whether that is appropriate, we can handle it as a separate motion. This is not exclusive of that. Why don't we dispense with this one and then we can come back to it. Okay. We've got a motion, it's been seconded, a little discussion there. Any other discussion? I think that was John who made the motion. Anything from you, John, on this? Okay, John is good, and then Ron, anything?

All right, let's get to it then. Are there any objections to the motion on the table? Not seeing any hands around the table, anyone online? All right, no objections online either, so we will consider **that motion approved by unanimous consent**. Then if there is anything anyone else wants to add, Pat, go ahead.

MR. KELIHER: I'll try to wing a very simple motion here for staff to keep up. I would **move that the Maine Halibut Proposal remain above the line to be funded if additional funds become available**.

CHAIR McNAMEE: Great, thank you, Pat, seconded by let's see I'll go the second with Erika. Thank you, Erika. Okay, we've got a motion, it's been seconded. Any discussion on the motion? Eric.

MR. ERIC REID: Thank you, Mr. Chair, I'm not even sure if I'm supposed to comment here. But there is a lot of things going on with halibut besides what's happening in Maine. I think that this motion is totally appropriate to support the Maine fishery, but it's also going to help support the American fisheries in international waters at some point. I would support that.

CHAIR McNAMEE: Thank you, Eric. All right, we've got a motion, we've had a little discussion. Anyone else before we call the question? All right, not seeing any hands, are there any objections to the motion on the table? Seeing no hands around the table, anyone online? No objections online, so we'll consider this **motion approved by consent**. I think that does it for that. The next agenda item is to move on to Program Updates, which Geoff will take us through, so whenever you're ready, Geoff.

### PROGRAM AND COMMITTEE UPDATES

MR. WHITE: Just before we step into the update, thank you everybody for supporting the funding process, a critical piece of ACCSP. Before we get to the Program Updates, we don't need to identify all the members right now. But I did want to highlight that the ACCSP Funding Subcommittee is up for reconstitution.

Confirming that membership over the winter, this is a group that historically has represented by ASMFC Bob Beal and NOAA with a council chair kind of north/south representation. The Operations Committee Chair, with north/south representation, and Advisor and then of course ACCSP staff.

During the Operations Committee in Advisory meeting, they did reappoint membership to include Nichole Lengyel Costa from Rhode Island, Maryellen Gordon in Jersey, and Julia Byrd in South Atlantic Council, and for the Advisors Fran Carp. I hadn't prepared the conversation in you all before this: It's probably best to e-mail folks and kind of have them appointed outside of this meeting, unless you wanted to handle it during the meeting.

Unless there is a volunteer. We'll do it after. Not to vote, if there are volunteers on the Coordinating Council that wanted to be members of the Funding Subcommittee, Bob may take their Chair role. I don't think you can hand that one off. If there are other volunteers that want to be part of this, please raise your hand, otherwise we'll handle that elsewhere. Kathy. Outstanding, thank you, Kathy for volunteering.

CHAIR McNAMEE: Any other volunteers? Okay, and so we can follow up on this afterwards.

MR. WHITE: We'll fill in the gaps after the meeting over e-mail.

CHAIR McNAMEE: Very good, thank you, Geoff.

MR. WHITE: Then that group will have probably the winter meeting to discuss next year's RFP and possibly rising the scoring beyond the catch effort and biological, as opposed to top lines for funding, as well as extending this conversation that we just started about the balance between future projects and Admin passed and searching for ACCSP funding.

Again, something that was brought up at the Operations and Advisors Committee and touched on during your conversation today. With that we'll move to the Program Updates. The first thing is really to look back a little bit at completed items that were from the 2024 Action Plan. Definitely some excitement here.

We have been able to implement expanded at entry quality control checks for SAFIS eTRIPS submissions, so a lot of partner attributes, though we're not getting the same data quality checks as other core elements that has had a workshop in 2023, we got FIS fundings to complete that, and that work is largely complete and set for implementation in eTRIPS now. We were able to continue to extend one-stop trip reporting across the federal permit, so that is getting HMS, Southeast Logbook Requirements, as well as GARFO requirements into SAFIS eTRIPS, so really the one submission technically can cover for sharing the data in the background, and making that a lesser burden on the fishermen. We've been able to support collection and management of spatial data, the lobster vessel tracking devices.

Also, launched the SciFish mobile application and project builder for standardizing Citizen Science data collection. Exciting movements on all of those things that were highlighted in the

2024 Action Plan. We've also made significant progress in data distribution and use. The first, there was the completion of the North Carolina Biological Data Feed, to get all that information to ACCSP.

The next step of that is for it to go from ACCSP down to Miami, the Southeast Fisheries Science Center. They are actively working on that with a goal date of finishing that in November. The other thing that is going to follow from that is getting the Southeast Tip Data sent to the ACCSP Data Warehouse, so again, populating the biological data module, which is a big step for us.

In the longer bullet there is all of the stock assessments, SEDARS that ACCSP was able to provide commercial landings data that were validated by the states, so thanks to all of you who have been doing that. Moving to the 2025 Action Plan. Highlighting here things that will be discussed and approved at the Business Session on Wednesday.

But really partnerships are a core component of the National Collaboration of Fishery Data Collection. We are continuing to improve our overall efficiencies, by sharing knowledge, technical approaches, and yes, even direct sharing of software, to enable some more progress in parallel jurisdictions.

One example of that is with MRIP APAIS, we were able to share that software program with the Gulf of Mexico, then actually with NOAA Offices of Science and Technology, to implement out in Hawaii, and there are ongoing efforts to do that with the SciFish application, which I will touch on a little bit later.

In the coming year, we're going to get to the development and implementation of modernized dealer reporting application and data processing by January, 2026. This is something that was slated. We wanted to get completed by January, 2025, but we made a large number of changes early in the year to help GARFO move some of their dealers

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from a File Upward application to an API, that is a precursor to this step of dealer reporting.

Then we had some slowdowns, because of other intervening activities in the spring, and some staffing issues and other projects that were running long. That is really moving to, we'll probably get the programming done for EDR in the middle of 2025, but we will also listen to the partners and saying, when that rolls out it should be the entire package all at once.

That means online, mobile, upload, data queries coming back out. Those four parts will get developed and tested throughout the year. The good news with this, even if we're ready early, it will allow a little extra time for the outreach and if we're patient to get that out to dealers before that needs to happen. Generally, the partners have not wanted us to change the dealer reporting system mid fishery season, which would be a little more difficult. Within SAFIS we also want to extend the One-Stop-Reporting Initiative to convene a workshop on state requirements. As the federal things come together, really looking to see what are the additional state needs that we can extend that program with.

Then under recreational surveys, we want to continue to develop and seek certification of the for-hire methodology for logbook estimates of catch and effort with dockside validation. This is really working with MRIP to continue a bunch of work we've already started, some mathematical analysis of existing datasets, and though make the map more consistent and answer some of the questions that their consultants had about sensitivity analysis.

That timing is actually in parallel with some actions by the Councils on SEFIER and Do Not Fish Reports that ACCSP remains involved in with these conversations, so again, a lot of partnerships that are helping to drive those activities in our coming year. Other items for 2025 in the Action Plan under New Tasks,

already mentioned the state requirements under Recreational Surveys.

The recreational group is really supporting data collection of pilot finder, so there was the discard project that was just supported for funding under the new projects, as well as large pelagic pilot surveys, because these are items that are happening through MRIP. They are supported by state staff to actually do the fieldwork, and ACCSP staff to get the data coordinated and passed through the middle of that.

Then also, work on our standards to really define the data consolidation standards and presentation for release catch discards and add to observer data across dealer trip and citizen science records. What that really means is it is collected in many ways, and we need to discern how to put that puzzle together and still preset it in a useful way on the discard information, to help out with the stock assessments.

Other new tasks under the Action Plan are data distribution and use. We've got a new list of stock assessments for the Commission and SEDAR process. We have an annual data load process for commercial data. Now that we're populating the biological module a bit more, we need to come up with that annual data load process for the biological information, whether that is lobster, herring, Southeast Tip Data, ultimately Northeast Fisheries Observer Program as well.

That is a task to do all that coordination and set up the planning for that. Then finally, to expand the Data Warehouse content, with emphasis on presentation of the recreational directed trips and catch frequency queries. Those are things that had been around a while back and we're needing to update the map and presentation on, and so Alex and his team will be working on that throughout the coming year.

The last items under the Action Plan for new tasks, are really to improve the IT hosting scalability to address the increased data demands, so this has to do partially with overall increases in electronic trip

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reporting, as Ed Martino presented to you in April. That pales in comparison to the positional tracker information, in terms of numbers of rows. It's not a huge volume of data storage, but it is a huge number of connections to either database, to make that more stable, reliable and consistent, ACCSP staff reached out and did a proposal through FIS for IRA funds, and we were approved for a project.

I think we're about getting the funds in place now, but it's 350 some odd thousand dollars over two years to work on that infrastructure, whether that is equipment within ACCSP or a cloud-based approach, just to make all that more scalable and stable. We want to promote and support communication.

The ACCSP activities by Committee members within their agencies, so we've done great with getting the newsletters out on a monthly basis of what committee activities and program activities are occurring. We heard good feedback from you all in the past that that is an appropriate way to go. But sometimes there is additional messaging and important tasks that aren't being shared back out within the agencies.

The Operations Committee and Advisors came up with an idea that we want to promote through next year, which is coming up with a item to share within the meeting summary, so a top couple of bullets of, these were common themes or important actions that occurred that may not have been caught in each individual's notes or task list, but would be something to take back and share within your agencies and beyond, or maybe you can collect feedback.

Then the last item is really, as always too, continuous improvement on our website, which remains a focus to both maximize information sharing and data availability, engaging our website and our users to provide information on to folks. Those are the major items in the Action Plan for next year.

I do want to highlight that we have more advisors at this point, and we still do need more. A task request for you is to go back and work on finding more advisors. Between your last meeting and now, Maryland took this to heart, and had a very successful campaign to advertise and request for more advisors. They got many more applicants than they expected, and they were able to find two new members that were able to participate in the ranking process this fall.

The current advisory members are on the screen for you to see now. But again, we can share that successful campaign message back out with you, and hopefully those that are ready to expand your advisory capacity will be able to do so. Another highlight is on SciFish. The project builder and application have been launched. This was a three plus year effort, including Julie and Kathy and Julia Byrd, and a full SciFish Organizing Committee.

The SciFish Advisory Panel has been reviewing some applications, there are two new projects within the approval process now, and this is another one of those places that we call luck. I tend to call it a surprising example of government efficiency, so the Pacific states and the Gulf state Commissions are interested in hosting SciFish architecture for their partner agencies.

But speaking with our MOU, we're keeping to the Atlantic coast, sharing the technology for them to deploy and work with their partners on their coast. We're kind of excited about that development as well. Next highlight is on the Atlantic Recreational Discards Pilot Projects. Again, this was something that was developed through the Rec-Tec Committee, developed with MRIP staff guidance. There are seven states that want to be part of this pilot and you had all just approved that for funding.

The goals are really to analyze with potential digit bias, collect additional lengths of released fish. The approach of this is to use a catch card, a paper catch card. It's a little bit of a low-tech approach, but that is its genius, and the group worked really hard to make that work. The Chair and Vice-Chair, Angela Giuliano and Don Franco were able to go to the Gulf

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States Commission workshop on released catch methodologies this summer, because they were presenting it as the states.

It was very well received by the Gulf group, and there is a whole Gulf contingent that now wants to try this, to develop a proposal for the Gulf IRA Red Snapper Funding, to try that Gulf wide. Again, kudos to that Subcommittee for coming up with the approach, and sharing that with our partners.

There has also been progress in data collection for MRIP in unsampled waves. This was raised as South Carolina wanted to do this for Wave 1, 2025. Since then, the Rec-Tech Committee and others have been discussing the ability to do the for-hire telephone survey. That is possible with his existing staff and budgets. It's looking right now like we'll be able to do Maryland through Georgia for January/February 2025, to begin getting for-hire effort in Wave 1.

The desire for fishing effort survey or dockside intercepts is there, but the timing is just not right for that, that would require additional funding, and with the FES going through its pilot cuts to the design changes, there is potential for the Private Angler Fishing Effort Survey to collect Wave 1 data in 2026.

But again, the state range for that would be unknown right now, so after this meeting if you guys are interested in creating a block of states to record that, that would be good to do so. The next item is admittedly a busy slide. But a place that we're looking to go and identify feedback from Coordinating Council, as well as Operations Committee, is the primary data collection initiative that ACCSP has taken part in, and already kind of committed to.

The eTRIPS validations are fully on their way to get out there. The One Stop Reporting and state needs I had mentioned already. The items that are kind of in the background portion of the arrow, are things like Electronic Dealer Reporting Redesign and Registration Tracking,

getting more information of the fishing entities into the software programs with the ongoing activity. In addition to those planned activities, we have these pentagons of things that are coming up for us.

There are opportunities for biological data loads and display, mentioned that as part of the Action Plan already. There are opportunities to extend charter observer data from North Carolina to Georgia, supported through the Southeast Fishery Science Center in the same methodology that is being used in Florida and throughout the Gulf of Mexico. Then also looking forward to the For-Hire Logbooks and Dockside Sampling, the ACCSP certification methodology. There are going to be efforts to get it certified in 2025, and then kind of see what can happen for implementation forward to there. These different perspectives, focus areas, are things that we're trying to work out. Do we have the right staff and the balance of staff and contractors to kind of get these tasks done, to answer the needs of the partners. That is where I wanted to share with you. The plate is kind of full now, and looking forward, but there are still opportunities to shift that, depending on the priorities of the Coordinating Council. With that I will pause.

CHAIR McNAMEE: Thank you so much, Geoff, appreciate that. Time for questions, and I see Dan McKiernan, go ahead.

MR. DANIEL MCKIERNAN: Thank you, Geoff, I have two questions. In an earlier slide you mentioned one of the tasks is collection and management of spatial data. Could you help me understand? I'm thinking the lobster tracker data, there is probably a lot of applications that have to be written, so that we can work at this data on a subregional basis. Could you describe what those challenges are, and how quickly there may be some tools for states to use some of that data?

MR. WHITE: I can, and I'm also going to phone a friend next to me here. One of the supported projects for today was an extension of those VMS applications. As that was put in place this year, learning the challenges of what comes in, in the

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data, what are the states interested in pulling back out of that information.

Then how to do that efficiently, so that it is fast enough to answer the needs of the partners, and doesn't crash the system on our end, and be flexible with that. That is a proposal that you all supported funding, and it will probably take place in the coming year, and I want to pause and hand it over to Julie to add information.

MS. SIMPSON: Yes, a big part of that is the framework. Right now, it results for the lobster framework, so we have the vessels that are expected to have lobster trackers. As you mentioned in lobster meeting, Massachusetts is already working to have other fisheries be part of this, and we need frameworks for those that will include those business roles. We're going to develop an adaptive module, so that new frameworks can just be built without further programming, and that is a big part of it.

Another big part of it is making sure that the data are acceptable in ways, in that sort of raw data way, so that folks could get those down for analyses. But then we've also been working with folks on sort of essentially tiered material so that they can be available beyond the basic data for a sort of higher-level analyses. But we need to work with the stakeholders on exactly what that looks like at this point.

MR. McKIERNAN: Thank you, I really appreciate that, where we're going with some of that tracker data, especially with that next fleet is really innovative. We want to map eel grass beds and have geofencing techniques, so we're kind of way out forward of that. But I truly appreciate whatever help you can give us to get there.

I did have a second question. Geoff, I know that the New England Council recently kind of echoed a DMF request of ours to have the APAIS interviewers ask anglers to sort of identify fishing location. Can you give us an

update as to if this is going to be possible in the next year or two?

MR. WHITE: Yes, I just got the letter Friday from New England Council, and thanks for kind of giving me a heads up that that was coming as well. It fits very well that letter, and the request from Massachusetts fits well into what the ACCSP Recreational Technical Committee is already got their eyes on.

We got a letter from Massachusetts requesting that. We did get a request, Rec-Tech is going to be talking about it on October 30, and their December 5th in-person meeting. Really to take that request, scope it out, in terms of how would that apply to a question within APAIS, or questions. How would that map look? How would anglers actually identify where it would go?

How many states are interested in this map grid going up and down the coast, to really identify that either the ten-minute grid square or a different methodology to do that. Once those parameters are set by Rec-Tech, and how many states that want to do it. It then goes to MRIP and their PRA process for additional questions.

I believe the next time that comes up is preparation '25, and the PRA questions in '26, and we would need a few months to program that into the tablets. It's definitely on track for discussion. We're taking it seriously, but it's a process to add those questions and fit it in with the Paperwork Reduction Act.

CHAIR McKIERNAN: Good, Dan? All right, thanks for that. Next, I'll go to Kathy.

MS. KATHY KNOWLTON: Great presentation, Geoff, thank you very much. Two questions, the first one is going to be one slide back, with the data priorities slide. Fantastic, so the items there that are in the aqua colored pentagons that have to do with expanding or building out new initiatives. Is that a good way of kind of thinking about them? It's work to come, it's additional work to come. Do we think, in light of the conversations that came up originally through Ops and Advisors and was touched on

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today, particularly with task comments, in terms of Funding Subcommittee.

Having more conversation about the impacts of the Administrative Grant. When we see information like this, reminding us to sort of have that sidebar conversation about how much these new items, and maybe starting to get into some kind of a symbol or a metric or something that kind of identifies this would be a low-medium or high addition, in terms of staff or these new initiatives would be primarily contracted out and have no effect on Admin.

I think that might help us moving forward, as we try to keep this idea at the front of our mind, and whether we can or can't get more money coming to ACCSP, because of the buildup of the administrative budget, in terms of the functionality that all of the partners are now reliant on. I think that would be particularly helpful, as we start to continue to talk about changes in the Admin Budget relative to whether you get the approval or the direction to add new work. That would be one comment, I don't know if you wanted to respond.

MR. WHITE: Thanks, Kathy, and I think those are definitely good conversations to keep going with, and I probably glossed over a few things on the slide that I just want to add in for your awareness today. When it comes to biological data loads, that is work that is capable to be done by existing staff. Most of that data would be, it's setting up the processes and data flows for it to get sent to ACCSP and loaded on a regular basis.

That one is pretty well approached in scoping out what that presentation methodology would need to be. It might take an FIS Grant. We would probably find that as a contract approach, one time development, and then we would maintain that inhouse. We've got a long track record of doing that with different projects.

When it comes to the charter observer data for North Carolina through Georgia, the Southeast Fisheries Science Center has identified funds to go directly to those three states, to hire staff and go out and do charter boat at-sea observers, and the piece for ACCSP would be to take a component already developed by the Gulf Commission, and Karen Cannell as the APAX Interface.

Sorry, Application Express is the Oracle Web Interface, and literally take what has already been built and paid for, and with some support from Southeast Fisheries Science Center, to install and modify that for ACCSP. Again, it's contract staff, it's a maintenance load, but it's not a major initiative for our software programming staff to take on.

Then the for-hire logbooks and dockside sampling are putting a lot of staff time into developing a methodology theory and design before that goes out into a field. Once that design is approved once, and certified by MRIP, then it's open for implementation by any Atlantic Coast partner again and again and again, when they are ready for it.

Whether that was a federal or a state logbook program that wanted to meet those parameters. Again, it's work at the beginning, but once that is developed it is not a workload on ACCSP staff or the Admin Grant to put that design in the field. That would be funded either by MRIP or by a state, and the data flow through with the data processing that is already a part of the Admin Grant.

MS. KNOWLTON: Could they come to ACCSP with a new proposal to implement, after it was gone through the MRIP approval process?

MR. WHITE: I would think, yes.

MS. KNOWLTON: Okay, that's one, second question had to do, if you don't mind, if you'll humor me with going back a few more slides, when you talked about the data standards for, it included Citizen Science right at the very bottom of it. It was nearer the beginning. There we go, there we go.

ACCSPs meat and potatoes is defining data standards. I'm excited to see on there the components that will be coming in through the new discard catch cards and lengths of discarded fish. The one that I was intrigued with most and didn't expect was the Citizen Science records.

How does that interaction, how do you see that interaction occurring with developing data standards for the citizen science records, when programs that are successful with going through the SciFish process and the SciFish Advisory Panel, and we have made standards using current ACCSP approved data fields. They can only choose from those. We frontloaded that to streamline consistent data standards. What portion of that is needed in the Citizen Science records moving forward? Do you understand my question?

MR. WHITE: I do, and it's not about the data collection. In my view it is something that has to be worked out about data presentation. Right now, we get biological data in from different places on discards. Trip Report has the information on released catch. APAIS Interview, an Observer Trip, a citizen science record.

They are stored in four different places. How do you pull the right information from each of those four places, and rebuild a coherent picture that answers the questions that the users need? It's less about redefining how citizen science should ask the question and more asking the data users, what is the best way to present the background.

MS. KNOWLTON: Do you see that happening through the Rec-Tech Committee, or is that more of a developmental thing?

MR. WHITE: I think partially Rec-Tech. I think it's really a collaborative effort across several committees, because I don't think any one of us knows the answer.

CHAIR McNAMEE: All right, great discussion. Other questions for Geoff? No hands in the room, any hands online? No hands online. All right, so I think Geoff, unless there is. Oh yes, no, I'm not going to forget that, don't worry. I'm just making sure we're done with the program updates.

### **ELECT CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR**

CHAIR McNAMEE: Okay, so we're done with that part of the agenda and now we're on to the Election of the Next Chair and Vice-Chair. I'll start with the Chair, and first I'll start by saying it's been a lot of fun chairing this committee. I think this Committee is super important and enables a lot of both fundamental and cutting-edge stuff that we're doing with data that allows us to do our work.

It's been a real pleasure being a part of that. But alas, all good things must come to an end, so I'll be turning over the Chairmanship after this meeting. To my left here, Ms. Kathy Knowlton has been riding along shotgun. She's been super helpful, super engaged, and so unless there are any objections, I think it would be prudent to appoint Kathy as our next Chair.

Looking around the table, I wasn't anticipating anyone flagging me down, so. I don't think we need a motion, as long as nobody jumps up and shouts, then I think we're good. We'll consider Kathy to be our new Chair for the Coordinating Council. Congratulations, Kathy. I promised Kathy I would finish up this meeting, and she'll take over with a clean slate next time. There is the Chair, so next we need now a new Vice-Chair. I will look over to Bob for a nomination.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BEAL: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you for your two years of service to the Coordinating Council, we appreciate it. I can sit here and I usually can't vote or make motions. I'm going to take advantage of this opportunity and nominate Renee Zobel to my right for Vice-Chair of the ACCSP Coordinating Council.

CHAIR McNAMEE: Great, so we've got a nomination, is there a second to that nomination,

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by Dan McKiernan. Great, are there any objections to the nomination of Renee for the Vice-Chair position? Seeing none; congratulations, Renee to the Vice-Chairmanship. Okay, that takes care of the elections, Geoff, go ahead.

MR. WHITE: I just wanted to take a moment and say thank you to Jason for his two years as being Chair. We've got your name added to the official plaque of those who served as Coordinating Council Chairs. I will certainly miss your efficient meeting running style, as well as having a bowtie next to me up here in the front, trying to copy you, or stay stylish for once. Thank you for your leadership and your help in keeping ACCSP moving forward.

CHAIR McNAMEE: Thank you very much, Geoff. (Applause) Yes, go ahead, Geoff.

MR. WHITE: While I have the floor, and saying thank you, I did want to look across the table at Mel Bell, so glad to have you here. In your official retirement meeting you were not with us; you were at another event. I appreciate your being able to be here with us again, appreciate your years of time and service to ACCSP on the Coordinating Council, and your mentorship both as a fisheries professional and a friend to get us through all this. Thank you once again for all your time and efforts with us.

MR. MEL BELL: Thanks, Geoff.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

CHAIR McNAMEE: Thank you, Mel. That takes us to the end of the agenda, unless anybody has Other Business, not seeing anyone raise a hand around the table. I think we can go ahead and adjourn if we get a motion to do so. Motion made by Dan, is there a second? Seconded, I'm going to assume there are no objections to that, so thank you, everybody, we're adjourned.

(Whereupon the meeting adjourned at 2:07 p.m. on October 21, 2024)

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## FY2026 ACCSP Request for Proposals Summary

During the October 2024 ASMFC annual meeting, the Coordinating Council tasked the ACCSP Funding Subcommittee to review how updated ACCSP module priorities and scoring may impact overall ranking. The Funding Subcommittee was reconvened with the following membership: Bob Beal (Chair), Julia Byrd, Nicole Lengyel Costa, Maryellen Gordon, Fran Karp, Carrie Kennedy, Kathy Knowlton, and Renee Zobel. The subcommittee met three times between December 2024 and March 2025. The recommendations of the subcommittee included:

- adjusting the primary program priorities to elevate the socioeconomic module and decrease the catch-effort module to reflect past accomplishments and future direction of the ACCSP,
- adjusting the secondary program priorities to align the socioeconomic module with the three other modules, and
- adding an Impact on Management row similar to the existing Impact on Stock Assessment.

The Operations and Advisory Committees met April 7, 2025, and supported the inclusion of the Funding Subcommittee's recommendations and chose to set the secondary priorities to be half of the existing primary priority scores. The ACCSP FY2026 RFP summary of changes includes the details for Coordinating Council consideration and action.

# Recommendations from Funding Subcommittee

## a. Funding Subcommittee Review

- i. Analysis of how changing the scoring would impact overall ranking
- ii. Open discussion of priorities
- iii. The subcommittee determined that there was not a significant impact by implementing the changes suggested below. They emphasized that it will be important for proposals to be specific in how the project will have an impact on stock assessment or useful for management. For example, this was a research recommendation from X or this Council specifically requested this information. Encourage proposers to get letters of support from those that would be using the data.

## b. Recommendations

- i. Primary Priority
  - i. Decrease catch and effort range from 0 - 10 to 0 - 8.
  - ii. Increase socioeconomic range from 0 - 4 to 0 - 6.
- ii. Secondary priority
  - i. Socio-economic is the only one that is different (0-1). All the others are 0-3.
  - ii. The Operations and Advisors should determine the change to be made increasing the socio-economic. Options:
    - 1. Make all three equal
    - 2. Make each secondary half of the existing primary
- iii. Add Useful to Management row with a range of 0 - 3 that is the same as Impact on Stock Assessment.

# ACCSP FY26 RFP Summary of Changes

## 1. RFP

### 1.1. General Changes

- 1.1.1. Updated dates appropriately
- 1.1.2. Changes to the priorities section based on review of funding subcommittee recommendations by Operations Committee and Advisory Panel
  - 1.1.2.1. Updated language (based on details outlined in Ranking Criteria below)

- 1. *Biological data;*
- 2. *catch, effort, and landings data (including licensing, permit and vessel registration data);*
- 3a. *releases, discards and protected species data; and,*
- 3b. *economic and sociological data (equal to 3a).*

## 2. Funding Decision Document

### 2.1. General changes

- 2.1.1. All dates have been updated

### 2.2. General Proposal Guidelines (**PAGE 5**)

- 2.2.1. Added bullets
- 2.2.2. Language: Proposals that request funding to purchase 3rd party data or develop/purchase 3rd party software that is similar (i.e. performing existing functions) to software offered by ACCSP may not be recommended for funding.
- 2.2.3. Language: Proposal summaries should be specific on how the project will have an impact on stock assessments or be useful for management. For example, this was a research recommendation from X or this Council specifically requested this information. Proposers are encouraged to get letters of support from those that would be using the data.

### 2.3. Appendix A (**PAGE 15**)

- 2.3.1. Added Year 6 (final year) value (\$71,172) for PRFC electronic reporting project

### 2.4. Appendix B (**PAGE 16**)

- 2.4.1. Changes to the ranking section based on review of funding subcommittee recommendations by Operations Committee and Advisory Panel (see details in Ranking Criteria below)

## 3. Biological Priority Matrix

- 3.1 Updated based on the matrix review held at the Biological Review Panel meeting held in February of 2025.

## 4. Bycatch Priority Matrix

- 3.1 Updated based on the matrix review held at the Bycatch Prioritization Committee meeting held in February of 2025.

## 5. Recreational Technical Committee Priorities – No Changes

## 6. Socioeconomic Priority Data Elements – No Changes

## 7. Timeline for Proposal Review

- 7.1. Dates are updated
- 7.2. Overall timeline remains relatively the same

## 8. Ranking Criteria Document

- 8.1. Updates based on review of funding subcommittee recommendations by Operations Committee and Advisory Panel

### 8.1.1. Primary Program Priority (updated)

Biological Sampling	0 – 10	Rank based on range within module and level of sampling defined under Program design. When considering biological, bycatch or recreational funding, rank according to priority matrices.
Catch and Effort	0 – 8	
Bycatch/Species Interactions	0 – 6	
Social and Economic	0 – 6	

### 8.1.2. Secondary Program Priority (updated)

Potential secondary module as a by-product (In program priority order)	0 – 5 0 – 4 0 – 3 0 – 3	Ranked based on additional module data collection and level of collection as defined within the Program design of individual module.
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### 8.1.3. Impact on Management (added)

Impact on management	0 - 3	Rank based on the level of data collection that leads to new or greatly improved management as specified in the proposal.
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## Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program

1050 N. Highland Street, Suite 200A-N | Arlington, VA 22201  
703.842.0780 | 703.842.0779 (fax) | [www.accsp.org](http://www.accsp.org)

**TO:** ACCSP Coordinating Council and All ACCSP Committees

**FROM:** Geoff White, ACCSP Director

**SUBJECT:** ACCSP Request for 2026 Proposals

The Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (Program or ACCSP) is issuing a Request for Proposals (RFP) to Program Partners and Committees for FY26 funding.

ACCSP's [Funding Decision Document](#) (FDD) provides an overview of the funding decision process, guidance for preparing and submitting proposals, and information on funding recipients' post-award responsibilities. Projects in areas not specifically addressed in the FDD may still be considered for funding if they help achieve Program goals. These goals, listed by priority, are improvements in:

1. Biological data;
2. catch, effort, and landings data (including licensing, permit and vessel registration data);
- 3a. releases, discards and protected species data; and,
- 3b. economic and sociological data (equal to 3a).

Project activities that will be considered according to priority may include:

- Partner implementation of data collection programs;
- Continuation of current Program-funded partner programs;
- Funding for personnel required to implement Program related projects/proposals; and
- Data management system upgrades or establishment of partner data feeds to the Data Warehouse and/or Standard Atlantic Fisheries Information System.

Proposals for biological sampling should target priority species in the top quartile (Attachment II) of the Biological Priority Matrix. Proposals for observer coverage should align with fisheries affecting the top quartile priority species (Attachment III) of the Bycatch Priority Matrix. Brief descriptions of the current levels of biological or bycatch sampling by any of the Partners would be helpful to the review process. Projects for recreational catch and effort data should target the priorities set by the Recreational Technical Committee (Attachment IV). Projects involving socioeconomic data should reference the Socioeconomic Priority Data Elements (Attachment V).

Proposals to continue Program-funded partner projects ("maintenance proposals") may not contain significant changes in scope (for example the addition of bycatch data collection to a dealer reporting project), and must include in the cover letter whether there are any changes in the current proposal from prior years' and, if so, provide a brief summary of those changes.

*Our vision is to 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.*



Additionally, in FY16 a long-term funding strategy policy was instituted to limit the duration of maintenance projects. Maintenance projects are now subject to a funding reduction following their fourth year of maintenance funding. For maintenance projects entering year 6, a further 33 percent cut will be applied and funding will cease in year 7.

All project submissions must comply with the Program Standards found [here](#). Please consider using [this successful project proposal](#) as a template. Overhead rates may not exceed 25% of total costs unless mandated by law or policy. Items included within overhead should not also be listed as in-kind match.

Submissions will be reviewed in accordance with the FDD (Attachment I), ranking criteria (Attachment VII), and funding allocation. Current funding allocation guidelines are 75% for maintenance projects and 25% for new projects within the Program priorities. If either allocation is not fully utilized, remaining funds will be available to approved projects in the other category. For example, if maintenance projects only use 67% of the total available funds, the remaining balance would be added to the 25% new project allocation to fund new projects as approved by the Coordinating Council.

Attachment VI provides a timeline for the FY26 funding process. The final decision on proposals to be funded for FY26 will be made in October 2025. Project awards will be subject to funding availability and, if there is a funding shortfall, awards may be adjusted in accordance with the FDD. Successful applicants will be notified when funding becomes available.

Project Investigators will be required to report progress directly to the Program's Operations and Advisory Committees in addition to meeting the standard Federal reporting requirements.

Please submit initial proposals as Microsoft Word and Excel files no later than **June 13, 2025** by email to Julie DeFilippi Simpson, ACCSP Deputy Director [julie.simpson@accsp.org](mailto:julie.simpson@accsp.org). If you have any questions about the funding decision process, please contact your agency's Operations Committee member (<http://www.accsp.org/committees>) or ACCSP staff (703-842-0780).

## RELEVANT ATTACHMENTS

ATTACHMENT I	FY2026 Funding Decision Document
ATTACHMENT II	FY2026 Biological Priority Matrix
ATTACHMENT III	FY2026 Bycatch Priority Matrix
ATTACHMENT IV	FY2026 Recreational Technical Committee Priorities
ATTACHMENT V	FY2026 Socioeconomic Priority Data Elements
ATTACHMENT VI	FY2026 Timeline for Proposal Review
ATTACHMENT VII	FY2026 Ranking Criteria Document

**Funding Decision Process**  
**Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program**  
*May 2025*

The Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (the Program) is a state-federal cooperative initiative to improve recreational and commercial fisheries data collection and data management activities on the Atlantic coast. The program supports further innovation in fisheries-dependent data collection and management technology through its annual funding process.

Each year, ACCSP issues a Request for Proposals (RFP) to its Program Partners. The ACCSP Operations and Advisory Committees review submitted project proposals and make funding recommendations to the Deputy Director and the Coordinating Council.

This document provides an overview of the funding decision process, guidance for preparing and submitting proposals, and information on funding recipients' post-award responsibilities, including providing reports on project progress.

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## **Overview of the Funding Decision Process**

- [Funding Decision Process Timeline](#)
- [Detailed Steps](#)

### **Funding Decision Process Timeline**

April- Operations and Advisory Committees develop annual funding priorities, criteria and allocation targets (maintenance vs. new projects)

May- Coordinating Council issues Request for Proposals (RFP)

June- Partners submit proposals

July- Operations and Advisory Committees review initial proposals, PIs are invited (not mandatory) to this meeting to answer questions and hear feedback; ACCSP staff provide initial review results to submitting Partner

August- Final proposals are submitted. Final proposals must be submitted electronically to the Deputy Director, and/or designee by close of business on the day of the specified deadline. Final proposals received after the RFP deadline will not be considered for funding.

September- Operations and Advisory Committees review and rank final proposals

October- Funding recommendations presented to Coordinating Council; Coordinating Council makes final funding decision

ACCSP Staff submits notification to submitting Partner of funded projects and notification of approved projects to appropriate grant funding agency (e.g. NOAA Fisheries Regional Grants Program Office, “NOAA Grants”) by Partner

As Needed- Operation and/or Leadership Team and Coordinating Council review and make final decision with contingencies (e.g. scope of work, rescissions, no-cost extensions, returned unused funds, etc.)

## **Detailed Steps of Funding Decision Process**

### 1. Develop Annual Funding Priorities, Criteria and Allocation Targets (maintenance vs. new projects).

Prior to issuing the Request for Proposals, the Coordinating Council will approve the annual funding criteria and allocation targets. These will be used to rank projects and allocate funding between maintenance and new projects respectively.

In FY16, a long-term funding strategy policy was instituted to limit the duration of maintenance projects. Maintenance projects are now subject to a funding reduction following their fourth year of maintenance funding.

- For maintenance projects entering year 5 of ACCSP funding in FY20, a 33 percent funding cut was applied to whichever sum was larger: the project’s prior two-year-average base funding set in FY16, or the average annual sum received during the project’s four years of full *maintenance* funding. In year 6, a further 33 percent cut will be applied and funding will cease in year 7. Please see Appendix A for a list of maintenance projects entering year 6 in FY20 and the maximum funds available for these projects.
- For more recent maintenance projects (i.e., those entering year 5 of maintenance funding after FY20), the base funding will be calculated as the average of funding received during the project’s four years as a *maintenance* project. These projects will receive a 33 percent cut in year 5, a further 33 percent cut in year 6, and funding will cease in year 7. Please see Appendix A for a list of maintenance projects entering year 5 or 6 in FY25 and the maximum funds available for these projects.

### 2. Issue Request for Proposals

An RFP will be sent to all Program Partners and Committees no later than the week after the spring Coordinating Council meeting. The RFP will include the ranking criteria, allocation targets approved by the Coordinating Council, and general Program priorities taken from Goal 3 of the current ASMFC Five-Year Strategic Plan. The RFP and related documents will also be posted on the Program’s website [here](#).

All proposals MUST be submitted either by a Program Partner, jointly by several Program Partners, or through a Program Committee. The public has the ability to work with a Program Partner to develop and submit a proposal. Principle investigators are strongly encouraged to work with their Operations Committee member in the development of any proposal. All proposals must be submitted electronically to the Deputy Director, and/or designee, in the standard format.

### 3. Review initial proposals

Proposals will be reviewed by staff and the Operations and Advisory Committees. Committee members are encouraged to coordinate with their offices and/or constituents to provide input to the review process. Operations Committee members are also encouraged to work with staff in their offices who have submitted a proposal in order to represent the proposal during the review. Project PIs will be invited to attend the initial proposal review, held in July. The review and evaluation of all written proposals will take into consideration the ranking criteria, funding allocation targets and the overall Program Priorities as specified in the RFP. Proposals may be forwarded to relevant Program technical committees for further review of the technical feasibility and statistical validity. Proposals that fail to meet the ACCSP standards may be recommended for changes or rejected.

### 4. Provide initial review results to submitting Partner

Program staff will notify the submitting Partner of suggested changes, requested responses, or questions arising from the review. The submitting Partner will be given an opportunity to submit a final proposal incorporating suggested changes in the same format previously described in Step 2(b) by the final RFP deadline.

### 5. Review and rank final proposals

The review and ranking of all proposals will take into consideration the ranking criteria, funding allocation targets, and overall Program Priorities as specified in the RFP. The Deputy Director and the Advisory and Operations Committees will develop a list of prioritized recommended proposals and forward them for discussion, review, and approval by the Coordinating Council.

### 6. Proposal approval by the Coordinating Council

The Coordinating Council will review a summary of all submitted proposals and prioritized recommended proposals from the Operations and Advisory Committees. Each representative on the Coordinating Council will have one vote during final prioritization of project proposals. Projects to be funded by the Program will be approved by the Coordinating Council by the end of November each year. The Deputy Director will submit a pre-notification to the appropriate NOAA Grants office of the prioritized proposals to expedite processing when those offices receive Partner grant submissions.

#### 7. Confirmation of final funding amounts

The Director and Deputy Director will be notified by NOAA Fisheries of any federal grant adjustments (e.g. additions or rescissions). Additional funds will generally go to the next available ranked project. Reductions may include, but are not limited to:

- Lower than anticipated amounts from any source of funding
- Rescission of funding after initial allocations have been made
- Partial or complete withdrawal of funds from any source

If these or other situations arise, the Operations Committee will notify Partners with approved proposals to reduce their requested budgets or to withdraw a proposal entirely. If this does not reduce the overall requested amount sufficiently, the Director, Deputy Director, the Operations Committee Chair and Vice-Chair, and the Advisory Committee Chair will develop a final recommendation and forward to the ACCSP Leadership Team of the Coordinating Council. These options to address funding contingencies may include:

- Eliminating the lowest-ranked proposal(s)
- A fixed percentage cut to all proposals' budgets
- A directed reduction in a specific proposal(s)

#### 8. Notification to submitting Partner of funded projects and submittal of project documents to appropriate grants agency (e.g. NOAA Grants) by Partner.

Notification detailing the Coordinating Council's actions relevant to a Partner's proposal will be sent to each Partner by Program staff.

- Approved projects from Non-federal Partners must be submitted as full applications (federal forms, project and budget narratives, and other attachments) to NOAA Grants via [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov). These documents must reflect changes or conditions approved by the Coordinating Council.
- Non-federal Partners must provide the Deputy Director with an electronic copy of the narrative and either an electronic or hard copy of the budget of the grant application as submitted to the grants agency (e.g. NOAA Grants).
- Federal Partners do not submit applications to NOAA Grants.

#### 9. Operation and/or Leadership Team and Coordinating Council review and final decision with contingencies or emergencies.

Committee(s) review and decide project changes (e.g. scope of work, rescissions, no-cost extensions, returned unused funds, etc.) during the award period.

## Proposal Guidance

- [General Proposal Guidelines](#)
- [Format](#)
- [Budget Template](#)

### General Proposal Guidelines

- The Program is predicated upon the most efficient use of available funds. Many jurisdictions have data collection and data management programs which are administered by other fishery management agencies. Detail coordination efforts your agency/Committee has undertaken to demonstrate cost-efficiency and non-duplication of effort.
- All Program Partners conducting projects for implementation of the program standards in their jurisdictions are required to submit data to the Program in prescribed standards, where the module is developed and formats are available. Detail coordination efforts with Program data management staff with projects of a research and/or pilot study nature to submit project information and data for distribution to all Program Partners and archives.
- If appropriate to your project, please detail your agency's data management capability. Include the level of staff support (if any) required to accomplish the proposed work. If contractor services are required, detail the level and costs.
- Before funding is considered beyond year one of a project, the Partner agency shall detail in writing how the Partner agency plans to assume partial or complete funding or, if not feasible, explain why.
- If appropriate to your project, detail any planned or ongoing outreach initiatives. Provide scope and level of outreach coordinated with either the Program Assistant and/or Deputy Director.
- Proposals that request funding to purchase 3<sup>rd</sup> party data or develop/purchase 3<sup>rd</sup> party software that is similar (i.e. performing existing functions) to software offered by ACCSP may not be recommended for funding.
- Proposal summaries should be specific on how the project will have an impact on stock assessments or be useful for management. For example, this was a research recommendation from X or this Council specifically requested this information. Proposers are encouraged to get letters of support from those that would be using the data.
- Proposals including a collection of aging or other biological samples must clarify Partner processing capabilities (i.e., how processed and by whom).
- Provide details on how the proposal will benefit the Program as a whole, outside of benefits

to the Partner or Committee.

- Proposals that request funds for law enforcement should confirm that all funds will be allocated towards reporting compliance.
- Proposals must detail any in-kind effort/resources, and if no in-kind resources are included, state why.
- Proposals must meet the same quality as would be appropriate for a grant proposal for ACFCMA or other federal grant.
- Assistance is available from Program staff, or an Operations Committee member for proposal preparation and to insure that Program standards are addressed in the body of a given proposal.
- Even though a large portion of available resources may be allocated to one or more jurisdictions, new systems (including prototypes) will be selected to serve all Partners' needs.
- Partners submitting pilot or other short-term programs are encouraged to lease large capital budget items (vehicles, etc.) and where possible, hire consultants or contractors rather than hire new permanent personnel.
- The Program will not fund proposals that do not meet Program standards. However, in the absence of approved standards, pilot studies may be funded.
- Proposals will be considered for modules that may be fully developed but have not been through the formal approval process. Pilot proposals will be considered in those cases.
- The Operations Committee may contact Partners concerning discrepancies or inconsistencies in any proposal and may recommend modifications to proposals subject to acceptance by the submitting Partner and approval by the Coordinating Council. The Operations Committee may recommend changes or conditions to proposals. The Coordinating Council may conditionally approve proposals. These contingencies will be documented and forwarded to the submitting Partner in writing by Program staff.
- Any proposal submitted after the initial RFP deadline will not be considered, in addition to any proposal submitted by a Partner which is not current with all reporting obligations.

## Proposal Format

Applicant Name: Identify the name of the applicant organization(s).

Project Title: A brief statement to identify the project.

Project Type: Identify whether new or maintenance project.

*New Project – Partner project never funded by the Program. New projects may not exceed a duration of one year.*

*Maintenance Project – Project funded by the Program that conducts the same scope of work as a previously funded new or maintenance project. These proposals may not contain significant changes in scope (e.g., the addition of bycatch data collection to a catch/effort dealer reporting project). Pls must include in the cover letter whether there are any changes in the current proposal from prior years' and, if so, provide a brief summary of those changes. At year 5 of maintenance funding, a project's base funding will be calculated as the average of funding received during the project's four years as a maintenance project.*

Requested Award Amount: Provide the total requested amount of proposal. Do not include an estimate of the NOAA grant administration fee.

Requested Award Period: Provide the total time period of the proposed project. The award period typically will be limited to one-year projects.

Objective: Specify succinctly the “why”, “what”, and “when” of the project.

Need: Specify the need for the project and the association to the Program.

Results and Benefits: Identify and document the results or benefits to be expected from the proposed project. Clearly indicate how the proposed work meets various elements outlined in the ACCSP Proposal Ranking Criteria Document (Appendix B). Some potential benefits may include: fundamental in nature to all fisheries; region-wide in scope; answering or addressing region-wide questions or policy issues; required by MSFCMA, ACFCMA, MMPA, ESA, or other acts; transferability; and/or demonstrate a practical application to the Program.

Data Delivery Plan: Include coordinated method of the data delivery plan to the Program in addition to module data elements gathered. The data delivery plan should include the frequency of data delivery (i.e. monthly, semi-annual, annual) and any coordinate delivery to other relevant partners.

Approach: List all procedures necessary to attain each project objective. If a project includes work in more than one module, identify approximately what proportion of effort is comprised within each module (e.g., catch and effort 45%, biological 30% and bycatch 25%). Please note that only one primary module and one secondary module are considered for ranking.



Geographic Location: The location where the project will be administered and where the scope of the project will be conducted.

Milestone Schedule: An activity schedule in table format for the duration of the project, starting with Month 1 and ending with a three-month report writing period.

Project Accomplishments Measurement: A table showing the project goals and how progress towards those goals will be measured. In some situations the metrics will be numerical such as numbers of anglers contacted, fish measured, and/or otoliths collected, etc.; while in other cases the metrics will be binary such as software tested and software completed. Additional details such as intermediate metrics to achieve overall proposed goals should be included especially if the project seeks additional years of funding.

Cost Summary (Budget): Detail all costs to be incurred in this project in the format outlined in the budget guidance and template at the end of this document. A budget narrative should be included which explains and justifies the expenditures in each category. Provide cost projections for federal and total costs. Provide details on Partner/in-kind contribution (e.g., staff time, facilities, IT support, overhead, etc.). Details should be provided on start-up versus long-term operational costs.

**In-kind** - <sup>1</sup>Defined as activities that could exist (or could happen) without the grant. <sup>2</sup>In-kind contributions are from the grantee organization. In-kind is typically in the form of the value of personnel, equipment and services, including direct and indirect costs.

<sup>1</sup>The following are generally accepted as in-kind contributions:

- i. Personnel time given to the project including state and federal employees
- ii. Use of existing state and federal equipment (e.g. data collection and server platforms, Aging equipment, microscopes, boats, vehicles)

Overhead rates may not exceed 25% of total costs unless mandated by law or policy. Program Partners may not be able to control overhead/indirect amounts charged. However, where there is flexibility, the lowest amount of overhead should be charged. When this is accomplished indicate on the 'cost summary' sheet the difference between the overhead that could have been charged and the actual amount charged, if different. If overhead is charged to the Program, it cannot also be listed as in-kind.

Maintenance Projects: Maintenance proposals must provide project history table, description of completed data delivery to the ACCSP and other relevant partners, table of total project cost by year, a summary table of metrics and achieved goals, and the budget narrative from the most recent year's funded proposal.

Principal Investigator: List the principal investigator(s) and attach curriculum vitae (CV) for each. Limit each CV to two pages. Additional information may be requested.

## **Budget Guidelines & Template**

All applications must have a detailed budget narrative explaining and justifying the expenditures by object class. Include in the discussion the requested dollar amounts and how they were derived. A spreadsheet or table detailing expenditures is useful to clarify the costs (see template below). The following are highlights from the NOAA Budget Guidelines document to help Partners formulate their budget narrative. The full Budget Guidelines document is available [here](#).

Object Classes:

Personnel: include salary, wage, and hours committed to project for each person by job title. Identify each individual by name and position, if possible.

Fringe Benefits: should be identified for each individual. Describe in detail if the rate is greater than 35 % of the associated salary.

Travel: all travel costs must be listed here. Provide a detailed breakdown of travel costs for trips over \$5,000 or 5 % of the award. Include destination, duration, type of transportation, estimated cost, number of travelers, lodging, mileage rate and estimated number of miles, and per diem.

Equipment: equipment is any single piece of non-expendable, tangible personal property that costs \$5,000 or more per unit and has a useful life of more than one year. List each piece of equipment, the unit cost, number of units, and its purpose. Include a lease vs. purchase cost analysis. If there are no lease options available, then state that.

Supplies: purchases less than \$5,000 per item are considered by the federal government as supplies. Include a detailed, itemized explanation for total supplies costs over \$5,000 or 5% of the award.

Contractual: list each contract or subgrant as a separate item. Provide a detailed cost breakdown and describe products/services to be provided by the contractor. Include a sole source justification, if applicable.

Other: list items, cost, and justification for each expense.

Total direct charges

Indirect charges: If claiming indirect costs, please submit a copy of the current approved negotiated indirect cost agreement. If expired and/or under review, a copy of the transmittal letter that accompanied the indirect cost agreement application is requested.

Totals of direct and indirect charges

*Example.* Budget narrative should provide further detail on these costs.

Description	Calculation	Cost
<b>Personnel (a)</b>		
Supervisor	Ex: 500 hrs x \$20/hr	\$10,000
Biologist		
Technician		
<b>Fringe (b)</b>		
Supervisor	Ex: 15% of salary	\$1500
Biologist		
Technician		
<b>Travel (c)</b>		
Mileage for sampling trips	Ex: Estimate 2000 miles x \$0.33/mile	\$660
Travel for meeting		
<b>Equipment (d)</b>		
Boat	Ex: \$7000, based on current market research	\$7000
<b>Supplies (e)</b>		
Safety supplies		\$1200
Sampling supplies		\$1000
Laptop computers	2 laptops @\$1500 each	\$3000
Software		\$500
<b>Contractual (f)</b>		
Data Entry Contract	Ex: 1000 hrs x \$20/hr	\$20,000
<b>Other (h)</b>		
Printing and binding		
Postage		
Telecommunications charges		
Internet Access charges		
<b>Totals</b>		
Total Direct Charges (i)		
Indirect Charges (j)		
Total (sum of Direct and Indirect) (k)		

## **Post-award Responsibilities**

- [Changing the Scope of Work](#)
- [Requesting a No-cost Extension](#)
- [Declaring Unused/Returned Funds](#)
- [Reporting Requirements](#)
- [Report Format](#)
- [Programmatic Review](#)

### **Changing the Scope of Work**

Partners shall submit requests for amendments to approved projects in writing to the Deputy Director. The Coordinating Council member for that Partner must sign the request.

When Partners request an amendment to an approved project, the Deputy Director will contact the Chair and Vice Chair of the Operations Committee. The Deputy Director and Operations Committee Chairs will determine if the requested change is minor or substantial. The Chairs and Deputy Director may approve minor changes.

For substantial proposed changes, a decision document including the opinions of the Chairs and the Deputy Director will be sent to the Operations Committee and the ACCSP Leadership Team of the Coordinating Council for review.

The ACCSP Leadership Team will decide to approve or reject the request for change and notify the Deputy Director, who will send a written notification to the Partner's principal investigator with a copy to the Operations Committee.

When a requested major amendment is submitted shortly before a Coordinating Council meeting, the approval of the amendment will be placed on the Council Agenda.

The Deputy Director will notify NOAA Grants of any change in scope of work for final approval for non-federal proposals, and the Partner will need to request a Change in Scope through Grants Online. Necessary communications will be maintained between the concerned Partner, the Program and NOAA Grants. Any changes must be approved through the normal NOAA Grants process.

### **Requesting a No-cost Extension**

If additional time is needed to complete the project, Program Partners can request a no-cost extension to their award period. Partners should let the Program know of the need for additional time and then request the extension as an Award Action Request through NOAA Grants Online at least 30 days before the end date of the award.

Necessary communications will be maintained between the concerned Partner, the Program, and NOAA Grants office. Any changes must be approved through the normal NOAA Grants process.

### **Declaring Unused/Returned Funds**

In an effort to limit the instances in which funds are not completely used during the award period, draw down reports from the NOAA Grants offices indicating remaining grant balances will be periodically reviewed during each fiscal year.

While effort should be made to complete the project as proposed, if Program Partners find that they will not be able to make use of their entire award, they should notify the Program and their NOAA Federal Program Officer as soon as possible. Depending on the timing of the action, the funds may be able to be reused within the Program, or they may have to be returned to the U.S. Treasury.

Program Partners must submit a written document to the Deputy Director outlining unused project funds potentially being returned. The Partner must also notify their Coordinating Council member (if applicable) for approval to return the unused funds. If the funding is available for re-use within the Program, the Director and Deputy Director will confer with the Operations Committee Chair and Vice-Chair and the Advisory Committee Chair, and then submit a written recommendation to the ACCSP Leadership Team of the Coordinating Council for final approval on the plan to distribute the returned money.

Necessary communications will be maintained between the concerned Partner, the Program, and NOAA Grants office. Any changes must be approved through the normal NOAA Grants process.

### **Reporting Requirements**

Program staff will assess project performance.

The Partner project recipients must abide by the NOAA Regional Grant Programs reporting requirements and as listed below. All semi-annual and final reports are to include a table showing progress toward each of the progress goals as defined in Step 2b and additional metrics as appropriate. Also, all Partner project recipients will submit the following reports based on the project start date to the Deputy Director:

- Semi-annual reports (due 30 days after the semi-annual period) throughout the project period including time periods during no-cost extensions,
- One final report (due 90 days after project completion).
- Federal Partners must submit reports to the Deputy Director, and State Partners must submit reports to both the Deputy Director and the appropriate NOAA Grants office.

Program staff will conduct an initial assessment of the final report to ensure the report is complete in terms of reporting requirements. Program staff will serve as technical monitors to review submitted reports. NOAA staff also reviews the reports submitted via Grants Online.

A project approved on behalf of a Program Committee will be required to follow the reporting requirements specified above. The principle investigator (if not the Chair of the Committee) will submit the report(s) to the Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee for review and approval. The Committee Chair is responsible for submitting the required report(s) to the Program.

Joint projects will assign one principle investigator responsible for submitting the required reports. The principle investigator will be identified within the project proposal. The submitted reports should be a collaborative effort between all Partners involved in the joint project.

Project recipients will provide all reports to the Program in electronic format.

Partners who receive no-cost extensions must notify the Deputy Director within 30 days of receiving approval of the extension. Semi-annual and final reports will continue to be required through the extended grant period as previously stated.

Partners that have not met reporting requirements for past/current projects may not submit a new proposal.

A verbal presentation of project results may be requested. Partners will be required to submit copies of project specifications and procedures, software development, etc. to assist other Program Partners with the implementation of similar programs.

### **Report Format**

#### **Semi-Annual(s) – Progress Reports: (3-4 pages)**

- Title page - Project name, project dates (semi-annual period covered and complete project period), submitting Partner, and date.
- Objective
- Activities Completed – bulleted list by objective.
- Progress or lack of progress of incomplete activities during the period of semi-annual progress – bulleted list by objective.
- Activities planned during the next reporting period.
- Metrics table
- Milestone Chart – original and revised if changes occurred during the project period.

#### **Final Report:**

- Title page – Project name, project dates, submitting Partner, and date.
- Abstract/Executive Summary (including key results)
- Introduction
- Procedures

- Results:
  - Description of data collected.
  - The quality of the data pertaining to the objective of the project (e.g. representative to the scope of the project, quantity collected, etc.).
  - Compiled data results.
  - Summary of statistics.
- Discussion:
  - Discuss the interpretation of results of the project by addressing questions such as, but not limited to:
  - What occurred?
  - What did not occur that was expected to occur?
  - Why did expected results not occur?
  - Applicability of study results to Program goals.
  - Recommendations/Summary/Metrics
- Summarized budget expenditures and deviations (if any).

#### **Programmatic review**

Project reports will inform Partners of project outcomes. This will allow the Program as a whole to take advantage of lessons learned and difficulties encountered. Staff will provide final reports to the appropriate Committee(s). The Committees then can discuss the report(s) and make recommendations to modify the Data Collection Standards as appropriate. The recommendations will be submitted through the Program committee(s) review process.

**Appendix A: Maximum Funding for Maintenance Projects Entering Year 5 or 6 of Funding in FY25**

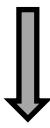
<b>Projects in Year 5 or 6 of Maintenance Funding</b>	<b>Calculated Base (4-year avg)</b>	<b>Maximum Funding Year 5</b>	<b>Maximum Funding Year 6 (Final Year)</b>
Electronic Trip-Level Reporting for the Potomac River Fisheries Commission Commercial Fisheries Sector	<b>\$213,516</b>	<b>\$142,344</b>	<b>\$71,172</b>



## Appendix B: Ranking Criteria Spreadsheet for Maintenance and New Projects

### Ranking Guide - Maintenance Projects:

Primary Program Priority	Point Range	Description of Ranking Consideration
Biological Sampling	0 – 10	Rank based on range within module and level of sampling defined under Program design. When considering biological, bycatch or recreational funding, rank according to priority matrices.
Catch and Effort	0 – 8	
Bycatch/Species Interactions	0 – 6	
Social and Economic	0 - 6	
Data Delivery Plan	+ 2	Additional points if a data delivery plan to the Program is supplied and defined within the proposal.

Project Quality Factors	Point Range	Description of Ranking Consideration
Multi-Partner/Regional impact including broad applications	0 – 5	Rank based on the number of Partners involved in project OR regional scope of proposal (e.g. geographic range of the stock).
> yr 1 contains funding transition plan and/or justification for continuance	0 - 4	Rank based on defined funding transition plan away from Program funding or viable justification for continued Program funding.
In-kind contribution	0 – 4	1 = 1% - 25% 2 = 26% - 50% 3 = 51% - 75% 4 = 76% - 99%
Improvement in data quality/quantity/timeliness	0 - 4	1 = Maintain minimum level of needed data collections    4 = Improvements in data collection reflect 100% of related module as defined within the Program design. Metadata is provided and defined within proposal if applicable.
Potential secondary module as a by-product (In program priority order)	0 – 5 0 – 4 0 – 3 0 - 3	Ranked based on additional module data collection and level of collection as defined within the Program design of individual module.
Impact on stock assessment	0 - 3	Rank based on the level of data collection that leads to new or greatly improved stock assessments as specified in the proposal.
Impact on management	0 - 3	Rank based on the level of data collection that leads to new or greatly improved management as specified in the proposal.

Other Factors	Point Range	Description of Ranking Consideration
Properly Prepared	-1 – 1	Meets requirements as specified in funding decision document Step 2b and Guidelines
Merit	0 - 3	Ranked based on subjective worthiness

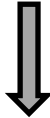
### Ranking Guide – Maintenance Projects: (to be used only if funding available exceeds total Maintenance funding request)

Other Factors	Point Range	Description of Ranking Consideration
Achieved Goals	0 – 3	Proposal indicates project has consistently met previous set goals. Current proposal provides project goals and if applicable, intermediate metrics to achieve overall achieved goals.
Data Delivery Plan	0 – 2	Ranked based if a data delivery plan to Program is supplied and defined within the proposal.
Level of Funding	-1 - 1	-1 = Increased funding from previous year 0 = Maintained funding from previous year 1 = Decreased funding from previous year
Properly Prepared	-1 – 1	-1 = Not properly prepared 1 = Properly prepared
Merit	0 - 3	Ranked based on subjective worthiness

### Ranking Guide – New Projects:

Primary Program Priority	Point Range	Description of Ranking Consideration
Biological Sampling	0 – 10	Rank based on range within module and level of sampling defined under Program design. When considering biological, bycatch or recreational funding, rank according to priority matrices.
Catch and Effort	0 – 8	
Bycatch/Species Interactions	0 – 6	
Social and Economic	0 - 6	
Data Delivery Plan	+ 2	Additional points if a data delivery plan to the Program is supplied and defined within the proposal.

Project Quality Factors	Point Range	Description of Ranking Consideration
Multi-Partner/Regional impact including broad applications	0 – 5	Rank based on the number of Partners involved in project OR regional scope of proposal (e.g. geographic range of the stock).
Contains funding transition plan / Defined end point	0 - 4	Rank based on funding transition or defined end point.
In-kind contribution	0 – 4	1 = 1% - 25%

		2 = 26% - 50% 3 = 51% - 75% 4 = 76% - 99%
Improvement in data quality/quantity/timeliness	0 - 4	1 = Maintain minimum level of needed data collections  4 = Improvements in data collection reflect 100% of related module as defined within the Program design. Metadata is provided and defined within proposal if applicable.
Potential secondary module as a by-product (In program priority order)	0 - 5 0 - 4 0 - 3 0 - 3	Ranked based on additional module data collection and level of collection as defined within the Program design of individual module.
Impact on stock assessment	0 - 3	Rank based on the level of data collection that leads to new or greatly improved stock assessments as specified in the proposal.
Impact on management	0 - 3	Rank based on the level of data collection that leads to new or greatly improved management as specified in the proposal.

Other Factors	Point Range	Description of Ranking Consideration
Innovative	0 - 3	Rank based on new technology, methodology, financial savings, etc.
Properly Prepared	-1 – 1	Meets requirements as specified in funding decision document Step 2b and Guidelines
Merit	0 - 3	Ranked based on subjective worthiness



# Biological Sampling Priority Matrix

*Created March 2025  
For FY2026*

*Our vision is to be the principal source of fisheries-dependent information on the Atlantic coast through the cooperation of all program partners.*

# The Biological Review Panel Recommends:

- Species in the upper 25% of the priority matrix should be considered for funding
- Sampling projects that cover multiple species within the upper 25% are highly recommended.



### Biological Review Panel recommendations based on matrix\*:

\* UPPER 25% OF MATRIX

	Fishery Status	Most Recent Stock Assessment (year)	Current/Next Stock Assessment (year)	Council Priority	ASMFC Priority	State Priority	NMFS Priority	Fishery Managed	Sig. change in Landings w/in 24 Months	Sig. change in mgmt w/in 24 Months	Adequacy Level of Sampling	Stock Resilience	Seasonality of Fishery	TOTAL
Species														
Black Sea Bass <i>Centropristis striata</i>	K	MA: 2024 SA: 2023	MA: 2025 SA: 2027	5.0	5.0	3.6	5.0	5	1	4	4	3	1	36.64
Gag Grouper <i>Mycteroperca microlepis</i>	K	2021	2025	5.0	0.0	0.9	5.0	3	3	5	4	4	3	32.93
Snowy Grouper <i>Epinephelus niveatus</i>	K	2021	2027	5.0	0.0	1.1	5.0	3	3	4	3	5	3	32.07
American Shad <i>Alosa sapidissima/mediocris</i>	K/U	2020	2030	0.0	3.0	3.8	0.0	5	5	1	4	5	3	29.79
Red Grouper <i>Epinephelus morio</i>	K	2017	2027	5.0	0.0	1.1	5.0	3	1	4	3	4	3	29.07
River Herring <i>Alosa</i>	K/U	2023		0.0	4.0	3.1	0.0	5	5	1	4	4	3	29.07
Tilefish <i>Lopholatilus chamaeleonticeps</i>	K	SA: 2024; MA: 2024	MA: 2027	5.0	0.0	1.8	4.0	5	1	2	3	4	3	28.79
Spanish Mackerel <i>Scomberomorus maculatus</i>	K	2022	2028	5.0	2.0	1.4	4.0	3	3	2	3	2	3	28.36
Red Snapper <i>Lutjanus campechanus</i>	K	2021	2025	5.0		1.1	5.0	3	1	1	4	5	3	28.07
Scamp <i>Mycteroperca phenax</i>	K	2022		5.0	0.0	1.0	4.0	3	1	4	3	4	3	28.00
Red Porgy <i>Pagrus pagrus</i>	K	2020	2028	5.0	0.0	0.7	4.0	3	3	5	3	3	1	27.71
American Lobster <i>Homarus americanus</i>	K	2020	2025	0	5.0	2.6	3.0	3	1	5	3	4	1	27.64
Ocean Pout <i>Macrozoarces americanus</i>	K	2022	2025	0	0.0	0.2	1.0	3	5	5	5	5	3	27.21
Cobia <i>Rachycentron canadum</i>	K	2020	2025	1	5.0	1.6	4.0	3	1	1	4	3	3	26.64
American Eel <i>Anguilla rostrata</i>	K/U	2023	2027	0	3.0	3.5	0.0	5	3	2	4	5	1	26.50
Winter Flounder <i>Pleuronectes americanus</i>	K/U	GB: 2022; GOM & SNE/MA: 2022	2025	0	2.0	2.5	5.0	3	1	3	4	5	1	26.50
Blueline Tilefish <i>Caulolatilus microps</i>	U	2017	2024	3	0.0	1.4	5.0	3	1	4	3	3	3	26.36
Horseshoe Crab <i>Limulus polyphemus</i>	K/U	2024	2029	0	5.0	3.3	0.0	5	1	3	2	4	3	26.29
Atlantic halibut <i>Hippoglossus hippoglossus</i>	K	2024	2026	4	0.0	1.1	4.0	3	1	1	4	5	3	26.14
Atlantic Menhaden <i>Brevoortia tyrannus</i>	K	2022	2025	0	5.0	3.1	3.0	5	1	3	2	3	1	26.14
Shortfin Mako Shark <i>Isurus oxyrinchus</i>	K	2019	2025	0	1.0	1.1	3.0	5	5	5	2	3	1	26.07
N. Short-fin Squid <i>Illex illecebrosus</i>	K/U	2022	2025	0	0.0	1.2	3.0	3	5	3	4	3	3	25.21
Gray Triggerfish <i>Balistes capriscus</i>	U	2023	2024	5	0.0	1.1	4.0	3	1	3	3	2	3	25.14
Scup <i>Stenotomus chrysops</i>	K/U	2023	2025	1	4.0	2.1	4.0	5	1	3	3	1	1	25.14
Bluefish <i>Pomatomus saltatrix</i>	K	2023	2025	0	4.0	2.9	3.0	5	3	1	3	2	1	24.93

# Bio-sampling Priority Matrix

		Biological Sampling Adequacy	
		Adequate ( 0 - 2 )	Inadequate ( 3 - 5 )
Averaged Priority Columns	High ( $\geq 3.0$ )		Black Sea Bass - Spanish Mackerel - Red Snapper
	Low ( $< 3.0$ )	Horseshoe Crab - Atlantic Menhaden - Shortfin Mako Shark	Gag Grouper - Snowy Grouper - American Shad - Red Grouper - River Herring - Tilefish - Scamp - Red Porgy - American Lobster - Ocean Pout - Cobia - American Eel - Winter Flounder - Blueline Tilefish - Atlantic Halibut - N. Short-fin Squid - Gray Triggerfish - Scup - Bluefish

Grouping of species in upper 25% of total matrix score, based on sampling adequacy and average priority (average of ASMFC, Council, NMFS, and State priorities)

- Horseshoe crab, Atlantic menhaden, and shortfin mako shark are being sampled adequately and have a low priority, so additional sampling is not needed
- Projects that target multiple upper quartile species should be given a higher priority
- Ocean Pout has low average priority, high significant changes in management and landings, and a high resilience score



# Bycatch Sampling Priority Matrix

Created in February 2025  
For FY 2026

*Our vision is to be the principal source of fisheries-dependent information  
on the Atlantic coast through the cooperation of all program partners.*



# Top Quartile of Bycatch Matrix Suggestions

Combined Fleets	Sig. Change in mgmt w/in past 36 mo	Amt of reg discards	Amt of non reg discards	Prot Spp Interactions	Score
Mid-Atlantic Gillnet	3	4	2	5	14
Snapper Grouper H&L Fleet	5	4	1	3	13
South Atlantic Shrimp Trawl	1	4	2	5	12
New England Otter Trawl	3	4	2	3	12
Mid-Atlantic Pound Net	1	4	2	5	12
American Lobster Pots	1	4	1	5	11
Pelagic H&L Fleet (North)	3	4	1	3	11
New England Gillnet	3	2	1	5	11
New England Extra- Large-Mesh Gillnet	0	4	2	5	11
Mid-Atlantic Small- Mesh Otter Trawl, Bottom	1	4	1	5	11
Mid-Atlantic Large- Mesh Otter Trawl, Bottom	3	2	1	5	11
Mid-Atlantic Fish Pots and Traps	3	4	1	3	11
South Atlantic Large Mesh Gillnet	0	4	2	5	11
Southeastern, Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico HMS Pelagic Longline	1	4	1	5	11
Mid-Atlantic Dredge, Other	1	4	1	5	11
New England Crab Pots	3	2	1	5	11
South Atlantic Blue Crab	5	2	1	3	11





## Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program

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### **ACCSP Funding Prioritization of the Recreational Technical Committee** *April 2023*

The Recreational Technical Committee determines that recreational data collection priorities for inclusion in ACCSP's annual request for proposals (RFP) and also guides the allocation of resources for NOAA Fisheries' NOAA Fisheries' Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP). The prioritized list of data needs, which were reviewed and approved by the ACCSP Coordinating Council and approved by MRIP, is provided below:

- 1. Improved precision (PSE) and presentation of MRIP estimates**
- 2. Comprehensive for-hire data collection and monitoring**
- 3. Improved recreational fishery discard and release data**
- 4. Improved timeliness of MRIP recreational catch and harvest estimates**
- 5. Biological sampling for recreational fisheries separate from MRIP**
- 6. Improved in-season monitoring**

*Our vision is to 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.*

# SOCIOLOGICAL AND ECONOMIC DATA

The Committee on Economics and Social Sciences (CESS) developed a list of priority socioeconomic data elements for coastwide collection. The list is not exhaustive; it represents key elements that can serve as a baseline of fundamental socioeconomic information to support management decisions. The list of priority data elements includes:

1. Trip-level information (to be collected through voluntary or mandatory reporting, for all or a subset of participants)
2. Data elements for an owner/operator survey (to be collected through an annual or semiannual survey)\*

The CESS identified these priority data elements with the understanding that data would be collected in the aforementioned methods and would be linked to other ACCSP data through identifiers. Alternative collection methods or the inability to link data with identifiers may require changes to the priority data elements list in order to ensure the utility of the data.

Note: Priorities for standalone surveys will differ from the priorities identified below due to their distinct methodologies and inability to leverage other ACCSP data. The CESS should be consulted when identifying data elements for standalone socioeconomic surveys to ensure their utility and, where practical, consistency across studies.

\*The ACCSP recognizes the analytic value of collecting the data elements below. We recommend that partners be aware of and take into account the reporting burden to industry, the sensitivity and at times confidentiality of socioeconomic information, and other relevant perspectives when determining which data elements to collect and set as optional or mandatory.

## A. COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

**Table 1:**  
**TRIP LEVEL INFORMATION**

DATA ELEMENT	DESCRIPTION / CRITERIA
<b>Trip Information</b>	
<b>Vessel Identifier</b>	-Unique vessel identifier (e.g., US Coast Guard, state registration number, etc.) -These identifiers must be trackable through time and space.
<b>Trip Identifier</b>	- Unique identifier assigned to the trip
<b>Labor Cost Information</b>	
<b>Total Crew Cost</b>	- Total monetary amount that was given to the crew for this trip

<b>Total Captain Cost (If other than owner)</b>	- Total monetary amount that was given to the captain for this trip
<b>Owner Share</b>	- Total monetary amount the vessel (or permit) owner received for this trip
<b>Other Trip Cost Information</b>	
<b>Fuel &amp; Oil Costs</b>	- Cost for all fuel and oil used on this trip
<b>Bait Costs</b>	- Cost for all bait used on this trip
<b>Ice Costs</b>	- Cost for all ice used on this trip
<b>Grocery Costs</b>	- Cost for all groceries used on this trip
<b>Miscellaneous Costs</b>	- Cost of any other expenses specific to this trip (not including wages, overhead, or fixed costs) E.g., offloading/non-crew labor costs, packaging costs, etc.

**Table 2:**  
**DATA ELEMENTS FOR OWNER/OPERATOR SURVEY**

<b>DATA ELEMENT</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION / CRITERIA</b>
<b>Vessel Identification*</b>	-Unique vessel identifier (e.g., US Coast Guard, state registration number, etc.) -These identifiers must be trackable through time and space.
<b>Fishermen Identification</b>	-Unique ACCSP Identifier for fishermen
<b>Labor Cost Information</b>	
<b>Crew Payment System</b>	- Code to identify crew & captain payment system (e.g. share system, per day, per trip)
<b>Percentage Share Crew</b>	- Percentage share to crew (if applicable)
<b>Percentage Share Captain</b>	- Percentage share to captain (if applicable)
<b>Percentage Share Boat/Owner</b>	- Percentage share to boat/owner (if applicable)
<b>Crew Wages</b>	- Average crew wages for the year (crew payment system indicates whether by hour, trip, day, etc.) (if applicable)
<b>Captain Wages</b>	- Average captain wages for the year (crew payment system indicates whether by hour, trip, day, etc.) (if applicable)
<b>Annual Costs (Most Recent Year)</b>	
<b>Labor costs (captain and crew not in household)</b>	- Total costs of labor for captain and crew outside the owner/operator's household
<b>Labor costs (to people within owner/operator household)</b>	- Total costs of labor for captain and crew within the owner/operator's household
<b>Annual Insurance Costs</b>	- Hull, health, protection and indemnity, mortgage, etc.
<b>Dockage</b>	- Total cost for vessel dockage, home port and transient dockage
<b>Loan Payments</b>	- Principal and interest
<b>New Gear/ Equipment</b>	- Total cost of new gear or equipment acquired
<b>Repairs &amp; Maintenance</b>	- Total cost of repairs & maintenance of vessel and gear that were conducted in the previous year
<b>Permits &amp; Licenses</b>	- Total cost of fishing permits / licenses for the previous year

<b>Leased Quota Cost</b>	- Total cost of leased quota for the previous year
<b>Other Professional Expenses</b>	- Professional expenses not otherwise itemized
<b>Demographic Information</b>	
<b>Household Size</b>	- # of individuals in the household (including respondent)
<b>Employment Status</b>	- Current employment status (e.g., employed fulltime, part-time, unemployed, retired, etc.)
<b>Education</b>	- Highest level of education completed
<b>Marital/Cohabital Status</b>	- Current marital or cohabitational status of respondent
<b>Age</b>	- Age of the respondent
<b>Gender</b>	- Gender of the respondent
<b>Ethnicity</b>	- Ethnic background
<b>Total Annual Household Income</b>	- Total annual household income
<b>Number of Household Individuals Involved in Commercial Fishing</b>	- Total number of household individuals involved in commercial fishing (including respondent)
<b>Percent of Annual Household Income from Commercial Fishing</b>	- Percent of household income that is generated through commercial fishing or support activities
<b>County of Residence</b>	- County of residence
<b>Years in Community</b>	- Years in county of residence
<b>Fishing Activity Information</b>	
<b>Fishermen status</b>	- Fishermen status (e.g. full time, part time, not actively fishing)
<b>Years in Commercial Fishing</b>	- Number of years participating in commercial fishery
<b>Permits held</b>	- fishing permits held (by permit type)
<b>Permit use</b>	- Were all permits used within the last year
<b>Reason for Latency</b>	- Reason for not using permit within the last year
<b>Primary Species Landed by Month</b>	- Primary species landed by month
<b>Primary Gears Used by Month</b>	- Primary gears used by month

\*Vessel Identifier is needed to link trip-level data to survey results



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This list includes dates for fiscal year 2025, including ACCSP committee meetings, relevant dates of the funding cycle, as well as meetings or conferences ACCSP typically attends or which may be of interest to our partners. If you have any questions or comments on this calendar, please do not hesitate to contact the ACCSP staff at [info@accsp.org](mailto:info@accsp.org).

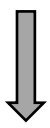
Jan 28-30:	NEFMC Meeting – Portsmouth, NH
Jan 29:	2025 FHTS Training - Webinar
Feb 4-5:	ASMFC Meeting – Arlington, VA
Feb 11:	Bycatch Prioritization Committee Meeting – Charleston, SC
Feb 11-12:	Biological Prioritization Committee Meeting – Charleston, SC
Feb 11-12:	APAIS North Atlantic Training- New Bedford, MA
Feb 11-12:	MAFMC Council Meeting- Webinar
Feb 18-19:	APAIS South Atlantic Training- Wilmington, NC
Mar 1:	Start of ACCSP FY25
Mar 11:	Commercial Technical Committee Meeting – Philadelphia, PA
Mar 12:	Information Systems Committee Meeting – Philadelphia, PA
Mar 31:	Recreational Technical Committee Meeting - Webinar
Mar 3-7:	SAFMC Meeting – Jekyll Island, GA
Apr 8-10:	MAFMC Meeting – Galloway, NJ
Apr 7:	Operations and Advisory Committees Spring Meeting – Webinar
Apr 14-17:	NEFMC Meeting – Mystic, CT
May 5-8:	ASMFC/Coordinating Council Meeting – Arlington, VA
May 12:	ACCSP issues request for proposals
May 31:	Recreational Technical Committee – Webinar
Jun 3-5:	MAFMC Meeting – Virginia Beach, VA
Jun 9-13:	SAFMC Meeting – Cape Canaveral, FL
Jun 13:	Initial proposals are due
Jun 20:	Initial proposals are distributed to Operations and Advisory Committees
Jun 24-26:	NEFMC Meeting – Freeport, ME
July 7:	Any initial written comments on proposals due
Week of Jul 14:	Review of initial proposals by Operations and Advisory Committees – Webinar
July 18:	If applicable, any revised written comments due
Week of Jul 21:	Feedback submitted to principal investigators
Aug 5-7:	ASMFC Meeting – Arlington, VA

Aug 11-14:	MAFMC Meeting – Annapolis, MD
Aug 15:	Revised proposals due
Aug 22:	Revised proposals distributed to Operations and Advisory Committees
Week of Sep 8:	Ranking exercise for Advisors and Operations Members – Webinar
Sep 15-19:	SAFMC Meeting – Charleston, SC
Sep 23-24:	Advisors/Operations Committee Joint Meeting (in-person; location TBD)
Sep 23-25:	NEFMC Meeting – Gloucester, MA
Oct 7-9:	MAFMC Meeting – Philadelphia, PA
Oct 27-30:	ASMFC Annual Meeting/Coordinating Council – Dewey Beach, DE
Dec 2-4:	NEFMC Meeting – Newport, RI
Dec 8-12:	SAFMC Meeting – Kitty Hawk, NC
Dec 15-18:	MAFMC Meeting – Washington, DC

# Ranking Criteria for Maintenance and New Projects

## Ranking Guide - Maintenance Projects:

Primary Program Priority	Point Range	Description of Ranking Consideration
Biological Sampling	0 – 10	Rank based on range within module and level of sampling defined under Program design. When considering biological, bycatch or recreational funding, rank according to priority matrices.
Catch and Effort	0 – 8	
Bycatch/Species Interactions	0 – 6	
Social and Economic	0 - 6	
Data Delivery Plan	+ 2	Additional points if a data delivery plan to the Program is supplied and defined within the proposal.

Project Quality Factors	Point Range	Description of Ranking Consideration
Multi-Partner/Regional impact including broad applications	0 – 5	Rank based on the number of Partners involved in project OR regional scope of proposal (e.g. geographic range of the stock).
> yr 1 contains funding transition plan and/or justification for continuance	0 - 4	Rank based on defined funding transition plan away from Program funding or viable justification for continued Program funding.
In-kind contribution	0 – 4	1 = 1% - 25% 2 = 26% - 50% 3 = 51% - 75% 4 = 76% - 99%
Improvement in data quality/quantity/timeliness	0 - 4	1 = Maintain minimum level of needed data collections    4 = Improvements in data collection reflect 100% of related module as defined within the Program design. Metadata is provided and defined within proposal if applicable.
Potential secondary module as a by-product (In program priority order)	0 – 5 0 – 4 0 – 3 0 - 3	Ranked based on additional module data collection and level of collection as defined within the Program design of individual module.
Impact on stock assessment	0 - 3	Rank based on the level of data collection that leads to new or greatly improved stock assessments as specified in the proposal.
Impact on management	0 - 3	Rank based on the level of data collection that leads to new or greatly improved management as specified in the proposal.



Other Factors	Point Range	Description of Ranking Consideration
Properly Prepared	-1 – 1	Meets requirements as specified in funding decision document Step 2b and Guidelines
Merit	0 - 3	Ranked based on subjective worthiness

## Ranking Guide – Maintenance Projects: (to be used only if funding available exceeds total Maintenance funding request)

Other Factors	Point Range	Description of Ranking Consideration
Achieved Goals	0 – 3	Proposal indicates project has consistently met previous set goals. Current proposal provides project goals and if applicable, intermediate metrics to achieve overall achieved goals.
Data Delivery Plan	0 – 2	Ranked based if a data delivery plan to Program is supplied and defined within the proposal.
Level of Funding	-1 - 1	-1 = Increased funding from previous year 0 = Maintained funding from previous year 1 = Decreased funding from previous year
Properly Prepared	-1 – 1	-1 = Not properly prepared 1 = Properly prepared
Merit	0 - 3	Ranked based on subjective worthiness

## Ranking Guide – New Projects:

Primary Program Priority	Point Range	Description of Ranking Consideration
Biological Sampling	0 – 10	Rank based on range within module and level of sampling defined under Program design. When considering biological, bycatch or recreational funding, rank according to priority matrices.
Catch and Effort	0 – 8	
Bycatch/Species Interactions	0 – 6	
Social and Economic	0 - 6	
Data Delivery Plan	+ 2	Additional points if a data delivery plan to the Program is supplied and defined within the proposal.

Project Quality Factors	Point Range	Description of Ranking Consideration
Multi-Partner/Regional impact including broad applications	0 – 5	Rank based on the number of Partners involved in project OR regional scope of proposal (e.g. geographic range of the stock).
Contains funding transition plan / Defined end point	0 - 4	Rank based on funding transition or defined end point.
In-kind contribution	0 – 4	1 = 1% - 25% 2 = 26% - 50% 3 = 51% - 75% 4 = 76% - 99%

Improvement in data quality/quantity/timeliness	0 - 4	1 = Maintain minimum level of needed data collections  4 = Improvements in data collection reflect 100% of related module as defined within the Program design. Metadata is provided and defined within proposal if applicable.
Potential secondary module as a by-product (In program priority order)	0 - 5 0 - 4 0 - 3 0 - 3	Ranked based on additional module data collection and level of collection as defined within the Program design of individual module.
Impact on stock assessment	0 - 3	Rank based on the level of data collection that leads to new or greatly improved stock assessments as specified in the proposal.
Impact on management	0 - 3	Rank based on the level of data collection that leads to new or greatly improved management as specified in the proposal.

Other Factors	Point Range	Description of Ranking Consideration
Innovative	0 - 3	Rank based on new technology, methodology, financial savings, etc.
Properly Prepared	-1 – 1	Meets requirements as specified in funding decision document Step 2b and Guidelines
Merit	0 - 3	Ranked based on subjective worthiness

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## March 2025 Committee Newsletter

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This monthly newsletter is intended to keep all committee members informed of the activities and accomplishments of ACCSP committees and staff. ACCSP staff welcomes feedback on all content.

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- **March 31: Recreational Technical Committee Meeting**
- **April 7: Operations Committee and Advisory Panel Committee Meeting**
- **May 7: Coordinating Council Meeting**
- **See [ACCSP Calendar Link](#) for more information**

## Program Updates

- The ACCSP Spring Data load is currently in progress. Thanks to all partner staff that worked together to submit participants and data.

## Commercial Technical Committee

- The ACCSP Commercial Technical Committee met on March 11 for their annual meeting.
- C. Bradshaw presented updated conversion factors for American Eel, Atlantic Menhaden, Atlantic Sharpnose Shark, Blue Crab, and Snowy Grouper to be considered by partners for unified coast-wide or state-specific conversion factors. Acceptance of proposed conversion factors, and the year to begin usage, will be applied to data based on feedback from each partner, returned to ACCSP by Tuesday March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2025.
- A. Christmas-Svajdlenka presented a new limited confidential access level which grants users the ability to request and receive or view confidential data, but not to query confidential data in the Data Warehouse. The update to the confidential access process will be presented at the upcoming Operations and Advisors Committee meeting in April and be implemented upon approval, in the coming months.
- A. Webb, J. Dingle and E. Hiltz presented requests for better alignment of state and federal QC matching. J. Myers will provide each state with a comparison of their state data to federal QC matching, and facilitate coordination between state partners and federal agencies to improve information displayed to partners.
- A. Christmas-Svajdlenka presented an update to the stock assessment process. Both her and J. Ni will work with partners, following a stock assessment, to update any data in the Data Warehouse that were not validated, aligning partner data with data stored in the Data Warehouse.
- Elections were held for the new Vice Chair position, which was filled by David Player. The Chair position was filled by current Vice Chair Lauren Staples.

## Software Update

ACCSP presented a project update on the eDR ReDesign.

- The update included discussions between ACCSP and partners on eDR requirements including proposed changes to the user-interface design and other technical details.
- A demonstration of the new SMS Registration Tracking modules was presented to partners. During the demonstration, partners asked questions about bulk permit-role updates and cross-agency permit role setup and coordination.
- ACCSP staff presented a project update on the Attribute Validation Project. Partners are ready to start using the new warning-type validations and ACCSP will let members know when the new validations will be available.
- ACCSP solicited partner input on Software Development priorities, via several interactive exercises (e.g. Miro) to facilitate discussion.
- Elections were held for the new Vice Chair position, which was filled by Chris Bradshaw. The Chair position was filled by current Vice Chair Rob Watts.

## Highlight

# CONGRATULATIONS

ACCSP would like to congratulate the new Vice Chairs, and Chairs elected and thank the previous Chairs and Vice Chairs for their service!

Editor: Marisa Powell

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## February 2025 Committee Newsletter

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### Upcoming Events

- **March 11: Commercial Technical Committee Meeting**
- **March 12: Information Systems Committee Meeting**
- **March 31: Recreational Technical Committee Meeting**
- See [ACCSP Calendar Link](#) for more information

## Bycatch Prioritization Committee

- The ACCSP Bycatch Prioritization Committee met on February 11 to review Bycatch Prioritization matrix change requests developed to support the 2025 RFP.
- The change requests were approved by Committee consent including updates to species indices and relevant fleet explanations.
- Marisa Powell provided the Committee with an explanation of roles and responsibilities of Bycatch Prioritization Committee membership for new members and refreshed awareness for existing members.
- The Bycatch Prioritization Committee had a Hot Topic discussion led by Nicole Lengyel Costa overviewing the Rhode Island state waters gillnet observer program.
- Elections were held for the new Vice Chair position, which was filled by David Player. The Chair position was filled by current Vice Chair Lauren Staples.

## Biological Review Panel Committee

- The ACCSP Biological Review Panel met on February 11 and 12 to consider the FY2026 Biological Review Matrix developed to support the 2025 RFP.
- The Biological Review panel updated and approved the Biological Review Matrix FY26, adding a significant number of species to the matrix as discussed at the previous Matrix Review meeting.
- Resilience scores were discussed and will be updated at the next annual meeting in 2026.
- Elections were held, with Angel Willey replacing Larry Beerkircher as Chair and Lucas Pensinger coming in as Vice Chair.

- The Standard Codes committee approved the addition of a new market code for “TITAN” crab claw sizes, requested by GA DNR.

## Software Update

- The latest eTRIPS Online and Mobile applications were released on February 20. New features included a partner-managed dealer "weigh out" upload supporting pdf or image (jpg) files. Other changes included new SE gear attributes including j-hook, circle-hook, and HMS bait.
- The SAFIS SMS Registration Tracking prototype will be available for partner testing after the upcoming Information Systems Committee meeting in March. This new tool allows partners to create and manage participant Relationships and permit/vessel permit Reporting roles.
- The Information Systems Committee meeting has been scheduled as an in-person meeting in Philadelphia on **March 12**.

## Highlight

# Congratulations

ACCSP would like to  
congratulate the new Vice  
Chairs, and Chairs elected and  
thank the previous Chairs and  
Vice Chairs for their service!



Editor: Marisa Powell

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## January 2025 Committee Newsletter

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This monthly newsletter is intended to keep all committee members informed of the activities and accomplishments of ACCSP committees and staff. ACCSP staff welcomes feedback on all content.

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PUT THIS  
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CALENDAR!

- February 11: Biological Review Panel Meeting
- February 11-12: Bycatch Prioritization Committee Meeting
- February 11- 12: Northern APAIS Training
- February 18- 19: Southern APAIS Training
- March 11: Commercial Technical Committee Meeting
- March 12: Information Systems Committee Meeting
- See [ACCSP Calendar Link](#) for more information

## Commercial Technical Committee

This year's annual Commercial Technical Committee (ComTech) meeting will feature a Lean Coffee session focused on *Topics in Your "Marina."* This session is an open forum that offers attendees the opportunity to suggest potential topics they would like to see ACCSP/ComTech discuss.

If you have ideas or issues you'd like the committee to explore, we encourage you to submit them in advance to [Anna-Mai.Christmas-Svajdlenka@accsp.org](mailto:Anna-Mai.Christmas-Svajdlenka@accsp.org). Your input will help shape the discussions and ensure that the meeting is as relevant and impactful as possible.

We look forward to your participation!

## Software Update

- As of **February 1, 2025**, the ACCSP eTRIPS/mobile app will not accept submissions of trip reports unless you are using the most current or one most recent release of the eTRIPS/mobile app. It has been planned for some time to reject trips submitted using older versions of the application. Please note that ACCSP staff will be issuing an email to SAFIS Administrators and a message of the day today so that users are also aware.
- The latest eTRIPS (online and mobile) release is in the final QA phase. The current release date is **February 6**, and all applications will be available for partner testing by February 4. New features include:
  - partner-managed dealer "weigh out" upload supporting pdf or image (jpg) files and
  - new multi-response SE gear attributes for j-hook, circle-hook, and HMS bait.
- The SAFIS SMS Registration Tracking prototype will be available for partner testing by mid-February and will be discussed at the upcoming Information Systems Committee meeting in March. This new tool allows partners to create and manage participant Relationships and permit/vessel permit Reporting roles.
- The Information Systems Committee meeting has been scheduled as an in-person meeting in Philadelphia on **March 12**. Additional meeting details will be sent to the

## Highlight



Editor: Marisa Powell

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## November / December 2024 Committee Newsletter

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This monthly newsletter is intended to keep all committee members informed of the activities and accomplishments of ACCSP committees and staff. ACCSP staff welcomes feedback on all content.

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### Upcoming Events

- February 11- 12: Biological Review Panel and Bycatch Prioritization Committee Meeting
- February 11- 12: Northern APAIS Training
- February 18- 19: Southern APAIS Training
- See [ACCSP Calendar Link](#) for more information

## Recreational Technical Committee

The Recreational Technical Committee (RTC) held virtual meetings on October 30 and December 5, 2024:

1. ACCSP staff covered the intention for adding Modern Fishing Act (MFA) assignments to the base level of APAIS assignments, NOAA Fisheries staff summarized an analysis which can be used to identify where Access Point Angler Intercept Survey (APAIS) allocation can be shifted, and RTC members performed an exercise to illustrate how other states could identify areas of improvements. Potential shifts to MFA allocation target the first priority of the current Atlantic Recreational Implementation Plan, to improve precision (PSE) and presentation of MRIP estimates.
2. RTC members summarized recent progress of the project proposal to collect recreational discards via pre-trip catch card, using MRIP APAIS design for assignment distribution. The RTC submitted the initial proposal to the ACCSP Request for Proposal (RFP) on June 17, submitted revisions based on feedback from ACCSP Operations and Advisors on August 19, had the proposal ranked during the September 24-25 joint ACCSP Operations and Advisors meeting, and finally had the proposal approved for funding by the ACCSP Coordinating Council on October 21. Next steps are for the eight participating RTC states (MA, RI, CT, NY, MD, NC, SC, and GA) to finalize the catch card, procedures, outreach materials, and to coordinate with NOAA Fisheries on a draw for catch card assignments in 2025. The successful funding of this discard pilot project addresses the third priority of the current Atlantic Recreational Implementation Plan, to improve recreational fishery discard and release data. The pilot not only helps provide additional recreational discard lengths outside of the headboat fishing mode for potential use in stock assessments, it also can be used to confirm responses for unavailable/discarded catch of

hire effort via the For-hire Survey (FHS) during waves which are not typically covered during a year, by state. For now, this additional survey effort is being limited in MD, VA, NC, SC, and GA for wave 1 (January and February) only; however, all states from Maine through Georgia have been asked to confirm and adjust their vessel frame (i.e., eligible, active vessels) within the NOAA Fisheries' Vessel Directory for all unsampled waves/months to potentially expand this exercise in future years. The goal of this effort is to provide insight into whether or not there are changes to fisheries and fishing industries but also to see if the full MRIP conduct, including the Fishing Effort Survey (FES) and APAIS, would be warranted in future year. This could be especially relevant considering the ongoing RTC effort to have a for-hire methodology of logbook effort and catch estimation for MRIP certification which posits having a dockside (e.g., APAIS) component. Therefore, this item can affect the second priority of the current Atlantic Recreational Implementation Plan, comprehensive for-hire data collection and monitoring.

4. ACCSP staff discussed the intended process of partner agencies, specifically on the Atlantic Coast, for submitting requests to amend MRIP processes – this was aligned with the recent addition of the NOAA Fisheries' website. State staff and RTC members then proposed two alterations to the APAIS to include more granular data for area fished and to better account for depredation. Beyond the specific requests, which both aim to expand data collection for better management of species groups along the Atlantic Coast, this exercise is helpful for assuring that partner requests are heard and discussed through the proper channels and to make adjustments, where and when possible.

5. ACCSP staff briefly updated with progress to the proposed methodology for the creation of for-hire logbook estimates of both catch and effort, for eventual MRIP certification. Since having had MRIP consultant reviews and follow-up in late 2023 and early 2024, ACCSP have begun working with an additional MRIP consultant to begin the process of creating tangible estimators, match metrics, simulations, and sensitivity analyses in 2025. This effort addresses the second priority of the current Atlantic Recreational Implementation Plan, comprehensive for-hire data collection and monitoring.

6. Dawn Franco (GA DNR) moved to RTC chair, replacing outgoing chair Angela Giuliano (MD DNR) and Rachel Sysak (NY DEC) was elected as the incoming vice-chair of the RTC. Congratulations to Dawn and Rachel and a well-deserved thank you to Angela for four years of much progress as vice-chair and chair with the RTC!

The full RTC will meet again sometime in 2025 to further discuss next steps on requests from partner agencies for potential implementation, update on the discards pilot project milestones, and to track MRIP contractor progress on the proposed for-hire methodology.

## Software Update

- The last major eTRIPS update was released on November 7. Major changes in this release include improvements to the Partner Footer, removal of several auto-filled

- ACCSP has received considerable feedback from end users on the changes in autofill and will be reaching out to partners to schedule a meeting for discussion early in the new year.
- The next major update is scheduled for mid January. Major changes in the upcoming release include new SE Federal gear questions for circle- and j- hook sizes and HMS bait. This version of eTRIPS will also allow users to upload photo (jpeg, png) or pdf dealer "weigh out" slips as part of trip reports.
- The Information Systems Committee meeting will be held in-person in March. ACCSP is discussing the location and dates with the chair and co-chair. More details will be sent out to members next week.

## Highlight



Editor: Marisa Powell

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## October 2024 Committee Newsletter

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- **December 5: Recreational Technical Committee Meeting**
- See [ACCSP Calendar Link](#) for more information

## Coordinating Council

- The ACCSP Coordinating Council met on October 21 to consider the FY2025 Partner and Administrative proposals and receive program updates.
- The Council approved the ACCSP Administrative grant and all three (3) maintenance proposals for FY2025 ranked and recommended by the Advisory and Operations Committees. The Council also voted to fully support the top four ranked new proposals, with the additional support for the Maine halibut sampling if funding allows. The Council noted appreciation to the Operations and Advisors on the work done to rank proposals and provide thoughtful recommendations to utilize available funding.
- The Council was presented an update of ACCSP program activities, including software development timelines, status of 2024 action plan items, planning for 2025 ASMFC Action Plan, and the need for more Advisors to be appointed by Council members.

## Software Update

- The latest eTRIPS Online and Mobile release is in the final QA phase and all major issues identified by ACCSP and partner testing have been resolved. The current release date is November 7. Major changes in this release include improvements to the Partner Footer, removal of several auto-filled values to improve data quality, and a backend mobile conversion from Xamarin to .NET MAUI.

## Standard Codes

- The Standard Codes committee approved the addition of 9 new Area-Fished codes. The request was made by the SEFSC commercial logbook team in order to support HMS fishing that occurs outside of the existing standard FIN areas. Prior to being presented to the Standard Codes committee, the request was reviewed and approved by SEFSC analysts, HMS, GARFO, SERO, FWC, and GulfFIN. The new areas are designed to emulate the domestic HMS areas used for management and will not overlap with the boundaries of any existing ACCSP area codes.

901	CARIBBEAN SEA
902	STRAITS OF FLORIDA/BAHAMA RIDGE
903	BLAKE RIDGE/BLAKE CANYON
904	BERMUDAS/HATTERAS PLAIN
905	MIDATLANTIC RIDGE (NORTH OF 35LAT)
906	SARGASSO SEA/CANARY AND CAPE VERDE BASINS
907	GUIANA BASIN/SIERRA LEONE BASIN
908	GUINEA BASIN (EAST OF -50LONG)

## Biological Review Panel and Bycatch Prioritization Committee

- The Biological Review Panel and Bycatch Prioritization Committees have begun meeting planning for the 2025 annual meetings. Please note this year we will review the priority matrices.
- The deadline for partners to submit their matrices suggestions is November 21<sup>st</sup>.

## Highlight





## ***ACCSP WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS***

We extend a warm welcome to our new members,  
whose diverse perspectives strengthen our  
committees. Thank you to all current members for  
your dedicated efforts in fostering collaboration and  
engagement, ensuring the continued success of  
ACCSP.

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Editor: Marisa Powell

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