Recreational Sector Separation Amendment - Alternative Overview and Workshop Results

November 12, 2026

ISFMP Policy Board & Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council

Presentation Overview

- Background
- Current Process
- Draft Alternatives Overview
- Stakeholder Workshop Summary
- Amendment Timeline
- FMAT/PDT Needs & Discussion

Background: Recreational Sector Separation Amendment

MID-ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

ATLANTIC STATES MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION

Why is this action being developed?

Purpose

- Improve management responsiveness to mode-specific needs by considering separate management of for-hire and private angler modes
- Determine whether additional permitting and reporting requirements are needed to support this approach (i.e., by limiting ability for anglers to switch modes)

Need for Action

- Interest in increased/more consistent use of "mode management"
- Better tailor management to unique characteristics of each mode (e.g., operations, preferences, reporting/data availability, economic vulnerability)
- Concerns about declining for-hire participation and economic viability

See full draft text on page 2 of amendment summary document

Previously Considered But Removed

- ⓧ **Separate allocations of catch/harvest by recreational mode.** Action timeline concerns; concerns with mode-specific data to inform allocations.
- ⓧ **Coastwide for-hire measures.** Difficult to accommodate regional variation in availability & preferences.
- ⓧ **<u>Requirements</u> for states to consider or implement mode management.** Concerns about limiting flexibility; increasing workloads.
- ⓧ **Temporary limitations on ability to renew inactive federal for-hire permits.** May not address action needs; permit inactivity driven by regional/temporal variation in availability.



Current Use of Mode Management

- Mode management is already allowed and used for all four species

Summer Flounder, Scup, Black Sea Bass	States may choose to implement mode management using RDM analysis at state and mode level. Federal waters measures may include mode management, if desired.
Bluefish	Currently mode management in federal waters and most states. States may choose not to implement mode management if measures are more restrictive.

- Removing species from the Amendment will not limit continued use of mode management as it is currently applied

Draft Alternatives Overview



1. Recreational Mode Management Guidelines
   - ➢ *Approaches to setting different measures for different recreational modes*
2. Federal For-Hire Permit Requirements
   - ➢ *Limitations on, or additional requirements for, federal for-hire permits*
3. State-Level Permitting and Reporting Requirements
   - ➢ *Requirements for states to implement certain minimum permitting and/or reporting requirements*

Alternative Set 1: Mode Management



Alt. Set 1. Recreational Mode Management Guidelines

1A	No action/status quo
1B	Uniform approaches/guidelines for mode management
1C	For-Hire resiliency measures setting process
1D	Regional for-hire measures
1E	Letter of Authorization (LOA) Program for Federally Permitted For-Hire Vessels
1F	Baseline measures recalibration for for-hire vessels

Alt. 1C - For-Hire Resiliency Measures Setting Process

- Considers modifying the current recreational measures setting process to allow **for-hire measures to be set every 4 years**

- Measures could be developed for each mode based on a rolling percentage of catch or effort by mode from recent years, or another approach
  - Percent Change Approach will still be used
  - The process will still compare the combined harvest estimate of the entire recreational fishery to the RHL
  - This step will occur following determination from the Percent Change Approach

Alt. 1C - For-Hire Resiliency Measures Setting Process

- Additional work needed to determine interim cycle process:
  - How private mode measures may need adjustment to meet requirements of the Recreational Measures Setting Process
  - How accountability measures may need to be altered

- Establishes exceptions for when for-hire measures need to be adjusted earlier than four years:
  - Significant increase in for-hire directed effort*
  - Significant increase in for-hire harvest*
  - RMS process indicates total needed harvest reduction of greater than XX%*
  - RDM changes significantly or model shows significant changes in estimated harvest

***Threshold TBD**

Alt. 1E - Letter of Authorization (LOA) Program

Opt-In Program Structure

- States opt in annually (or biennially), agreeing to recognize special measures for LOA holders
- Federally-permitted for-hire vessels in these states could "opt-in" to program
- Vessels would commit to the duration of the fishing year

Measures

- LOA measures would be conservationally equivalent to federal or coastwide measures but designed to enhance for-hire operational viability

Reporting & Eligibility Criteria

- Enhanced reporting requirements and potentially special eligibility criteria for participating vessels



Alt. 1E - LOA Program: Draft Sub-Alternatives

1E-1. Species 	1E-2. Length of Participation 	1E-3. Eligibility 	1E-4. Reporting Requirements 	1E-5. Regional Configuration 
1E-1-a. All four species **1E-1-b.** Species eligible for conservation equivalency (CE) (summer flounder, black sea bass) **1E-1-c.** Species not eligible for CE (scup, bluefish)	**1E-2-a.** Annual–states opt-in and participants apply for LOA program on annual basis **1E-2-b.** Length of specifications–states opt-in and participants apply only when for-hire management measures are specified	**1E-3-a**. Any federal permit-holder (if state has opted into LOA program) **1E-3-b**. Additional eligibility criteria (e.g., control date, activity level, additional reporting)	**1E-4-a**. Must complete and cooperate with surveys (e.g., requirement to participate in For-Hire Survey) **1E-4-b**. Flexible Data Gap Reporting – required collection of specific data gap elements	**1E-5-a.** Regional LOA Program with regional LOA measures specified in this action (no more than two regions) **1E-5-b**. Regional LOA measures with regions set via measures process (regions adopted at same time as measures) **1E-5-c.** Coastwide LOA measures

Alt. 1F - Baseline Measures Recalibration for For-Hire

- Council members, Policy Board members, and stakeholders have suggested a one-time “reset” of measures should be explored for the for-hire fishery

Note:

- Concern about whether it is in the scope
- This concept has been explored through previous actions
- Current tools (i.e., the RDM) not configured to analyze regulations using past conditions
- New methodology needed to quantitatively derive such measures

Alternative Set 2: Federal For-Hire Permitting



Alt. Set 2 - Federal For-Hire Permit Requirements

Goal: increase effectiveness of mode management approaches by limiting ability to switch between modes to use specific measures or programs.

2A	No action/status quo
2B	For-Hire Permit Capacity Limitations ● 2B-1: Moratorium on new for-hire permits ● 2B-2: Limited entry system with qualification criteria to reduce latent effort ● 2B-3: Tiered permit system
2C	Require min. threshold of participation in for-hire survey

Alt. 2B - Federal For-Hire Permit Capacity Limitations

2B-1. Moratorium on new for-hire permits	**2B-2 Limited entry system designed to reduce latent effort**
Intent: Limit number of federal permits to recent levels; stop new permits from being issued. **Sunset Provision Sub-Options:** **2B-1-a.** No sunset provision **2B-1-b.** 5-year sunset provision	Intent: Limit number of federal permits to recently <u>active</u> for-hire vessels **Qualification criteria Sub-Options:** **2B-2-a, 2B-2-b, 2B-2-c, 2B-2-d** **Sub-Options to allow new entrants*:** **2B-2-e, 2B-2-f, 2B-2-g** ******feasibility TBD*

Alt. 2B - Federal For-Hire Permit Capacity Limitations

- **2B-3 Tiered Permit System**
  - Similar in some ways to LOA program, but designed and implemented through a different process

Tier 1: Active Participants		Tier 2: Open Access
• Requires meeting a certain threshold of activity (*Threshold TBD)* • Includes additional flexibility and reporting requirements (*TBD*) • Tailored measures to meet needs of for-hire participants	**Movement between Tiers based on eligibility criteria**	• New entrants or part-time vessels who do not frequently fish or target these species • Measures likely match private mode or developed specific to Tier 2 permit holders

Alternative Set 3: State-Level Permitting and Reporting



Alt. Set 3 - State For-Hire Permitting and Reporting Requirements

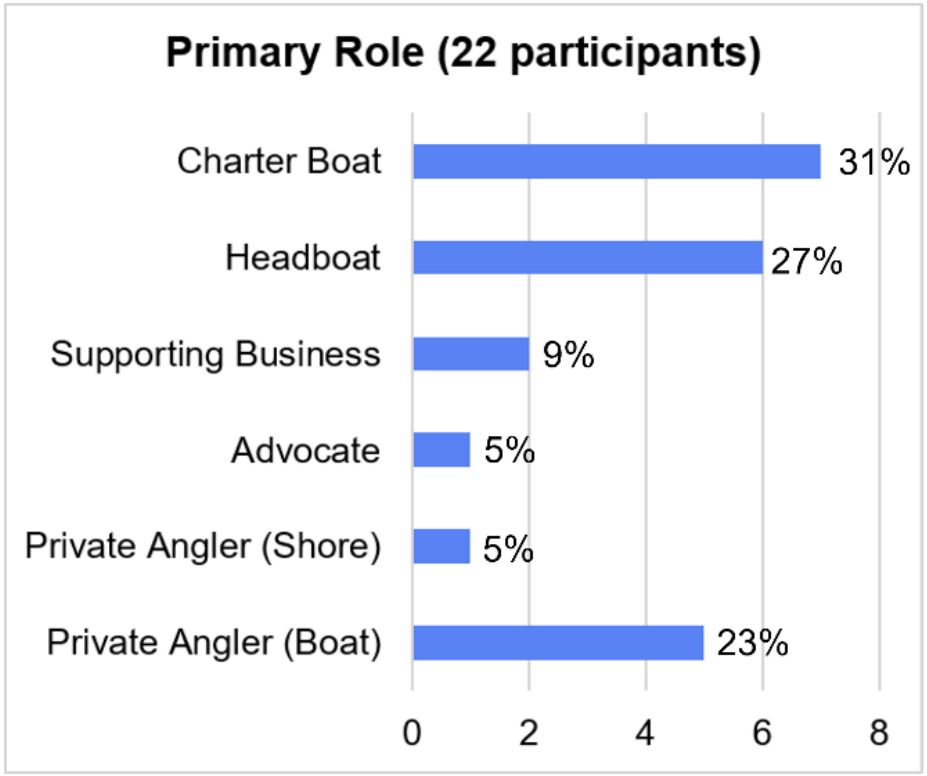
3A	**No action/status quo**
3B	**Require state-level for-hire limited entry permitting** • Qualification criteria for the limited entry program would be determined by each state
3C	**Require state-level for-hire reporting** • Would adopt minimum requirements for state for-hire reporting for the 4 species • States would determine the exact requirements and whether to limit to the 4 species or broaden

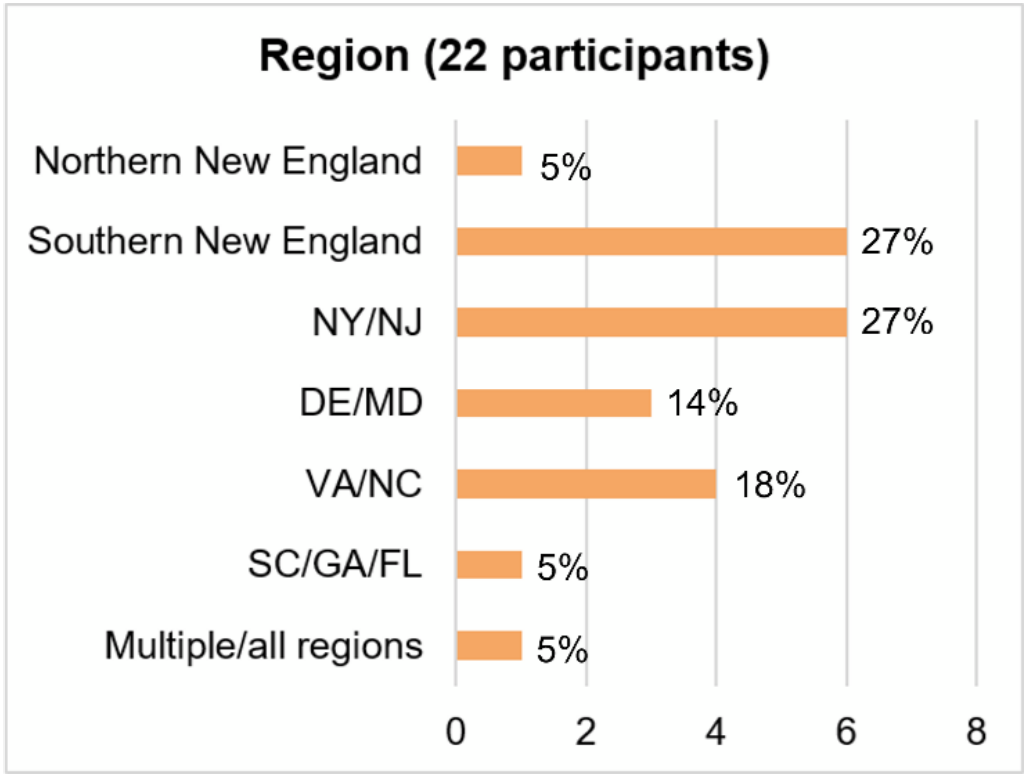
Summary of Stakeholder Workshop



Sector Separation Workshop Overview

- September 23-24, 2026 - Linthicum Heights, Maryland
- 22 Participants from all recreational sectors





Workshop Objectives

1. Achieve an **understanding of the current concerns and challenges** encountered by each component of the recreational fishery.

2. Gather **feedback and recommendations** on existing draft alternatives, including identifying priority actions and areas of consensus.

3. Recommend any **additional options/analyses** that should be considered within the existing scope of the action.

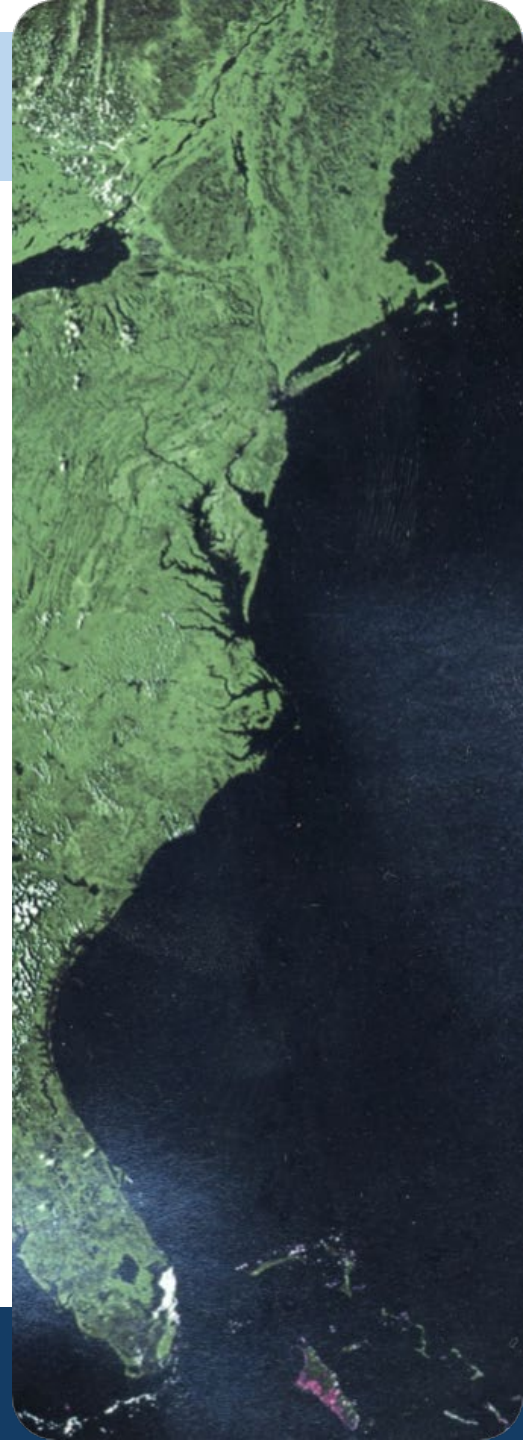
Key Findings: General

There is an urgent need for action to provide relief to the struggling for-hire fleet.

Broad agreement among for-hire participants

Remove bluefish from further consideration in the Amendment.

Broad agreement, with one opposing view



Key Findings: Mode Management Overall

Mode-measures between for-hire and private modes are most urgently needed.

Broad agreement among for-hire participants

Specific measures most urgently needed depend on species and region.

Broad agreement

Interest in mode-management for shore-based anglers (lower size limits).

Broad agreement, with one opposing view

Region-specific measures are needed, but should be refined to better reflect ecology and fishery characteristics.

General agreement

Specific measures for charter and headboat modes is a secondary concern.

General agreement

Reservations about pursuing mode-based management, concerns about unintended consequences.

Minority view of several private anglers and one for-hire participant

Key Findings: Mode Management Concerns

Incentive for private anglers to obtain for-hire permits

Transparency in development of measures

Concerns with some previous processes

Consider accountability for the for-hire mode

Impacts on private anglers

Evaluating direct operational, social, and economic effects on private mode participants

Overly disparate measures

Concerns regarding large disparities between sector regulations and equity across fishery modes

Key Findings: Alt. 1C - For-Hire Resiliency

Potential risks of a four-year management cycle outweigh the perceived benefits of increased stability and predictability.

General agreement

If alternative is pursued, clearly defined triggers for reverting to a two-year cycle are needed.

Broad agreement

Duration of measures is secondary to ensuring that the measures themselves are favorable or at least acceptable to clients.

Broad agreement among for-hire participants

Longer cycles may lead to management uncertainty buffers; uncertain implications of assessment frequency changes

Concerns

Key Findings: Alt. 1E and 2B-3 - Specialized For-Hire Approaches

The tiered permitting strategy (2B-3) is preferable to the LOA Program (1E).

General agreement

Neither approach should restrict legitimately interested new participants.

Broad agreement

Either approach should include eligibility criteria that ensure such approaches are only available to more active for-hire vessels.

Broad agreement

Many remaining questions about tiered permit system and LOA Program:

- **Interaction with state management**
- **Regional design**
- **Enforcement**

Key Findings: Alt. Set 2 - Federal For-Hire Permitting and Reporting

Opposition to implementing a Federal for-hire permit moratorium (2B-1) or a limited entry system (2B-2).

Broad agreement

Required participation in the For-Hire Survey (2C).

Broad agreement

Reinstate a "Did Not Fish" (DNF) for-hire report requirement.

Broad agreement

FMAT/PDT Discussion 2C:

-Due to nature of For-Hire Survey, will not add meaningfully to estimates

<u>recommend removing alternative</u>

Key Findings: Alt. Set 3 - State For-Hire Permitting and Reporting

Opposition to implementing state-level for-hire limited entry programs (3B).

General agreement; some private anglers thought limited entry could be helpful from a client safety perspective

State-level for-hire reporting requirements should be further pursued.

Broad agreement

The Commission should further explore strategies to strengthen/standardize requirements for for-hire permits.

Broad agreement



Considerations for Further Amendment Development

01 • Evaluate Implications
Evaluate **implications for different modes** (e.g., impact to private angler mode). Helpful to have RDM analysis, but recognize limitations.

02 • Characterize Activity
Better **characterize for-hire permit activity and potential eligibility requirements** for specialized measures (e.g., thresholds, vessel history, new entrants).

03 • State Interactions
Determine how specialized for-hire approaches would **interact with state regulations**, conservation equivalency, and enforcement.

04 • Phased/Pilot Approaches
Consider **phased/pilot approaches** to test performance of novel strategies. However, some emphasized the urgency of decisive action sooner.

05 • Stakeholder Engagement
Maintain stakeholder engagement in measure development, addressing past concerns about transparency in mode-based measure development.

Discussion and Next Steps

MID-ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

ATLANTIC STATES MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION

September 2026	Stakeholder workshop to further develop draft alternatives
November 12, 2026	Council/Policy Board meet to review workshop report and direct FMAT/PDT to refine alternatives (**CURRENT STEP**)
January 2027	Council/Policy Board approve range of alternatives for public hearings
Winter 2027	FMAT/PDT develops draft public hearing document/draft amendment
April or May 2027	Council/Policy Board approve public hearing document/draft amendment for public comment
May/June 2027	Public hearings and comment period
July 2027	AP meeting; FMAT/PDT meetings to provide recommendations on final action
August 2027	**Final Action**
Fall 2027	Staff develop and submit required documentation to NOAA Fisheries
TBD	Effective date of management changes (*implementation timeline depends on final alternatives adopted)

Key Questions for Discussion

Mode Management

- 1B: Mode management guidelines. If retained, need guidance on what to include.
- 1C: For-hire resilience. Further develop or remove?
- 1D: Regional measures. Further develop or remove?
- 1F. Baseline Measures for For-Hire. Limited analytical capacity to develop. Remove/retain?

Permitting and Reporting

- 2B-1 and 2B-2: Moratorium/Limited entry. Lacked workshop support. Remove/retain?
- 2B-3: Tiered permits. Further develop?
- 2C: FHS minimum response rate. Remove based on FMAT/PDT rec?
- 3B and 3C: State level permitting/reporting. Remove/retain?

Action Timeline

Keep planned final action schedule of Aug. 2027?

Bluefish

Should bluefish remain in the action?

Considerations for Further Amendment Development

Mode Management Guidelines Alt. 1B - If retained, FMAT/PDT needs direction on what types of guidelines or program details should be explored in as much detail as possible:

Given the implementation timeline, should the date of final action be adjusted to allow for further development of alternatives?

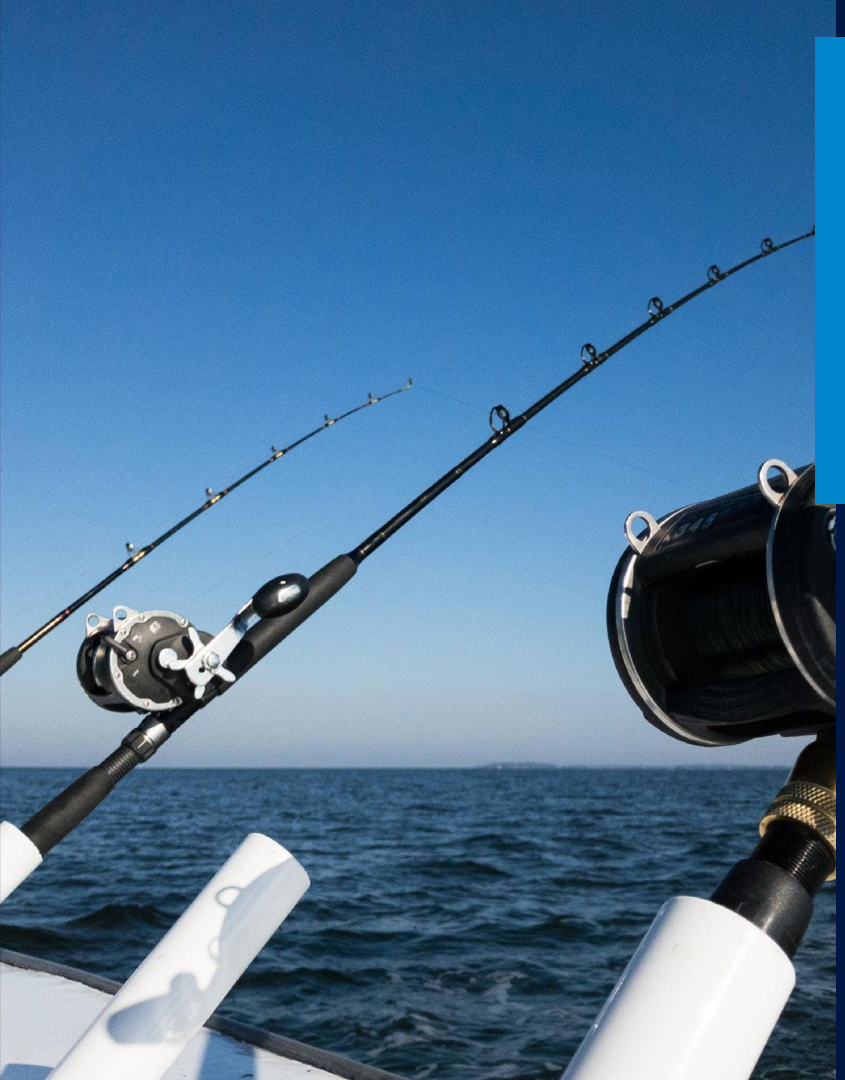
Are there any alternatives that should be removed from consideration?

- e.g., **1F.** Baseline Measures for For-Hire, **2C.** Require Minimum Threshold of Participation in the For-Hire Survey

Should bluefish remain in the Amendment?

Questions?


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NOAA Fisheries Office of Science and Technology

Fishing Effort Survey transition and status update

ASMFC Annual Meeting 2026

NOAA Fisheries Office of Science and Technology
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce

2026 Improved Fishing Effort Survey

- Began implementing the improved Fishing Effort Survey according to existing regional survey administration schedules.
- Revised design developed in response to concerns from the recreational fishing community and partners that our **shore and private boat fishing effort** estimates may be too high
  - Revised survey improves the accuracy of estimates by addressing potential overreporting of fishing trips.
  - This follows extensive testing and a favorable independent peer review that indicated the revised design offers improved utility for stock assessments and management decisions.

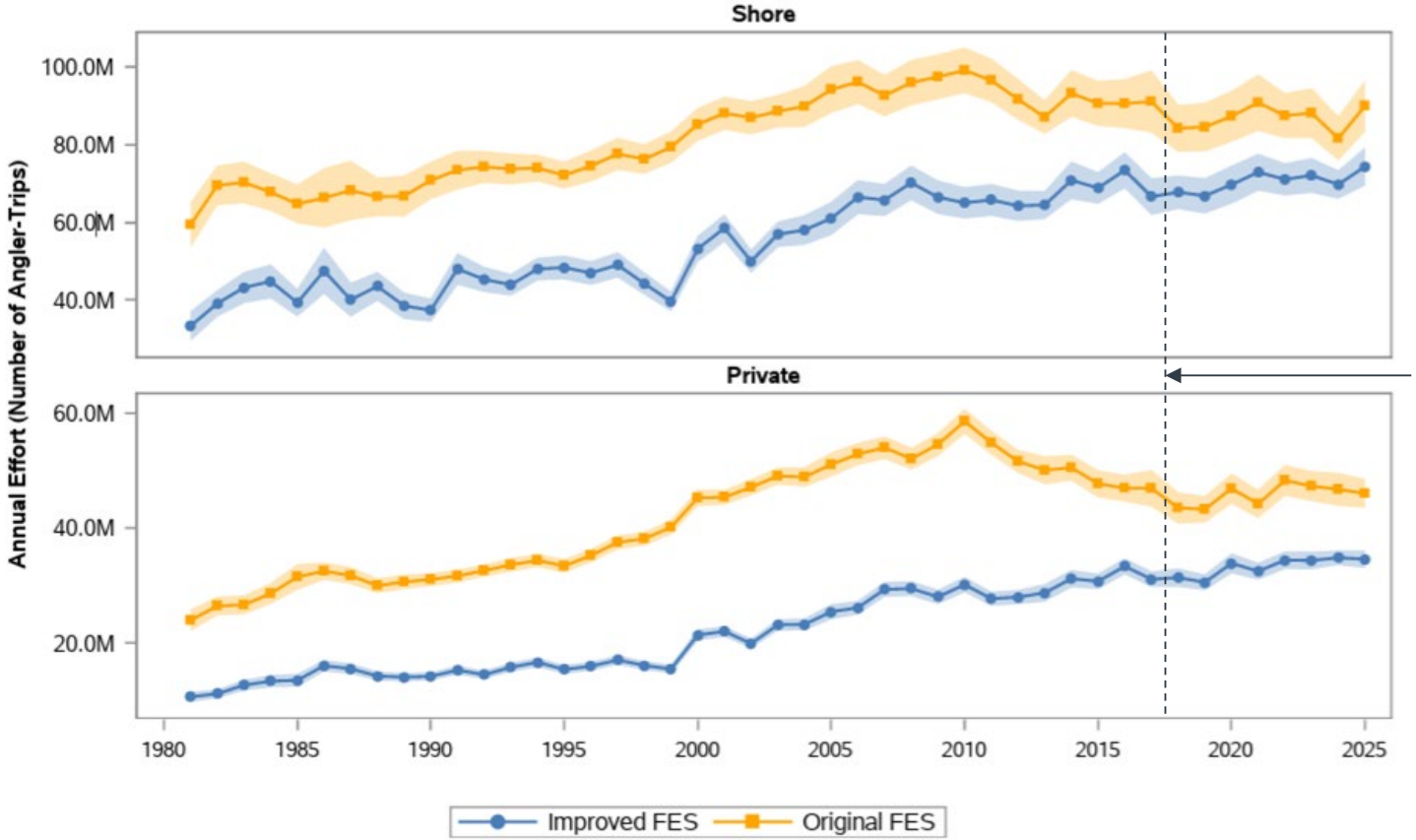
2026 Calibration Model

- **Builds on peer-reviewed model** previously developed to calibrate historical recreational fishing estimates from the Coastal Household Telephone Survey (1981–2017) to the original FES scale in 2018. However, the new model **directly calibrates CHTS, original FES, and improved FES** effort estimates rather than using prior model outputs.
- Uses a **more advanced statistical approach** and a longer time series of mail data than the prior model, resulting in more reliable and consistent historical estimates.
- Model **favorably peer-reviewed** in late 2025 via a 2-day peer-review workshop; provided **opportunity for** both **partner and public comment** and **incorporated key feedback** from review (on both model and preliminary results) prior to implementing model.

Changes to Effort Time Series - Key Takeaways

- Calibrated estimates are lower than original FES estimates
- Larger relative reductions for private boat mode compared to shore mode
- Larger relative reductions in lower activity waves

Atlantic Coast - Annual Effort by Fishing Mode



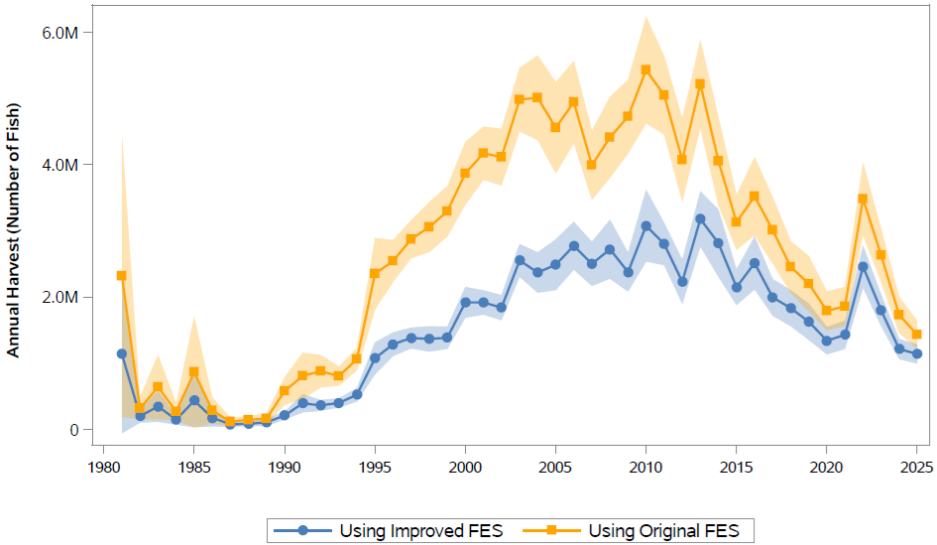
Switch in methods from CHTS to original FES

How the Effort Calibration Impacts Catch Estimates

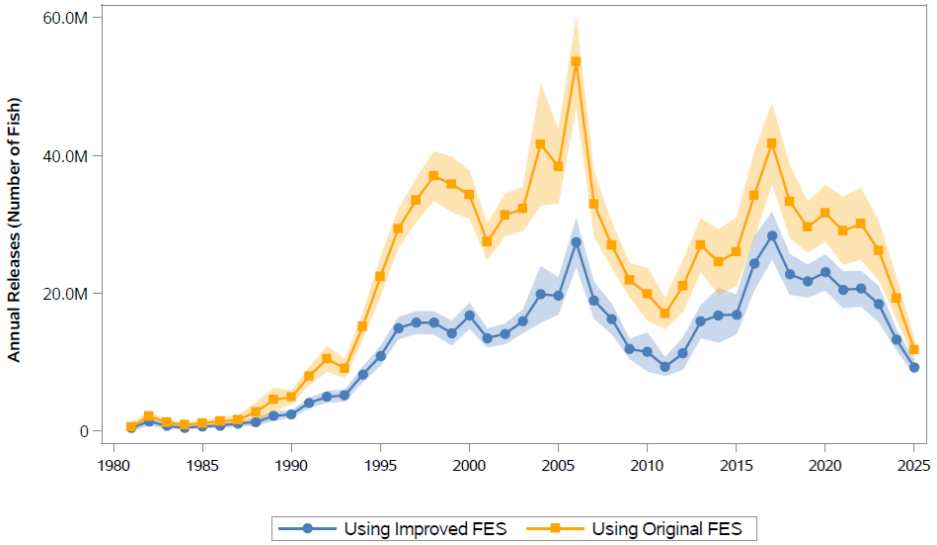
- **Revised catch time series are systematically lower:** The magnitude of this reduction varies by species, as a result of the updated effort estimates varying across states, fishing modes (private boat v. shore), and time of year (2-month “waves”).
- **Historical trends remain generally similar**: In some cases the new calibration improves trend representation.
- **Magnitude of high-volume outliers reduced:** The difference between the estimates from the original FES and the new calibrated estimates is largest during peak years.
- **Select Species:** Striped Bass, Black Sea Bass, Summer Flounder, Cobia, Bluefish
- **Harvests** and **Releases** in numbers of fish (Atlantic Coast; all fishing modes combined)

Striped Bass - Atlantic Coastwide Estimates

Annual Harvest

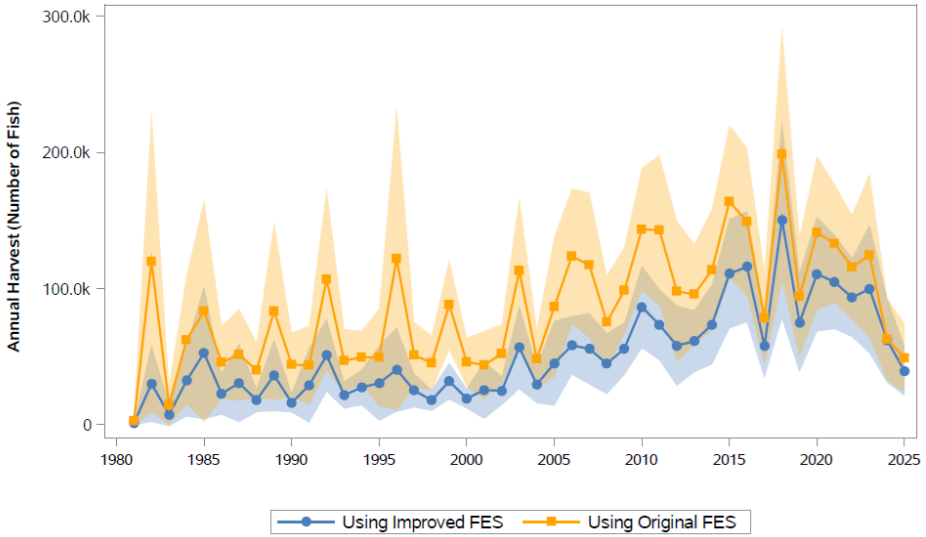


Annual Releases

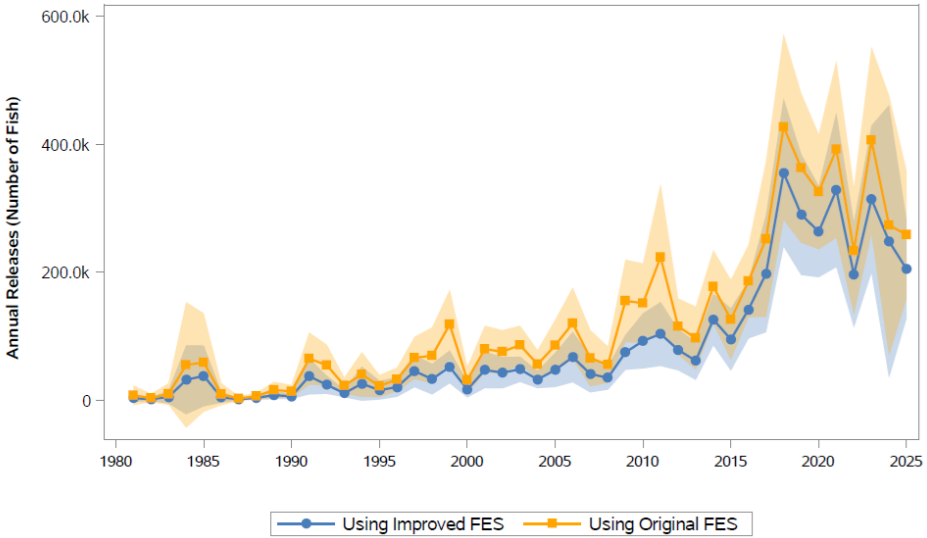


Cobia - Atlantic Coastwide Estimates

Annual Harvest

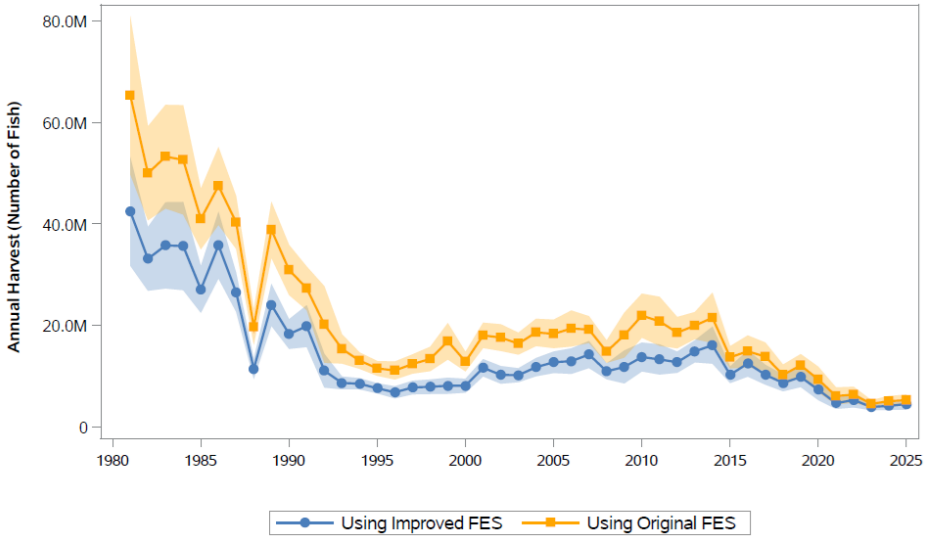


Annual Releases

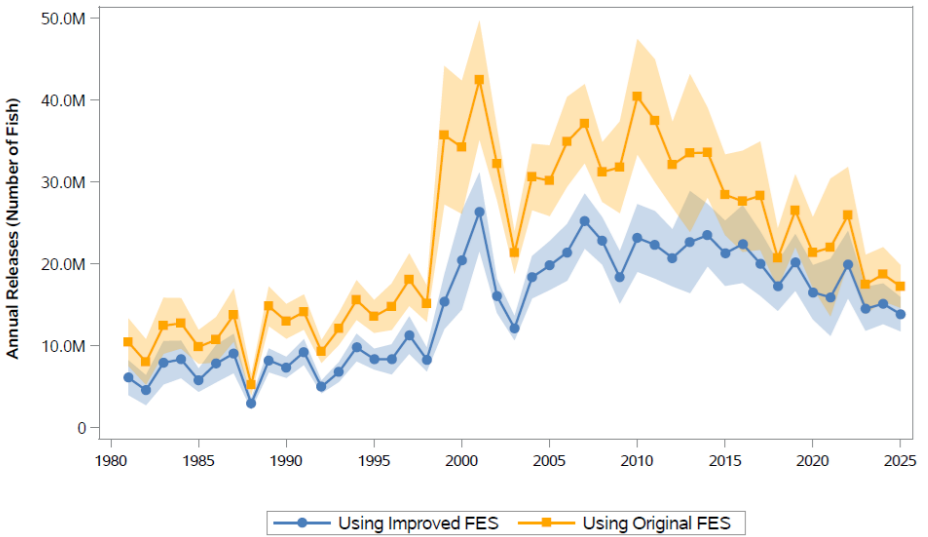


Bluefish - Atlantic Coastwide Estimates

Annual Harvest

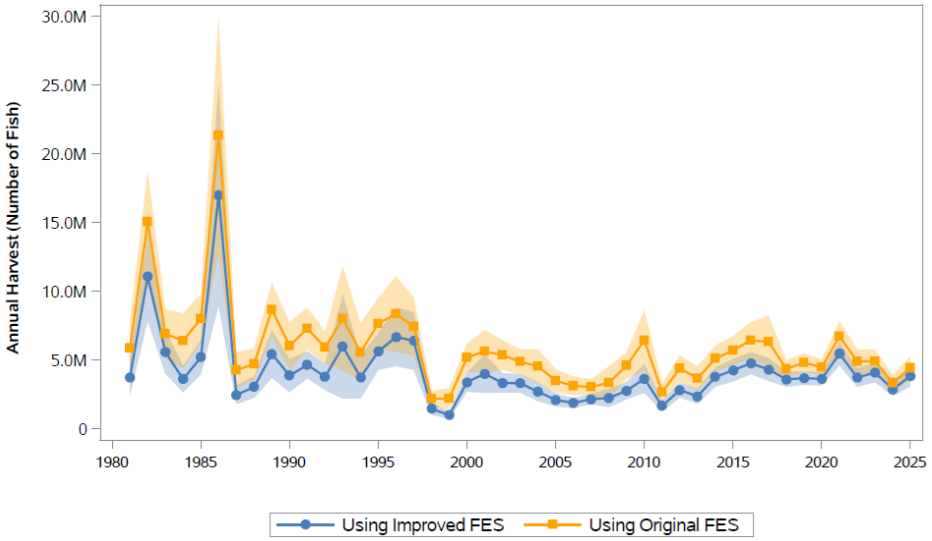


Annual Releases

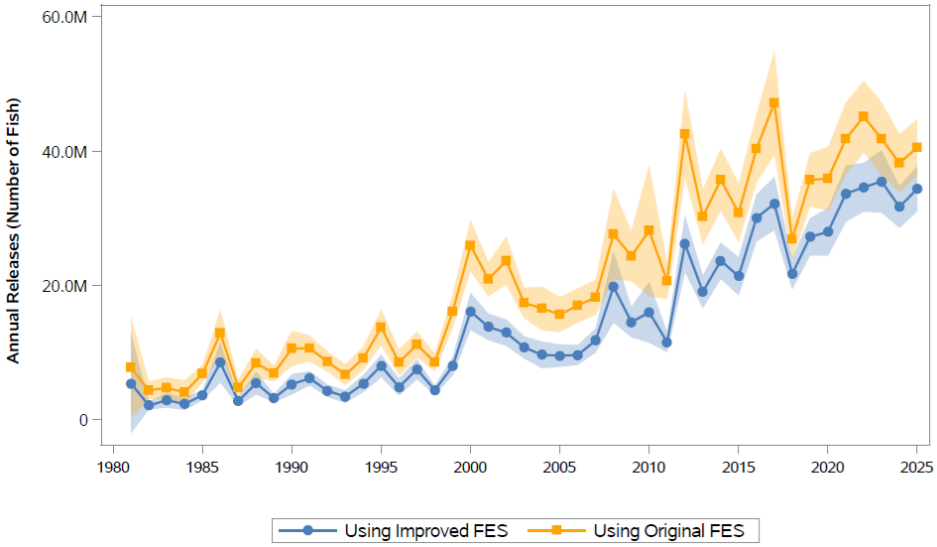


Black Sea Bass - Atlantic Coastwide Estimates

Annual Harvest

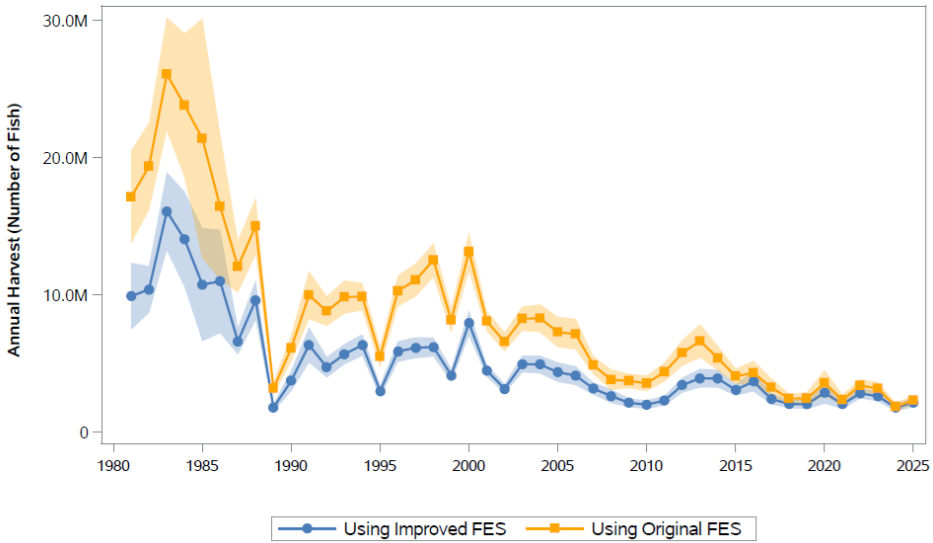


Annual Releases

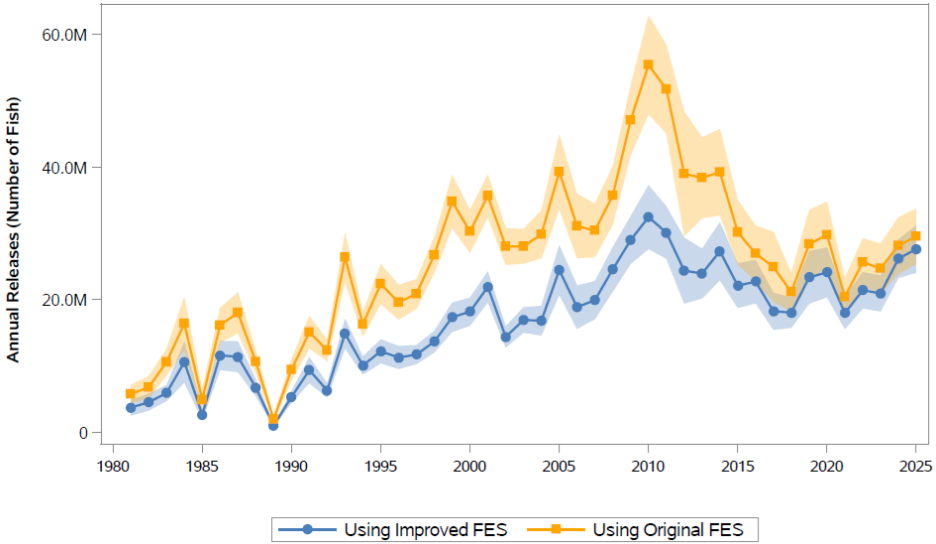


Summer Flounder - Atlantic Coastwide Estimates

Annual Harvest



Annual Releases



Current Status

- **MRIP Queries**
  - 2026 Calibration Comparisons for original FES (PRE) and calibrated (CAL) catch and effort estimates
  - Standard queries now return calibrated estimates
- **MRIP Data Downloads**
  - Estimate datasets, public-use (trip, catch, size) datasets are all updated for the calibrated estimates
- **Data products available for 1981-2025**
- **Coordinating with SEFSC, SERO, Councils and Commissions on data needs**

2026 Estimation

- **Waves 1-3 (Jan/Feb,Mar/Apr,May/Jun) 2026**
  - Preliminary estimates for all three waves were released on November 5th
  - Also produced back-calibrated “original FES” estimates to allow for direct comparisons to existing catch limits
    - Available in the 2026 Calibration Comparison queries

2026 Estimation (Continued)

- **Waves 4-5 2026**
  - Plan to release individual waves
  - Will release Waves 4 & 5 together if delayed
- **Wave 6 and Final 2026**
  - Plan to release on schedule
    - mid-February 2027
    - mid-April 2027



Questions?

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RAPID - An Update

Recreational Angler Partnership Improvement Directive

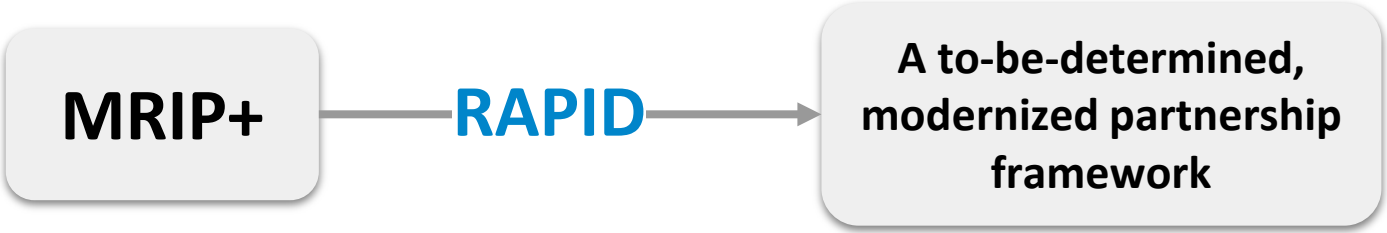
Tim Sartwell - Special Advisor

Geoff White - Director ACCSP

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce

RAPID Overview

Recreational Angler Partnership Improvement Directive



- RAPID is the collaborative *process* to **remodel and improve recreational fisheries data collection** through a national series of workshops.
- This is a unique opportunity to co-develop a framework for recreational fisheries data collection that builds trust and stronger partnerships between anglers, state agencies, councils, and commissions and NOAA.

RAPID Progress and Updates

- A national steering committee is helping guide and support the process.
- Regional RAPID workshops will begin in early 2027
  - **Eight** regional workshops will be held in council regions
  - Angler listening sessions in late 2026
  - Keystone Policy Center is managing the planning, facilitation, and execution of workshops
- Eight regional workshop planning teams have been activated to determine workshop locations, participants, and adapt agendas to their regions.

RAPID Progress and Updates

8 Regional Workshop Planning Teams



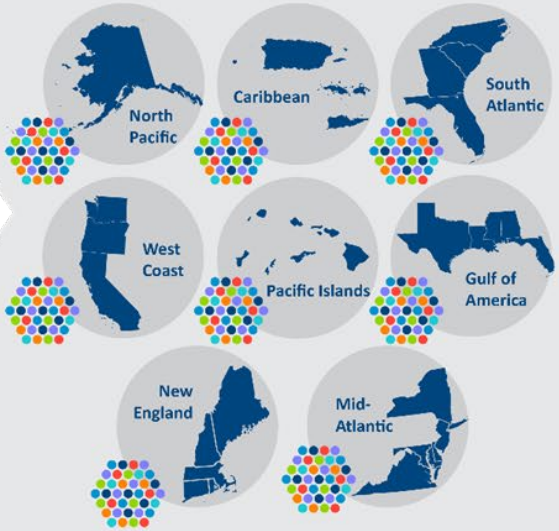
Fisheries Perspectives

Sample - does not represent all planning teams

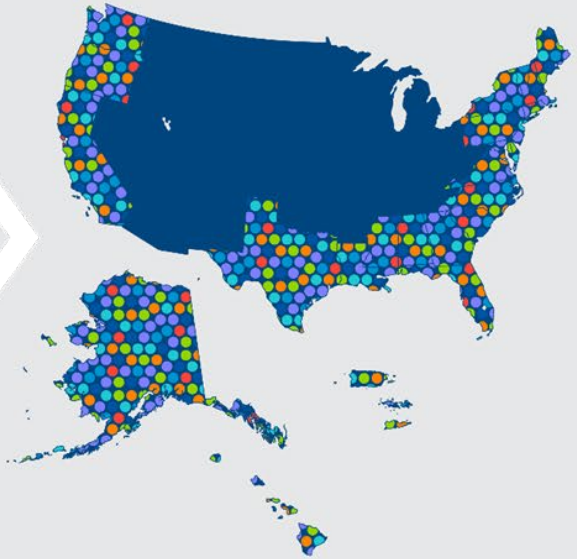
- RAPID Steering Committee
- Fishery Management Council
- Marine Fisheries Commission
- State Marine Resource Department
- NOAA Fisheries Science Center
- NOAA Fisheries Regional Office
- Fishing Community

8 Regional Workshops

Planning teams identify workshop participants



1 Regionally Flexible Data Collection Framework



RAPID Steering Committee

- **Gregg Bray** - Assistant Director/Fishery Information Network Program Coordinator - Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission
- **Alex DiJohnson/Geoff White** - Deputy Director/Director of Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program under Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
- **Dr. Luiz Barbieri** - Science Program Leader for Florida's Fish and Wildlife Research Institute's Marine Fisheries Research Program
- **Dr. Nancy Leonard -** Senior Program Manager/Pacific Coast Recreational Fisheries Information Network Program Coordinator - Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission
- **Dr. Jon Hare** - Acting Director in NOAA Fisheries OST, Science Director of the NOAA Fisheries Northeast Fishery Science Center
- **Dr. Evan Howell** - NOAA Fisheries Deputy Assistant Administrator for Scientific Programs
- **Tim Sartwell** - NOAA Special Advisor for Recreational Fisheries to the Deputy Under Secretary
- **Anna Mehlhorn** - NOAA Fisheries OST, Recreational Fisheries Partnership Program Coordination and Science Communications Knauss Fellow

New England RAPID Planning Team

Name	Affiliation	Title
Alex DiJohnson	ACCSP	Deputy Director of Recreational Fisheries Data - Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program under Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
Geoff White	ACCSP	Director of the Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP)
Dan McKiernan	MA - DMF	Director of the Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries; ASMFC Chair
Ben Gahagan	MA - DMF	Recreational Fisheries Program Leader
Robin Frede	NEFMC	Fishery Analyst: Groundfish (lead), Protected Resources and Atlantic Large Whales
Kevin Sullivan	NH - NH Fish & Game	Marine Biologist II, NH Fish and Game Department
Spencer Talmage	NOAA GARFO	Fishery Policy Analyst
Katherine Papacostas	NOAA NMFS OST	Branch Director for NOAA Fisheries Recreational Statistics - Program Management
Dr. Jon Hare	NOAA NMFS/ OST and NEFSC	Acting Director of the NOAA Fisheries' Office of Science and Technology; Science Director of the NOAA Fisheries Northeast Fishery Science Center
Jason McNamee	RI - DEM	Deputy Director for Natural Resources Category with the RI Dept of Environmental Management

Mid-Atlantic RAPID Planning Team

Name	Affiliation	Title
Alex DiJohnson	ACCSP	Deputy Director of Recreational Fisheries Data
Geoff White	ACCSP	Director of the Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program
Dr. Rich Wong	DE - DNREC Division of Fish and Wildlife	Environmental Program Manager
Jason Didden	MAFMC	Fishery Management Specialist
Joe Cimino	NJ - DEP	Director of New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's Marine Resources Administration
Savannah Lewis	NOAA GARFO	Fishery Management Specialist
Dr. Katherine Papacostas	NOAA NMFS OST	Branch Director for NOAA Fisheries Recreational Statistics
Dr. Jon Hare	NOAA NMFS/ OST and NEFSC	Acting Director of the NOAA Fisheries' Office of Science and Technology; Science Director of the NOAA Fisheries Northeast Fishery Science Center
John Maniscalco	NY - NYS DEC	Biologist

South Atlantic RAPID Planning Team

Name	Affiliation	Title
Alex DiJohnson	ACCSP	Deputy Director of Recreational Fisheries Data - Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program under Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
Geoff White	ACCSP	Director of the Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP)
Jessica McCawley	FL-FWC	Director, Division of Marine Fisheries Management
Doug Haymans	GA - DNR	Director of GA DNR Coastal Resources Division
Carolyn Belcher	GA - DNR	Chief of Marine Fisheries for the Coastal Resources Division
Chris Batsavage	NC - DEQ	Special Assistant for Councils for the North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries (NCDMF); NC Designated Official on the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council
Katherine Papacostas	NOAA NMFS OST	Branch Director for NOAA Fisheries Recreational Statistics - Program Management
Dr. Clay Porch	NOAA SEFSC	Director of the NOAA Southeast Fisheries Science Center
Sean Meehan	NOAA SERO	Recreational Fisheries Coordinator at the NOAA Southeast Regional Office
John Carmichael	SAFMC	Executive Director, South Atlantic Fishery Management Council
Chip Collier	SAFMC	Deputy Director for Science
Ben Dyar	SC - DNR	SCDNR Director of Fisheries Management

What Can We Expect from RAPID?

All recreational fishing data systems will be open to change.

Evaluation	Regionally flexible-Nationally cohesive	Preserved recreational data time series
Discussion of what is working well, what can be improved and what may need to be removed from our current recreational data systems.	Opportunity to identify resources needed to improve our recreational data collection at a regional and national level.	NOAA will maintain the continuity of recreational fishing data throughout the RAPID process. New survey methods will be bridged with existing surveys to ensure scientific robustness and avoid abrupt management changes or disruption



Main Takeaway

RAPID has no predetermined outcomes, so management impacts remain unknown. We anticipate data system updates and will collaboratively identify improvements to recreational fisheries data, partnerships, and management support.

Angler Listening Sessions

National angler listening sessions will provide pre-workshop background on RAPID and offer a space for comments, feedback, and questions.

There are two opportunities to participate in this conversation:

December 3, 2026
from 5–7 p.m. ET

December 9, 2026
from 8–10 p.m. ET

Meetings links will be made available on the NOAA website in the coming days.

Regional Workshop Schedule

- **Mid-Atlantic:** January 5-7, 2027 in Philadelphia, PA
- **South Atlantic:** January 11-13, 2027 in Charleston, SC
- **New England:** January 20-22, 2027 in Boston, MA
- **West Coast:** February 2-4, 2027 in San Diego, CA
- **Caribbean**: February 8-9 in Puerto Rico
- **Western Pacific:** February 23–25, 2027 (Location TBD)
- **Gulf**: March 1-3, 2027 in New Orleans
- *To Be Scheduled: North Pacific*

Note: Dates and locations may change based on hotel availability

RAPID and Executive Order 14430



- RAPID serves as the **catalyst** to achieve the recreational fishing data improvement goals outlined in the E.O.
- We do not anticipate any major changes to the RAPID approach or workshop design
- RAPID and the Executive Order both aim to improve recreational fisheries data through partnership and collaboration
- NOAA anticipates the opportunity for broad discussion of the E.O. directives during the RAPID regional workshops.



Photo: Costa Del Mar

Questions?

Tim Sartwell
tim.sartwell@noaa.gov

Geoff White
Geoff.White@accsp.org

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries COMMISSION

Law Enforcement Committee Report to ISFMP Policy Board

November 12, 2026

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries COMMISSION

Other Business

- Electronic Reporting Compliance – NOAA and RIDEM
- Best Practices for DRONE / ROV Programs - NHFG
- Interstate Wildlife Violators Compact - NHFG
- Trends in Patrol Boat Manufacturing – Florida FWC
- JEA Update – NOAA OLE

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries COMMISSION

Notable Case Work

Massachusetts Environmental Police

✓ *"Chatham Fisherman Caught"*

Rhode Island Environmental Police

✓ *"National News"*

Florida - Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

✓ *"Sea Turtle Poaching and Illegal Fishing"*

Thank you!

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries COMMISSION

Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership (ACFHP)
&
ASMFC Habitat Committee

Report to the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission ISFMP Policy Board

November 12, 2026

Simen Kaalstad

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries COMMISSION

ACFHP Steering Committee

November 9–10, 2026 · Newport, RI



Photo: Xavier Rufray

ACFHP at a Glance

Funding delivered, next round ranked, five-year plan approved

$297K

FY26 awards to 4 habitat projects worth $1.74M in total (NFHP and NOAA)

35 ac · 2.5 mi

Restored, conserved, and reconnected in 2026

11 of 13

FY27 proposals on the final ranked list ($735K requested)

$147K

recommended for NFHP Funding in FY27 projects ($1.58M total cost)

135 mi

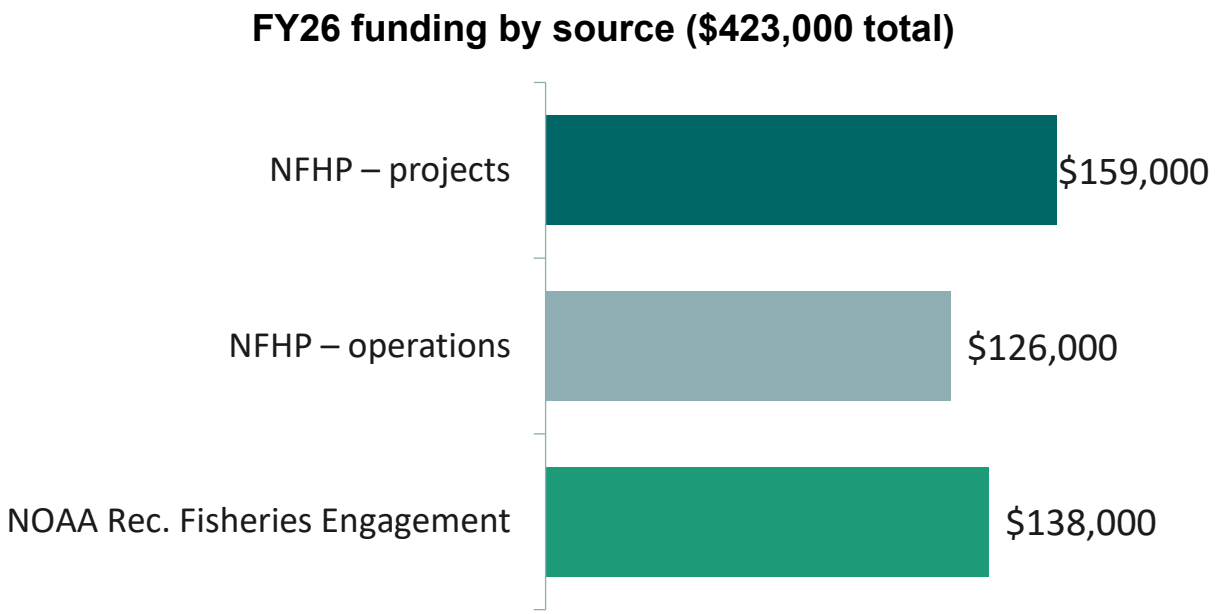
river reconnected by the top FY27 project, Royal River Phase 2 (ME)

2027–2031

Conservation Strategic Plan approved Nov 9; 1-year 2027 Action Plan adopted Nov 10

FY26 Funding Overview

$297K in ACFHP project awards sits within $1.74M of habitat work



NFHP: Atlantic Mills dam removal design (RI) and Long Island Sound eelgrass (CT), plus ACFHP operations. NOAA: Tyson Point living shoreline (NC) and Casting for Conservation (FL).

$297,000

awarded to 4 projects (2 NFHP, 2 NOAA)

$1,743,316

combined value of the four projects

$1.45M

from partners and other funders (~$4.90 per $1)

35.45 ac · 2.5 mi

restored or conserved; river reopened to fish passage

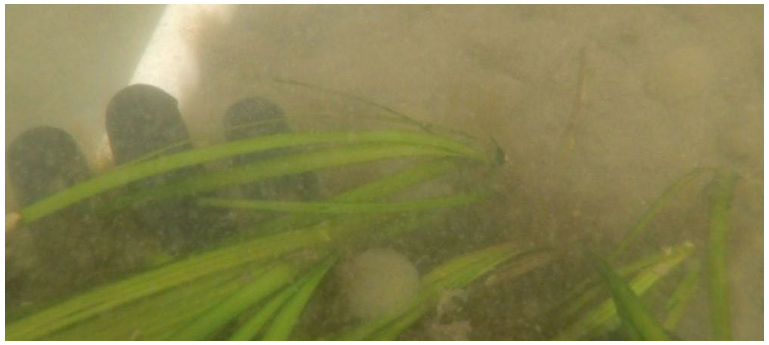
FY26 Funded Projects

Four projects from Rhode Island to Florida

Project (lead, state)	Source	Award	Total cost	Outcome
Atlantic Mills Dam Removal design (Woonasquatucket River WC, RI)	NFHP	$91,384	$750,000	2.5 mi · 27 ac
Eelgrass restoration, Long Island Sound (Connecticut College, CT)	NFHP	$67,616	$273,240	5 ac · ~500K seeds
Tyson Point living shoreline (NC Coastal Federation, NC)	NOAA	$72,000	$654,076	1,400 ft · 3.45 ac
Casting for Conservation (Matanzas Riverkeeper, FL)	NOAA	$66,000	$66,000	~300 anglers · 2,000 lb debris
Total, 4 projects		**$297,000**	**$1,743,316**	**35.45 ac · 2.5 mi**



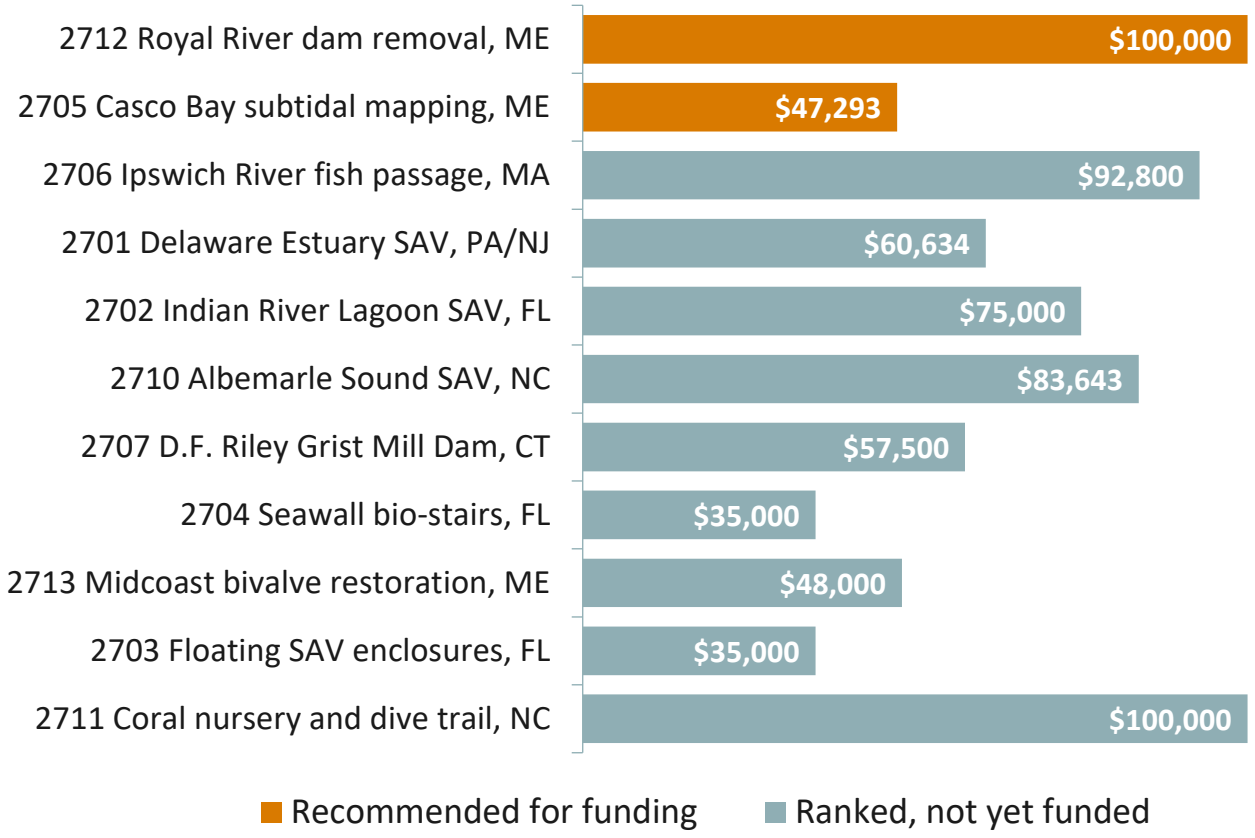
Atlantic Mills Dam, Providence, RI (WRWC)



Duck Island eelgrass pilot site, CT (Connecticut College)

FY27 Project Rankings

13 proposals, 11 ranked, top two recommended for NFHP funding



$734,870

requested by 11 ranked projects

$10.4M

in total project cost (about 14:1)

$147,293

recommended for 2712 and 2705 (20% of requests)

By subregion: North Atlantic 4, Mid-Atlantic 3, South Atlantic 2, South Florida 2

FY27 Recommended Projects

Royal River dam removal and Casco Bay habitat mapping



#1 · American Rivers

Royal River Restoration Phase 2: East Elm Street Dam removal, Yarmouth, ME

Phase 1 removal finished Oct 2026; Phase 2 construction Jul–Oct 2027, then 5 years of monitoring





#2 · Maine DMR

Subtidal mapping of SAV and shellfish beds, Casco Bay, ME

$100,000	$1.28M	~135 mi	7
ACFHP request	total cost	river reconnected	partners

$47,293	$295,000	2027	2028
ACFHP request	total cost	summer field season	public habitat maps

*Combined: $147,293 from ACFHP within $1,575,311 in total cost (about $10.70 per ACFHP $1). *Miles as reported in the Steering Committee review. Photos: American Rivers; Maine DMR.*

2027–2031 Conservation Strategic Plan

Approved November 9, building on 2022–2026 results



2022–2026 accomplishments

165 mi	river reconnected (9 fish-passage projects)
8,987 ac	spawning and nursery habitat opened
127 ac	marsh, SAV and oyster reef restored
$15.2M	total project value from $1.34M in ACFHP funds (~$11 per $1)
19 · 9	projects in nine states, Maine to Florida

Three goals, 2027–2031

1 Conservation and restoration delivery

2 Science and data product development

3 Partnerships and collaboration

Approved with minor edits. The Committee chose a 1-year 2027 Action Plan, adopted Nov 10.

CSP Objectives and 2027 Action Plan

5-year goals and objectives, priority actions for 2027

1 Conservation and restoration delivery

Objectives

- Conserve and connect priority aquatic habitats
- Direct more resources to fish habitat conservation
- Fund the projects with the greatest habitat benefit

2027 actions

- Fund 2 projects; submit list to NFHP
- Update ranking criteria by March 2027
- Applicant webinar and first-timer support
- Endorse strong unfunded projects

2 Science and data product development

Objectives

- Develop, synthesize, and share science that improves conservation outcomes

2027 actions

- Complete and promote the SAV seed-transfer guidance
- Convene a Science and Data workshop
- Report project outcomes by subregion
- Evaluate updating habitat prioritization maps

3 Partnerships and collaboration

Objectives

- Promote ACFHP with the NFHP Board and Fish Habitat Fund
- Share partner projects and products
- Collaborate across the FHP network

2027 actions

- Promote the CSP and Kaalstad et al. (2026)
- Update the 15 state fact sheets and StoryMap
- Best-practice webinar series by habitat
- Share federal funding opportunities

SAV Seed Transfer BMP Workshop

Invitational workshop: November 17–18, Virginia Beach, VA





Goal: a guidance document (report and manuscript) on interstate and regional seed-transfer practices for eelgrass (Zostera marina) and widgeongrass (Ruppia maritima)

Dec–Jan

RFP: 6 applications; Remote Ecologist selected for lit. review

Mar

Zosterapalooza session (EPA New England)

Nov

Draft literature review delivered

Nov 17–18

Invitational workshop, Virginia Beach

Feb 2027

Final guidance (no-cost extension)

Sessions: seed collection, storage and handling, transfer, deployment, monitoring, and research and governance needs. Subject-matter expert survey open through Dec 1.

Guest Presenter: Narragansett Bay NEP

Darcy Young and Jenny Rogers, Narragansett Bay Estuary Program



Elizabeth Webbing Dam, Blackstone River, RI (NBEP / Fuss & O'Neill)

Covers 2,100 mi² of watershed in RI, MA and CT; one of 28 National Estuary Programs.

Link to ACFHP: a $132,897 NBEP request is pending as match for our FY26 Atlantic Mills Dam project.

~$690K aquatic connectivity planning awards since 2022

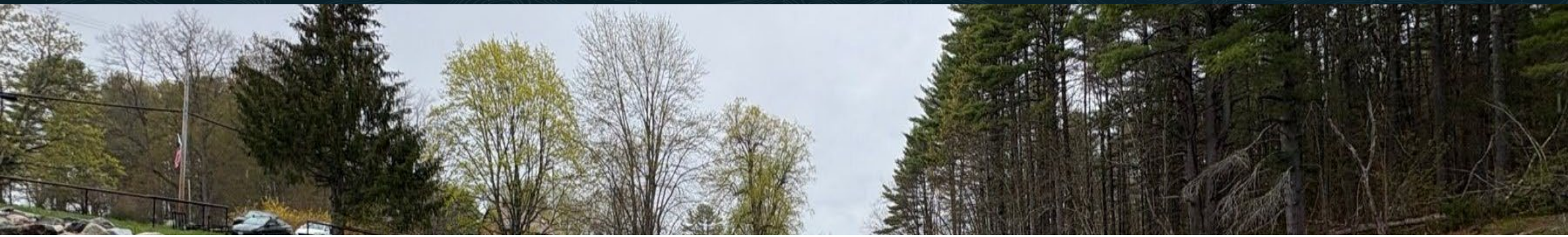
~$2.5M aquatic connectivity design awards since 2022

~$1.95M SNEP implementation RFP, mid–late spring 2027 (max ~$500K per project)

~$90K outreach and education RFP, early spring 2027 (max ~$15K)

Also: State of Our Waterways report and Watershed Science Summit, Sep 22–24, 2027.

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries COMMISSION



ASMFC Habitat Committee

November 11, 2026 · Newport, RI



Mill Pond Dam Removal, Sabattus River, ME. Photo: Casey Clark, Maine DMR

Habitat Hotline Atlantic 2026

Coming soon!



~80% of content in final form; 22-page draft

14 state updates; Connecticut and Rhode Island still outstanding

23 Commissioners and proxies answered the habitat priorities survey

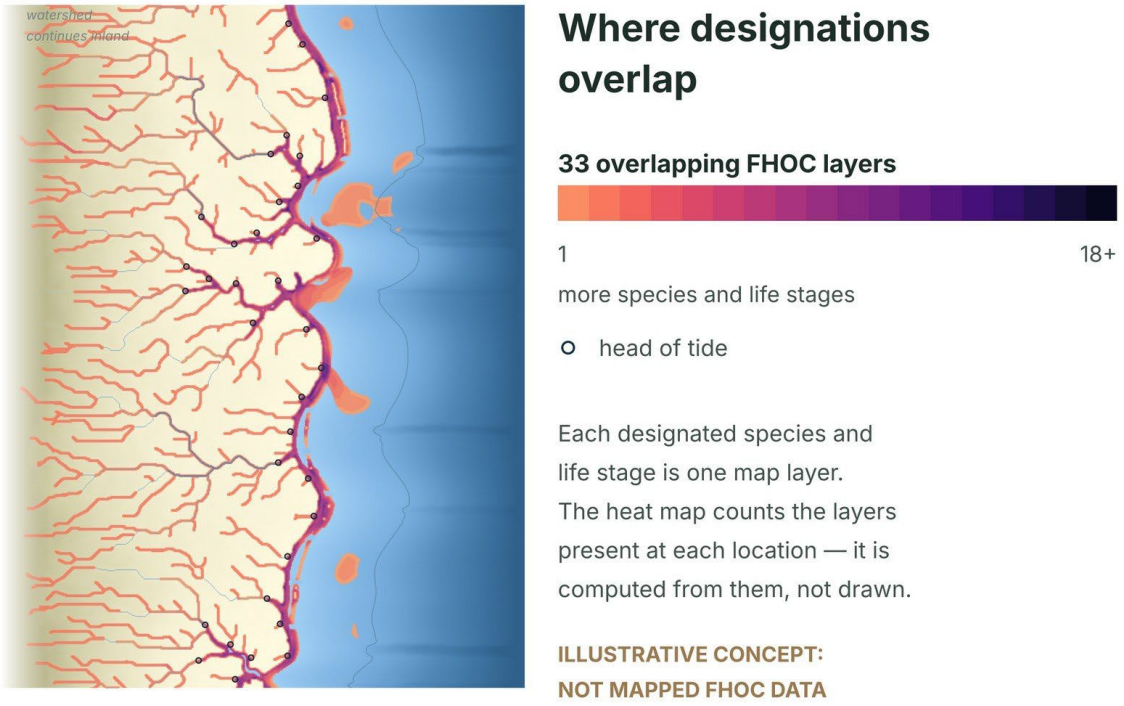


Horseshoe crabs spawning in a SC salt marsh. Photo: Daniel Sasson, SCDNR

Features: horseshoe crab spawning in salt marshes; a fish-friendly turbine on the Roanoke River; ASMFC Commissioner Habitat Survey results; and an ACFHP FY26 projects page. Possible 2027 theme: fisheries production value of habitat.

Fish Habitat of Concern Mapping

Mapping (FHOC) Designations



Illustrative concept only: composite heat map of overlapping FHOC layers

15 ASMFC-managed species or groups with designated FHOC

2 products a habitat layer for each species and life stage, and a composite heat map

ME–NC first layers planned for the most data-rich region

Early stages: external funding opportunities are being pursued to support this work. Non-regulatory decision support, with MARCO and a volunteer technical advisory group contributing.

Habitat Committee Discussions

Key topics from the November 11 meeting

Habitat priorities

Commissioner survey results (23 responses) will shape a 1–3 year work plan and be reported to the Policy Board. Species assignment approach under review.

Offshore mineral mining (VA)

Proposed exploration of a ~6,000 km² area, narrowing to focused sand extraction. Impacts and viability not yet known; summary to be shared.

Dredging windows

USACE effort to drop environmental dredging windows was remanded after litigation; states and agencies are working toward consensus.

Invasive seagrass and marsh shifts

Invasive Halophila stipulacea is spreading north in Florida; mangroves are encroaching into Southeast salt marshes.

Oyster shell recycling

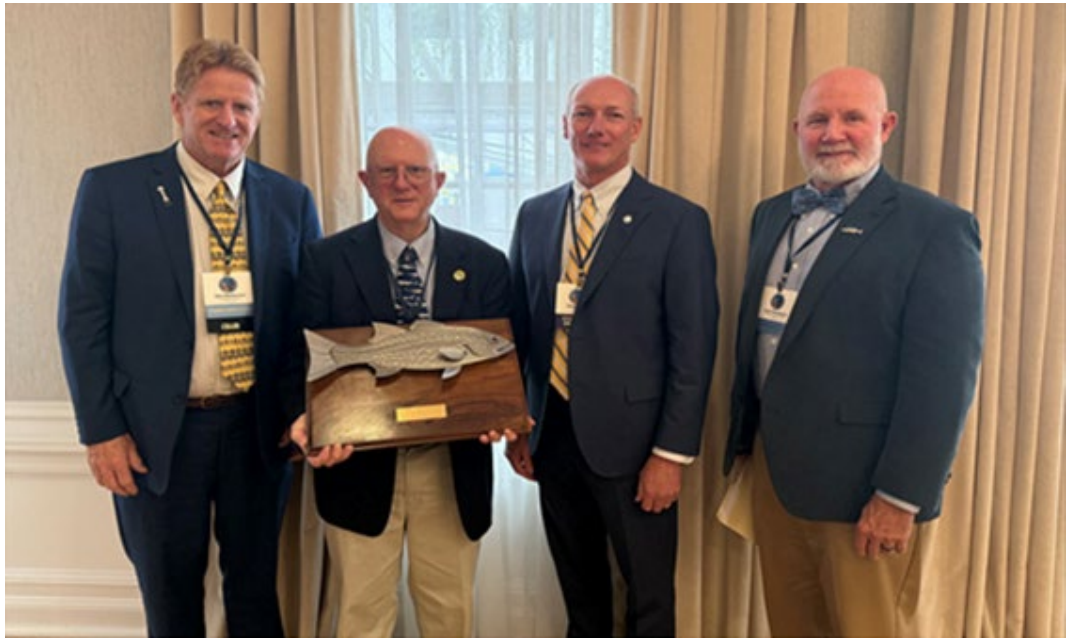
An interactive dashboard of state shell recycling programs is in development to connect the public with local programs.

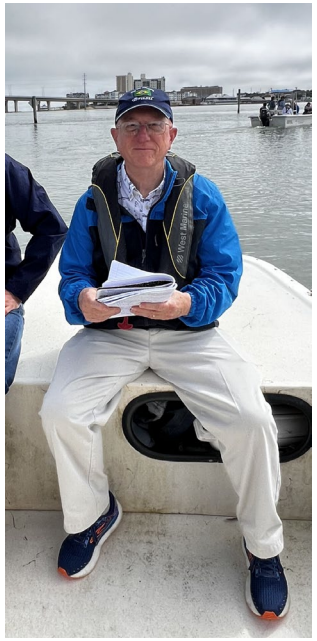
Committee process

Review and update the 2013 policy for responding to requests for comment, so input can reach the Commission in time.

Congrats!

Congratulations, Dr. Wilson Laney





Captain David H. Hart Award

ASMFC's highest annual award, for outstanding contributions to Atlantic coast fisheries

Second person ever to receive all three ASMFC awards, joining Bill Goldsborough.

THANK YOU!

Questions?