

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program Coordinating Council

*May 4, 2025
3:45 – 5:15 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 (*K. Knowlton*)
2. Council Consent
 - Approval of Agenda
 - Approval of Proceedings from October 2025
3. Public Comment
4. Consider Funding Decision Document and FY2027 Request for Proposals (*J. Simpson*) **Action**
5. Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) Updates
 - ACCSP: Discuss Potential Updates to MRIP APAIS on Area Fished and Depredation (*G. White, A. DiJohnson*)
 - NOAA: Recreational Angler Partnership Improvement Directive (RAPID), MRIP Estimate Publication Dates, and 2027 Recreational Summit (*R. Cody, T. Sartwell*)
6. Update on Program and Committee Activities (*G. White, J. Simpson, A. DiJohnson*)
7. Other Business
8. 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
ATLANTIC COASTAL COOPERATIVE STATISTICS PROGRAM
COORDINATING COUNCIL**

**Hyatt Place Dewey Beach
Dewey Beach, Delaware
Hybrid Meeting**

October 27, 2025

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 February 2025** by consent (Page 1).
3. **Move to approve the funding proposal recommendations by the Operations and Advisory Committee as proposed today** (Page 3). Motion by Jay McNamee; second by Joe Grist. Motion passes (Page 3).
4. **Move to adjourn** by consent (Page 17).

ATTENDANCE

Board Members

Megan Ware, ME	Joe Grist, VA
Renee Zobel, NH (Acting Chair)	Brandi Salmon, NC
Dan McKiernan, MA	Ben Dyar, SC
Jason McNamee, RI	Kathy Knowlton, GA (Chair, virtual)
Greg Wojcik, CT (virtual)	Erika Burgess, FL
Marty Garry, NY	Julia Beaty, MAFMC
Heather Corbett, NJ	Ron Owens, PRFC
Richard Wong, DE	John Carmichael, SAFMC
Carrie Kennedy, MD	

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

Staff

Bob Beal	Michael Opiekun
Alex DiJohnson	Trevor Scheffel
Toni Kerns	Julie DeFilippi Simpson
Madeline Musante	Geoff White

The Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program Coordinating Council of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission convened in the Hyatt Place Dewey Beach, Ballroom East/West via hybrid meeting, in-person and webinar; Monday, October 27, 2025, and was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Chair Renee Zobel.

CALL TO ORDER

CHAIR RENEE ZOBEL: All right, we're going to go ahead and get started this morning. I want to welcome everybody to Dewey Beach, Delaware. We get to kick off the meeting with Coordinating Council; what better way to kick it off. I am not your illustrious Chair; she is joining us online. I'm here for the meeting, so I'm going to be sitting in and chairing the meeting, but Kathy, you'll hear her beautiful voice, I'm sure. I will kick it over to Geoff here for a minute.

MR. GEOFF WHITE: Thank you, we're just going to start off with a quick roll call. I'm going to go around for the folks that I do see in the room, in hopes of just making that go a little bit quicker. Of course we're missing our federal counterparts today, but kind of running north to south we have Megan Ware from Maine.

Renee Zobel is our acting Chair from New Hampshire here. I do see Dan McKiernan, Massachusetts, Jason McNamee, Rhode Island. Greg Wojcik from Connecticut is online. Good morning, Marty Gary from New York, Heather Corbett, New Jersey, I do see Richard Wong across the table there sitting for Delaware.

Carrie Kenedy for Maryland, Joe Grist for Virginia, Brandi Salmon for North Carolina. We have Mel Bell sitting in for Ben Dyar for South Carolina. Kathy Knowlton is our Chair, virtual for Georgia and Erika Burgess is here for Florida. Bob Beal for the Commission, John Carmichael for South Atlantic Council, Julia Beaty for Mid-Atlantic Council. Ron Ellis for PRFC and myself, Geoff White and Julie Simpson for ACCSP. Did I

miss anyone, either in the room or online? Then we have accomplished a roll call.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

CHAIR RENEE ZOBEL: We'll get to the first item on the agenda, which is the approval of the agenda. Are there any changes to the agenda? Seeing no changes to the agenda the agenda is approved by consent.

APPROVAL OF PROCEEDINGS

CHAIR RENEE ZOBEL: Moving on to the proceedings from the May, 2025 meeting. Are there any amendments or changes that need to happen to the meeting minutes from May? Yes, go ahead.

MS. JULIA BEATY: Just a minor edit, my last name is spelled wrong, it has one T but there are two Ts in the minutes. It's not a big deal.

CHAIR ZOBEL: Thank you, Julia, we will note that. Any other changes to the meeting minutes? Seeing no other changes, we will make that edit and those are approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT

CHAIR ZOBEL: Moving right down the list, open time for public comment about anything that is not on the agenda. Is there any public comment about an item not on the agenda this morning? Seeing none.

CONSIDER FY2026 ACCSP PROJECT AND ADMINISTRATIVE PROPOSALS FOR FUNDING

CHAIR ZOBEL: That moves us on to considering the FY2026 ACCSP Project and Administration Proposals for Funding. I'm going to pass it over to Julie.

MS. JULIE DeFILIPPI SIMPSON: The first thing that we're going to do is look at the comparison rankings of the maintenance projects. On the left-hand side is the Operations and the Advisors on the right-hand side. This is just to note that all the projects are supported, but there are different orders, based on the group, and that we wanted to show you those.

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In the past one of the things that we have noticed is that the Operations Committee by virtue of having more people usually sort of dominate the rankings. One of the things that you will notice here for the new projects is that the order of the final combined rankings is actually reflective of the Advisors Committee. That shows you how closely things are ranked.

Yes, all I was saying was this is the Operations and the Advisors rankings and this is just to show you the difference between the two and the order. And unlike past years, every person has an individual ranking, which is the same every year. But normally, because there are more operations committee members, their rankings sort of dominate.

In this case, the order that the Advisors chose for new rankings is actually reflected in the combined ranking. You'll see that as we get to the scores. The score ranges are very close in some of these new projects, and that's why that happened. I'm just going to move down here to the ACCSP funding summary.

This is just to show you why we did full rankings, and that is because there is a little bit of uncertainty in the funding, especially compared to previous years. If you look at the \$3.35M column, which is the first column. You'll note that when you get to the maintenance difference there is a deficit in the \$3.35M, but not in the \$3.5M budget.

Provided that we get the \$3.5M we will fund all the maintenance projects and there would be plenty of money. That would normally mean that we would do condensed rankings. But because that isn't sure, \$3.35M, we wanted to do full ranking so the scores have that higher level of granularity. There is obviously not enough money under either budget to fund all projects in both categories.

But this is just a breakdown of what you would normally see across the top of the spreadsheet,

and it's just a little bit easier to read in this format. Okay, so on the next slide this is just the text from the recommendation of the Operations and the Advisors Committee. This is at the \$3.5M level funding recommendation. This is for the maintenance and new proposals. One of the things to note in these recommendations is that unfortunately the timing of the Operations and Advisory Committee meant that the federal folks were able to attend Day 1, but not Day 2 when we had the rankings. One of the reasons that we are unsure of the viability of the Southeast Fisheries Science Center being partially funded is that we've not had anyone from that group to weigh in on that.

Just a little bit of a visual, and a little more detail on this for the \$3.5M. Under this they would fully fund all the maintenance proposals and the administrative budget. Very straightforward on the maintenance side. Under the new proposal the primary proposal is to fund the Rhode Island black sea bass proposal, and then to partially fund the Southeast Fisheries Science Center.

Because there is uncertainty on whether or not partial funding is viable for that project, the Operations and Advisors have offered an alternative on the next slide, which is to fully fund the Rhode Island black sea bass, fully fund the next proposal in line, which is the electronic reporting in Massachusetts, and then to partially fund the New York fishery dependent sampling.

New York has indicated that they can work with partial funding, so this option is viable. The next slide is a little bit different. It's the idea of, what if there is \$3.35M, how does that work, because it doesn't fully fund all the maintenance proposals? The recommendation then is to fully fund the first four maintenance proposals, partially fund the North Carolina proposal.

Then again, we have alternatives for the new proposals. Moving down, again we just have the fully fund administration and then fund everything as listed in the \$3.5M column. North Carolina said that that would be a viable option for them as well. For the new proposals, the first option is to again

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fund black sea bass and if possible, fund the Science Center. This may be a different question of viability, because now their viability is working with less funds.

The question would be, is it viable at that funding rate? If it's not the alternative, the alternative is to fund the black sea bass, fully fund the Massachusetts proposal and then use the remaining funding to make the North Carolina maintenance proposal whole. Those are the recommendations as outlined by the Operations and Advisory Committee, and I will turn it back to you to discuss.

CHAIR ZOBEL: Does anyone have any questions for Julie about what was just presented? Yes, go ahead, Jay.

DR. JASON McNAMEE: I just want to make sure I'm understanding, and thanks for the presentation, Julie. I want to make sure I'm understanding the, there are like two key uncertainties here, right, which kind of drives our contingency-driven proposal. There is, we don't know if it's going to be \$3.35M or \$3.5M that's the first one.

Then the second one has to do with the ability of that Southeast Fisheries Science Center proposal, whether they can make do with kind of less than what they asked for or not, which we can't know right now because we can't talk to them. Is that correct?

MS. SIIMPSON: Yes, that is very well summarized.

CHAIR ZOBEL: Any other questions for Julie? Anyone have any motions that they would like to bring forward about the funding? Jason McNamee, go ahead.

DR. McNAMEE: I will make a motion to approve the funding proposal that was recommended by the Operations Committee and some kind of shortcut having to describe all of the things.

But it is basically, as it's been proposed today in the presentation.

CHAIR ZOBEL: Just give Madeline a minute to get that up. Joe, is your hand up to second? Okay, seconded by Joe Grist. Thanks for the patience online, we're just doing motions on the fly here. Okay, great. Is there any discussion on the motion on the board. Seeing none; is there any opposition to the motion on the board? It's perfected briefly here. Jason, do you mind reading it as written back into the record for us.

DR. McNAMEE: Yes. **Move to approve the funding proposal recommendations by the Operations and Advisory Committee as proposed today.**

CHAIR ZOBEL: One more time, **any opposition to the motion on the board? Seeing no opposition the motion is approved by consent.** Back to you, Geoff.

MR. WHITE: That was quicker than expected, so well done, everybody. Thanks for your attention and looking at the future projects and things. We do have several program updates for you today. We have program points and in between sections as you saw in the presentation that was distributed. But again, if there are burning questions just flag us down and we will answer them in the moment.

Looking at our existing funding there has been a fair amount of activity in trying to follow the bouncing ball of what projects that had been previously approved that actually received funding, where things did not go as well as planned, and an update on where the FY2025 funds were able to be distributed.

The kind of stoplight approach we've got here is for one project we had through FIS, the Fisheries Information System and their Inflation Reduction Act. ACCSP had a modernization proposal that was ranked highest among all of them, and yet the funding was not able to be allocated in time, and therefore was rescinded at the money movement process.

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We recognized searching outside funding could use some infrastructure updates, make our systems a bit more scalable and disaster proof, redundant there. In that one we've had to shift where that goes. For FY24 there was some funding that didn't make it in that fiscal year was supposed to have been handled in FY25.

One of those projects that is still outstanding is the state of Maine's lobster reporting. There is about \$234,000.00 of the total \$335,000.00 that was approved that has not yet been allocated. We thought that was found within GARFO abilities to move at some point this summer, and only learned at the end of September that that is still pending. For FY2025 there are a few projects that are still delayed. One of those is the ACCSP Admin Grant, not all of that has been distributed to the Commission to date. We are expecting that to happen once things open up and can be accomplished. There was also a project in the state of Maine for black sea bass sampling. That one also is pending present processing. On the good news, of the FY25 ACCSP projects that were approved, there are four on the screen that the funds actually were moved to those partners to begin those projects.

Most of those did not have the funding move until very late in the summer, and their start dates are kind of variable. Things are moving but they have been a bit delayed. This slide highlights projects that thanks to our Chair, Vice-Chair and Bob Beal were able to find some other sources of funds, and these all expire in the end of June, 2026. These were all intended to kind of make the direction of the Coordinating Council whole and fulfilled.

The top two projects were 2024 partner projects that we were able to fund through ACFCMA, the 2024 Rhode Island Socioeconomic value of fisheries and also some of the state of Maine's lobster harvesting as well as some halibut age sampling equipment. Those two have been kind of approved and are out and active. The next two projects have to do with

improving the infrastructure and kind of recovering a portion of the IRA proposal that was not funded elsewhere.

That is extending our Oracle cloud infrastructure for ACCSP databases, and also to extend some data validations for both SAFIS eTRIPS, the harvester reporting program and electronic dealer reporting, and that those validations will occur whether dealers and fishermen are using ACCSP software or other software that passes through that APR.

Those are two projects that were also approved for movement and completion before June. The last two projects are really about extending regional projects to support where we expected some funds to come through, and that was unable to occur, anywhere between January and August of 2025.

The charter observer data centralization for Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina was a database design created at the Gulf States Fisheries Commission. They very generously shared that with us, but we need to install that into our environment and apply that to the changes for a South Carolina database and access that is kind of collecting this field work, and then submitting that so that we have a bit more centralized storage for that.

The other one is following through on the MRIP for-hire logbook methodology. We had a peer review for that a while back, and we finally identified funds to do some more statistical work, make that more robust and respond to the comments of the peer review. Those projects are all in motion, and were really supported by, again, the leadership team of Kathy, Renee and Bob over the last several months.

I appreciate all of your efforts to do that, and wanted to make sure that we were transparent and clear with the Coordinating Council about how those choices were made and what projects we've been able to support at this point. I do want to pause here and just see if anyone on the Council has questions at this point.

CHAIR ZOBEL: I would like to add that it was a great partnership between the Commission and ACCSP

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that allowed these funds to move around. Just kudos, highlights to the relationship between the Commission and ACCSP that these projects were able to be funded during a particularly challenging situation. Just wanted to make sure I added that. Any questions for Geoff? Seeing no questions, continue on.

PROGRAM AND COMMITTEE UPDATES

MR. WHITE: The next section of important updates on recreational data collection, I really wanted to highlight the process here. All three of these sections are really about the utility of the ACCSP to bring the state partners to the table, come up with regional solutions and then bring those forward to MRIP as the MRIP governing body and things it planned back in about 2015. The first one is the recreational release catch card project.

It is a pilot project having to do with the APAIS dockside. It was designed to address Priority 3, which is improve recreational fisheries discard and release data. As you can see from the list of states it was really exciting. We had eight states participating in a pilot, which is a pretty broad pilot, but it really got feedback, in terms of what was happening and what was possible throughout the whole range of MRIP data collection on the Atlantic Coast.

It uses paper catch cards to hand out to fishermen that boat, so that they can record what is happening during their trip, as opposed to being asked after the trip, so what is that ability to kind of preplan or record that during a fishing trip, and is that method of data collection providing more detailed information about lengths of fish released or closer in numbers on how many fish are being released.

It was really based on the modified sampling design of APAIS to maintain the sampling probabilities so it could be expanded. If the pilot goes well, the data could be expanded after the fact. Again, this is handing out catch cards before the fishing trip. For 2025, each

states data collection Waves 3 through 5 they had about 400, 7 to 8-hour catch card assignments. They went out early to hand out the catch cards beforehand.

There were about 1,600 cards distributed, and about 400 of those were returned, which is about a 20% return rate. There were also 800 fish lengths that were provided, where folks caught, measured and released their fish as they went. It's been really interesting. We've had requests already for this data. There is a high-level interest in a project.

One of the proposals that was in the motion to move forward with the second year of data collection for this, and we're really kind of excited about the potential for this to be added as a modification to APAIS in the future. We're glad to see the South Atlantic Council and Commission folks were interested in this.

If you have further questions about the catch card project, Alex DiJohnson and Trevor Scheffel with the Recreational Team are here, and would be happy to tell you a lot more details. Moving on to the next section, this is about adding questions to APAIS. The first one of these is about adding area fished to MRIP APAIS. This originally came up through state of Massachusetts, so Dan has really pressed this for both Massachusetts and New England Council about different stock areas.

It's about looking at more detailed where the fishing occurred, and using APAIS as kind of a comprehensive unbiased coverage of all of the fishing up and down the coast. This type of geographic granularity was included in the first implementation plan recreational data needs that ACCSP completed in, I think 2016. The method, this would be to show folks a map with a grid area. If it's a non-key question, which means if it is not answered it doesn't end the interview, you just keep going.

If they do answer it then there is a potential to skip a couple of other questions and keep going. This grid area would not be used for estimation. The map doesn't add up on the cell-by-cell basis, but it would be included in the MRIP data for the

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download data, so the stock assessment folks could use it.

Rec-Tech has been really good about going through all of these details, not just what is the question, what's the map, what's the scale. But how is it going to be used, how would it be available? When folks ask about the process of adding a question to MRIP, it is pretty robust and it does take a little while.

The next slide shows a couple of examples of what those grid areas would look like. There are different size grid cells that are being shown here, a 10 minute a 30 minute and a full 60 minute or 1 degree-based grid cells. They have different granularity of what kind of depth distance from shore. Whatever may be able to be inferred from that.

However, Rec-Tech is looking into the possibility of what anglers might be willing to answer, and kind of do a feasibility test of what the tablets and the software might be able to accomplish. This testing of the technology and moving in this direction is likely to happen in 2026. As a feasibility study, a couple slides later we talk a little bit about Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA), but there is a request for that.

What is the burden on fishermen and when does PRA approval occur. It has to be part of a timeline of changing any MRIP questions. That's why there is kind of the note of including the PRA consideration when they get that far. Another item where Rec-Tech has been responsive to request from others is looking at a question in data collection within APAIS for depredation.

There is a place already in the survey that talks about released fish and the disposition or kept fish and their disposition, and so they wanted to monitor the frequency and extent of depredation events. This was raised and brought up through HMS. The intent is really to provide data to estimate excess mortality for

stock assessments, similar to post-release mortality type items.

If we go to the next slide, it is really the addition of certain disposition codes. This was a functional adjustment we could make in a software. Alex and the software contractors are making this change, pretty much in the next few weeks, so that they can begin the data collection in 2026. Again, it impacts PRA burden of adding additional questions.

I will say that HMS has done a great job of preparing these questions, providing all the different codes, working with all of the states, are going to come to agreement about how it would work, and then being flexible with, if they wanted to add a question that has to pass through PRA that process doesn't occur until 2026, and they would add another question for the survey after the approval takes place. We were able to move forward on this one, because it is a new code to an existing question. With that, I have hinted at PRA, but I will talk about it just a little bit more. The Paperwork Reduction Act managers and through Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs and Office of Management and Budget, essentially measures the angler time burden to provide the information and participate in the survey. Then it's multiplied by how many people get interviewed for the whole year in all the different states.

The screenshot above, you know all federal fisheries data falls under PRA in one sense or another. Julie will talk about it a little bit later when it comes to our software development, but this screenshot is all the different PRA items that apply to SAFIS eTrips. There is a variety of these things that happen, based on the survey, the mandatory data reports that occur.

But PRA kind of impacts everything, and sometimes when we think, ooh, it's just adding a question, it's simple. Then you get, there is only a three-year cycle for PRA review and not surprisingly that process is a little slower today than it has been in the past. It is something that just has to be worked with as we go through that. The next slide is a highlight in the MRIP Estimation Review.

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MRIP has put a lot of effort in the last few years to identify in the reenvisioned state partnerships, and how to have more state review and internal review of their estimates to identify not just what is an outlier, but what was the cause of that and can they document what that cause is, and be able to not repeat investigations of the same odd data point that actually was part of the survey and is valid for the piece.

What they are now doing is each wave requesting the states look at the estimates from the current wave and the previous wave, flag particular items, they are listed here under what is needed from reviewers. But they are providing, the state leaves and through our recreational team they've provided an R Script that kind of standardizes how to scroll through the estimates and look for unusual events and flag those for human review.

That process, once that starts really happening each wave is going to be a better way to identify, track and adjust, adapt to estimates that are unusual. How well has it been working out so far? Next slide is just a brief item that highlights for calendar 2024. They went through three of these reviews not six for last year. But just showing on the screen there were about 32 catch estimates that were flagged for investigation by eight states.

Absolutely appreciate your staff participating in this process, and would highlight it is really most beneficial when the state MRIP leads are able to interact with their state stock assessment biologist, Technical Committee members, kind of figure out what is odd and how can we channel that feedback back to MRIP to make things better as an ongoing basis.

If you're one of the states that provided a large number of items, thank you for doing that. Other states if you want to have the opportunity to jump in and participate in this process a little bit more, you are absolutely

welcome to do that. That would be wonderful. That ends my recreational item summary, so it is an opportunity to pause for questions around the table or online. Brandi.

MS. BRANDI SALMON: Do you happen to have an example of one of the areas that got flagged?

MR. WHITE: I do not. Alex or Trevor, do you have one off the top of your head? I think we'll have to follow up with you on that one. Thank you, Allison. Since you are away from the microphone, for the folks online, I'll just repeat. Basically, areas flagged for edits were probably high estimates, and you can follow up with ones that were in North Carolina.

Usually, it's looking for unusually high estimates or things that have been flagged as outliers and identify was that evaluated by MRIP staff to say, yes, that was a real event and this is why it calculated through, or some other approach. Anything else? I see Jason, but was there someone before that? Rich, I think your hand was up first.

MR. RICHARD WONG: I do have a question about disposition codes if you want to stay on that topic that's fine, but otherwise I have a question about the disposition codes.

MR. WHITE: Go ahead.

MR. WONG: This new disposition codes, actually they look pretty helpful. They are informative. Is that going to be in the APAIS Survey or just HMS, only for HMS species?

MR. WHITE: They are going to be part of the APAIS Intercept Survey, and I think there are three questions that are flagged for what was the disposition of those released fish, were they released alive? Again, those options become available for the angler to select from. Jason.

DR. McNAMEE: I have a series of questions, so I'll just go one at a time and then let others have a chance. The first one that I have is on the card program. Like all of this stuff is really cool. I applaud all the work. I think all of these things

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could vastly improve and help that dataset. It's all good stuff.

With the cards, I guess I was wondering, so we collected data. What is the plan once we have the information? You can probably generate some internal metrics, like return rates and things like that to kind of know the efficacy of, are people actually returning these things and what does that look like. But then I was wondering, are there going to be comparisons made?

For instance, like a comparison to the standard MRIP discard length protocol or volunteer angler data is another thing. I'm asking the question, because maybe there is a plan already. But if not, I think that would be a good thing to do.

MR. WHITE: Yes, when the Subcommittee was developing it, they did talk about a variety of things that they would be testing. One of those was how much earlier before assignment should they go out to hand out catch cards. How well does handing out catch cards during an assignment work?

Does it impact the number of interviews that can be done during an assignment if they are focused on both handing out a catch card and interviewing somebody after the fact. There are plan comparisons to the rounding errors or the digit bias of how many fish of the species were released. Seeing how the number and type of releases that came back, relative to the standard APAIS Survey. Because these were overdrawn assignments they were created as additional sampling that after kind of some of those data analysis things occur then it might be possible for MRIP to use those as part of the standard APAIS Survey and increase those intercepts.

They've got some tweaks in Year 2, to try and get this as higher activity sites. They want to look at how these data could get folded into the estimation process. There is a plan that is kind

of evolving, but because the data collection is still occurring right now, they are not yet to the full beta analysis stage from Year 1.

DR. McNAMEE: Thanks for that, Geoff. Just a quick follow. In particular, the last thing you said there I think that is super important. It's kind of nice you have almost a parallel experiment going on, so you can do those direct comparisons, that's great. I would just encourage kind of an external comparison as well, kind of like a, I don't know, out of bag type of comparison.

In particular I'm wondering about the volunteer angler data, you know discard lengths that are generated through other types of programs and whether it looks similar or really different. That is just, I think, an important piece of information. However, in particular if we want to use this for estimation, having it within this statistical design is really important, so I appreciate that as well.

MR. WHITE: Thank you, Jason, other questions around the room? Seeing none; any hands online? Not at the moment. Jason, another one then.

DR. McNAMEE: Yes, I've got so this one and one more if there is time. The grid idea is also super cool. I like how your kind of looking at it across. It's funny, that last like the biggest frame that you have sort of is not consequential, it's all grid because they are so small. But I think that refinement is really cool.

You mentioned, it's in the presentation and you mentioned it won't be used for estimation, and so I was thinking about that a little bit. I think I understand why, but I wondered about why you can't maybe use it in the estimation. I think we're getting those harvest and discard estimation. But what about like activity?

Depending on their refinement you could kind of understand that. I think there is some estimate that you can generate out of there, like where the activity is kind of happening along the coast and inshore/offshore as well. Just to keep in mind, I think it's good information, but to kind of take that

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a step further. I think it would be valuable and okay to do with the dataset. Have you guys been talking about like how you're going to use it in that way or not quite yet?

MR. WHITE: Well, I will try to answer that, and then Alex, if you have more to add, you are welcome to talk through a microphone, to prepare you for that.

Throughout these discussions, John Foster of MRIP has been participating, in why it would or would not be able to be part of the standard MRIP catch and harvest estimates, because if you have effort information that fishing occurred, but you only have catch information and discard information from a lower subset by those grid cells, then do you have enough data matching up grid cell by grid cell to do the calculations? He basically was saying that is comes to a low data availability, impossible to calculate catch by grid cell. That was my nonstatistical explanation. But they can follow up on that one further. I do think there would be utility to say, we have evidence of fishing in these areas of marine spatial areas, and there might be analysis that could be done there.

I would only suggest that that may not be an MRIP estimation task, but by having the data in the download files, which meets the criteria for their public data use, availability, et cetera, it would be available to the stock assessment folks to assign stock areas, and it would be available to look at marine spatial use planning et cetera.

But that would be an after the survey task, not a task for MRIP staff to accomplish. I am just careful to separate those things, so it is not assumed who would be doing the work. Thanks, Jay. I don't see other hands, and yes, we have time, because we're ahead of schedule, so go ahead.

DR. McNAMEE: Thanks for that. That was a great response, thanks for that, Geoff, for the last question. My final one was on that MRIP Review. I'll ask, this is like a two-part. You have

highly caffeinated Jay first thing in the morning, sorry. The R script, that sounds really cool, and I'm imagining it's like an audit, and so maybe there are bounds of, what is a reasonable like length at this for the species, that sort of thing.

If you're above or below it maybe that throws a flag or something like that. I would be interested to hear a little bit more about how the R script works. You know we've talked a little bit about this already, and so we have this mechanism now for IDing things that we want to investigate further, which is great, and then like what happens.

You ID something, it gets referred back and then is there like the potential that that could change, or is it just kind of like a case-by-case thing? I just wondered about, like we've got the first half and I wondered what happens if you actually identify a problem. I am remembering like a few years back where we did similar things, and like 9 times out of 10 it was like yes, it's a weird number, but everything looks good, so that is the number. I'm wondering if that is different now or just kind of the same.

MR. WHITE: The R script is way out of my depth. But I will say that people that are good at that have worked on it. What exactly it accomplishes I am not aware of, but the real exciting part is there is a standard way for each state with different knowledge to look at the estimate information and flag the same types of things for human review.

We were excited about it; it wasn't just going to be a few states that had really cool ideas doing it one way and other states doing it a different way. The standardization of that process was really, I think important for the whole Coordinating Council to hear. What happens with those estimates, I know Lucas and the MRIP team have been evaluating these.

They not only just doing the evaluation but documenting what happens. I think there have been cases where an unusual estimate and an outlier have been removed or down weighted et cetera, and so there have been changes to those

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estimates based on the reviews. There are other cases where the estimate stands, and yet it has a documented description of where the MRIP team went through and said, oh, it was because this happened in the effort survey, this happened in the dockside survey, this was where there was a conversion factor that affected it. We actually did, there was an interview that saw that fish and it came through.

I'm so impressed with the state staff that are doing the survey in the field. There are places where, it's many years ago now, but it was oh there is no way you caught a grouper with a flyrod from shore, and said Well yes, it was weird. The interviewer thought it was weird so he took a picture. Then he told their state lead who talked to MRIP.

It followed the chain all the way through. The folks are out there and they are collecting the data, and they care. It comes back through and they say, oh yes, it did happen, it was weird. But sometimes it stands. But if they are really high PSEs then you recognize the high PSE. Sorry, everybody for the long answer. But Rich, you have an idea? Go ahead.

MR. WONG: I just have another question, if Jay, are you done? Okay. Well, I actually agree with Jay. All of this work with the MRIP amendments and the catch cards, it's really incredibly needed information, and we've needed it for quite a long time. But in particular, I was curious about the catch card, the future from the catch card program.

Is this going to be continued and/or expanded going forward? Because I think we're almost underappreciating how important those catch cards are going to be, given the changes that are ahead for black sea bass, summer flounder and scup management, maybe even bluefish, when we go to a total catch, kind of the move to a total catch management approach. I guess my question is, what is the future plans for the catch cards?

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MR. WHITE: The crystal ball strategic plan for that would be, do a second year of field sampling with the Catch Card Pilot Project in 2026. If the data analysis and everything works out after that, then it would be, ask MRIP to include that as the standard methodology for the Atlantic Coast.

Then it would become part of every APAIS assignment as one way to get the data back and get more detail on released fish. That process has borne through in the past, where there was a pilot project for how to collect headboat data in, I want to say 2003, 2004, and that Kathy can raise her hand and correct me.

That became the standard headboat at-sea observer MRIP process on the Atlantic Coast starting in, I think 2005. There is a bit more process and review now than there was at that point, but that is the theme of find the regionally important project, pilot test it, bring it to MRIP and bring it into the fold of the standard methodology. That's the ultimate plan if all the stars align to get that far. With that we'll go to Brandi at the far end of the table.

MS. SALMON: Yes, I agree, it is very important data to have, but I definitely want to caution on the fact that it would be interesting to see how that affects the amount of APAIS surveys we actually obtain. North Carolina has been in a unique situation where we are having a lot of people, not revolting, but are getting frustrated with how many attempts that we're making to try to acquire recreational data. The main thing that we really need is for them to participate in the APAIS Surveys. If they are handed a catch card in the beginning, are they more likely or less likely to participate in the APAIS surveys after the fact? Just something to keep in mind with that project, because I know North Carolina has been experiencing that already.

MR. WHITE: Thanks, Brandi, I appreciate the local knowledge on that one. I am not seeing any more hands here, do we have any online? Not at the moment. I'm going to move us forward; the next section of presentation slides is with Julie.

MS. SIMPSON: I'm just going to start out with some major software project timelines. This is the Southeast Coastal Logbook and HMS Logbook. We sort of wrapped up development on those earlier in the year. We are on track for the one-stop reporting at the end of the year, and then also the eDR Redesign in early January, and then registration tracking will be going into 2026. We'll just dig a little bit into each of these projects now.

The first one is the One-Stop Reporting. This is essentially something that we've incorporated a lot of the federal aspects of this yet, but not the state aspects of it. We did a lot of talking with the folks at Comtech and IS in the spring, and gathering some information there. We're going to be compiling some direction to move us forward into 2026 by the end of this year, so that the partners can review that.

The short answer to what is One-Stop Reporting from the state perspective is, if I am answering a federal report and there is a question that the state asks, that question would also get added to their federal report, not just their state reports. If you want to know the number of tautog as well as the weight, we could add that question to that form, regardless of whether or not it is a state or federal form.

The look up list would still be federal, if there is a federal form. But we would be able to add state questions if those permits also existed. That is the direction of One-Stop Reporting, and the goal is to just get more information that the states are looking for, regardless of whether or not they are filling out your state forms.

The next project is the registration tracking. This is the project that is focused around the participant information, so the permits the vessels and the people. Most importantly, this one is focused on not just the person but how that person is related to various entities. In some cases, a person operates individually, they might also operate as part of a corporation,

sometimes one corporation owns another corporation. It can get very complicated.

That can be difficult to track, so we are enhancing that portion of the database, and we're also looking at the implementation of potential roles. I can be the person who owns the permit, and especially in cases in the for-hire. I might own that boat, I own the permit, it's my responsibility. But I have a captain reporting for me.

They should be able to see the reports they enter, and not the reports that the other captains enter. But I want to see all the reports for that permit, because it is my permit. Those are some of the enhancements that we're working on. It requires touching a lot of the underlying database and a lot of the applications as well, so it is a slow but steady project. We're also working in conjunction with a federal project, where they are consolidating their vessel permits on the Atlantic Coast, so we have been working with them, so that our structures align as much as possible, so that we can exchange data with the Feds and actually still identify the same entity across both data bases.

Their project made excellent progress this summer, and for obvious reasons is currently on hold at the moment. We are interested in working with one or two folks in 2026, just sort of test the new structure. I know Massachusetts is one of the partners that has had historic, it would be easier that we could identify these folks, so thank you.

If you are interested in working with us, we would love to work with you on that. Not that I'm pointing anyone out. Next project is the Southeast Coastal Logbook and the HMS Logbook. These are both logbooks out of the Southeast Fishery Science Center. We did complete the development of these.

Simultaneously, earlier in the year, there was an East Coast Logbook project. The purpose of this project is to centralize the federal logbook data for the Atlantic and the Gulf. Because of that project, the Southeast was interested in the data not going

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to the Southeast Fishery Science Center, but going into this new database.

Even though we have the development ready, they are not ready to put these logbooks electronically in the field. Folks are still using paper for these logbooks, which annoys some of them, but that is the way it is right now. The federal project was also delayed. They were planning on being done in September, and we were supposed to be able to move data to them then.

However, they got caught up in some PRA issues, as Geoff mentioned earlier, and they also have some issues within the mandate on federal systems having multifactor authentication, which is a thing for them, it's a mandate that they have to follow, and it's fairly complicated. Obviously, at this point, we will just hold this development until the Feds are back and can continue to work on their project.

At this point, ACCSP is just essentially sitting on, hey, we developed this and we're ready to go. As soon as they are ready to go, we're ready to go. The last one is sort of our major project for the year. This is the eDR redesign. I know you guys have heard about this before, but I wanted to start out by saying thank you to everybody.

We have had a lot of partner involvement throughout the year. We are meeting every three weeks with staff from your folks, and we are getting a lot of feedback. We asked a lot of questions on e-mail. I think it's been a really excellent process, in terms of constant collaborations for the product that we deliver is something that not only everyone has already seen.

But they know how it's going to work. They are helping out with the outreach to the dealers. Things are going very well from that perspective. I just wanted to start out with a thank you. One of the key points here is that first bullet, which is the Progressive Web App. The Progressive Web Application is how we're

building the eDR online. Essentially, this is something that you can use on your web browser. It works really well on a computer; it also works very well on a tablet.

It is not quite where we want it to be on a phone, but it is pretty good. Right now, you do need to be connected to the internet to use that, but we're hoping in the future that that might be something that we can change, and it can be available offline. But the most important aspect of this is that because it is something that we can make it more useable on the phone, it is useable on the tablet and it's one application.

It means that in contrast to some of the other ACCSP applications in SAFIS, we do not have an external contract for this. We are building it entirely in-house. We've consolidated the development internally by using the new modern technology, and we've removed the ability and need for an external contract.

That is something that is a really key point to this project. There has been a lot of discussion about, that's the online version, there is also the file upload version. There has been a lot of discussion about that, because it was a very old application that had been written in code. It was a very old application that lived on a server that is dying.

It was written by some folks at GARFO, and so GARFO has been helping us to redevelop that application, and one of the key points to that is that we are integrating the validation, so the same validation package that looks at the online is going to look at the file upload. That is a key point, because that wasn't true in the past.

There were essentially different rules for submission under file upload, and we wanted to make that go away, so that everything is validated the same way. There are some folks who are going to be moving to the API. The API is not just for vendors. There are some dealers that actually have fairly large operations, and rather than exporting a file and uploading it, they can actually talk directly to the API.

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We already have a vendor that services five of the dealers and has reached out to us, and is working on transitioning those five folks to direct away from the API and get away from this dial upload thing. I think if we had our ideal world, that is the way most of the dealers would go. They would either enter their data online or go to the API.

But there are some folks that just don't have the in-house technology for that. But it is moving in that direction. There are a lot of other moving parts in here, but just the wrap up really is, we appreciate the time and effort that folks have been spending on the collaboration, and despite the fact that we don't have our federal friends at this moment, we are moving forward with this.

We appreciate all of the outreach that the state folks are doing and the Council folks are doing to get the dealers, because we don't have the federal component of outreach and support at this point. Does anybody have any questions on that before we move on to bio module stuff?

CHAIR ZOBEL: Carrie, go ahead.

MS. CARRIE KENNEDY: Thanks, Madame Chair, Vice-Chair. I just wanted to make the point to thank you very much for all your work on the One-Stop Reporting. I know our state license holders on our coast are very interested in participating and using that project.

They have been very clear with us that they want to volunteer to be testers, at least a couple of them, before it's implemented. I will ensure that we work internally to make sure that this project is working. But just for the record, don't hesitate to reach out if you guys need anything, and that Maryland is very interested in this project.

CHAIR ZOBEL: Jason.

DR. McNAMEE: Yes, so I'll piggyback off of that comment, and maybe come at it from another

angle. There has not been testing yet, as I understand it, and so there is nervousness about that, because I think some folks are feeling, I really need to kind of get in there and test it so I can understand how to then describe it to my dealers and things like that.

Maybe you could talk a little bit about your confidence. I guess it is the testing hasn't occurred, and it's a January 1, but that's not super far away. You know if you could talk a little bit, I'm hoping you are confident you can make me confident about that.

MS. SIMPSON: Yes, sorry, I had OSR in my head in the first minute there, but I caught up with you. Yes, we've actually done a number of demonstrations with folks, so they are not poking around in it yet, but they've actually seen the application a number of times. Most recently it was about a week ago.

We actually tested it. We asked all the states and all the partners, actually, to say, do you have a dealer that would be willing to do this with us. We've actually demonstrated it with the dealers themselves already. We've worked with the dealers and we were like, what do you think of it? For better or worse, they were very happy with the application. Their complaints were all about the regulations, which we couldn't do anything about.

We told them we would pass on that information. But from the good standpoint, we are very confident, because they liked the application and they felt that it looked like it was easy to use. Some of the things that they said, there was one person who said, you know I typically use Trip Ticket because it can do this.

We were like well this was built to do that, and they were like, oh, I really like that. Right now, they have to switch back and forth, because they have to do HMS in one, and then go back to everything else, and they were doing Trip Ticket in the other because they liked it better. They were like, oh, I'm probably just going to use this new one instead of switching back and forth.

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We will very likely have this available for poking around in the next week or two, so partners can start poking around in it. We will also have the file upload available for poking around in the same timeline. There is a lot of poking around that is going to be happening. We've also already talked to the test dealers about the change that is going to happen with file upload. The only change is going to be before you upload that file, right now there are no column headers. We are going to ask folks to add column headers, so that is going to be their big change, and we did tell those dealers that and they were like, oh, that is not an issue. They were very like, okay.

They were expecting this like, oh you did this outreach and told us this thing was coming. Now it turns out to be a big nothing. I was like, excellent, I want it to be a big nothing. We would much rather give you a lot of warning and then have you be like underwhelmed with the amount of change that comes your way.

That is what we're experiencing so far. I will be honest; there will always be people that will complain. We do anticipate that there will be people that will be like, you made me change something and I don't like it, even though it's better, because I think that is always the nature of change is that are some folks that are just resistant to it.

But everything we've done so far has been very well received. We are going to be doing a lot more outreach, in terms of flyers and messages coming up, and more opportunity for folks to poke around. But they have all at least had at least two demos. Hopefully that helps.

DR. McNAMEE: Yes, thanks, Julie, and it does help. The demos are good. I had recognized that there had been some demonstrations, it's just I think it's different, right. You get the demo when they are actually now testing, so you take the training wheels off, it's different. I

just worry a little bit about. Well maybe I'll ask a question in this way.

If you run into issues where you're like, oh man, that's bad, we need to reprogram or modify. Do you feel like you have enough time, and if not, what is the impact of what if you push it a month and push it two months, something like that. Is that like major impact or something that you could potentially do?

MS. SIMPSON: I'll answer that in two parts. Part 1 is, we are currently scheduled to have the development done on November 12. Our goal is to be fully developed by November 12, with all the things that will be rolling out in January. We feel like that month and a half is enough time to fix any issues at that point, especially because we've been demonstrating and testing them up 'til now, so we're really only looking at those last few items that sort of need to bring it all together in this sort of like last round of development.

Yes, I think we do have plenty of time to make sure the January 1 product is good. The reason that we have this timeline is because the partners have requested that calendar changeover. We are going to do our darnedest to make sure that it happens. The reality is, is that the old system is there. We can always use it. The timeline could change if something disastrous strikes. But I think that is a plan that has a letter like way past the middle of the alphabet.

MR. WHITE: All of that is absolutely true for the electronic dealer reporting online piece. The file upload portion does have another contingency that we do need to make that happen January 1, if there are some infrastructure issues that we have to move off of that technology.

CHAIR ZOBEL: I'm going to call on myself. I have a very specific question for the Registration Tracking. You said you've been working very closely with our federal partners on that. Is that something that, for example, MRI is coming in with permit information, so that they have the ability to look at data without having to request that from our federal partners. Is

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it that specific? Okay, Julie said no, in answer to my question.

MS. SIMPSON: No.

CHAIR ZOBEL: All right, thank you. Any other questions for Julie? Okay, seeing no other questions.

MS. SIMPSON: Okay, I'll keep talking now. The Biomodule Status. The biomodule is one that has been around since the beginning of ACCSP. A few years back that was redesigned by that group on the anticipation by the Biological Committee, on the anticipation that we were starting to move away from catch and effort as our primary focus, and wanted to really start ramping up the biological module.

That has been reflected in the changes in the RFP, and so now we're really moving into populating data in the warehouse. Right now, for existing data we have the lobster, the herring and the Jonah crab data. These are primarily the result of stock assessment projects that we had been involved in. Lobster is the longest time; every sort of five years we were doing an intensive amount of lobster data to help those folks out.

There was really more of a species-based bio module for a while. Some of the current projects that we're working on right now are the North Carolina DMF biological database. This is an ACCSP proposal to restructure their biological database. But it also creates a direct link to the data warehouse.

They've already loaded data from 2011 to 2024 into the ACCSP from their system, and they are currently working on loading data back as far as 2000 as part of that. One of the things that is a real key to this project is that the Science Center, the Southeast Fishery Science Center is picking up North Carolina data from ACCSP. This is sort of a modernization to the data flow that is happening there. The second one is where we sort of, we've really only provided

the 2023 and 2024 data in that process so far, but those data are flowing into temp, and so it is just sort of a change in the process. But it is a modernization of that data flow, because it is more of a database connection link, rather than the passing of files.

The next one is sort of an inverse of that second bullet, where the Southeast Fishery Science Center, the Trip Interview Program called TIP, I think everyone probably knows it as TIP, is that staff from Science Center and ACCSP have worked together to transfer the TIP data from South Carolina through Florida.

Currently, we have data from 2023 and 2024 in our system, somewhat. Coming soon, soon being completely dependent on federal government timeline is the 2014 to the 2022 data. One of the biggest reasons that these projects are, as a group, a really important start is that this provides an opportunity for ACCSP to expand the participation that we have in the SEDAR process. Right now, the Science Center, Larry Beerkircher, doesn't have the opportunity to attend the SEDARS.

But he's often been asked to provide these TIP data for the assessment, and so if ACCSP is in the room providing the commercial landings data, we would also be able to provide this dataset the same way that Larry has in the past, but also then be there to make any changes, and so that could actually enhance the efficiency of that process.

That is why this group of projects is so important. Moving forward, what we want to do is just develop an annual process, very much like the spring and fall data load that we have now for the commercial catch and effort. We're going to be working with additional partners to set up those bio feeds, and rather than focusing on, oh this species, because we do stock assessments for that.

We're really just going to be focusing on the entire biological sampling program. Some states have one, some states have a couple of different ones that might be regional, or otherwise focused differently. But we're going to be moving those

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data in as well, and Sky and Michael are already in conversations with a number of partners on moving those data over.

That is where we are on the biological module specifically. One of the additional things that we did do is that we participated in a GARFO hosted biological sampling workshop. This was an information exchange. It was a really good opportunity to learn from others. It was a state federal workshop that they hosted to explore some of the current biological sampling programs.

ACCSP presented on our biological module. We are also still focused on the opportunity for centralizing the database. Again, as I mentioned with the SEDAR Project, the centralization of biological data can hopefully help streamline some of the stock assessment and other science activities. This workshop was hosted in September, so they got it in under the wire at the end of September. It just really laid the groundwork for some future opportunity. We're looking forward to that. I can pause again if anyone has some questions.

CHAIR ZOBEL: Any questions for Julie on the bio sampling? Continue on.

MS. SIMPSON: The next one is, the Committee Participation Guidelines. We did update this document. It was a one-page document that just sort of outlined the roles previously. But some of the committees were looking for a little bit more guidance on consensus building. We added that as a second page in that guidance, and so now it is updated. The other thing that we want to do this winter is we want to host a leading facilitation training with the ACCSP Chair and Vice-Chairs.

We're going to be doing that in conjunction with the FIS quality management and continuous improvement professional specialty group. I didn't use the acronym there, because I didn't think it would be well known, but it's a really long title. Basically, it's just a group of

folks that work on some quality management so they have facilitation expertise. We're going to try to work with some of the folks that are in other FINs and/or contractors, because they will be working. The majority of the group is unfortunately not working at this time, but Alex and I are members of that group, so we're going to ping on a couple of the people that we know are working to help us out with it. The next thing I want to talk about is the limited confidential access. One of the things that we wanted to note is that this is a project that we initiated on behalf of partner requests. In the past when someone applied for confidential access, they were given a database account and then they had access to the database.

However, a lot of folks wanted the requestors to sign those documents, even if they were looking for just a custom data request. We built this in response to that. There are now essentially two levels of confidential access permissions. The first one is that limited access, which means you sign the form and that allows you to receive or view confidential data, so if you are part of a committee where they are going to be presenting that, as part of the TC you can be in the room.

But you do not have a confidential account inside the data warehouse. You can't go in and query any of your own data. It is a more restricted form of access to the data. Then there is the full access, which is essentially the way it was before, which means that you get an account and you can request a query or your confidential information.

Essentially, the limited access is like I said for the SEDAR folks and the stock assessment folks, and for anyone who is working on a grant or specific project, where they really just need a custom data request. Whereas, staff or the partners data security contact, those kinds of staff need access to data on a regular basis, and so they would still have that full access.

Limited access in action, since August 1st, of 2025, we did that this year, pardon me. We've actually had about 46% of the accounts that have been created, which have been about a little over 100.

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Those accounts have been either created over the year, those have been about 46% of limited access. About half of the people that would have necessarily had it full access now don't have full access. This project is working very well moving forward. That is the end of my slides.

CHAIR ZOBEL: Any questions on limited access for Julie? Okay, yes, so the 2026 Action Plan. This will be presented to the Business Session for Action, so there is expected to be a discussion on it then, but we still wanted to open up the opportunity, we do have a few minutes here, for any questions on the Action Plan or discussion if anybody has any.

Seeing no hands, any online? No, then we have just one more slide here that is just ACCSP by the numbers for your viewing enjoyment, and that concludes our meeting today.

ADJOURNMENT

CHAIR ZOBEL: Anybody opposed to adjourning? Seeing none; we are adjourned.

(Whereupon the meeting adjourned at 10:18 a.m. on Monday, October 27, 2025)

ACCSP FY27 RFP Summary of Changes

1. RFP

- 1.1. General Changes
 - 1.1.1. Updated dates appropriately

2. Funding Decision Document

- 2.1. General changes
 - 2.1.1. All dates have been updated
- 2.2. Detailed Steps of Funding Decisions Process
 - 2.2.1. Language removal from Step 1: 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. **(PAGE 2)**
 - 2.2.2. Language addition to Step 5: A cover letter addressing requested responses and review questions must be submitted with the final proposal. **(PAGE 3)**
- 2.3. General Proposal Guidelines **(PAGE 5)**
 - 2.3.1. Language update
 - 2.3.2. From: 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.
 - 2.3.3. To: Proposals that request funding to purchase 3rd party data or develop/purchase 3rd party software that is similar (e.g., performing existing functions) to software offered by ACCSP will be considered on a case-by-case basis and may or may not be recommended for funding
- 2.4. Appendix A **(PAGE 15)**
 - 2.4.1. Added Year 6 (final year) value (\$111.892) for Lobster Harvester Reporting in Maine

3. Biological Priority Matrix – No Changes

4. Bycatch Priority Matrix – No Changes

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. Committees are given more time to review initial proposals and provide feedback

8. Ranking Criteria Document – No Changes



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

TO: ACCSP Coordinating Council and All ACCSP Committees

FROM: Geoff White, ACCSP Director

SUBJECT: ACCSP Request for 2027 Proposals

The Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (Program or ACCSP) is issuing a Request for Proposals (RFP) to Program Partners and Committees for FY27 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:

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

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.

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

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.

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 FY27 funding process. The final decision on proposals to be funded for FY27 will be made in October 2026. 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 12, 2026** by email to Julie DeFilippi Simpson, ACCSP Deputy Director 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	FY2027 Funding Decision Document
ATTACHMENT II	FY2027 Biological Priority Matrix
ATTACHMENT III	FY2027 Bycatch Priority Matrix
ATTACHMENT IV	FY2027 Recreational Technical Committee Priorities
ATTACHMENT V	FY2027 Socioeconomic Priority Data Elements
ATTACHMENT VI	FY2027 Timeline for Proposal Review
ATTACHMENT VII	FY2027 Ranking Criteria Document

Funding Decision Process
Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program
May 2026

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.

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.

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. A cover letter addressing requested responses and review questions must be submitted with the final proposal.

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. 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 3rd party data or develop/purchase 3rd party software that is similar (e.g., performing existing functions) to software offered by ACCSP will be considered on a case-by-case basis and may or 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 - ¹Defined as activities that could exist (or could happen) without the grant. ²In-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.

¹The 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
Personnel (a)		
Supervisor	Ex: 500 hrs x \$20/hr	\$10,000
Biologist		
Technician		
Fringe (b)		
Supervisor	Ex: 15% of salary	\$1500
Biologist		
Technician		
Travel (c)		
Mileage for sampling trips	Ex: Estimate 2000 miles x \$0.33/mile	\$660
Travel for meeting		
Equipment (d)		
Boat	Ex: \$7000, based on current market research	\$7000
Supplies (e)		
Safety supplies		\$1200
Sampling supplies		\$1000
Laptop computers	2 laptops @\$1500 each	\$3000
Software		\$500
Contractual (f)		
Data Entry Contract	Ex: 1000 hrs x \$20/hr	\$20,000
Other (h)		
Printing and binding		
Postage		
Telecommunications charges		
Internet Access charges		
Totals		
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

Projects in Year 5 or 6 of Maintenance Funding	Calculated Base (4-year avg)	Maximum Funding Year 5	Maximum Funding Year 6 (Final Year)
Managing 100% Lobster Harvester Reporting in Maine	\$335,676	\$223,785	\$111,892

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.

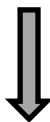
Other Factors	Point Range	Description of Ranking Consideration
Properly Prepared	-1 – 1	Meets requirements as specified in funding decision document Step 2b and Guidelines
Merit	0 - 3	Ranked based on subjective worthiness

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 (≥ 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

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

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

Total Captain Cost (If other than owner)	- Total monetary amount that was given to the captain for this trip
Owner Share	- Total monetary amount the vessel (or permit) owner received for this trip
Other Trip Cost Information	
Fuel & Oil Costs	- Cost for all fuel and oil used on this trip
Bait Costs	- Cost for all bait used on this trip
Ice Costs	- Cost for all ice used on this trip
Grocery Costs	- Cost for all groceries used on this trip
Miscellaneous Costs	- 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**

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

Leased Quota Cost	- Total cost of leased quota for the previous year
Other Professional Expenses	- Professional expenses not otherwise itemized
Demographic Information	
Household Size	- # of individuals in the household (including respondent)
Employment Status	- Current employment status (e.g., employed fulltime, part-time, unemployed, retired, etc.)
Education	- Highest level of education completed
Marital/Cohabital Status	- Current marital or cohabital status of respondent
Age	- Age of the respondent
Gender	- Gender of the respondent
Ethnicity	- Ethnic background
Total Annual Household Income	- Total annual household income
Number of Household Individuals Involved in Commercial Fishing	- Total number of household individuals involved in commercial fishing (including respondent)
Percent of Annual Household Income from Commercial Fishing	- Percent of household income that is generated through commercial fishing or support activities
County of Residence	- County of residence
Years in Community	- Years in county of residence
Fishing Activity Information	
Fishermen status	- Fishermen status (e.g. full time, part time, not actively fishing)
Years in Commercial Fishing	- Number of years participating in commercial fishery
Permits held	- fishing permits held (by permit type)
Permit use	- Were all permits used within the last year
Reason for Latency	- Reason for not using permit within the last year
Primary Species Landed by Month	- Primary species landed by month
Primary Gears Used by Month	- 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 calendar year 2027, 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.

Jan 28-29:	NEFMC Meeting – Webinar
Jan 28:	2026 FHTS Training - Webinar
Feb 4-5:	ASMFC Meeting – Arlington, VA
Feb 10-11:	APAIS South Atlantic Training- Richmond, VA
Feb 17:	Bycatch Prioritization Committee Meeting – Webinar
Feb 25:	Biological Prioritization Committee Meeting – Webinar
Feb 24-25:	APAIS North Atlantic Training- New Bedford, MA
Feb 10-11:	MAFMC Council Meeting- Webinar
Mar 1:	Start of ACCSP FY26
Mar 2-6:	SAFMC Meeting – Jekyll Island, GA
Mar 4:	Recreational Technical Committee Meeting - Webinar
Mar 24:	Information Systems Committee Meeting – Webinar
Mar 25:	Commercial Technical Committee Meeting – Webinar
Apr 6:	Operations and Advisory Committees Spring Meeting – Webinar
Apr 7-9:	MAFMC Meeting – New York, NY
Apr 14-16:	NEFMC Meeting – Portland, ME
May 4-6:	ASMFC/Coordinating Council Meeting – Arlington, VA
May 11:	ACCSP issues request for proposals
Jun 8-12:	SAFMC Meeting – St. Augustine, FL
Jun 12:	Initial proposals are due
Jun 16-18:	MAFMC Meeting – Alexandria, VA
Jun 19:	Initial proposals are distributed to Operations and Advisory Committees
Jun 23-25:	NEFMC Meeting – Mystic, CT
July 6:	Any initial written comments on proposals due
Week of Jul 13:	Review of initial proposals by Operations and Advisory Committees
July 18:	If applicable, any revised written comments due
Week of Jul 27:	Feedback submitted to principal investigators
Aug 5-7:	ASMFC Meeting – Arlington, VA
Aug 10-13:	MAFMC Meeting – Philadelphia, PA
Aug 14:	Revised proposals due

Aug 21:	Revised proposals distributed to Operations and Advisory Committees
Week of Sep 7:	Ranking exercise for Advisors and Operations Members – Webinar
Sep 14-18:	SAFMC Meeting – Charleston, SC
Sep 15-17:	NEFMC Meeting – Plymouth, MA
Sep 22-23:	Advisors/Operations Committee Joint Meeting (in-person; location TBD)
Oct 6-8:	MAFMC Meeting – Duck, NC
Nov 9-12:	ASMFC Annual Meeting/Coordinating Council – Newport, RI
Dec 2-4:	NEFMC Meeting – Newport, RI
Dec 7-11:	SAFMC Meeting – Beaufort, NC
Dec 14-17:	MAFMC Meeting – Annapolis, MD

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

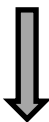
Merit	0 - 3	Ranked based on subjective worthiness
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Ranking Guide – Maintenance Projects: (to be used only if funding available exceeds total Maintenance funding request)

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

Amended Area Fished Feasibility Testing for the APAIS

ACTION:

The Recreational Technical Committee recommends approval of the area fished map grid as an Atlantic coastwide change to APAIS data collection, for testing and PRA submission in CY2026 and potential survey implementation in CY2027.

Resources needed:

There are no new funds required to complete the technical feasibility testing. Programming changes in the DIA and data delivery can be completed within existing contracts and staff capabilities at ACCSP.

Plan

In CY26, the RecTech 'Area Fished' subcommittee will test the feasibility of collecting spatial information from recreational anglers by adding a map question to the APAIS questionnaire in the tablet-based Dockside Interceptor Application (DIA). After successful testing, full implementation of the change in APAIS would require Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) approval, which must be submitted by NOAA in early April 2026. This new question will be asked in combination with the currently asked fishing area and distance from shore questions to reduce burden where possible (eg. answering all 3 questions for offshore areas). The subcommittee will test two different approaches for collecting spatial information, both utilizing a reference map presented to the angler. This reference map will incorporate a 10-minute grid overlay and the anglers will be asked to indicate where they spent the majority of their time fishing, following the design of the current fishing area question. The first method will ask the angler to identify the 10-minute grid square while the second will ask the angler to point to a location within a 10-minute grid square. Two versions are being tested to assess angler responsiveness (e.g., do they refuse to select a specific point of fishing grounds, but a less granular grid is acceptable?) and interviewer feedback about DIA functionality/flow. Additional spatial resolutions (grid sizes) can be incorporated into the DIA for testing throughout the year. Testing of private/rental and charter boat angler responses will be conducted opportunistically at sites and times selected by interviewers and will be outside of the APAIS sample frame.

Proposed Question Text(s) by Approach

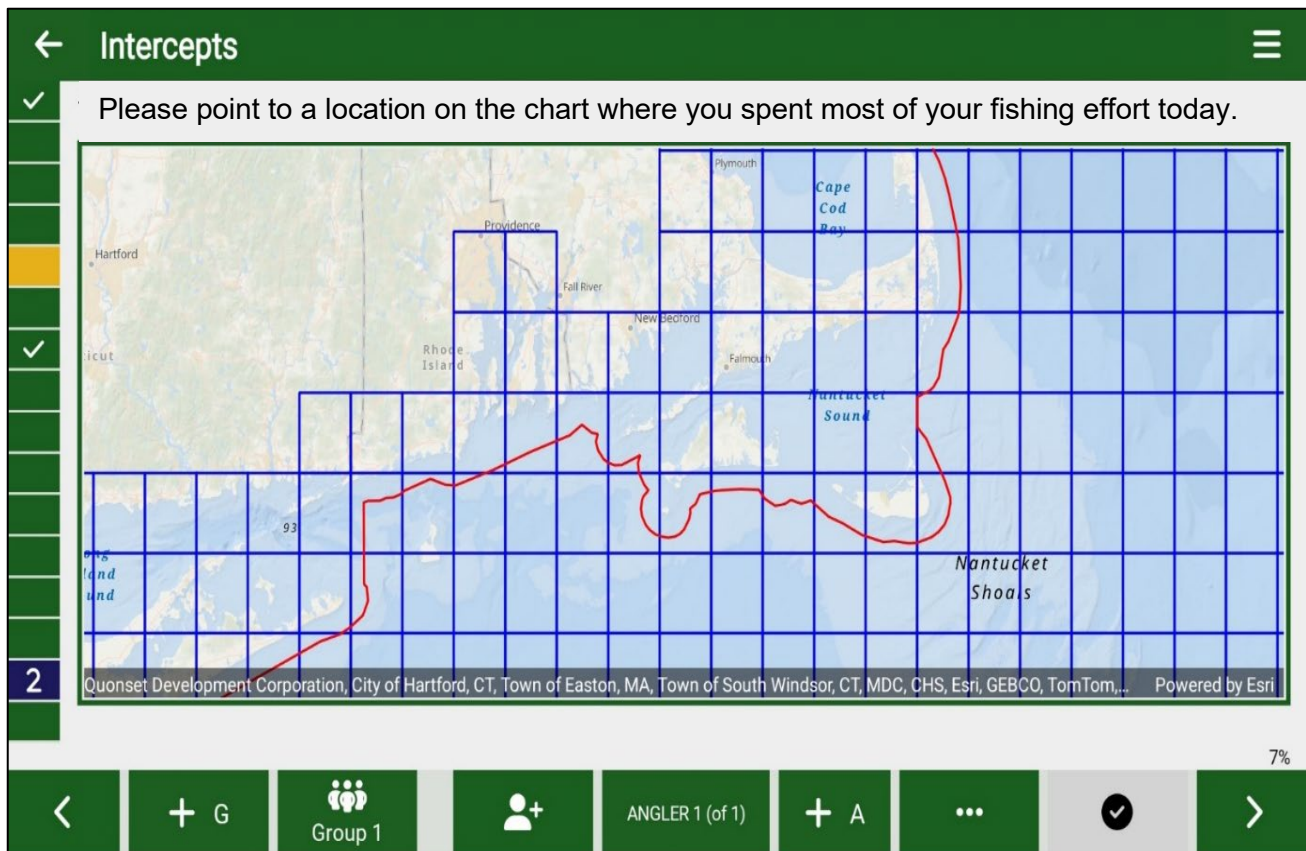
Selection of an entire grid square

1. In which box was most of your fishing effort today?

Selection of a location/area within a grid square

1. Please point to a location on the chart where you spent most of your fishing effort today.
2. Please point to a general area on the chart where you spent most of your fishing effort today.

Sample Map question incorporated into the DIA: (note proposed grid extends Maine to Georgia)



Proposed Data Availability

The angler responses to the area fished by grid-cell will be delivered from ACCSP to NOAA fisheries and included in the NOAA Micro-data download data as additional information that can be used in custom analysis, for example to support fishery stock assessments where multiple regional stocks exist.

The additional definition of areas will not change the MRIP Catch Estimates on the public website queries available through NOAA ([Recreational Fisheries Statistics Queries | NOAA Fisheries](#)) or ACCSP data warehouse ([Home](#)).

Depredation Amendment for the APAIS

ACTION:

The Recreational Technical Committee recommends approval of the depredator list as an Atlantic coastwide change to APAIS data collection, for PRA submission in CY2026 and survey implementation in CY2027.

Resources needed:

There are no new funds required. Programming changes in the DIA and data delivery can be completed within existing contracts and staff capabilities at ACCSP.

Plan

In response to request from HMS through the ACCSP RecTech Committee, during CY26 a list of depredation-specific disposition codes were added to the APAIS which also allows for the inclusion of detail about the type of depredator (eg. sharks, marine mammals, birds). Currently, the list of depredators exists as an addition to the interview comments; however, the RecTech would like to include the list as a separate item response, requiring Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) approval for implementation in CY27.

Disposition Codes

Unavailable Catch

- Eaten/plan to eat/depredation damage (A)
- Thrown back dead/plan to throw away depredation damage (B)
- Thrown back alive and undamaged/observed scavenged (C)

Discarded Catch (Headboat Assignment Only)

- Thrown back dead/plan to throw away depredation damage (B)
- Thrown back alive and undamaged/observed scavenged (C)

Available Catch

- Eaten/plan to eat/depredation damage (A)
- Thrown back dead/plan to throw away depredation damage (B)

Proposed Depredator List

- Sharks
- Bony Fish
- Dolphins/porpoises
- Seals/sea lions
- Birds
- Other/unknown

Proposed Data Availability

The angler responses to the depredation dispositions will be delivered from ACCSP to NOAA fisheries and included in the NOAA Micro-data download data as additional information that can be used in custom analysis.

The additional depredation codes will be mapped to existing unobserved catch as dead (B1), and will not change the presentation of MRIP Catch Estimates on the public website queries available through NOAA ([Recreational Fisheries Statistics Queries | NOAA Fisheries](#)) or ACCSP data warehouse ([Home](#)).