

# Fisheries Files

A vibrant source of fisheries data information for Atlantic coast fisheries decision makers, managers, and industry professionals



## ACCSP's Integrated Fisheries Reporting Workshop a Big Success

Fisheries data managers took a big step toward improving Atlantic fisheries data systems when they convened at ACCSP's Integrated Fisheries Reporting (IFR) workshop last month.

Currently, fisheries-dependent data are collected from various sources—including Vessel, Observer, and Dealer reports—and linked together after the fact. IFR describes a fishery reporting system designed so that all reporting for a single trip is done on a single report.

Predicated on the idea that human data entry is the source of most fisheries data errors, an IFR system minimizes human involvement in the reporting process, relying on an automatically generated Trip ID to integrate multiple fisheries reports.

Several programs that collect Atlantic coast fisheries data have already begun to explore ways in which they could implement IFR in their data systems. To ensure that state and federal programs' IFR efforts dovetail with one another

and avoid duplication of effort, ACCSP put together an IFR workshop for fisheries data managers on the Atlantic coast.

Bringing together representatives from state, regional, and federal fisheries agencies, the main goal of the workshop was to reach consensus on a set of business rules to guide IFR implementation across programs.

Participation was excellent, with representation from: the three Atlantic Fishery Management Councils and the Gulf States Fishery Management Council; both NOAA Fisheries regional offices; both Atlantic science centers, as well as the Pacific Fisheries Science Center; NOAA Fisheries Highly Migratory Species Division; northern, mid-Atlantic, and southern states on the Atlantic coast; and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF).

Eric Schwaab, Vice President of Conservation Programs at the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and former NMFS Director,

*Cont. on p. 3*

|  |   |
|--|---|
| ACCSP's Recreational Implementation Plan | 4 |
| PSE Report Released                      | 4 |
| For-hire Inventory                       | 5 |
| Fishermen Learn to Use eTrips/M          | 6 |
| ACCSP Meeting and Funding Cycle          | 7 |

**Proposals for ACCSP FY18 project funding are due June 19<sup>th</sup>!**

# Who We Are & What We Do

## Staff

**Program** staff is dedicated to maintaining ACCSP standards and handling administrative and funding tasks of the Program, including outreach.

- Michael S. Cahall, *Director*
- Elizabeth Wyatt, *Program Coordinator*
- Ali Schwaab, *Outreach Coordinator*

The **Data Team** works with partners to identify, transform, and audit data so they can be included in the Data Warehouse. They also provide data services by designing custom data requests and participating in stock assessments.

- Julie Defilippi, *Data Team Leader*
- Heather Konell, *Data Coordinator*
- Joe Myers, *Senior Data Coordinator*
- Jennifer Ni, *Information Systems Specialist*

The **Software Team** designs, builds, and maintains the Standard Atlantic Fisheries Information System (SAFIS), as well as internal systems that the Program manages or that support program activities.

- Karen Holmes, *Software Team Leader*
- Nico Mwai, *Fisheries Programmer*

The **Recreational Data Program** staff provides central coordination and data processing for the MRIP APAIS. They support the states in the conduct of the APAIS and the development of the ACCSP recreational data standards.

- Geoff White, *Rec. Program Manager*
- Coleby Wilt, *Rec. Data Coordinator*
- Alex DiJohnson, *Rec. Data Coordinator*
- Sarah Rains, *Rec. Data Analyst*

Shared with the ASMFC is Ed Martino, *Information Systems Manager*.

## Committees

Since its inception, ACCSP has been a committee-based organization. Committees are responsible for setting program policies and standards, deciding annual funding allocations, and planning and coordinating data collection and data management programs.

Committees, composed primarily of representatives from the partners (listed on page 8), provide the framework for the collaborative processes that create and manage the standards and govern the Program. Technical committees create and manage the program standards with guidance from the Operations and Advisory Committees. The Coordinating Council provides general oversight to the Program and sets overall policies.

- **Coordinating Council**  
*Chair: Robert Boyles, SC DNR*
- **Operations Committee**  
*Chair: Pat Campfield, ASMFC*
- **Advisory Committee**  
*Chair: Jerry Morgan, CT-Rec*
- **Biological Review Panel**  
*Chair: Vacant*
- **Bycatch Prioritization Committee**  
*Chair: Michael Errigo, SAFMC*
- **Commercial Technical Committee**  
*Chair: Stephanie Iverson, VMRC*
- **Information Systems Committee**  
*Chair: Anna Webb, MA DMF*
- **Recreational Technical Committee**  
*Chair: Tom Sminkey, NOAA Fisheries*
- **Outreach Committees**
  - Atlantic Coastal Fisheries Communications Group:  
*Chair: Tina Berger, ASMFC*
  - Data Warehouse Outreach Group: *-Vacant*
  - SAFIS Outreach Group:  
*Chair: Anna Webb, MA DMF*

## Philosophy

### Vision

To be the principal source of fisheries-dependent information on the Atlantic coast through the cooperation of all program partners.

### Mission

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.

### Values

- Accurate data are required for good fisheries management decisions.
- Coordination and collaboration amongst the program partners are essential for success.
- The Program must be responsive to the changing needs for fisheries data.
- Processes must be open and transparent but confidential data must be protected.
- Data shall be accessible and easy to use.
- Responsibilities should be matched with available resources.



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opened the workshop with defining the “why?” He emphasized that integrated reporting will improve data timeliness and accuracy, thus helping to build trust in the data among both management and industry users.

Attendees were also presented with a synthesis of previous integrated reporting efforts undertaken both within and outside of the United States.

Barry Clifford of GARFO presented an update on implementation of the Fisheries Dependent Data Vision (FDDV) process in the Northeast. GARFO intends to implement IFR using a Trip Management System (TMS) that will distribute the Trip ID to each system component.

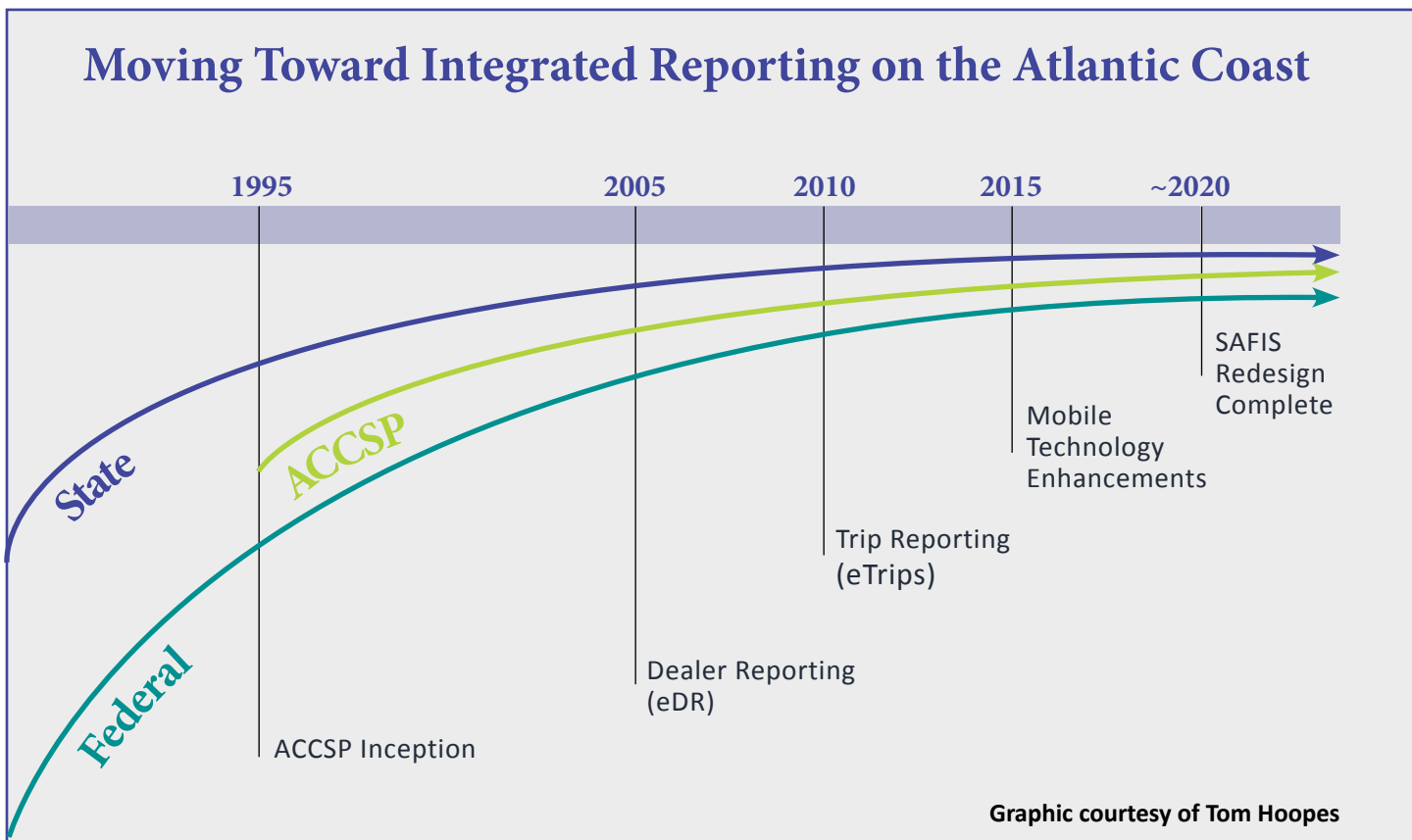
Attendees agreed that the TMS would be a logical starting point for discussing an IFR solution that would meet the needs of all ACCSP partners. The consensus was that the GARFO/NEFSC conceptual plan would be the launching point for workshop discussions and development going forward.

Attendees then discussed current issues for implementing integrated reporting, including:

- Duplicate reporting requirements
- Statistical areas
- Definition of a trip
- Regulatory changes
- Local flexibility

Workshop participants began to develop integrated reporting business modules for trip, dealer, biological sampling and observers, and expanded business modules for the Vessels Monitoring System (VMS), electronic monitoring, private recreational angler, and cooperative research.

The workshop report, due in mid-July, will be used for a timeline for incorporating integrated fisheries reporting in SAFIS and to report to the ACCSP Coordinating Council in Fall 2017.



# ACCSP Releases Report on Percent Standard Error in Recreational Fishing Data Workshop

In 2014, ACCSP hosted a workshop on Percent Standard Error (PSE) of Recreational Fishing Data to improve the understanding of how recreational data precision impacts science and management uncertainty. Ultimately, the aim of the workshop was to develop consensus among fisheries scientists and managers on target PSE values for use in stock assessments and fisheries management.

The workshop report has recently been published and can be accessed [here](#) on the ACCSP website. The report includes an overview of the entire ACCSP PSE project and summaries of the presentations given:

- Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) Process & Perspective
- Review of Precision Use in Stock Assessments:
- Relative Standard Error in Health Statistics:
- A Summary of the Management Scenario Evaluation Model
- Incorporating Uncertainty in Fisheries Management-National Standard 1 Perspective
- Use of Precision in Council Process

The report also includes recommendations developed for use of PSE in fisheries stock assessments and in management actions.

Participants agreed that data with a PSE of 40% or below provides for valid input to stock assessment models, while data with PSE values between 40% and 60% may be used with caution when combined with sensitivity analyses or other methods to mitigate potential biases.

Participants concluded that data with a PSE of 60% and above should only be used with extreme caution.

The large number of factors affecting the success of a fisheries stock assessment and management makes a single threshold PSE improbable.

## ACCSP and Recreational Fisheries Data

One of the guiding principles of the Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) is to better integrate the regional Fisheries Information Networks (FINs) into the planning and execution of recreational data collection.

On the Atlantic coast, ACCSP is the FIN, and the bulk of recreational catch data collection is accomplished in partnership with the states using the Access Point Angler Survey (APAIS). To this end, MRIP has requested a 5 year implementation plan that will provide regional guidance to MRIP on the priorities for Atlantic coast recreational data needs, as well as set the course for ACCSP activities from 2017-2019.

ACCSP's Recreational Technical Committee (RTC) has been working on the plan for several months with the intention of presenting it to the Operations Committee and Coordinating Council for approval at ACCSP's August meeting. The draft plan outlines the current state of recreational data collection, including details on each program; and identifies areas for potential improvements. The plan identifies the following areas as priorities for ACCSP and the Atlantic coast as a whole:

1. Improved recreational fishery discard and release data
2. Improve precision (PSE) of MRIP catch estimates
3. For-Hire electronic logbook implementation and validation
4. Improved timeliness of recreational catch and harvest estimates
5. Biological sampling for recreational fisheries separate from MRIP
6. Improved spatial resolution and technical guidance for post-stratification of MRIP estimates

Once approved by the Operations Committee and Coordinating Council, the plan will be submitted to MRIP.



*Mike Cahall, ACCSP Director*

## For-hire Inventory Workshop Report Explores Ways to Reduce Duplicate Reporting

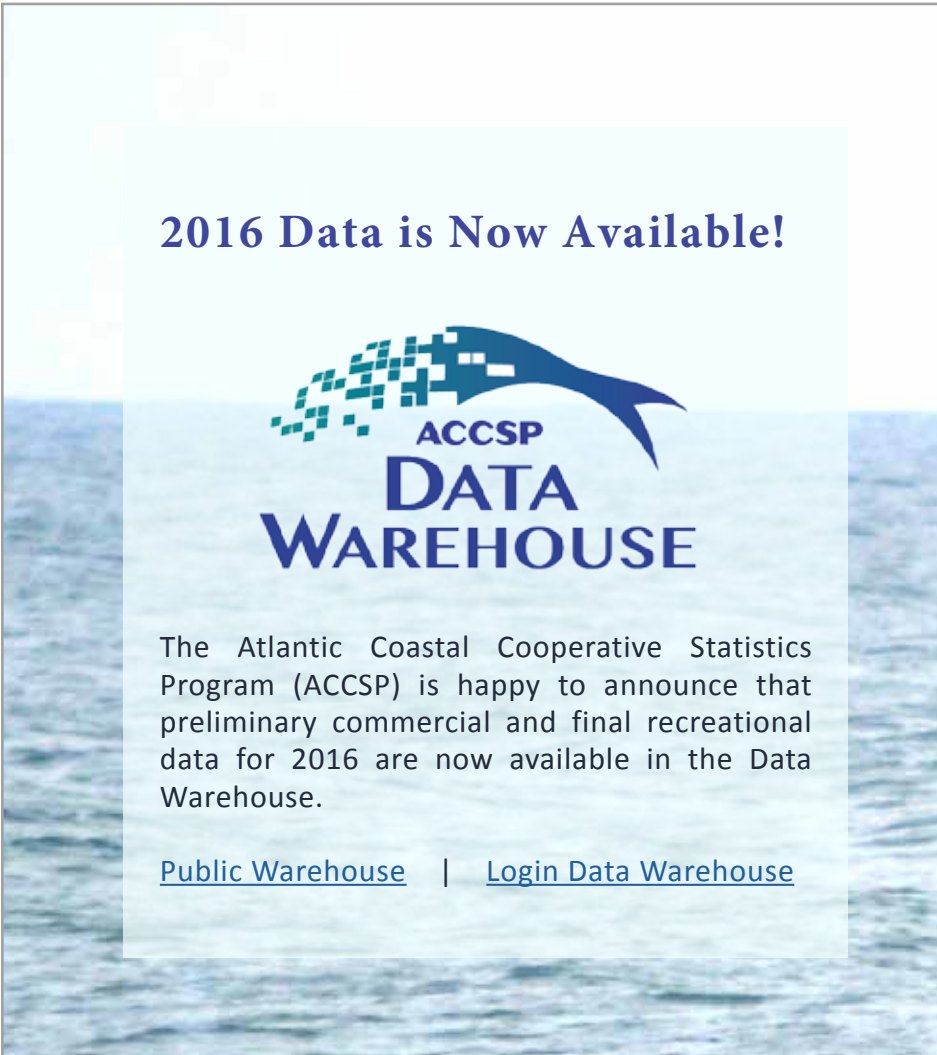
Between state and federal agencies along the Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico coastline, more than 20 individual programs collect data from the for-hire sector. While many of these programs have been created to fill a specific management need, the collected data often overlaps.

In 2016, ACCSP brought together representatives of these for-hire data collection programs to explore opportunities for data sharing and convergence in order to reduce duplicate reporting in the Atlantic and Gulf for-hire sector.


At the workshop, participants engaged in small group discussions on four topics:

1. Timeliness of reporting in for-hire data collection programs
2. Core common data elements necessary for for-hire reporting.
3. Capabilities of existing programs to move to electronic reporting.
4. Opportunities for reducing duplicate reporting.

The results of the workshop were recently published in the *Inventory and Comparison of For-Hire Data Collections in the Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico: Opportunities for Convergence* workshop summary. The report



**2016 Data is Now Available!**

  
**ACCSP  
DATA  
WAREHOUSE**

The Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP) is happy to announce that preliminary commercial and final recreational data for 2016 are now available in the Data Warehouse.

[Public Warehouse](#) | [Login Data Warehouse](#)

summarizes the discussion and the participants' recommendations to streamline for-hire data collection, developed by consensus.

Participants reached agreement on a number of core data elements and on a minimum standard for reporting data, agreeing that data should be reported at the trip level on a weekly basis at a minimum.

By adopting the same core data elements and minimum reporting standards, management could combine data collection efforts.

Participants also identified improvements needed to make a reduction of the number of data collection programs feasible, including:

- Strengthening the vessel directory system
- Establishing a system for unique trip IDs
- Developing a common grid identifier for location
- Conducting outreach with the for-hire community.

The full report can be found here: [www.accsp.org/recreational-fisheries](http://www.accsp.org/recreational-fisheries).

## Fishermen Learn to Use eTrips/Mobile for e-Reporting

Who says you can't teach an old (sea) dog new tricks? 30 captains proved the old adage wrong as they readily grasped ACCSP's tablet-based trip reporting application at two electronic vessel trip reporting (eVTR) workshops held in April.

Back in August of 2016, the Mid Atlantic Fishery Management Council (MAFMC) approved a new eVTR framework requiring for-hire fishermen fishing for MAFMC-managed species to submit their trip reports *electronically* within 48 hours of the end of the fishing trip.

While the MAFMC's eVTR framework has not yet been published as a final rule, MAFMC hosted two one-day eVTR workshops in April to prepare early adopters for the transition to electronic reporting.

The workshop kicked off with an overview of the council's eVTR framework. The framework does not change existing reporting requirements, only the method and timeline for report submission.

The workshop focused on teaching captains how to use ACCSP's tablet-based eTrips/mobile application to complete and submit their electronic trip reports. Although several other eVTR applications are authorized for electronic reporting, the council anticipates that many fishermen will choose eTrips/M, the only free electronic reporting application

currently authorized.

Using their own tablets and a test account, participants followed along with a step-by-step user tutorial provided by Rick Bellavance, president of the Rhode Island Charter and Party-boat Association.

As one of the captains involved in the design and development of the application back in 2013, Bellavance's knowledge of and experience using the application for his own reporting needs made him a natural leader for these workshops.

Throughout the workshop, ACCSP staff worked with state

partners to set up individual accounts for each workshop attendee. This allowed captains to begin their electronic reporting immediately following the workshop.

It is the council's hope that these early adopters will be able to help smooth the transition to electronic reporting for their fellow fishermen.

Additional support, including user tutorials and FAQs, can be found on ACCSP's [website](#). Captains will also be provided with contact information for a new 24-hour helpdesk for eTrips/M users, which can be reached at 1-800-984-0810.

### MAFMC eVTR Proposed Rule Published in Federal Register for Public Comment

The **Omnibus Electronic Vessel Trip Report Framework** proposes management measures to increase the timeliness, accuracy, and quality of fisheries data submitted to NMFS while also reducing the burden on the charter and party fishing fleets.

The electronic vessel trip report Framework would implement a requirement for charter and party vessels that hold a permit to fish for Atlantic bluefish, black sea bass, scup, summer flounder, tilefish, squid, Atlantic mackerel, and/or butterfish, while on a trip carrying passengers for hire, to submit required VTRs by electronic means.

These proposed measures are intended to improve the timeliness and accuracy of charter and party vessel trip reporting.

The proposed rule can be viewed [here](#). Public comments will be accepted until June 23, 2017.



## ACCSP Meeting and Funding Cycle

Please note all meetings are subject to change and additional meetings of each ACCSP committee may be scheduled throughout the year as tasks are assigned. For the most up-to-date information on all committee meetings, please visit <http://www.accsp.org>. If you have any questions or comments on this calendar, please contact Elizabeth Wyatt, Program Coordinator, at 703-842-0790.

|                |   |                |
|----------------|---|----------------|
| June 19        | Initial Proposals Due   |                |
| June 26        | Proposals distributed to Operations and Advisory Committees         |                |
| Wk of July 17  | Review of Initial Proposals   | Webinar        |
| Aug 1 - 3      | ASMFC Mtg/ ACCSP Coordinating Council                               | Alexandria, VA |
| Aug 21         | Revised Proposals Due   |                |
| Aug 28         | Revised Proposals Distributed to Operations and Advisory Committees |                |
| Week of Sept 4 | Preliminary Ranking Exercise for Advisors                           | Webinar        |
| Week of Sep 11 | FY2015 Proposal Review  | Webinar        |
| Sept. 20-21    | Operations and Advisors Joint Meeting                               | TBD            |
| Oct. 15-19     | ASMFC Annual Mtg/ACCSP Coordinating Council Meeting                 | Norfolk, VA    |

Have you heard about...



**Atlantic Coast Fisheries News**  
*a collection of upcoming meetings, recent news alerts, and articles of interest from Atlantic coast states, regional fishery management councils, and federal agencies*

ACCSP and the ASMFC have been pulling together the latest fisheries news stories from our state and federal partners in a weekly online newsletter, the Atlantic Coast Fisheries News. [SIGN UP HERE](#)

# Program Partners

In 1995, representatives from 23 coastal resource agencies along the Atlantic coast signed a Memorandum of Understanding to become partners in the ACCSP. The program partners are implementing the ACCSP standards within their respective areas.

- NOAA Fisheries Service (NOAA)
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (US FWS)
- Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC)
- New England Fishery Management Council (NEFMC)
- Potomac River Fisheries Commission (PRFC)
- Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (MAFMC)
- South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (SAFMC)
- Maine Department of Marine Resources (ME DMR)
- New Hampshire Fish and Game Department (NH FGD)
- Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries (MA DMF)
- Rhode Island Division of Fish and Wildlife (RI DFW)
- Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (CT DEEP)
- New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYS DEC)
- New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife (NJ DFW)
- Delaware Division of Fish and Wildlife (DE DFW)
- Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC)
- District of Columbia Fisheries and Wildlife Division (DC FWD)
- Maryland Department of Natural Resources (MD DNR)
- Virginia Marine Resources Commission (VMRC)
- North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries (NC DMF)
- South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SC DNR)
- Georgia Department of Natural Resources (GA DNR)
- Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FL FWCC)



Editor’s Note: Fisheries Files is published by the Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program. Its purpose is to report developments on ACCSP partner projects, the Data Warehouse, and SAFIS. This document is also used to communicate updates on ACCSP committees and staff. Please credit the Program when reprinting articles used in this newsletter. Anyone wishing to submit relevant information or articles is invited and encouraged to do so. Submissions may be sent to Ali Schwaab at alexandra.schwaab@accsp.org.