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## **Rhode Island Party & Charter Boat Captains to Report with Tablet Technology**

Arlington, VA, October 21, 2014 – Commercial and for-hire captains in Rhode Island are now able to enter their reporting information using a mobile version of the Standard Atlantic Fisheries Information System (SAFIS). The application, known as eTRIPS Mobile (eTRIPS/m), was developed and integrated into SAFIS by the Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP), a state and federal partnership for Atlantic coastal fisheries data collection and data management, at the request of the Rhode Island Division of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) and the Rhode Island Party and Charter Boat Association.

eTRIPS/m captures catch and effort data from the captains. Trip reports, or logbooks in some fisheries, provide catch and effort data to the state or federal government and are used in fisheries management and assessments. Trips can be categorized as commercial or party/charter. Rick Bellavance, Captain of Priority Too and President of the Rhode Island Party and Charter Boat Association, describes the innovative ability to report on a handheld device by stating, “ACCSP’s new mobile reporting application will revolutionize the way fishermen provide fisheries-dependent data. The software, designed with extensive input from active and experienced fishermen, is easy to use and saves time. It’s the latest tool available to improve data quality and timeliness - a goal of fishermen everywhere.”

The eTRIPS/m application will increase data accuracy and make data available immediately to fisheries managers, improving their ability to respond to changes in the fishery in a more timely way. John Lake, Principal Biologist with the Rhode Island DFW Marine Fisheries, is enthusiastic for the launch of eTRIPS/m as a management tool because he recognizes that there will be more flexibility in the management of the party and charter boat sector in state waters (0-3 miles from shore). He explains, “Every year, it’s a delicate balance to create realistic recreational regulations on species for party and charter boat operators that are also not too liberal for general recreational anglers. This type of trip level data collected from the mobile application greatly aids in the accounting of catch and analysis of how the regulations are working.”

If you would like to view a demonstration of eTRIPS/m, the ACCSP is conducting a webinar on Thursday, November 6 at 10am EST. Please contact Ann McElhatton, Program Manager with ACCSP, at info@accsp.org or 703.842.0780.

For more information on the implementation of eTRIPS/m in Rhode Island, please contact John Lake at [john.lake@dem.ri.gov](mailto:john.lake@dem.ri.gov).

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### **About the Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program**

ACCSP is a cooperative state-federal program to design, implement, and conduct marine fisheries statistics data collection programs and to integrate those data into a single data management system that will meet the needs of fishery managers, scientists and fishermen. It is composed of representatives from natural resource management agencies coastwide, including the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, the three Atlantic fishery management councils, the 15 Atlantic states, the Potomac River Fisheries Commission, the D.C. Fisheries and Wildlife Division, NOAA Fisheries Service, and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. For further information please visit [www.accsp.org](http://www.accsp.org).