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NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION
(NOAA)

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NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE (NMFS)
ATLANTIC HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES ADVISORY PANEL

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HMS RECREATIONAL ROUNDTABLE: LPS WORKSHOP
AND HMS LISTENING SESSION

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FRIDAY
MAY 28, 2021

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The Roundtable convened via webinar at
9:00 a.m. EDT, Bennett Brooks, facilitating.

PRESENT

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Highly Migratory Species Management Division**

**PETE COOPER, Branch Chief, Atlantic Highly
Migratory Species Management Division**

**RUSSELL DUNN, National Policy Advisor for
Recreational Fisheries, NOAA Fisheries
Directorate**

**JOHN FOSTER, Recreational Fisheries Statistics
Branch Chief, Office of Science and
Technology**

**CLIFF HUTT, HMS Recreational Coordinator,
Atlantic Highly Migratory Species Management
Division**

**ANTHONY KAUFMAN, Research Associate, ECS Federal
in support of Office of Science and Technology**

**MATT LAURETTA, Research Fishery Biologist,
Southeast Fisheries Science Center,
Sustainable Fisheries Division**

**YONG-WOO LEE, LPS Team Lead and Statistician,
Office of Science & Technology**

**BRAD MCHALE, Northeast Branch Chief, HMS
Recreational Coordinator, Atlantic Highly
Migratory Species Management Division**

**DAEMIAN SCHREIBER, Research Associate and LPS
Operations Coordinator, ECS Federal in support
of Office of Science and Technology**

**JOHN WALTER, Deputy Director of Science and
Council Services, Southeast Fisheries
Science Center**

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P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

9:01 a.m.

1
2
3 MR. BROOKS: Okay, it is 9:00. Randy,
4 I think I'm going to hand it off to you to say a
5 really fast hello and then I'll orient us to the
6 day.

7 MR. BLANKINSHIP: Sure, thanks,
8 Bennett. Good morning, everybody. Welcome to,
9 for some of you it will be day four of a series
10 of meetings.

11 We have had the HMS Advisory Panel
12 Meeting over the last three days, and then today
13 we're continuing with many of the 18 members, but
14 also we're adding in the public meeting all day
15 today for this workshop on the large pelagic
16 survey and the recreational roundtable for,
17 recreational fisheries roundtable for HMS
18 fisheries this afternoon, and that's what we'll
19 conclude with.

20 We're really happy that you're all
21 here. Thank you, for those of you that have been
22 in the long meetings thus far this week, I thank
23 you for continuing on with us today and we're
24 looking forward to a good discussion.

25 I'll have some other comments in a
26 moment, but good morning and thanks for being
27 here. I'll turn it back to you, Bennett.

28 MR. BROOKS: Great. Thanks, Randy.
29 So just a quick orientation to the day and ground
30 rules.

31 We have a full day. We will be going
32 until 3:30 today, so settle in. But we will be
33 getting a long lunch break from 11:30 to 1:00,
34 again just because we know people have other work
35 to attend to and also staring at a computer for
36 six and half hours straight is not the healthiest
37 thing in the world to do. So count on that.

38 This morning, we will hear from the
39 large pelagic survey team. And we'll really be
40 focusing on the large pelagic workshop this
41 morning.

42 Warning, it is -- there's a lot of
43 material to walk through and we'll spend about an
44 hour or an hour and a quarter letting the LPS
45 team kind of share all of their presentation with
46 us.

47 And then we'll have about an hour or
48 so, maybe a little bit less, maybe 45 minutes,

1 for questions.

2 We're really going to focus that first
3 set of questions in the morning around clarifying
4 questions, understanding what the team presented,
5 making sure we're all sort of comfortable with
6 it, and it makes sense.

7 So we'll really ask you all to focus
8 on clarifying questions. After lunch, we'll come
9 back -- we'll come back to the LPS conversation.
10 That will be a much more open discussion.

11 If there are additional clarifying
12 questions, great. If folks want to have, sort of
13 think more broadly about the LPS, great. We'll
14 sort of take that conversation where it goes.

15 And then at around 2:00 in the
16 afternoon, we'll shift and we'll sort of set
17 aside the LPS workshop and shift much more to an
18 HMS listening session focused on recreational
19 issues.

20 And this is an opportunity really for
21 those of you on this call to share your thoughts,
22 to share your perspectives, with the agency.

23 It's not designed to be a conversation
24 where we focus in and sort of come up with
25 answers. It's much more about what's on your
26 mind, what are the issues you're thinking about,
27 what are the issues you think that should be
28 rolling forward that the agency should be
29 thinking about?

30 And then we'll wrap up and adjourn
31 around 3:30.

32 As far as ground rules, let me just
33 reemphasize what Randy said. This is not HMS AP
34 meeting.

35 This is not an advisory panel meeting.
36 This is an open workshop. So whether you are a
37 member of the advisory panel or a member of the
38 public, everyone here is sort of with equal
39 standing in this conversation.

40 And so there's no sort of group that
41 is given sort of first bit at the apple, it's
42 just -- it's just everybody.

43 And so I will manage the conversation
44 that way.

45 My main guidance to everyone is just
46 please contribute and share time. Particularly,
47 I know with the LPS there's going to be a lot of
48 questions.

1 I'm going to really ask people to not
2 sort of come in with a list of eight questions,
3 because that will just wind up cannibalizing
4 everyone else's time.

5 So think about, what are the two
6 questions that are most critical to you? Get
7 them out there and then we'll work our way
8 through the queue and I'll be happy to circle
9 back to folks if we have time.

10 Stay focused on the topic today. It's
11 about recreational fishing. The morning and the
12 early afternoon about the LPS, then we go into
13 the roundtable.

14 Please, please, please, keep your
15 focus, keep your comments focused on that, and as
16 I said, really today, in particular the late
17 afternoon, it's more about raising issues and
18 resolving them.

19 In terms of some ground rules for the
20 virtual world, I know for the AP members, you've
21 been in this for the last four days, but we do
22 have people who haven't been, so bear with me

23 Everyone will be muted unless and
24 until sort of you're invited into the
25 conversation. When you want to contribute,
26 again, just raise a virtual hand, which you will
27 find if you open up the participant tab.

28 You'll see a little hand like this.
29 Just click on it, and that will -- that will get
30 you into the queue.

31 If you want to use -- if that -- if
32 you can't find that, at the bottom of your screen
33 on the right-hand side, you'll see a little chat
34 button, which has a little quote bubble.

35 If you pop on that, you can also say,
36 hey, I can't find my hand but I want to get into
37 the conversation.

38 You can also put a message in there.
39 And my general guidance is use the chat
40 sparingly. It's a great -- it's a great tool to
41 say, hey, I totally agree with what that person
42 just said.

43 It's a wonderful way for the agency to
44 see that kind of thing. Or there's some kind of
45 thrill you want to share.

46 What I want to avoid is having a whole
47 separate conversation in the chat as people are
48 presenting.

1 It's just, it's hard to listen and
2 stay focused if you're busy reading and writing
3 in a chat. So please stay with me on that if you
4 can.

5 Again, I'll run this queue as if I
6 were in a room and people's hands are going up.
7 I will deviate from that, sort of bring in new
8 voices, just so we get a good diversity of folks
9 who are in the mix.

10 I think that's all I want to say now.
11 Unless there are any questions, I will hand it
12 back to you, Randy, to do a more formal welcome
13 and overview of our game plan for today.

14 MR. BLANKINSHIP: Sure. So once
15 again, thanks for being with us, everybody. For
16 those who have joined in the last few minutes,
17 welcome.

18 We're glad that you're here for this
19 large pelagic survey workshop and recreational
20 roundtable.

21 I just have a few kind of intro
22 comments to go through before I'll turn it over
23 to Russ Dunn, who is our National Policy Advisor
24 for Recreational Fisheries.

25 So to introduce myself, for those of
26 you that don't know me, I'm Randy Blankinship,
27 the Chief of Atlantic Highly Migratory Species
28 Management Division, and working in NOAA
29 Fisheries within the Department of Commerce.

30 And folks from HMS Management Division
31 and from other offices are going to be quite
32 involved in presenting today.

33 The first presentations are going to
34 be from the Office of Science and Technology
35 within NOAA Fisheries.

36 But later on today and through the
37 day, we will be hearing from, and they have their
38 videos on right now, Brad McHale and Cliff Hutt.

39 Many of you know them. They are our
40 Recreational Coordinators. Both of them are kind
41 of north in the area, and then also mid-Atlantic
42 and south areas, and have a lot of expertise
43 along those lines.

44 And they're very involved certainly in
45 our HMS Management Regimes, not only on the
46 recreational side but the commercial as well, as
47 well as economics and social science.

48 They're very broad in their expertise

1 and really are assets.

2 At the outset here, I want to say what
3 a lot of you know, which is Atlantic HMS
4 fisheries, both recreational and commercial, are
5 some of the most valuable, exciting, intriguing,
6 and popular fisheries around.

7 They are extremely valuable from a
8 commercial standpoint, with folks making a living
9 off of them, often times very lucrative
10 fisheries, and valuable to the United States in
11 supplying food for our population and enjoyment
12 for folks when they are to eat in some of the
13 various restaurants and having excellent fish to
14 be able to enjoy.

15 And on the recreational side of
16 things, it is, in the United States, one of the -
17 - one of the nicest things that we have going is
18 the successful management of fisheries to allow
19 for a vibrant recreational fishery that allows
20 for people to not only enjoy recreation and the
21 sport of fishing, but also to go out and fish for
22 food themselves to supply a food supply that they
23 get to bring home and then -- and then eat
24 themselves.

25 This successful management of
26 recreational fisheries is also attractive for
27 folks from other places when they come in to the
28 United States from other places and from
29 international origins to come in and fish and
30 enjoy our recreational fisheries as well, through
31 charters and those kind of things.

32 Those are a big part of many of our
33 communities, our coastal communities, is the
34 vibrant fisheries that bring in and generate a
35 lot of revenue in a lot of different ways.

36 So it's support our coastal
37 communities both on the commercial side and from
38 the recreational side by supporting the
39 recreation itself.

40 Participation in our HMS Fisheries in
41 the United States is broad, from Maine to Texas
42 the U.S. Caribbean, as well as U.S.-flagged
43 vessels on the high seas.

44 And that means that the stakeholders
45 in these fisheries are diverse, as well, from
46 recreational stakeholders, commercial
47 stakeholders, environmental groups, and interests
48 from that standpoint, as well as others, that can

1 include academia that plays a role in helping us
2 to better understand those fisheries, and then
3 the coastal communities that rely upon these
4 fisheries as well.

5 Today we're going to be spending some
6 time specifically discussing recreational
7 fisheries data collection, and specifically
8 within that the large pelagic survey and give
9 some air time to discuss HMS recreational
10 fisheries in general.

11 This initiative, well, this day that
12 we're spending today, discussing these issues, is
13 part of an overall national initiative of
14 recreational roundtable discussions that are
15 happening in the various regions around the
16 country.

17 And so we're doing that for Atlantic
18 HMS along with those others. It is not something
19 really new.

20 We've done this in years past where
21 we've had a round of recreational roundtable
22 discussions over the past few years.

23 It is the case that even though we're
24 talking about and discussing recreational
25 fisheries, there's a lot of interest in the
26 various stakeholders.

27 As you might note, for some of you
28 that are familiar with the backgrounds of folks
29 that are participating, that there is a broad
30 interest, just like the diverse interests that I
31 -- that I talked about just a moment ago.

32 And a big part of that is related to
33 the data that is collected from recreational
34 fisheries, and there's a lot of interest from
35 commercial and environmental groups and academia
36 in how that data, how those data are collected
37 and then how they funnel into and are used by the
38 agency and by other groups, including
39 international work through ICCAT and through the
40 ICCAT scientific body, SCRS, in conducting stock
41 assessments for those species that are managed by
42 ICCAT, as well as our domestic assessments.

43 And so this recreational data is very
44 important for some of those assessments. And
45 that's why there's great interest in this
46 particular workshop for the large pelagic survey.

47 And I think that that will -- you'll
48 see that in the nature of the questions that come

1 in and the discussion we have.

2 The large pelagic survey certainly has
3 gotten a lot of attention over the last several
4 months, particularly related to a couple of --
5 the management of a couple different species,
6 western bluefin tuna stock as well as the North
7 Atlantic stock of mako, and that interest we'll
8 continue today.

9 We had a -- there was a workshop
10 conducted several months ago on a large pelagic
11 survey, and this discussion was requested again
12 to continue to help inform people about the large
13 pelagic survey, to answer questions, and then
14 also to gain input and thoughts about it.

15 So we're looking forward to that
16 discussion. We're glad that we're able to have
17 it. We're glad that you all are able to join us
18 today and participate in it.

19 With that, that concludes my opening
20 comments. I want to take a moment to introduce
21 Russ Dunn for his opening comments.

22 Russ Dunn, once again, is the National
23 Policy Advisory for Recreational Fisheries. He's
24 been with the agency for several years. I don't
25 actually know how many.

26 But he started out his federal
27 employment service with NOAA Fisheries actually
28 in the Atlantic Highly Migratory Species
29 Management Division.

30 So he has close ties to the species
31 and the fisheries that we will be discussing
32 today. We're really glad to have him with us.
33 So, Russ, I'll turn it over to you.

34 MR. DUNN: Thanks, Randy. I am duly
35 impressed but not surprised that we are exactly
36 on time to the minute with you running the
37 meetings.

38 So, yes, so, thanks, Randy. So as
39 Randy said, I'm Russ Dunn. I started out my
40 career, depending on how you look at it, either
41 not long enough ago to retire or too long from
42 other perspectives.

43 But, yes, 19 years I've been with NOAA
44 now. So, thanks for the opportunity to join you
45 all today.

46 It has been 11 years since I left HMS
47 for the current position that I hold now, and it
48 still feels sort of like coming home, so I

1 appreciate it.

2 There is a lot happening out there
3 right now, whether it's HMS or other fisheries
4 that we're looking at as we fortunately come out
5 of COVID.

6 We've got a new administration with
7 new priorities that will undoubtedly impact
8 fisheries across the country, including HMS at
9 some level, both rec and commercial.

10 I think an obvious one there for the
11 new administration is climate. I'm sure you all
12 have talked about that at this meeting to some
13 depth.

14 Anglers, as you know better than most
15 of us, are really on the frontlines of seeing
16 climate change, the effects in the water each
17 day.

18 We're seeing, you're seeing sea
19 surface temps change, rain shift, changes in
20 migration patterns, range expansion, increase.

21 Down south, we're seeing, well, I'm
22 down in Sarasota, Florida, where we've seen
23 increased harmful algal blooms.

24 And so climate is something that is
25 going to remain with us, climate change as a
26 focus for the agency throughout this
27 administration.

28 I don't think any of us at this point
29 really knows what the intersection with fisheries
30 and climate, and in my case particularly,
31 recreational fisheries, will be.

32 We're going to have to explore that
33 really together to figure out what does that
34 mean? How do we -- how do we build more climate-
35 resilient fisheries? And what exactly does that
36 phrase mean?

37 There are other emerging issues,
38 emerging ocean uses, that I think we all need to
39 pay attention to, in particular the rec
40 community.

41 And those things are obvious to some
42 of you. I know Mike Pierdinock and other are
43 dealing with wind power already.

44 Clearly, that is going to spread
45 across the country, or it is. There are lease
46 blocks already in place up and down the east
47 coast and projects in the wings waiting to move
48 forward.

1 That is something that, from the rec
2 perspective, I'm concerned about the strength of
3 the rec voice at the table in that.

4 That's another one where, while we are
5 working together, strength in the voice of the
6 rec community in those discussions, you all, too,
7 are going to have to be proactive in entering
8 those discussions.

9 Aquaculture is another similar issue,
10 which is advancing. As there's substantial
11 interest in increasing marine aquaculture, it is
12 another competing use for ocean space, and we've
13 got to find a way to allow both activities,
14 fishing as well, traditional fishing as well as
15 aquaculture as that moves forward.

16 To that, and to try and sort of stay
17 ahead of the curve on engagement with that, we,
18 my team has partnered up with the Office of
19 Aquaculture this winter, and we held two or three
20 workshops or informational sessions with the
21 Office of Aquaculture and opened up to the rec
22 community, really just to begin to understand
23 what are the priorities or the concerns of the
24 rec community around that issue.

25 Not surprisingly, we immediately heard
26 access, opportunity, water quality issues,
27 concerns about disease spreading, how that
28 impacts foraged fish, things like that.

29 So that is an issue that is really at
30 the beginning of that, and we need to be able to
31 stay engaged on that to make sure that we can
32 coexist here.

33 Another issue broadly that I think is
34 another emerging ocean use, if you will, is the
35 30x30 Initiative under the President's executive
36 order.

37 I wouldn't normally put that under
38 ocean uses, but it goes to the same concept, how
39 do we coexist depending on how 30x30 is executed
40 with now wind power, aquaculture, conservation.

41 We need to make sure that fishermen
42 retain their opportunity and access to get out
43 there on the water.

44 Looking a little more fine scale, I
45 know that electronic reporting is an issue for
46 anglers around the country, both private and for-
47 hire sectors.

48 And I know that there's challenges

1 with duplicative or overlapping reporting
2 requirements.

3 HMS is working on that with the other
4 regions to try to minimize those challenges and
5 ACCSP.

6 We've also got the MAFAC ER Task
7 force. MAFAC, I'm sure most of you know, is the
8 Marine Fisheries Advisory Committee.

9 It's NOAA's FACA committee. We just
10 met with them for the past three days while
11 you've been in this meeting. I've been in that
12 meeting.

13 They have stood up an electronic
14 reporting task force who is -- that is comprised
15 of fishermen, app developers, statisticians, et
16 cetera, to try and provide information that can
17 really form the basis of a roadmap for advancing
18 ER in a -- in a thoughtful and productive way.

19 Depredation I know is another issue
20 out there for not just HMS but everybody.
21 Really, it is across the country, whether it's
22 sharks, porpoises, dolphins, sea lions, seals,
23 killer whales, it is impacting fisheries across
24 the country.

25 There are certainly laws in place that
26 are making responding challenging and limiting
27 the options of anglers and NOAA, the councils,
28 about how we can respond.

29 So it's an issue that we need to look
30 at sort of broadly. And unfortunately, with
31 those various species involved, there will be no
32 one-size-fits-all.

33 So I think it's going to be a
34 difficult issue to tackle, but it's clearly one
35 that's important to anglers and commercial
36 fishermen to address.

37 And then, the last sort of fine scale
38 issue for HMS, out of personal interest, the
39 billfish 250 limit.

40 I know how close we came this year.
41 There was a little hiccup with some QA/QC, but
42 even regardless of that, my recollection is we're
43 in the sort of upper 230s or mid-230s.

44 I have sort of a special interest in
45 that because I was there in the -- at the meeting
46 in Morocco when that was established. So I'm
47 sort of following that.

48 And I've spoken with Randy and I think

1 he is well aware and on top of the concept of
2 trying to maybe expand NOAA's ability to soften
3 our response a little bit.

4 As this came up this year, I think it
5 became apparent we have a pretty blunt stick to
6 respond, and I think there's interest in trying
7 to broaden out our options on that.

8 So I look forward to seeing how that
9 works out.

10 Data is another big issue. I know,
11 obviously, you're going to talk a lot about that
12 with the LPS discussion today, so I'll leave that
13 to the true experts.

14 And then shift a little bit towards
15 this afternoon with -- part of the reason I am
16 here is -- today is because we're coming up on
17 the next summit, National Rec Fish Summit in
18 2022.

19 We're again partnering up with our
20 previous partner, the Atlantic States Marine
21 Fisheries Commission, to execute this.

22 Right now, it is planned, we just
23 locked in the hotel for March 29 and 30 in 2022.
24 Excuse me.

25 And we are, as Randy said, right now
26 in the midst of conducting a series of virtual
27 discussions like this one to solicit inputs from
28 the public on what should we cover.

29 I'll go into that a little bit more
30 this afternoon. There's dozens of issues that
31 have been put in, but as we get there later, I'll
32 give you sort of a quick preview of some of the
33 topics that have floated to the top, if you will,
34 in terms of most frequently mentioned.

35 But we are excited about the next
36 summit. It's a -- it's a heavy lift, but we
37 really enjoy doing it, and it gives us really
38 guidance for about a four-year period of where
39 should we focus as an agency.

40 So with that, I will turn it back over
41 to Randy and Bennett, and say thank you in
42 advance for being here.

43 MR. BROOKS: Great, thanks, Russ, so
44 much for being here and those comments. At this
45 point, I want to hand it off to John Foster and
46 just really dive right into the large pelagic
47 survey presentation.

48 I will just remind folks, John and his

1 team have a -- have a fairly good amount of
2 material to run through.

3 So we'll just ask them to go straight
4 until 10:30, and then we'll take a break and then
5 we'll come back from that break and that will be
6 when we'll open it back up to you all for
7 clarifying questions.

8 So as we're going through this, please
9 take note if there's a specific question you have
10 on a slide, it would probably be really helpful
11 if you just jot down the slide number so that we
12 can sort of make sure we're hitting the --
13 hitting the questions that you all have.

14 But with that, John, let me hand it
15 off to you to introduce your team and walk us
16 through.

17 MR. FOSTER: Okay, great. Thanks,
18 Bennett. Let me start sharing my screen and the
19 presentation. Perfect. Okay, yes, looks like
20 it's up.

21 All right. So, in the interest of
22 time, I'll just say a very quick but sincere
23 thanks to Randy and Atlantic HMS Management
24 Division for coordinating today with the HMS
25 Advisory Panel meeting.

26 And again, thanks to all the
27 participants for either hanging in for another
28 day at the end of the meeting, the AP meeting, or
29 for joining us today for this topic.

30 So in terms of what we will be
31 covering today, I'll run through a quick
32 introduction of the LPS team and sort of where
33 LPS lives in terms of NOAA Fisheries and HMS
34 tasks.

35 I will then also cover the current
36 survey design and estimation methods for the
37 large pelagic survey, and then I will hand off to
38 Daemian Schreiber for the third topic, Operations
39 and Estimates, and then finally, Yong-Woo Lee
40 will cover an ongoing redesign project that we
41 have for the LPS.

42 So at NOAA Fisheries Office of Science
43 Technology, the LPS team has four members, Dr.
44 Yong-Woo Lee, Daemian Schreiber, Tony Kaufman,
45 and myself.

46 Yong-Woo came to us from Northwest
47 Pacific Fisheries Science Center where he handled
48 a number of assessments and quantitative analytic

1 tasks.

2 Within the LPS team, he is the team
3 lead, team leader. He also is our task manager
4 for operations and the LPS statistician.

5 Daemian Schreiber, many of you may
6 recognize that name. He comes to us from
7 Quantech, who has been the primary contractor for
8 both the LPS as well as the for-hire survey, the
9 FHS, on the Atlantic coast.

10 He served as the program manager there
11 for many years. Very familiar with the
12 operations side of it, and he serves now with us
13 as the Operations Coordinator for LPS as well as
14 for the for-hire survey.

15 Tony Kaufman also came to us from
16 Quantech. He is a data analyst and statistical
17 programmer for us.

18 He is heavily involved in developing
19 parts of our redesign project, which we'll talk
20 more about later.

21 And then finally, I am on the team as
22 the Chief for the Recreational Fisheries
23 Statistics Branch in the Office of Science and
24 Technology.

25 And when I first started, I was also
26 the LPS statistician and have since moved on, but
27 still stay involved with the team.

28 Okay, in terms of where the LPS lives
29 within NOAA Fisheries, again it is within the
30 Office of Science and Technology, within my
31 branch.

32 We also do a few other HMS-related
33 programs. We administer the Catch Card programs
34 that exist in Maryland and North Carolina as well
35 as participate in the quarterly billfish
36 accounting, where we provide analytic and sort of
37 tabulation support for that.

38 You're very familiar with the
39 management and regulatory tasks within the agency
40 all occurring within the Office of Sustainable
41 Fisheries, Atlantic HMS Management Division.

42 And then the assessment and research
43 tasks, generally housed within the Southeast
44 Fisheries Science Center in their Highly
45 Migratory Species Branch, among other units
46 within the center.

47 And they, of course, handle the stock
48 assessments, they calculate indices of abundance,

1 and do research related to population dynamics
2 and life history.

3 Okay, so that now will -- that was the
4 introduction. We'll now shift gears to cover
5 survey design and estimation methods.

6 This will be fairly detailed but still
7 at a somewhat high overview level.

8 So the primary role of the LPS is to
9 provide estimates of catch and effort for highly
10 migratory species and other large pelagics for
11 the recreational fisheries that are occurring off
12 of mid-Atlantic and North Atlantic regions in the
13 U.S., and specifically covering June through
14 October.

15 It is a complex design overall that
16 uses complemented surveys, and essentially that
17 just means there are separate surveys that
18 provide estimates for different components that
19 go into estimating overall catch and effort for
20 these fisheries.

21 The overall design is specialized to
22 cover Atlantic bluefin tuna, as well as other
23 related uncommon or pulse HMS fisheries.

24 And of course the estimates and the
25 data are used in stock assessments as well as
26 management tasks.

27 Just a bit more. The surveys are
28 actually performed in part under the authority
29 from the Atlantic Tunas Convention Act.

30 It relies heavily on the HMS vessel
31 permits from a couple of different categories
32 that we'll speak to more in a few minutes which
33 are required, and as part of the permit,
34 reporting or compliance with the survey requests
35 are mandatory.

36 And that's a huge quality feature for
37 the survey. It helps keep our response rates,
38 compliance rates high, ensuring that we don't
39 have errors introduced from things like high
40 nonresponse rates or high or noncompliance rates.

41 Of course, the estimates are used to
42 report U.S., in part, U.S. landings to ICCAT.
43 And as I mentioned earlier, this will be detailed
44 but still at a fairly high level.

45 So we have very, very complete
46 detailed technical documentation that will cover
47 all aspects of the LPS.

48 And we have a link provided in the

1 presentation. And once that's posted, if the
2 link is not working, we will certainly make that
3 live URL link available as well.

4 Okay, so now getting into some of the
5 details. In terms of the species covered by the
6 large pelagic survey, of course Atlantic bluefin
7 tuna, as I mentioned, is sort of a key priority
8 species.

9 Not only do we cover that species, but
10 we provide more detail on bluefin tuna in terms
11 of estimates by size class.

12 We also cover the BAYS tunas, of
13 course, billfish and swordfish species, the
14 coastal migratory shark species are covered as
15 well, as well as a few other large pelagics, such
16 as dolphin, greater amberjack, and wahoo.

17 It's a seasonal survey and regional in
18 that it doesn't cover all Atlantic states or the
19 entire year.

20 The coverage includes both private and
21 charter boats, ten states ranging from Maine
22 through Virginia, so the mid-Atlantic and New
23 England or North Atlantic regions, and the months
24 of June through October.

25 And again, this is tailored to cover
26 sort of the peak of the bluefin tuna as well as
27 related HMS Fisheries in these two regions or in
28 this broader region.

29 In terms of the survey, the individual
30 components within the overall LPS, there is a
31 telephone survey, the LPTS.

32 That is the primary source of effort
33 information for estimating the total number of
34 vessel trips.

35 There are separate surveys
36 administered to private boat anglers separate
37 from the charter sector, and I'll speak more to
38 that in a minute.

39 The other major component is an
40 intercept survey, the LPIS. So that's a dockside
41 survey with captains, vessel operators, at the
42 end of their fishing trips, at the marina, boat
43 ramp, whatever fishing access site they have
44 returned to at the end of their trip.

45 That survey provides us the catch rate
46 information, average catch per trip by species
47 and different catch types, as well as very
48 detailed trip characteristics.

1 And I'll speak to that more in a
2 separate slide.

3 The third component of the LPS is a
4 biological sampling component. This supports
5 assessment and life history and population
6 dynamic studies, but it's opportunistic in terms
7 of how the data are collected, meaning that it
8 doesn't have sort of a standardized design.

9 And so for that primary reason, we
10 don't use that data in estimating catch or
11 effort, but it is providing critical information
12 that's used in assessments in terms of things
13 like age and length keys as well as some of the
14 life history and population dynamics studies you
15 may be aware of that are, again, run out of the
16 Southeast Fisheries Science Center, in terms of
17 delineating stocks based on genetic information,
18 things like that.

19 Okay, so moving now to starting with
20 the telephone survey, again, which provides the
21 effort information primarily, and I'll start with
22 the private boat survey.

23 So again, it's estimating numbers of
24 vessel trips for the private boat mode. It's a
25 list frame telephone survey, and in this case,
26 that means we use the HMS permit list for both
27 the angling and general category permits.

28 That comprises the frame that we then
29 sample from. Again, because of a requirement
30 from the permit, reporting is mandatory.

31 And the sampling is stratified by
32 state and month and a two-week reference period,
33 which essentially means the captains are asked to
34 report their trips for a specific two-week period
35 of time.

36 Again, it covers Maine through
37 Virginia and June through October. A little
38 additional detail there, we don't actually start
39 sampling in New Hampshire or Maine, the two
40 northernmost states, until July, again, based on
41 the timing of when the fisheries season really
42 gets going there.

43 A key aspect is that we send advanced
44 notification letters through the surveys, so
45 captains are notified in advance of when they'll
46 be asked to report for the selected vessel.

47 As well, in terms of the calling, the
48 selected vessels, captains for the selected

1 vessels, are called in the week immediately
2 prior, or, excuse me, immediately following the
3 referenced, the two-week referenced period.

4 So while the trips are still fresh in
5 their minds, we make those telephone calls and
6 ask them for a report on those trips from the
7 prior two weeks.

8 This is a telephone interview, so
9 there's a live interviewer asking questions to
10 captains.

11 They are entering the information
12 directly into, recording it electronically into
13 what's called a CATI.

14 That's just a computer assistant
15 telephone interviewing. Basically just means
16 they're using a computer to record the
17 information as the interview progresses.

18 It's what's known as a trip profile
19 format or questionnaire format, which essentially
20 means that captains are asked about their most
21 recent trip and then they work backwards through
22 time, again, for the trips that occurred within
23 the most recent two weeks.

24 And there's detailed information
25 collected throughout each trip. These are just
26 some examples.

27 So, what site did the trip return to?
28 What were the target species for the trip? Was
29 it a trip associated with a tournament or not?

30 And then there's catch information
31 collected on a very limited number of species,
32 again, which generally don't have high bag
33 limits, so it's easier to remember the numbers of
34 individual fish that were caught.

35 And again, these are just for the LPS
36 trips. These are not for all types of fishing
37 that they might be doing.

38 Okay, so shifting gears now to the
39 phone survey for the charter boats to generate
40 their effort estimates.

41 Again, it's still in terms of numbers
42 of vessel trips, but here it's just for the
43 charter boats.

44 It is separate from the private
45 because it's conducted as an add-on or a
46 component within the more general for-hire
47 survey, which many of you may be familiar with.

48 This is a telephone survey that we

1 conduct to estimate for the general for-hire
2 sector charter boats, as well as head boats.

3 So this is a subset within that
4 overall general for-hire sampling. An again,
5 that's a list frame telephone survey of known
6 charter vessels.

7 And we're sampling specifically from
8 the vessels that have an identified HMS charter
9 boat permit within that larger group of vessels.

10 It's very similar to the private side
11 in terms of how it's stratified with one key
12 difference.

13 Instead of the two-week reference
14 period, it is shortened down to a one-week
15 reference period because charter captains are
16 generally taking quite a bit more trips within
17 any given time period, and so we cut that
18 reporting period down to one week so there's not
19 so many trips to try to recall.

20 Again, it's covering Maine through
21 Virginia, June through October. We send advanced
22 letters as well so captains know when their
23 vessels have been selected, the week that we'll
24 be asking about.

25 And again, all of the calls are done
26 within the week following the reference period
27 week.

28 So again, shortening down that window
29 of time that folks have to remember the trips.

30 Many captains are recording these
31 trips in a log anyway, so they have the
32 information but this still just helps keep it
33 fresh as possible in their minds.

34 So to give some sense of the scale of
35 these fisheries, or the number of permits for the
36 -- that the surveys are based on, these two
37 figures give numbers of permits by states covered
38 by the LPS for both the private and charter
39 modes.

40 In general, the private side is
41 somewhere between 10,000 to 15,000 permits a year
42 across all of these.

43 On the charter side, it's closer to
44 2,000 total permits across these states, and
45 that's typical in recent years.

46 Looking quickly at sample sizes and
47 response rates for the telephone surveys, here
48 we're using 2019.

1 We conducted just a bit over 5,000
2 completed interviews with private boat captains
3 and a little over 3,300 interviews with charter
4 captains, again for the LPS add on component of
5 the for-hire survey.

6 And response rates, just under 65
7 percent for the private boat captains, and just
8 almost 60 percent for the charter -- the charter
9 captains.

10 And again, for telephone surveys,
11 these response rates are still quite high and
12 boosted by the fact that reporting is required as
13 a condition of the permit.

14 Okay, so shifting gears now to the
15 LPIS, that's the intercept survey, the dockside
16 survey component.

17 Again, this is primarily conducted to
18 collect detailed catch and trip characteristic
19 information.

20 It gives us, allows us to estimate
21 catch rates, average catch per trip, by species
22 and size class, in the case of bluefin, as well
23 as disposition or catch type.

24 So that's things like landed fish
25 versus released alive fish or discarded at sea,
26 dead fish. That's what we mean by catch type of
27 disposition.

28 As I've said before, it's a dockside
29 survey of captains right as they have completed
30 their trip and returned to whatever site they've
31 ended the trip at.

32 And again, it is specific for large
33 pelagic trips. It does not cover all types of
34 recreational fishing. It's just for the species
35 of interest here.

36 Again, the design is complex. It's
37 stratified. It involves clustering. Sites are
38 clustered together for a given sampling
39 assignment.

40 And unequal selection probabilities,
41 really that just means that we want to target the
42 sampling to sites that will be more productive.

43 So sites that have higher activity
44 rates for this type of fishing, we will visit
45 those sites more often than we will go to sites
46 that have less of this type of fishing.

47 We still want to cover all of the
48 sites so that we're not introducing potential

1 systematic errors into the data, but we do need
2 to keep the sampling efficient, so we go again go
3 to sites where there's a higher chance of
4 encountering these types of trips more
5 frequently.

6 And then again, on stratification,
7 we're covering Maine through Virginia, June
8 through October, and the two private and charter
9 boat modes.

10 So just to give a sense of what
11 information we are collecting for folks that may
12 not be familiar with the survey, there's two
13 primary pieces of information.

14 Of course, we want to generate catch
15 rates, so we need the counts of fish per vessel
16 trip by species and catch type or disposition,
17 but we also collect information on the vessel
18 itself, state registration number, U.S. Coast
19 Guard documentation number, the HMS permit.

20 If the vessel has a permit, we collect
21 the category of the permit as well as the permit
22 number.

23 The samplers actually have permit
24 reference lists with them that they take into the
25 field that help accurately identify if the vessel
26 is on the permit frame or not.

27 And I'll speak to why that's important
28 in just a couple slides.

29 But beyond that, again, detailed trip
30 information, characterizing the effort for the
31 trip, numbers of fishing lines.

32 How many anglers were fishing? How
33 long were they fishing? How long was the trip?
34 What were the target species?

35 Where were they fishing? What were
36 the general methods used? Trolling, chunking,
37 things like that.

38 Some environmental characteristics if
39 they were recorded, water temperature, depth.

40 Generally, for this fishery, captains
41 have that information. It helps them target
42 specific species.

43 And if they do and they'll share it
44 with us, we record it. And then observations on
45 individual fish.

46 Overall length recorded for individual
47 fish, if that's available. For sharks, we can --
48 we can collect sex information as well.

1 And remember, the LPBS is a separate
2 component for more detailed biological
3 information.

4 Okay, so for sample sizes and response
5 rates for the intercept survey, again, in 2019 we
6 conducted a little over 2,300 individual sampling
7 assignments.

8 That's a sampler, and interviewer
9 going out in the field, visiting specific sites
10 on a specific date.

11 That resulted in about 2,400 completed
12 intercepts with private vessels, private angler
13 vessel trips, and a little over 1,600 for the
14 charter boat, with a very high response rate of
15 just about 98 percent, again, because reporting
16 is required as part of the permit.

17 That greatly incentivizes captains to
18 participate in the survey.

19 Just a quick, a little bit more detail
20 on the biological sampling. Again, this is to
21 collect hard parts, otoliths, dorsal spines for
22 age and growth work and age link key work, muscle
23 tissues, gonad samples for, again, life history,
24 population dynamic research.

25 It's opportunistic, as I mentioned
26 earlier. We conduct about -- we target about 150
27 assignments per year.

28 Again, that's within the LPS range.
29 So June through October and Virginia through
30 Maine.

31 Its focus is bluefin tuna, but we do
32 collect information on the other species,
33 yellowfin tuna, the other BAYS as well.

34 And the samples are sent to the Panama
35 City, Florida, lab within the science center for
36 processing.

37 MR. BROOKS: And John, just a heads up
38 here, you're about three, four minutes left in
39 your 20.

40 MR. FOSTER: Okay, that's good. We're
41 getting close. And let me just make sure I know
42 exactly how close. Okay, I've got three slides
43 left.

44 Okay, so quickly on the effort
45 estimation, the way this works with the telephone
46 survey data, again, it's done separately for
47 private boats compared, and charter boats.

48 So you essentially, with the data that

1 we collect over the phone, we can calculate an
2 average number of LPS trips taken per vessel.

3 We then multiply that by the total
4 number of vessels on the frame, and that gives us
5 the total number of trips, again, separately for
6 private boat compared to charter boat.

7 That's just limited, though to boats
8 that are on the frame, and so there can be boats
9 off the frame and we have to account for that as
10 well. And I'll speak to that in a separate slide
11 here.

12 For the intercept survey, again, catch
13 rates are one of the primary pieces of
14 information that we calculate from the intercept
15 survey data.

16 Again, this is done separately by
17 state area, month, and fishing mode. State area
18 is, in some cases we combine two states. For
19 example, Connecticut, Rhode Island are combined.

20 In other cases, we end up splitting a
21 state. So New Jersey is split into north and
22 south and it aligns with some management zone
23 delineations.

24 Again, separately by species, and then
25 bluefin tuna, we do it separately by size class
26 and again, the different dispositions, kept or
27 landed fish, released live, discarded dead,
28 within those separate dispositions.

29 We also, as I mentioned, we need to
30 correct for any effort that's not covered by the
31 phone survey frames.

32 So that would be vessels that either
33 don't have the permit, they're targeting species
34 that don't need a permit but are within the LPS
35 grouping of species, or they may have gotten
36 their permit so recently that it was after we did
37 a pull from the permit database to create the
38 frame.

39 You can buy it the same day you take
40 your first trip. And we need to account for all
41 of those types of trips.

42 So this information comes from the
43 intercept survey, as well, again, with those
44 detailed vessel identification fields that we
45 collect.

46 All right. This is the last slide in
47 this section. Just to sort of schematically put
48 it, put the estimation all together.

1 So again, with the LPTS, that's the
2 phone survey, that's our primary source of
3 effort, vessel trip information.

4 We do use some of the information from
5 the intercept survey to adjust for those off
6 frame trips.

7 So again, for example, in the
8 intercept survey, extreme example, if half the
9 trips that we see on the intercept survey for a
10 given state and month don't have the HMS permit,
11 that's not realistic, but that just makes the
12 math easy, if half of the trips didn't have the
13 permit, then we would take our LPTS effort
14 estimate and double it to account for the fact
15 that half the trips that we saw on the intercept
16 survey didn't have the permit.

17 That's just the flip of that fraction.
18 The intercept survey, again, is the primary
19 source for the catch rate.

20 That's for average catch per trip. We
21 multiply those pieces together, total number of
22 trips, average catch per trip, and that gives us
23 our total catch estimates.

24 And again, the link is provided for
25 much more detailed information that we included
26 in a more general document.

27 Okay, and that is the end of the
28 section. Again, I apologize I had to go through
29 that so quickly.

30 And please, if you have questions, I
31 hope that you were able to note them, and we'll
32 have plenty of time to get to those, anything I
33 didn't cover in detail, at the end of the
34 presentation.

35 And with that, Bennett, I think I
36 will, I can hand it back to you.

37 MR. BROOKS: Okay. Let's just hand it
38 straight over to Daemian Schreiber to talk about
39 operations and estimate production.

40 We'll just keep that going. And
41 again, for everyone who's listening here, just
42 jot down any questions you might have.

43 MR. SCHREIBER: Hi, everybody, I want
44 to make sure you can hear me okay.

45 MR. BROOKS: We can hear you
46 perfectly, Daemian.

47 MR. SCHREIBER: Great.

48 MR. BROOKS: If you could just bring

1 up your slides.

2 MR. SCHREIBER: That's the wrong one
3 there, isn't it?

4 MR. BROOKS: It's right now on half
5 the screen.

6 MR. SCHREIBER: Okay. Let's see. Is
7 that better?

8 MR. BROOKS: Yep.

9 MR. SCHREIBER: Okay.

10 MR. BROOKS: Yep.

11 MR. SCHREIBER: So, yes, thank you,
12 everyone, for joining us today and thanks again
13 for the privilege to explain some of the
14 intricacies of the large pelagic survey
15 operations and the production of estimates from
16 the survey.

17 I'll be showing you some examples of
18 the public queries that can be done on the data
19 to view the estimates in a -- in a graphical
20 manner.

21 But there, I should point out, are
22 also many tables of data available and raw data
23 as well.

24 So first of all, a brief overview of
25 the annual operations for the LPS. As John
26 mentioned, a contractor conducts the intercept
27 portion of the survey as well as the telephone
28 portion for the private LPTS, the survey for
29 angling and general category HMS permit holders.

30 And the ACCSB and state partners are
31 conducting the for-hire survey and the add-on for
32 the LPTS during June through October.

33 This slide really highlights more of
34 the LPIS operations. Just so you know, at the
35 end of each year the contractor goes back through
36 the data and evaluates field interviewer
37 performance and decides who they want to invite
38 back in the coming year.

39 They also plan for their recruiting in
40 that time period around April. And it's around
41 that time when a comprehensive site register
42 review is conducted to evaluate the pressures
43 which are used in the draw.

44 John mentioned sampling locations with
45 prior productivity, more fishing activity.

46 Essentially, it's the way that the
47 assignments are drawn so that they can be
48 productive.

1 And the survey materials are also
2 reviewed. So we look at the questionnaires, the
3 questions specifically, the layout, how quickly
4 the interviewers are able to get through the
5 interview to try to reduce the burden on
6 respondents while still obtaining all of the
7 information that we need for the survey.

8 And for planning purposes,
9 essentially, there is a kickoff meeting with the
10 contractor that takes place every year in April.

11 In May, the contractor conducts the
12 training for the field interviewers. And that
13 training takes course over a couple of days.

14 There's a fish identification test.
15 They are shown pictures of species to identify.

16 And then they, if they pass the test,
17 they are then trained to conduct the survey.

18 And that includes a full review of the
19 procedures, manual, and the protocols for
20 conducting the survey.

21 Now, when sampling actually begins, or
22 is conducted, June through October, there are a
23 lot of other moving parts.

24 I mentioned the site register at the
25 -- at the beginning of the year, but each month
26 of sampling is drawn separately.

27 And there are monthly site register
28 updates. And to go along with those monthly
29 sample draws and monthly assignment activities,
30 they include scheduling, monitoring the results
31 of those assignments, tallying the number of
32 interviews, responding to or providing
33 information on refusals, even though they are
34 relatively few and compliance is high.

35 And with that, with those activities,
36 there are other activities that we're doing at
37 NOAA, reviewing the sample before the
38 interviewers are scheduled, evaluating the draw
39 to ensure temporal coverage throughout the month,
40 that the clusters of sites are being drawn in
41 proportion to the pressures that they have, and
42 then reviewing the schedule that's delivered to
43 us, and each week during the conduct of the
44 survey, meeting with the contractor for updates
45 and reviewing reports that cumulatively for the
46 month put a good -- put the survey in perspective
47 for us and allow us to plan and/or react if there
48 are problems in the field, like if an interviewer

1 is not allowed at a site for a particular reason
2 or an area of the site is what I'm getting at.

3 So also during those months, the
4 contractor is conducting unannounced quality
5 control field visits on the interviewers and
6 following up on the telephone with respondents to
7 ensure not only that they were interviewed that
8 day but also that the -- that the interviewer
9 asked to see any available catch, to measure that
10 catch if it's available for measurement, and that
11 the interviewer was courteous and professional.

12 So there is a preliminary data review
13 that also takes place at the end of each month
14 after the data is delivered.

15 So we get the June data at the end of
16 July. So there's roughly a three-week period
17 after the end of the month that the contractor is
18 processing the data using error tracking programs
19 provided by NOAA.

20 And then they deliver the data to NOAA
21 and we check it again. And I should just point
22 out that there's a lot of back and forth if there
23 are any errors flagged between the contractor and
24 the interviewers and then between NOAA and the
25 contractor, who then sometimes have to go back to
26 the interviewers again for those -- for those
27 data processing or cleaning purposes.

28 And so we have very high confidence
29 that the data has undergone a thorough QA/QC
30 process.

31 I shared also that there's a mid-
32 season data review meeting where the field
33 supervisors attend with NOAA and the contractor
34 to go over raw data, fish dumps, we call them.

35 They're essentially less fish by
36 species and their length, frequencies, we also
37 look at the preliminary estimates, monthly
38 estimates.

39 So after the mid-season data review,
40 there is also a final data review at the end of
41 the year in December, and then final estimates
42 are produced later on in April. Sorry.

43 MR. BROOKS: Daemian, I wanted -- this
44 is Bennett. I just wanted to let you know, I'm
45 not sure how you're planning to move through
46 these, but you are about at the halfway mark for
47 time.

48 MR. SCHREIBER: Okay, thanks.

1 MR. BROOKS: And I know you're on
2 Slide 1, so --

3 MR. SCHREIBER: Yeah.

4 MR. BROOKS: Just flag it.

5 MR. SCHREIBER: There are a lot of
6 activities that happen. So thanks, I'll move on.
7 This slide just shows the location of the LPIS
8 sites.

9 This slide shows a couple examples of
10 boat ramp and a marina where the interviews are
11 taking place.

12 The sites are clustered, as I
13 mentioned, and most of the assignments take place
14 in the late afternoon or early evening.

15 The graph on the right side of the
16 slide shows the hour of the interview time. So
17 you can see in general, these are mostly
18 recreational trips or charter trips that are
19 coming back in the late afternoon, starting
20 around 3:00.

21 And the assignments last from two to
22 eight hours.

23 Here we have a picture of an
24 interviewer conducting a survey in Cape Anne
25 Marina in Gloucester, Mass. That's a couple
26 years ago.

27 And so they are dockside, interviewing
28 the captain about their trips.

29 Again, here's another idea of -- or so
30 you have an idea of the layout of insight of Rye,
31 New Hampshire.

32 Not all sites offer this kind of
33 visibility, but if the interviewer were to be at
34 the dock, that's kind of blown up there, they can
35 look out and see any boats coming into the harbor
36 there and then watch where people go when they
37 get off their boat to ask them about their
38 fishing activity for the day.

39 And only the folks who are, who have
40 returned from trips targeting the large pelagic
41 species are interviewed for this survey. The
42 rest are tallied.

43 As you know, there are several size
44 classes of bluefin tuna. The majority of the --
45 of the fish that we see in the mid-Atlantic tend
46 to be school to small medium, where in New
47 England most fish are, with bluefin anyway, are
48 commercial size class.

1 But not always. And in some years,
2 there are runs of school size fish in that area
3 in New England.

4 So again, the quality assurance
5 activities that are in place involve interviewer
6 training, making sure the interviewers know how
7 to identify the species on site, that they are
8 knowledgeable about the objectives of the survey,
9 and understand on a basic level the design, and
10 mostly, most importantly, that they follow
11 procedures.

12 The telephone interviewers are
13 experienced and trained on the survey, and they
14 are supervised by remote screen viewing and
15 listening in to calls periodically for quality
16 control.

17 And as I mentioned, the dockside
18 interviewers are surprised sometimes, but
19 nevertheless, there's that follow-up, too, with
20 the captains after the fact by phone.

21 So in data entry, the operator, there
22 is an operator assistant or rather an optical
23 character recognition assistant entry of forms.

24 That just means that there's a person
25 who's viewing the screen and as a computer
26 program captures the data, they're confirming or
27 correcting what the computer program has read.

28 And I already mentioned the extensive
29 data error checking programs and processes and
30 data review meetings.

31 As a reviewer, the estimates are
32 products for the telephone survey for effort by
33 boat type, for each month, by each area, and the
34 catch estimates are produced in a similar manner,
35 including the catch type, fish that are kept,
36 released dead, or released alive, or species,
37 with bluefin, by size classes.

38 The query tools available online, so
39 that the estimates that are produced can be
40 viewed in tabular or graphical formats.

41 Quickly, I just want to go through
42 some of the recent estimates. So you can see
43 there was a big increase in 2020.

44 That's still in line with historical
45 activity, the highest being most recent, I guess,
46 year being back in 2007.

47 Both modes of activity effort were up
48 in 2020. In August, you could query this

1 yourself, but charter activity was increased in
2 Massachusetts and private was pretty stable in
3 August year to year.

4 These are the annual bluefin tuna, all
5 sizes, landings, for the last ten years. And you
6 can see that they increased.

7 The colors correspond with the month
8 of sampling. So you can see that fewer fish were
9 harvested in October compared to the other months
10 last year.

11 Again, this is another query by all
12 size classes for all modes and all states. So
13 the top one has large size class, followed by
14 large medium, large school, school, small medium,
15 and young school, excuse me, young school, being
16 those fish that are under 27 inches curved fork
17 length.

18 Occasionally, they are encountered by
19 the survey.

20 These are the number of fish that were
21 released alive in the same way. So you can see
22 the young school are more often released alive.

23 In 2020, it was more than 1,500 young
24 school fish. There are annual landings of
25 yellowfin tuna available.

26 Again, these are estimates produced by
27 combining the telephone and intercept survey
28 data. And 2020 was a good year for yellowfin
29 according to the data.

30 Dolphin go up and down in annual
31 landings. And shortfin mako, you can see the act
32 of regulation with the emergency rule being first
33 placed in 2018.

34 And that is the end of my slides, so
35 than you.

36 MR. BROOKS: Thank you, Daemian. And
37 you stuck your landing on that, even finished a
38 minute ahead of time for Yong-Woo. You get an
39 extra minute.

40 Thanks. And again, to anyone who
41 might have joined, we're walking through all the
42 presentations.

43 We'll have one more, we'll then take
44 a break, and we'll come back and get any of your
45 clarifying questions.

46 So let's hand it off to Yong-Woo Lee
47 who will talk to us about the LPS redesign
48 project. Yong-Woo, are you there? There you

1 are.
2 MR. LEE: Okay.
3 MR. BROOKS: If you could just call up
4 your presentation.
5 MR. LEE: Can you hear me okay?
6 MR. BROOKS: We can hear you just
7 fine. A little bit closer, but it's pretty good.
8 Yep.
9 MR. LEE: I'm too loud?
10 MR. BROOKS: No, you're good.
11 MR. LEE: Okay.
12 MR. BROOKS: But we just need to see
13 your presentation, that's all.
14 MR. LEE: Okay, gosh, good morning and
15 happy Friday. I'm trying to catch my breath.
16 There was a lawn care guy, my
17 neighbor, and their lawnmower was so loud ran
18 over there and ran after him to tell him to stop.
19 Anyway --
20 MR. BROOKS: Yong-Woo, we're not
21 seeing your presentation yet.
22 MR. LEE: Oh, okay.
23 MR. BROOKS: You don't see it yet?
24 MR. LEE: I'm not seeing it yet. If
25 anyone else is, jump in, but no.
26 MR. BROOKS: All right, and then if
27 you can do -- there we go, perfect.
28 MR. LEE: Thank you. My name's Yong-
29 Woo Lee. Good morning and happy Friday. I'm
30 going to talk about the LPS redesign projects.
31 And throughout my presentation, you'll
32 be able to hear this term, LPPS, a lot. This is
33 an acronym for LPS Pilot Survey.
34 So this is different from LPIS, LPTS,
35 those terms that you heard from previous
36 presentations.
37 So what are the tasks that are
38 involved in the redesign projects? I listed some
39 of the tasks in the time sequence order.
40 So number one, baseline assessments of
41 current LPS design data and estimates, and then
42 based on the findings, we needed to develop new
43 survey design.
44 And then we need to test that new
45 survey design in the field. That's where this
46 LPPS comes in.
47 And once it's confirmed that the new
48 design is good, valid, and working well in the

1 field, then we should look at our survey design
2 and estimation method, certified by MRIP.

3 And I'm going to explain to you in the
4 later slides about the MRIP process. And then we
5 need to calibrate the historical estimates
6 relative to the estimates coming out from the new
7 design.

8 Once everything is good, then we
9 should be able to go ahead and fully implement
10 the new design for the large pelagic survey.

11 And the redesign items, I'll point out
12 that the redesign is focused on the intercept
13 survey because that's where a lot of questions
14 and concerns come up.

15 So I shared this table, because that
16 table, about three years ago in the AP meeting
17 back in 2018, so we laid out our plan about the
18 redesign projects.

19 And it takes seven years. And we
20 categorized the tasks into four different phases.

21 And you see the columns over here span
22 from 2018 all the way to 2024. That's the year
23 that we anticipate to complete the project and go
24 with full implementation.

25 And you will see some of the cells
26 that overlap between the phases because some
27 tasks needs to be done simultaneously to reduce
28 the overall timeframe.

29 This is the table showing where we
30 are. So we started the project in 2018 and we
31 were able to finish the fairly comprehensive
32 baseline assessment and then came up with a new
33 design with the help of expert statistical
34 consultants.

35 And also they did computer simulations
36 to regulate the design. And once we have a good
37 design in our hands, last year, in 2020, we did a
38 pilot test in a subset of LPS states, and this
39 year again, we will be doing a pilot study in
40 other LPS states.

41 So last year, we did a pilot survey in
42 Mass, Delaware, and Maryland. Those are
43 completed.

44 And despite the pandemic, we were able
45 to do a pretty good pilot survey in those areas.

46 This year, we will be conducting pilot
47 survey in Mass, Rhode Island, Connecticut, and
48 Virginia.

1 Next year, the rest of the LPS states
2 will be subject to the pilot test, New Hampshire,
3 New York, and New Jersey.

4 So why we try to cover different LPS
5 states in different years, because we need
6 benchmark data and benchmark estimates for
7 calibration.

8 That's why we try to hit all of the
9 LPS states with the new survey design.

10 Okay, so what is the motivation of for
11 LPS redesign? Two main motivations. First one
12 is MRIP certification for design, estimation
13 method, and data standards.

14 Some of you already heard a lot about
15 the MRIP program. It stands for Marine
16 Recreational Information Program.

17 It is a data collection and analysis
18 initiative by NOAA Fisheries. The program is
19 trying to implement the national network of
20 recreational fishing surveys based on the state-
21 regional-federal partnership.

22 You can learn more about the MRIP
23 program by visiting the MRIP website.

24 So the network is published, national
25 network of recreational fishing surveys. MRIP
26 sets up certain standards for any fishing survey
27 to be certified.

28 So in order to join the national
29 network as a standardized survey, we want to have
30 our LPS design and estimation method to pass
31 through the MRIP certification process.

32 Secondary motivation was that back in
33 2018, there was an HMS implementation plan
34 published and out of 10 priorities, LPS redesign
35 was listed, identified as a number one top
36 priority.

37 So these are the major motivations for
38 LPS redesign project.

39 What are the issues and concerns when
40 it comes to LPS? We categorize into two major
41 ones.

42 Number one is it that it departures
43 from probability-based sampling. I will get into
44 more detail about this.

45 Even so, there is a conservative on
46 these matches between design and estimation.

47 So what are the departures from
48 probability-based sampling in current LPIS? It

1 can be characterized by coverage gaps.

2 Some survey designs and survey
3 operations create some concerns about coverage
4 gaps.

5 First one, multisite clusters for the
6 different sites within the cluster. Depending on
7 the fishing activity, they may stay only five
8 minutes or some in good fishing activity sites,
9 they may stay more than three hours.

10 That type of variable sampling choice.
11 So this graph shows the number of -- on the left
12 side, it shows the number of clusters for each
13 state.

14 And as you can see, of course,
15 different LPS states have different numbers of
16 axis sites.

17 And some sites are clustered together,
18 and we call them multisite cluster. Some sites
19 stand alone as a single-site cluster.

20 And you can see, as you can see the
21 green bar indicates the multisite clusters, red
22 bar is the single-site clusters.

23 And some states, it's like Maine and
24 New York, Rhode Island, all those sites are
25 clustered together to form the multisite
26 clusters.

27 And the blue line is the average
28 number of sites per cluster in each state. The
29 point I'm trying to make here is that there is a
30 bunch of sites that are grouped together to form
31 multisite clusters.

32 And the samplers will spend, again,
33 samplers spend different amount of time in each
34 cluster, depending upon the fishing activities.
35 It's non-probability sampling manner.

36 Number two issue that creates coverage
37 gaps, variable sampling times. Depending on,
38 again, depending on the fishing activity,
39 samplers may stay a short amount of time or may
40 stay a much longer time.

41 It varies between two and eight hours.
42 So the box plot shows the assignment durations
43 for the past five years from 2016.

44 One thing that you can notice is the
45 operation is variable, as short as slightly less
46 than two hours or up to nine hours.

47 It's fairly consistent, that's a good
48 thing, between the years. The red line indicates

1 the five-year average. So it's right around
2 three hours.

3 But again, sometimes some assignment
4 is shorter, some assignments are longer. And
5 that creates the different issue about
6 probability sampling.

7 So number three coverage gap issue is
8 missing morning and night sampling. And as
9 Daemian pointed out, a survey has to be focused
10 on afternoon sampling.

11 So this is the time distribution
12 between telephone survey and the intercept survey
13 data.

14 The green area is the time disposition
15 of return trips based on the telephone survey.
16 And the pink area is the intercept survey time.

17 And good thing is that the intercept
18 tries to hit the hot spot or sweet spot of the
19 return trips.

20 However, as you can see in the light
21 green area, there are some areas like morning and
22 the late evening, late hour -- late hour -- late
23 hours.

24 Those trips didn't get captured by the
25 intercept survey. So that's why our current
26 intercept survey focused on -- focused on the
27 afternoon sampling time.

28 So another major issue of current LPIS
29 is a mismatch between design and estimation. As
30 you learned from John and Daemian's presentation,
31 current LPIS is fairly complex, multistage with
32 site clustering, and also it utilized something
33 called, we use this acronym, PPSWOR.

34 It's stands for probability
35 proportional to size without replacement.

36 Anyway, the key thing is that for the
37 sample draw, it tries to utilize the site
38 pressure fishing activity of the past years for
39 each access site for the sample draw.

40 And also, the current design has a
41 variable assignment duration. For the estimation
42 side, it moves these complex features of the
43 design.

44 It assumes that every observation has
45 equal probability, meaning that it has an equal
46 sampling rate.

47 And because of that, the estimation
48 has an unrated estimation procedure. And this

1 may lead to a higher precision than the actual.

2 So those are the
3 discrepancies between the design and estimation
4 of current intercept survey.

5 I'm just trying to highlight that
6 samples, number of samples drawn by the sampling
7 process is aligned with relative fishing pressure
8 by site groups or site clusters.

9 So this is the reason that if you use
10 very low activity site consistently, you may not
11 run into any interviews because those are low
12 activity sites have much lesser chance of sending
13 samplers.

14 So what we tried to improve with
15 redesign, so the goal of redesign is to improve
16 intercept survey to be more statistically valid
17 and robust, but at the same time, trying to
18 maintain sampling productivity is a simple
19 statement but it is more like chasing two rabbits
20 going opposite directions.

21 So we want to have a statistical
22 design that is robust and valid, but at the same
23 time, we want to have enough data coming from the
24 intercept survey.

25 So with the new design, to address
26 goals and issues that I already mentioned, we
27 decided to go with a single-site approach rather
28 than multi-site approach, and then also we fixed
29 the time intervals.

30 So you already saw the maps of site
31 locations. So we no longer group the sites into
32 clusters. Every site is single-site sampling
33 unit in the pilot study, pilot survey.

34 And also we fixed amount of the
35 assignment time duration to three hours, and
36 there are four different time intervals per day,
37 starting from 10 a.m. all the way to 10 p.m.

38 And each time interval has different
39 fishing pressure that we apply to the sample
40 process.

41 A main feature of the new design is,
42 I told you about maintaining productivity. So
43 you can have a great statistically valid design,
44 but if it doesn't incur enough data points, then
45 it doesn't work for us.

46 So we want to have a design that is
47 valid, statistically valid, but at the same time,
48 incur, bring enough data to us.

1 So to do that, we used statistical
2 consultants. We came up with this idea of
3 adaptive sampling.

4 So adaptive sampling allows for the
5 movement of a subset of already drawn
6 assignments. And samplers can utilize some
7 factors, like weather factors, fishing
8 conditions, and regulations, to move from, to
9 move assignments from low fishing pressure site
10 or expect to the low productive to the site, move
11 to the site that expected to be more productive.

12 So this is designed to keep the, keep
13 and maintain the sampling productivity. One
14 major issue with this adaptive sampling approach
15 is that you can see adaptive sampling as kind of
16 opportunistic sampling, meaning that it's
17 difficult to provide a sampling rate to those
18 opportunistic samples.

19 And we devised a way of estimating the
20 inclusion property for those adaptive samples
21 with the rest of the property samples.

22 As I mentioned, the computer
23 simulations come from that estimate unbiased with
24 a relatively high precision. So we are very
25 hopeful with the new design.

26 And again, we want to give credit to
27 our statistic expert consultants for coming up
28 with a new design and conducting a computer
29 simulation for confirmation.

30 So again, we are in 2021. We will be
31 conducting another field survey. And then we
32 will be looking into a MRIP certification
33 process. And we will study more about what will
34 it take to calibrate old estimates, historical
35 estimates.

36 Anyway, we have this schedule, and
37 luckily, so far, we have been marching along as
38 scheduled.

39 Again, our target for the full
40 implementation is 2024, but you can have a plan
41 but there could be some obstacles to delay your
42 project date, to meeting the target date.

43 So there are some valuable scenarios
44 for delaying factors. Like what if pilot survey
45 suggests that we need -- we need to tweak design
46 to be more productive or for some -- to
47 accommodate for some deficiency?

48 What if we need additional

1 benchmarking data for better calibration? Or if
2 MRIP certification process is delayed?

3 What if there is enough desire to
4 extend the survey to cover more months? For
5 example, there are some indications that bluefin
6 tuna tends to appear in the Northern area in arid
7 season.

8 So to capture that, you may want to
9 extend the sampling time period coverage. What
10 if we want to expand our survey to the states in
11 Southeast area, Gulf of Mexico, or Caribbean
12 regions.

13 So this variable scenarios may delay
14 the timing of the full implementation, but we are
15 hopeful and we will try to work hard, do our best
16 to meet the target date.

17 That was my last slide. Thank you
18 very much.

19 MR. BROOKS: Great. Thank you, Yong-
20 Woo, and thank you, Daemian and John, for I think
21 sharing a tremendous amount of information in a
22 really effective way. So thank you for those
23 presentations.

24 What I want to do now is go to a break
25 here. Let's have about 15 minutes. We'll
26 reconvene at 10:45 sharp.

27 And then we'll spend the next 45
28 minutes taking clarifying questions. I see
29 there's two folks already in the queue, David
30 Schalit and Bob Hueter.

31 And again, I really ask folks to spend
32 -- only post questions just understanding right
33 now the information that was presented, a lot of
34 information that I'm sure are questions.

35 You want to make sure you're
36 understanding what was shared. And then we'll
37 come back in the afternoon and open that
38 conversation more broadly to build in more
39 perspective.

40 So let's go to our break now. And
41 John or Randy, anything you want to say real fast
42 before we go to the break?

43 MR. BLANKINSHIP: No, I don't have
44 anything.

45 MR. BROOKS: Okay.

46 MR. FOSTER: Yeah, Bennett, me,
47 either. Thank you.

48 MR. BROOKS: Okay. Great. Then let's

1 go to break and we'll reconvene at a quarter of
2 sharp. Thanks, everybody.

3 (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter
4 went off the record at 10:34 a.m. and resumed at
5 10:47 a.m.)

6 MR. BROOKS: All right. Let's jump in
7 here, and just to remind us, about 45 minutes now
8 for clarifying questions.

9 I really want to make sure folks are
10 understanding the information that was presented.
11 Again, later in the afternoon you'll have a
12 chance to have higher level discussion about the
13 LPS.

14 But right now, I really want to make
15 sure folks are tracking all the information that
16 was just shared with us.

17 So I've got four people in the queue
18 so far. To the folks who are asking questions, I
19 ask you to be as succinct as you can in your
20 question just so we can get to as many of them as
21 possible.

22 And if you have multiple questions,
23 let's just start with one or two per person and
24 then we can double back.

25 I just want to make sure everyone has
26 a chance to fold in here. And if you could lower
27 your hand after you ask the question.

28 So let's start with David Schalit and
29 then we'll go to Bob Hueter. So if we could open
30 it.

31 So, David, you had a question before
32 but maybe not anymore. All right, let's go to
33 Bob Hueter. Okay, Bob, your line is open.

34 MR. HUETER: Hi, good morning. Good
35 morning, everyone, can you hear me?

36 MR. BROOKS: Yes, we do. Thanks.

37 MR. HUETER: Great. Fantastic
38 presentation on the LPS program. It's the best
39 I've ever seen. I learned a lot. Really, I
40 really appreciate it, to the three guys.

41 Before I ask my questions, I do want
42 to say that the intercept surveys are fantastic
43 educational tool and must remember that value to
44 your LPS, not only for the fishers in their
45 learning but also to the surveyors.

46 And I go back to when I was a grad
47 student and I did some intercept survey to make a
48 little money and I learned so much during those

1 experiences.

2 It's a great -- it's a great
3 educational tool and something that students
4 should be, and fisheries should be encouraged to
5 try for a while.

6 I have three questions, but real
7 quick. I think they're going to be pretty short
8 to answer, at least the first two.

9 The first one is, I don't understand
10 if reporting is mandatory for the telephone
11 survey why the response rate is only about 60-64
12 percent.

13 I would have thought that permit
14 removal would be, well, permits themselves, would
15 be contingent upon compliance. So maybe somebody
16 can explain that.

17 The second question is what is the
18 annual cost of the LPS program? I'd like to know
19 approximately what that is, including this
20 redesign effort.

21 And then most importantly, in
22 Daemian's presentation, he presented some graphs
23 on landings, but instead of landings, can someone
24 show us or tell us about the CPU e-trends?

25 That's the key because you guys are
26 collecting effort, and landings is one thing but
27 it's really catch per unit effort that's
28 important here. Thank you.

29 MR. BROOKS: Great. Thanks, Bob. So
30 first question, if reporting is mandatory, why is
31 the rate so low?

32 MR. FOSTER: I'll take a shot at this
33 first and then Daemian or Yong-Woo. So in the
34 field, and answering it, I guess, from a field
35 perspective first.

36 So in the intercept survey, it's sort
37 of very clear, or much clearer, why someone may
38 be refusing, or that not participating is an
39 actual refusal.

40 On the phone, it could just be that
41 they never answered the phone, and there could be
42 a wide -- a wide array of reasons for that.

43 So it's much -- it's much less clear
44 when someone is -- sometimes it is clear when
45 someone is refusing to answer the phone and
46 there's a hard refusal.

47 But that is typically a small fraction
48 of the overall non-contacts, we could call it,

1 non-response.

2 Again, a much larger fraction of it is
3 just unable to contact someone. Could be changed
4 numbers or they're not answering their phone for
5 any number of reasons.

6 So it's much harder to sort of pin
7 that down and for that reason, it's something
8 that we can't -- we can't ever fully address.

9 And we take up to ten call attempts
10 within that week for each selected unit, but we
11 can't, we don't want to just keep going
12 indefinitely.

13 And that's kind of what we have seen
14 as the sort of cost-effective point is ten call
15 attempts.

16 So I'll stop there on that one.
17 Thanks.

18 MR. BROOKS: Annual cost of the LPS
19 program? And then I think that was including the
20 survey redesign.

21 MR. FOSTER: Yeah, Daemian, perhaps
22 you could handle that one?

23 MR. SCHREIBER: Thanks. So including
24 the redesign, I'm going to estimate it's about \$1
25 million or \$1.25 million.

26 MR. BROOKS: Okay.

27 MR. SCHREIBER: With the pilot.

28 MR. BROOKS: And then the last
29 question was around tracking CPUE trends as
30 opposed to landings? Anyone want to jump in on
31 that? Is there information on CPUE or any
32 thoughts on that?

33 MR. FOSTER: Yeah, go ahead, Yong-Woo.

34 MR. LEE: Yeah. The recording tool
35 doesn't have an option to produce a CPUE in the
36 table form or a graphical form.

37 But, yes, we do have CPUE and we try
38 to CPUE, but it's just not available at the
39 moment in the web tool.

40 MR. BROOKS: Okay, so tracked but not
41 available. Brad, I saw your camera turn on. Did
42 you want to jump in on that? Or one of these
43 questions?

44 MR. MCHALE: No, just standing by to
45 support in case it was more of a program-centric
46 -- need a program-centered person to say
47 anything.

48 MR. BROOKS: Got it. Thanks. Okay,

1 thanks. Next, Rick Weber?

2 MR. WEBER: Good morning, Bennett.

3 MR. BROOKS: Morning.

4 MR. WEBER: I have not really been a
5 fan of clusters, and it may be covered, Daemian,
6 in the training.

7 I have fear that interceptors feel
8 that their job is to find fish, and given the
9 option of sitting and recording a zero versus
10 going to a facility where they can air quote find
11 fish, feel that they produced something, I feel,
12 I fear that they will choose to do that.

13 I should say that I've worked with all
14 of you through the years. I remember Yong-Woo's
15 first presentation and I thought seven years was
16 ridiculous, and here we are, halfway through it.
17 Blows my mind.

18 But as we moved, I mean, I even heard
19 Yong-Woo say that the survey would be more
20 productive, that by switching to the adaptive
21 process, the survey would be more productive.

22 My first question is, how is adaptive
23 not just another word for clusters? I want to be
24 a supporter, but I want to understand and I just
25 don't. So this truly is a clarifying question.

26 How is adaptive not just another form
27 of cluster?

28 MR. SCHREIBER: Yeah. Sorry, Yong-
29 Woo, go ahead.

30 MR. LEE: You can view the adaptive
31 sampling as a form of non-probability sampling,
32 meaning that at the raw data level, you may not
33 provide the actual inquiry of probability or
34 sampling weight.

35 However, with statistical estimation
36 procedure, with a single-site approach and fixed
37 time interval, we are able to estimate the
38 increase in probability with those adaptive
39 samples.

40 So that's the difference between the
41 site cluster approach versus the adapted sampling
42 approach.

43 MR. SCHREIBER: And if I could, just
44 to follow up on that, Rick. So interviewers are
45 tasked with finding anyone who's eligible for the
46 survey, regardless of whether or not they
47 actually caught fish, right?

48 As you are correct to be concerned, if

1 we were only interviewing people who landed a
2 fish, then that would not be correct.

3 They need to interview anybody who
4 went out. And so then they are moving in between
5 the sites and the cluster under the current
6 design.

7 They're looking for anyone who's
8 eligible for the survey by way of targeting a
9 large pelagic species.

10 And as Yong-Woo pointed out, with the
11 adaptive sampling, having that as an option to
12 increase productivity doesn't mean the
13 interviewer can just go to multiple sites and
14 there's no -- with no more clustering in the
15 pilot survey.

16 When they are doing an adaptive
17 assignment, they're going not one of the primary
18 sampling units, a single site, and it's a small
19 proportion.

20 Currently, it's 25 percent of the
21 assignments that are drawn are considered
22 adaptive, if that helps.

23 MR. BROOKS: Great.

24 MR. WEBER: I think -- I think it
25 does, Daemian, and I, as I say, there's no one
26 speaking that I don't trust your hearts, but I
27 just, I hear all the words and my brain does not
28 always put it together.

29 You guys, this is what you live, and
30 I -- and I, on some level, I just have to trust
31 that you guys are doing it, because I will -- we
32 don't have hope today of bringing us all along to
33 your level.

34 But along -- but along those lines,
35 the new fixed time windows are going to
36 reintroduce this problem.

37 In a world where you get more
38 opportunity in a three-hour window, more boats
39 are backing in, that interceptor is going to have
40 to prioritize which surveys they are taking.

41 And again, there is something in me
42 that says I have some fear that they select those
43 with more fish because at the end of the day,
44 fish reports are the product that they are
45 proudest to produce.

46 And if I have the option of
47 interviewing somebody who has one fish or
48 somebody that has 12 fish, I fear that the

1 interceptor will choose the person in that moment
2 because they only have three hours. Will they
3 cherry pick?

4 MR. BROOKS: Hey, Rick, I'm going to
5 jump in here for a minute. I want to try to
6 steer these kinds of comments to the afternoon.

7 I mean, they're totally in play and
8 appropriate, but I want to make sure we get to
9 the clarifying questions here. So I'm going to
10 capture that --

11 MR. WEBER: That was clarifying
12 because I thought there was -- there was -- I
13 thought that they might be able to tell us that
14 there are procedures in place to stop that.

15 And so along those lines, I don't need
16 to -- I don't need to start a debate on it, but I
17 was hoping that they could take the time.

18 And along those, the final comment,
19 where I was going was, are the timeframes, since
20 we know the return times and now we're going into
21 three other sampling windows, will the expansions
22 be done on those three-hour time windows?

23 That's the end. You can get me so I
24 don't add any more on, Bennett.

25 MR. BROOKS: Thank you, Rick. So I
26 guess we'll go back just to the comments, Daemian
27 or whoever, on those fixed time windows and the
28 concern that Rick is posing there. Anything you
29 can share? Any approach?

30 MR. FOSTER: This is John Foster. I'd
31 like to add -- sort of address that. So in terms
32 of the way that the expansion works, we will not
33 be generating estimates by the three-hour time
34 windows.

35 That is just a part of the new pilot
36 tested, being tested design, as a way to stratify
37 the sampling.

38 So it allows us to ensure coverage
39 across the day in a way that is accounted for in
40 the estimation process so that we appropriately
41 assign sample rates to the -- to the sample units
42 that are defined now by the three-hour time
43 windows.

44 But we still cover the full day. We
45 just randomly select, in a way that's accounted
46 for in the draw process, essentially ensuring,
47 put most simply, that the math works, but two, to
48 ensure that the windows of time within the day

1 are appropriately presented in the overall
2 estimation process.

3 Because we're still going to be
4 producing the catch rates at the state, state
5 area, month, fishing mode, private or charter,
6 level for each species and catch type.

7 We're not going to do that
8 specifically within those three hours. They just
9 wouldn't be precise if we did it that way.

10 We need to use all of the collective
11 data, but we will be weighting, sample weighting,
12 all of the data appropriately when we do
13 estimation at the standard cell.

14 And just one quick point back to the
15 -- to the -- are we targeting trips with fish?
16 Again, there's nothing that -- I get the idea of,
17 it's sort of like trophy, hunting, I suppose, if
18 you can bag a trip with the most catch, that kind
19 of idea.

20 But training for interviewers is very
21 firm on not preferentially interviewing trips
22 with catch over trips without catch.

23 And there are unannounced field visits
24 by supervisors to check on samplers to make sure
25 they're not doing something like that, as well as
26 checks on the data that are done by interview to
27 compare the data collected by one interview to
28 another to another across all of them to try to
29 look for those kinds of possible biases where one
30 interviewer has a much higher proportion of
31 intercepts with catch, for example.

32 MR. WEBER: Thank you.

33 MR. BROOKS: Thanks, John. That's
34 helpful. Let's go back to David Schalit and
35 then to Willy Goldsmith.

36 MR. SCHALIT: Good morning.

37 MR. BROOKS: Again, clarifying
38 questions.

39 MR. SCHALIT: Thank you, John,
40 Daemian, and Yong-Woo. Bennett, I have a request
41 and I have, well, not a great many questions, but
42 what I'll do is I'll just, I'll take, I'll ask a
43 couple of questions and then I'll leave my hand
44 up. Okay?

45 MR. BROOKS: Yeah. Yeah. Yes, that'd
46 be fine.

47 MR. SCHALIT: Yes, John, you mentioned
48 that, your slide 10 biological sampling and that

1 it is opportunistic.

2 My question is, could you give us a
3 kind of ballpark number, let's say, for otolith
4 sampling and genetic sampling.

5 I mean, would you say you collect less
6 than 100, less than 1,000? That sort of thing.
7 That would be my first question.

8 MR. FOSTER: Sure. Thanks, David.
9 I'm actually going to hand that off to Daemian,
10 who is more familiar with the sample sizes for
11 that.

12 MR. SCHREIBER: Thanks. There are up
13 to 150 assignments, but there are more than that
14 many fish sampled because multiple fish can be
15 finished on an assignment.

16 Last year, the last couple years, the
17 number of bluefin sampled were in the several
18 hundred, not over 1,000.

19 MR. SCHALIT: Okay, several hundred.
20 That's good. Okay. Now, here's my request that
21 I have.

22 I don't know which of you gentlemen
23 would be involved in this, but I'm the president
24 of the American Bluefin Tuna Association.

25 And we're looking at large pelagic
26 survey from the perspective of the commercial
27 sector, okay?

28 I'm wondering if one of you could send
29 to me by email a list of the data fields or what
30 you refer to as data elements, in a typical
31 record for the dockside intercept.

32 And if you let me know which one of
33 you can do that, I will send you via chat my
34 email address. Would that be workable?

35 MR. FOSTER: Yes, we can -- we can
36 certainly do that. Daemian, would you mind
37 coordinating that?

38 And then, if it's okay, we actually --
39 there's a link to -- I mentioned the link that's
40 in the presentation part that

41 I gave that was for, that's really for
42 technical sort of design estimation, essentially
43 covering all the sort of mathematics of it.

44 We have other reference information on
45 the website that sort of goes through kind of the
46 details, David, that you're asking about in terms
47 of what the questionnaires looks like, the types
48 of information that's collected, the field

1 procedures.

2 So if it's okay, I can put that link
3 in the general chat as well.

4 MR. SCHALIT: Great. Sure. And then
5 my final question for now would be -- would be,
6 we were discussing the percentage of recreational
7 permits contacted by telephone.

8 What is the targeted that you want to
9 sample by that means? In other words, I've
10 separated from the number of attempts you make.

11 In other words, a certain percentage
12 of those -- of those calls are, I'm going to say
13 a small percentage is unanswered, or for one
14 reason or another doesn't result in your getting
15 a good sample.

16 What is your -- what is your target
17 sample percentage that you're looking for from
18 the telephone survey?

19 MR. FOSTER: So on that, it's easiest
20 to answer for charter because it is actually a
21 rate or a percentage.

22 So we target 10 percent of vessels on
23 the frame to be selected for any one-week
24 reporting period.

25 On the private side, it's a fixed
26 number of units, of vessels that are selected for
27 reporting with the individual two-week reference
28 period.

29 I believe the percentage works out to
30 something around five percent, but because of the
31 different sizes of the frames, it's actually a
32 good bit larger number on the private side than
33 it is on the charter side.

34 But maybe Daemian or Yong-Woo, you
35 happen to remember just a ballpark private boat
36 sample size?

37 MR. SCHREIBER: For the year, it's
38 around 8,000 vessel selections.

39 MR. SCHALIT: For charter/headboats?
40 Or for recreational, you mean?

41 MR. SCHREIBER: Private. Yeah.

42 MR. FOSTER: Yeah, okay. I'm
43 following you. And that charter/headboat, that
44 approximate 10 percent --

45 MR. BROOKS: David, I'm going to --
46 I'm going to -- I'm going to push on and then
47 come back to you, okay, just because --

48 MR. SCHALIT: Okay, that's fine.

1 MR. BROOKS: Okay. Great. Thank you.
2 Let's go to Willy Goldsmith and then we'll go to
3 Mike Pierdinock.

4 MR. GOLDSMITH: Thanks, Brian, can you
5 hear me?

6 MR. BROOKS: Yes.

7 MR. GOLDSMITH: Great. First off,
8 just wanted to echo Bob Hueter's question/concern
9 about the reporting compliance, I guess, if you
10 want to call it that, LPTS.

11 I think I just wonder if there are
12 opportunities for the team to look at contacting
13 those folks by email or mailer even and I guess
14 also look at perhaps what some HMS folks have
15 called compliance assistance, making sure that
16 the whole frame is getting covered there and
17 there isn't any bias in who's responding.

18 My couple of questions have do with
19 the -- with the intercept survey and kind of
20 thinking about ancillary uses as Bob again talked
21 about in terms of education.

22 First off, Daemian, I believe you had
23 mentioned that latitude and longitude are
24 collected as part of the catch information and
25 the -- and the fishing location.

26 And just wondering about the
27 coarseness or resolution of that data.
28 Certainly, a lot of our folks are aware that the
29 socioeconomic impacts of offshore wind
30 development on the -- for our community came out
31 this week and the raw data are not particularly
32 high resolution in terms of what the impact might
33 be.

34 And I'm just wondering if there are
35 other uses for that data outside the large
36 pelagic survey.

37 The other question is about the degree
38 of outreach that the folks who conduct the
39 intercept surveys provide to permit holders
40 around the need to self-report bluefish tuna
41 landings in the fishery.

42 I know that's been a concern around
43 compliance. I'm just wondering if that's
44 something that folks do try to communicate.

45 And then also, for individuals who are
46 intercepted who might not possess a permit, if
47 there's information about obtaining an HMS permit
48 as part of the protocol there. Thanks.

1 MR. BROOKS: Okay. Three questions
2 there. Specificity on lat/long data collected.

3 MR. SCHREIBER: So one of the
4 questions on the -- on the questionnaire is where
5 were you fishing for large pelagic species?

6 And the area name is collected and
7 then the degrees and minutes, but not the
8 seconds, are collected.

9 Now those are -- those can be pretty
10 big areas, right? Canyons offshore or hills or
11 lumps or bumps.

12 So the idea is to get the general area
13 from the response, and often, though, the
14 respondent doesn't have, or they may not want to,
15 go back to their plotter and give precise
16 locations.

17 That's hard to do, right, if you're
18 trolling, but if you're anchored up somewhere,
19 you could -- you could do that.

20 And so in those cases, the area where
21 they did most of their fishing is included in the
22 data.

23 BOEM has made some use of the LPS data
24 in relation to wind farm energy. And as far as
25 outreach, if the interviewers are asked if they
26 still need -- if they still need to report the
27 fish online, or through the ALRS, Automated
28 Landings Reporting System, then the interviewers
29 say yes, you still have to report it.

30 I think just by way of being asked if
31 they have an HMS permit, that alone is notice, I
32 guess, for someone who doesn't have a permit that
33 they need one.

34 But the interviewers are not
35 enforcement. I just want to make that point.

36 MR. BROOKS: Thanks, David. Let's go
37 to Mike Pierdinock, then Bob Humphrey, then Dewey
38 Hemilright. Mike?

39 MIKE PIERDINOCK: Good morning. Thank
40 you all for your presentation. A few questions.
41 Slide 6 indicated the LPS stratified survey state
42 by state.

43 As we're all familiar with, and it was
44 noted, with increased water temperatures and the
45 climatic shift of our stocks, bluefin or other
46 species, for example, are moving farther north
47 and east into cooler waters sooner in the year
48 and that's consistent with our observations.

1 So with that, how do you take into
2 consideration that you'll do these surveys and
3 what state to consider that?

4 I'll note, like, almost one, two
5 months ago that the fleet out of Montauk was
6 reporting schoolie bluefin at the canyons.

7 We passed that information on and it
8 was early, and the earliest they had seen it in
9 years.

10 Three weeks ago we had giants south of
11 Cuttyhunk, five, ten miles offshore. That was
12 the earliest we'd seen it in years.

13 And with that, then how do you then
14 make that determination of where you should go to
15 capture those fish?

16 So with that, Daemian made a new
17 point, made a point that north of the Cape, it's
18 historically been different than south of the
19 Cape.

20 North of the Cape up into New England,
21 that's typically where we have the large giants
22 and larger fish.

23 And as a result of that and the Wicked
24 Tuna effect, everybody's general category
25 fishermen or they're headboats with commercial
26 endorsements.

27 As a result, there's fewer
28 recreational anglers that then would target the
29 recreational size fish.

30 So while we're out there, whether
31 we're near shore or off shore, well off shore, we
32 may not be equipped or permitted then to target
33 the rec fish.

34 So then how can we capture that in the
35 surveys to be representative of what's out there?
36 Because we're not targeting it?

37 There are my two questions and I'll go
38 from there. Thank you.

39 MR. BROOKS: Great. Thanks, Mike.

40 MR. FOSTER: So this is John.

41 MR. BROOKS: Yeah, go ahead, John.

42 MR. FOSTER: Okay. I'll start on that
43 and then ask Daemian or Yong-Woo to add anything
44 or clarify.

45 In terms of sort of seeking of fish
46 showing up either outside of LPS coverage, within
47 the LPS state, range of states, at different
48 times, based on reports, we have been able to

1 either start the telephone calling in May or
2 extend it, I believe in a few cases, into
3 November, in cases where the arrival of fish or
4 the departure was not within the normal range.

5 I will say, though, that there are
6 limitations to how flexible we can be in that.
7 It's the sort of thing where if it -- if the
8 pattern is changing and it's becoming a
9 consistent or rather, or even if it's just
10 consistently inconsistent where there's a chance
11 it's going to show up and the fish might show up
12 in May any year, not just they always show up in
13 May, that's the sort of thing that we can work to
14 adjust the time.

15 But again, because of finite resources
16 with the -- with the -- for the survey, in
17 general, we have to maintain sort of a standard
18 coverage that's identified ahead of time.

19 But again, we can -- we can extend the
20 coverage as it's needed, and we have done that in
21 the past.

22 And the question about if the fishery
23 are targeting different size classes of tuna, for
24 example, the survey will still directly
25 characterize that.

26 And again, the primary purpose, at
27 least for our uses of the data, Office of Science
28 and Technology, are to produce the catch and
29 effort estimates, to produce indices of abundance
30 using the fishery-dependent data that we collect.

31 That's a -- that is a use of the data.
32 It's done by the Science Center, and I know folks
33 are on the call and I don't want to speak for
34 them.

35 But that is partly why we collect all
36 of the additional detailed information on the
37 trip, characteristics and the intercept survey,
38 as well as on the phone.

39 It allows for them to try to take into
40 account those behavioral changes, targeting
41 changes, things like that, within the models they
42 use to calculate those indices.

43 But that is a separate task from catch
44 and effort estimation, and that's what we focus
45 on.

46 MR. BROOKS: Thanks. That's a good
47 answer, John, thank you. Bob Humphrey, and then
48 over to Dewey.

1 MR. HUMPHREY: Thank you. Thank you,
2 Bennett, and thank you to the presenters. I
3 actually have questions for each of the
4 presenters, but I'll ask one and then leave my
5 hand up so that you can circle back as you
6 promised.

7 MR. BROOKS: Okay, thanks, Bob.

8 MR. HUMPHREY: And first question goes
9 out to John. Does, and if so, how does, the
10 survey distinguish between charter headboat
11 vessels with and without a commercial
12 endorsement?

13 For example, if someone with a
14 commercial endorsement decides they're
15 recreational fishing that day or somebody is
16 targeting recreational fish but catches a lineal
17 commercial fish, does that come out in the -- in
18 the mix?

19 MR. FOSTER: Sure. So the one way
20 that it's done is we record -- again, we're
21 covering all of those vessels.

22 If they choose to fish sort of under
23 the commercial endorsement and they're going to
24 sell the fish or they have sold the fish, when we
25 -- when we intercept them, we record that.

26 One of the catch dispositions that we
27 record is sold fish. And those fish are separate
28 from the non-commercial, the recreational catch,
29 in the other categories, the landed not sold
30 category.

31 So the sold fish are not used in
32 calculating the catch rates for the recreational
33 estimates.

34 I think that is the primary way to
35 keep those separate and not create sort of
36 duplicate. Yeah.

37 MR. BROOKS: Great. Hey, Bob if you
38 want to jump in with your second question, please
39 go for it.

40 MR. HUMPHREY: Sure. Second question,
41 for Daemian. I realize that your presentation
42 was more on methods and results, and this is sort
43 of a follow-up to Bob's question.

44 You had a chart that showed a fairly
45 sizable jump in bluefin landings last year. Can
46 you tease out from the survey how much of that
47 was an artifact effort versus availability of the
48 resource?

1 MR. SCHREIBER: Yeah, of course,
2 effort was higher, and that's a major component
3 to the estimate.

4 The increase is estimated and I think
5 that we can attribute the larger catch estimate
6 to the larger effort estimate.

7 MR. BROOKS: Thanks. Okay, thanks,
8 Daemian.

9 MR. HUMPHREY: What about the
10 alternative? Can you also get some indication
11 that it may related to availability of fish, more
12 fish, more catch?

13 MR. FOSTER: So this is John, if I can
14 jump in on that one.

15 MR. BROOKS: Yeah.

16 MR. FOSTER: Again, it's difficult,
17 it's a challenge to try to get sort of a direct
18 estimate of, say, availability or abundance
19 directly from the fishery-dependent data, because
20 there's many other factors in there that can
21 affect what we see from the fishery data.

22 But one thing we can learn, and I
23 don't have it right with us, that can give some
24 indication of what you're getting at with
25 increased availability, would be looking at sort
26 of the targeting behavior or the success rate of
27 those trips for bluefin tuna.

28 Did we see an increase in the
29 proportion of our intercepts? An increase in the
30 number of trips that were targeting bluefin tuna
31 in 2020 compared to prior years?

32 Or the trips that were targeting
33 bluefin tuna, said they were targeting bluefin
34 tuna, was there a higher success rate with a
35 higher proportion of those trips had catch, had
36 landings?

37 A lot can contribute to that beyond
38 just availability, but that is one thing that we
39 can look at.

40 I just, I don't have that information
41 on hand today.

42 MR. BROOKS: Great. Thanks. Let's go
43 to Dewey and then Ray Bogan.

44 MR. HEMILRIGHT: Yeah, thank you. Can
45 you hear me?

46 MR. BROOKS: Yes, we can, Dewey.

47 MR. HEMILRIGHT: Yeah. Thank you for
48 the presentation. I had a couple questions. One

1 question is, you talked about calling the permit
2 or the people that fished and having a 60 percent
3 compliance rate, whether it was not answering the
4 phone or for whatever reason, maybe particularly
5 answering the phone.

6 What number comes up when you all call
7 somebody? What number does it say on somebody
8 else's phone when you're calling? And then I
9 have one other question after that.

10 MR. BROOKS: So how are you identified
11 to someone who is answering the phone.

12 MR. SCHREIBER: Yeah, real quick, it
13 really depends on the local carrier. Some
14 carriers aren't passing through caller ID
15 information.

16 The upstate agent fees calling that
17 might show up on your caller ID if Quantech is
18 calling. That could show up on your caller ID as
19 the name.

20 Or you may see a number, a different
21 number, just a number, and not -- and it may be
22 unknown. It depends.

23 MR. HEMILRIGHT: Do you think that
24 could be maybe a problem, why somebody's not
25 answering their phone?

26 MR. SCHREIBER: Yeah, it could be. I
27 mean, you could, anyone can screen their calls.
28 Usually, since there are multiple call attempts
29 during the week, someone might actually, if
30 they're screening their calls, they may answer
31 and say, like, why are you calling me?

32 Or on the other hand, those advanced
33 letters give notice to the respondents that they
34 -- that they will be called.

35 So if it's a number they don't
36 recognize, maybe they would think, oh, that's
37 probably the survey.

38 MR. HEMILRIGHT: And my second --
39 thank you for that. And my second question, this
40 redesign of the LPS survey, I believe that's my
41 understanding of this, and the mentioning of MRIP
42 recalibration.

43 Is there any way that this is going to
44 be used to backdate prior catch history for the
45 recreational industry?

46 MR. BROOKS: As in whether they'll try
47 to correct past database and would learn this new
48 design? Anybody want to jump on that?

1 MR. FOSTER: Yeah, I can start, and
2 Yong-Woo, please feel free to jump in. So the
3 short answer is, that is planned to look at the
4 historic time series and develop a calibration as
5 needed.

6 It's not clear yet how different
7 estimates based on the new design would actually
8 be from estimates produced using the current
9 design.

10 We're running them side by side for
11 this three-year period to try to get at that
12 information.

13 There's a possibility that the
14 differences are not, either not that large or not
15 in one direction all the time.

16 So the new estimates aren't always
17 higher or always lower. They're just -- they're
18 just different but it varies how they differ.

19 Those are situations. The variable
20 difference is not systematic, not always higher
21 or lower.

22 That's a case where a calibration
23 might not be needed, or if we do develop a
24 calibration, it really wouldn't change the
25 historic time series very much.

26 But again, we won't really know that,
27 answers to that question until this design study
28 is complete and we've had time to generate all of
29 the estimates and compare them side by side.

30 MR. HEMILRIGHT: It sounds like --

31 MR. BROOKS: Thanks, John.

32 MR. HEMILRIGHT: It sounds like that
33 this is -- I'm kind of asking, the reason I'm
34 asking is because I look at the MRIP
35 recalibration and the magnitude of what it
36 produced, and I'm just curious, who's going to
37 decide on -- it sounds like it's a very open-
38 ended question and answer to a I guess you have
39 to wait and see what the outcome is.

40 But thank you for answering, because
41 that's one thing I'm very cautious on was the
42 MRIP recalibration and what it produced.

43 And it appears like this is a
44 possibility it could be used for similar types of
45 things in the future. Thank you.

46 MR. BROOKS: It looks like Brad maybe
47 wants to jump in on that. Oh, sorry, John, go
48 ahead.

1 MR. FOSTER: I'll do one quick follow
2 up. Sorry, Brad and Ray, thanks.

3 Just to give maybe a bit more sort of
4 context for it, this is focused, this redesign is
5 focused solely on the intercept survey component.

6 The big change in the more general
7 surveys that have been done, redesigned recently
8 for MRIP, was mostly coming from the effort
9 survey piece for private boats and shore mode, in
10 particular.

11 So that's a lot to unpack. We can't
12 get into all that here. But this, the LPS
13 redesign, is focused only on the intercept.

14 The effort survey components really
15 would continue as they currently are being done.
16 There's not redesign work going on there.

17 So that effort won't be -- there would
18 be a rescaling of the effort, and that's really
19 what drove most of the big changes in the more
20 general survey.

21 So I wouldn't expect, even if we do
22 see some changes with the LPS, I wouldn't expect
23 them to be as large in magnitude as we saw in the
24 more general estimates.

25 MR. BROOKS: Thanks, John. Brad, do
26 you want to jump in on this?

27 MR. MCHALE: Yeah, on two quick
28 points. One is we in the HMS Division share
29 those same concerns that Dewey just voiced, and
30 look forward to seeing how the numbers play out.

31 It's not only, too, they had domestic
32 implications, but obviously, with ICCAT quotas
33 and what have you, there was an additional layer
34 that we're always cognizant of.

35 We look forward to that dialog
36 continuing. And John, thank you very much for
37 that clarification.

38 Where I really wanted to chime in was
39 more of a question from Daemian, is following up
40 on Dewey's question on what number pope up? And
41 honestly, that's being dictated by local
42 characters.

43 And as a permit holder, on my phone it
44 shows up as Quantech. And I have answered those
45 calls.

46 And I'm just curious, are voicemails
47 left when those call attempts are made? Or is
48 we're kind of calling and then we're just trying

1 to connect with a live individual?

2 I'm just curious if in addition to the
3 notification letter, then in addition to the
4 numerous times you're attempting to reach those
5 individuals, is there a voicemail component being
6 left, notifying the permit holder as well?

7 MR. SCHREIBER: Yeah, so, the
8 voicemails are left on the for-hire survey LPTS
9 add on. So with charter captains.

10 They can be harder to reach,
11 especially during the season if they're out there
12 making a lot of trips.

13 On the private survey, the
14 interviewers are not leaving messages on
15 voicemails.

16 But again, if they get a person on the
17 phone, and the respondent or permit holder is not
18 available, then they leave their name and number
19 and ask for a call back, either to schedule a
20 better time to do the interview or to conduct the
21 interview at that later time.

22 MR. MCHALE: Thanks, Daemian.

23 MR. FOSTER: Can I jump in just for a
24 second?

25 MR. BROOKS: Yeah.

26 MR. FOSTER: Daemian, would you mind
27 just very quickly and briefly, I think it might
28 be relevant to mention the other reporting modes
29 for LPTS, private in particular?

30 I think it sort of gets back to
31 Willy's comments or questions, too, about email
32 and other ways that respondents could provide
33 their information. Thanks.

34 MR. SCHREIBER: Yeah, the advanced
35 letter includes the toll-free number for
36 respondent to contact if they choose to reach out
37 before they're called.

38 And there is an email address on the
39 advanced letter as well where the respondent
40 could reach out to Quantech to schedule a time to
41 do the interview.

42 MR. BROOKS: Great. Thanks. Ray
43 Bogan, you haven't had a chance to jump in with a
44 question yet. Bring you in.

45 MR. BOGAN: Okay, I see I'm open. I
46 thought I was closed out.

47 MR. BROOKS: You are. You are open.

48 MR. BOGAN: Yeah, just from a

1 prefatory standpoint, I want to point out what
2 John Walter and Matt were involved in one of the
3 two programs that were done in order to address
4 certain challenges associated with MRIP and LPS
5 and the numbers that were ultimately submitted to
6 ICCAT.

7 So there has been some discussion of
8 this. I just haven't heard it mentioned today.
9 In addition to the Wicked Tuna phenomena, as
10 we've all come to accept as a fact, there seems
11 to be no question about that phenomena and its
12 impact on things, there's another unexpected
13 circumstance that we learned of during those two
14 workshops.

15 And that was what was taking place in
16 Maryland and Virginia in particular, because as
17 you know, part of the conclusion with regard to
18 the status of stock was that, look at the dearth
19 of landings in Maryland and Virginia.

20 Therefore, we learn a lesson from
21 that, when in fact the lesson wound up being once
22 we explored it that there was certain avoidance
23 of landing, particularly of certain size fish.

24 John Walter, in particular, was very
25 -- found that to be a very compelling and
26 interesting circumstance, as did, I believe,
27 Matt, although I should not speak for either one
28 of them.

29 So a question becomes, where I've
30 heard some of the other things with the panel, I
31 want to know whether or not that component can be
32 addressed, and if so, how might it be addressed?

33 And that is that a dearth of landings,
34 as we know, does not mean a reduction in the size
35 of the stock.

36 And while I know that the MRIP and LPS
37 folks don't determine size of stock, the
38 conclusions they reach and the data they submit
39 does impact it.

40 Therefore, is there anything that can
41 and has been done to address not only the Wicked
42 Tuna phenomena, but also the phenomena that we
43 learned about in Maryland and Virginia, where we
44 learned that there is no, there isn't this dearth
45 of fish that we thought, but rather the dearth of
46 landing and effort towards it.

47 Has that issue been addressed, or is
48 it going to be?

1 MR. BROOKS: So I'm wondering if this
2 is a question for John or Daemian or Yong-Woo, or
3 whether there's someone else on who might be able
4 to handle that.

5 MR. FOSTER: It looks like Matt has
6 raised his hand. I defer to him.

7 MR. BROOKS: Yeah, let's bring Matt
8 in.

9 DR. LAURETTA: Yes, hi, everyone.
10 It's a great question, Ray. Essentially, that is
11 where the catch created effort relative abundance
12 indices come into play.

13 So there we would scale the catches
14 divided by the amount of effort directed
15 specifically towards a size group, for example,
16 small or large schooled, so that it's really the
17 relative rate of catching per effort that we use
18 as an abundance trend to fit to the stock
19 assessment to fit the stock assessment to that
20 data.

21 So you're absolutely right. In that
22 case, you can have low effort, relatively good
23 catches per trips that are targeting them, and a
24 higher catch rate, which would be a relative
25 abundance trend, and that's how we would scale
26 it.

27 So what it comes down to is the
28 question on the survey form that is, what species
29 were you targeting primarily?

30 And we switched to the primary target
31 to really get at the core fishery for example,
32 the smaller size classes of bluefin.

33 And that's how we're able to correct
34 the data to account for shifting effort. So it
35 goes back to the CPUE being an important metric
36 that we might consider making available as part
37 of the standard output of the survey so that
38 stakeholders or anyone can understand how that
39 relative abundance trend may be changing, which
40 corrects for shifting efforts.

41 Now in the total landings, of course,
42 will be dependent on effort, because as it gets
43 scaled to that catch rate to the overall effort.

44 And so there's sort of two different
45 pieces of information that would be used for
46 assessing the stock.

47 As far as I know, bluefin tuna is the
48 only HMS stock that uses the relative abundance

1 in the stock assessment, whereas all the
2 reporting of HMS to ICCAT is done for each of
3 them.

4 So if I can clarify further for you,
5 Ray, let me know, but it's essentially as you
6 say, that when we're looking at the trend in
7 abundance from the survey, it is relative to the
8 effort.

9 And so, for example, if the catches
10 went from two fish being observed per trip to 10,
11 that would show up as a large increase in the
12 CPUE.

13 MR. BROOKS: Great.

14 MR. BOGAN: I appreciate that answer,
15 Matt, and I appreciate that explanation.

16 And I think the broader message that
17 must be given is that through the challenge of
18 changing patterns, there's sometimes an inability
19 to pick up on changing fishing patterns, and I
20 think to the extent that that can be addressed
21 through further questions, or as an example, and
22 this would apply to not just the Maryland,
23 Delaware, Virginia fishermen, but no doubt
24 others, and that is that are there -- have you
25 not targeted certain other species that are
26 otherwise available as a result of some change in
27 fishing practice?

28 I know that's a very awkward question
29 but the nature of the question, folks like you
30 who are far smarter than I am and more adept at
31 coming up with questions on surveys would be able
32 to figure that out.

33 But I think it would be a very, very
34 important thing, because it's not, that is not a
35 critique, I'm sorry, that's not a criticism of
36 anything because it was a change in pattern that
37 I think John and Matt, for example, would agree.

38 Certainly, I was surprised. I didn't
39 expect to hear those answers. But the source of
40 the answers was very reliable, and therefore it
41 just shows the great challenge associated with
42 finding this information, but begs, in my
43 opinion, for another question or two to try to
44 further hone in on those changing patterns.

45 And finally, as I get off and I'm
46 sorry to take so long, a final thing I would
47 mention, there is another phenomenon beyond
48 Wicked Tuna, beyond the stuff that you've seen

1 with Maryland and Delaware and Virginia, and that
2 is the fast boat phenomena.

3 That's a whole other issue that
4 changes fishing patterns, and that's something
5 that has developed in the last several years. So
6 thank you very much for your explanation and
7 thanks very much for taking time.

8 MR. BROOKS: Thanks, Ray. We're a
9 little bit beyond break. I think John Walter
10 wants to jump in on this last discussion, and
11 then I'd like to get to Jeff Kneebone, who hasn't
12 had a chance to ask a question, and then we'll
13 probably go to break. John?

14 DR. WALTER: Good morning, everyone.
15 I'll be really brief. There is this element of,
16 like, when the fisheries change, we do need to
17 know about for our assessment models is not
18 alluded to for the CPUE as well as for the
19 selectivity of the fishery.

20 If the fishery is changing how it
21 fishes, we need a model to understand that. And
22 that's where some of the intangibles that could
23 be gleaned from the people who are in the field
24 about how the fishery is changing, as well as the
25 fishermen.

26 I don't know how to design a survey to
27 add that into the survey about changing fishing
28 practices, but I believe we do need to be
29 cognizant of that.

30 I know that for me to be able to give
31 good assessment advice, I need to know those kind
32 of things that are happening.

33 So that was what I was really
34 elucidating in the webinar we had I think in
35 January, and something that, it's that value-
36 added part of the survey that perhaps we could
37 try to pass on to analysts such as ourselves.
38 Thanks.

39 MR. BROOKS: Thanks, John. Jeff
40 Kneebone, let's bring you into the mix here.

41 DR. KNEEBONE: Thank you, Bennett, can
42 you hear me?

43 MR. BROOKS: Yes.

44 DR. KNEEBONE: Okay. Thanks,
45 everyone. It's been great. I just have a couple
46 -- one quick question. I'm not sure this is the
47 right time for it but I'll ask anyway.

48 So for the count fish category in the

1 LPIS, I'm reading the document that the
2 interviewers always ask to see the catch that's
3 being reported by the fishermen, but I'd like to
4 get some perspective on whether that happens more
5 often than not.

6 So to put it another way, are most of
7 the fish counts that I see in that LPS data
8 reflecting both counts that were made by person
9 doing the interview?

10 Or what percentage of the respondents
11 are not allowing the interviewer to actually
12 count the fish? Thank you.

13 MR. BROOKS: Yeah, this is just the
14 right time to ask that question. So I don't know
15 who wants to jump in on that from LPS.

16 MR. SCHREIBER: So in the data, in
17 addition to the counts, there is, there are
18 fields for the number observed by the -- and
19 identified by the interviewer as well.

20 Offhand, I would say that most fish
21 are observed, but I don't have the percent of
22 landings that are observed.

23 A lot of times, they may be, if
24 they're packed down on ice, then they wouldn't be
25 available.

26 If they've already been fileted and
27 obviously the carcass, if that's no longer
28 available, that makes it difficult for the
29 interviewer to say they observed the fish.

30 But they are capturing. So that's
31 another good reason it's important for the
32 respondents to provide accurate information on
33 the fish they kept, released still alive,
34 released dead, or sold.

35 DR. KNEEBONE: Great. Thanks.

36 MR. BROOKS: All right. Well, thanks
37 again to the LPS team for the presentations and
38 all the -- all the responses to these questions
39 and all the -- all the responses to these
40 questions and for everyone's focused comments
41 here.

42 What I'd like to do is just call
43 people's attention in the chat. There are a
44 couple of links that have been posted in response
45 to the questions, one on CPUE trends, another on
46 some of the operational details around the
47 questions in the survey.

48 So if you haven't seen those, scroll

1 through the chat to find those. There was a
2 question about how and when ideas, if folks have
3 ideas for the -- for the rec summit, when and how
4 to submit those.

5 And we'll double back and address that
6 this afternoon. And then as Bob Humphrey just
7 said, he put a couple of questions for Yong-Woo.

8 I know there were maybe one or two
9 folks who had a few more questions that they
10 didn't get to.

11 I would encourage you to maybe post
12 those questions in the chat box now and to the
13 extent that the LPS team can address that during
14 the afternoon in the chat, that would be helpful.

15 Also, LPS team, you should get a break
16 and lunch as well. So please, don't feel the
17 need to be tethered to the chair.

18 So we will break now. We will come
19 back at 1:00. We will come back to this
20 conversation.

21 But again, I'll sort of just at that
22 point invite people to weigh in more broadly with
23 your comments, perspectives, any questions you
24 have for the team.

25 And we'll have another 15 minutes or
26 so for that. So come back at 1:00 sharp for LPS.

27 And then after that, we'll move into
28 the more general HMS listening session.

29 Thanks everyone for a good
30 conversation. See you in an hour and a quarter.

31 (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter
32 went off the record at 11:43 a.m. and resumed at
33 1:01 p.m.)

34 MR. BROOKS: All right, well, it's
35 1:00. I want to get us moving. So just this
36 afternoon, or a quick review of the plan.

37 We have about the next 45 minutes or
38 so, 50 minutes, to continue the discussion on
39 that LPS, both questions you might have that we
40 didn't get to this morning, and also just more
41 broadly open the conversation up for anybody
42 who's in the workshop here to share thought you
43 have on the LPS survey, sharing thoughts on the
44 agency's use of LPS data.

45 We want to -- we want to -- throw that
46 wider here. Again, we'll do that until about
47 1:50, maybe up until 2:00. And at 2:00, we'll
48 hand it off to HMS folks to open up the listening

1 session for the recreational roundtable, which is
2 really your chance to weigh in more broadly on
3 issues of concern, issues of note, that you would
4 like HMS to have to be thinking about.

5 So that's the game plan. Well wrap up
6 by 3:30 this afternoon. I will note that we have
7 no scheduled breaks for the next two and a half
8 hours.

9 So that's a little harsh, but it's
10 that or drag you farther into almost Memorial Day
11 weekend.

12 We opted for the get us all out by
13 3:30, but obviously, you take whatever break you
14 need between now and 3:30.

15 So with that, let me just see, anyone
16 from the HMS team or LPS team want to say
17 anything before we just open it back up for
18 conversation?

19 All right, then if not, let's see if
20 folks want to jump in with questions or comments,
21 perspectives that you have that you would like
22 either the LPS team or HMS to hear regarding
23 large pelagic survey?

24 David Schalit, I see your hand up, so
25 why don't you jump in?

26 MR. SCHALIT: Thank you. I'm not sure
27 if this is -- I have a question and a comment.
28 I'm not sure if this was in Daemian's
29 presentation or John's.

30 It was stated that approximately 5,000
31 trips are surveyed annually, and I was wondering
32 if you guys have an estimate of the total number
33 of trips that take place annually.

34 MR. FOSTER: Sure, David. And all of
35 our estimates, again, are available on that
36 website at the -- at the link that Daemian
37 provided in his presentation.

38 But essentially, for the private
39 anglers, private boat anglers, the annual
40 estimate, again, for the LPS range, it varies
41 from about 50,000 to 70,000 trips.

42 Again, that's for private boat
43 anglers. And then for charter, it's closer to
44 about 10,000 trips, again, with some variation,
45 10 to 20.

46 So that's roughly the scale of the two
47 -- the two sectors, in terms of the annual trips.
48 So June through October.

1 MR. SCHALIT: So that gives me an idea
2 of like the percentage of sampling that you're
3 looking at. Okay.

4 That's really good. Okay, now my
5 comment has to do actually relates to something
6 that was brought up by Rick Weber, Ray Bogan, and
7 Mike Pierdinock, and this has to do with what
8 they touched on, what I'm -- what I'm talking
9 about here now, has to do with CPUE.

10 And we've been reminded recently that
11 CPUE does not -- is not looking at abundance,
12 it's looking at density.

13 That's really what it's intended to
14 do. And the problem we have with bluefin tuna
15 is, as you know, bluefin doesn't do the same
16 thing in two consecutive years.

17 Bluefin will inhabit areas this year
18 that they're not going to inhabit next year.

19 That presents a realistic problem for
20 the large pelagic survey to the extent that if we
21 look at these dynamics, and bluefin, population
22 dynamics, we are -- we are wondering, to what
23 degree are you able to dynamically allocate your
24 human resources in line with what the bluefin are
25 doing? And how could we improve, how could we
26 sharpen our pencil on that issue?

27 I mean, one issue that came up in
28 these numerous conversations we had last winter
29 regarding the small fish indices was that the
30 observation by the fisherman was that there was
31 high density of juvenile bluefin in offshore
32 areas in the Gulf of Maine region, a bit out of
33 the -- of the -- of the boats that typically fish
34 for them, and then we had another situation,
35 which was well documented, in which the region,
36 this approximately 220 mile length of coastline
37 from the Cape Islands all the way down to Long
38 Island and all the way to southern New Jersey was
39 an area of high density.

40 And so we're wondering, obviously,
41 okay, I should step back and just say this. The
42 gold standard, and my understanding is that the
43 gold standard in terms of sampling is that every
44 trip has an equal opportunity to be sampled.

45 So we're not only looking to just
46 records successful trips. Because in order to
47 have a success rate, you have to have
48 unsuccessful data in there.

1 So that's what we're concerned about
2 is the responsiveness of the large pelagic survey
3 to shift in density to the extent that we are, we
4 at least can say that these areas are being
5 somehow represented that we are -- we are
6 actually trying to achieve that gold standard, so
7 to speak.

8 And I think that's the problem. One
9 of the thoughts we have, one of the thoughts I
10 have is that perhaps the -- perhaps the people
11 who are -- who are managing the large pelagic
12 survey could benefit from a conversation with the
13 recreational leadership and who would know about
14 these events, fairly up to date on these issues.

15 I am not, by the way, part of the
16 recreational leadership. I'm involved in
17 commercial fishing.

18 It seems to me that there is definite
19 -- there is -- there is knowledge out there that
20 we, that might be able to have a positive impact
21 on the -- on the -- on allocation, on your
22 resource allocation dynamics, to the extent that
23 you have that capability. And I'm wondering if
24 you could speak to that. Thanks.

25 MR. FOSTER: Sure. This is John.
26 I'll start and invite others on the LPS team and
27 even Matt Lauretta or John Walter to add on from
28 a science perspective.

29 Sort of, I think there's several
30 things here that are kind of intertwined. One
31 is, can we use the information, the data, the
32 estimates from the LPS, to generate some measure
33 of absolute abundance, or an index of abundance
34 that reflects just the population of tuna, not
35 the fishery?

36 Ideally, we would have a fishery-
37 independent survey to get at that. By
38 definition, it's free of all of the effects of
39 the fishery, regulations, angler preference, any
40 economic conditions, any number of factors that
41 could uncouple what the fishery is, the signal in
42 the fishery and the actual true population.

43 LPS is a fishery-dependent survey.
44 Now, that's not to say the data can't be used to
45 try to model, to estimate an index of fishery
46 independent abundance, but it is fishery-
47 dependent.

48 And so it needs to reflect the changes

1 of things that are going on in the fishery. And
2 the data will reflect those changes in the
3 fishery.

4 And those changes, again, may not
5 reflect only changes in abundance of the species
6 or their availability, whether it's abundance
7 that's changing or some special change in their
8 migration patterns, or whatever the case might
9 be.

10 The LPS is going to be tied to the
11 fishery. Now, that said, if the fishery is
12 changing in certain ways, it might impact the LPS
13 ability to characterize the fishery.

14 So suddenly, both are returning to
15 different sites that we don't cover. Or, as the
16 question was raised earlier, I apologize, I
17 don't, I apologize, I don't remember by who, but
18 if the fishery is changing, it's temporal scale.

19 Fisheries are starting in May or April
20 or they're ending in November, December, and
21 we're not picking them up in other surveys or
22 other HMS reporting programs, then that's an
23 issue, that's a coverage issue of the survey, and
24 we definitely want to address those, because
25 we've been, not been able to characterize the
26 fishery well.

27 But if it's something like anglers or
28 captains are changing their targets but they're
29 still returning the same sites and they're still
30 returning at the usual times of day.

31 So they're being intercepted as they
32 had been in previous years, even though their,
33 some of their behaviors are changing, but we're
34 still capturing all of that in the survey.

35 Well, those changes are impacting the
36 catch and effort estimates, and they're not
37 impacting fishery-dependent estimate of catch
38 rate.

39 What they're impacting, potentially,
40 is the ability to use the fishery-dependent data
41 to estimate a fishery-independent indices of
42 abundance, which is what we want to try to get
43 to.

44 Now, we collect a lot of auxiliary
45 information, additional information of surveys,
46 and the folks at Southwest Center, or excuse me,
47 Southeast Center are aware of all of this.

48 And so they're doing their best to try

1 to account for these changes in the fishery
2 conditions that would, again, affect the
3 relationship between the fishery-dependent data
4 collected through the LPS and its use for
5 estimating an abundance index.

6 So again, there's just a lot of sort
7 of intertwined considerations here. And it's the
8 sort of thing where we could add a question or
9 two to the LPS, either the phone survey and/or
10 the intercept survey, and that would help improve
11 capture these sort of changes, then we're
12 certainly supportive of looking into that.

13 We have added questions in the past
14 for certain issues, like circle hook use or
15 additional fishing methods, things like that.

16 So that's certainly well within the
17 realm, but again, it depends on the nature of the
18 changes in the fishery and what they do or don't
19 impact in terms of information coming out of the
20 LPS.

21 Is it catch estimates? Is it effort
22 estimates? Is it a derived use of the data, like
23 indices of abundance, things like that.

24 That's a lot of information. I'll
25 stop there.

26 MR. BROOKS: Yeah, let's see if Matt
27 or John Walter want to jump in on that at all.
28 Mike Pierdinock?

29 DR. LAURETTA: This is Matt, I raised
30 my hand, but no problem.

31 MR. BROOKS: Sorry, I didn't see it.

32 DR. LAURETTA: Yeah, exactly, just to
33 build on what John said. So there's sort of two
34 levels to this.

35 One is, is it capturing what the
36 fishery is removing from the population, and
37 that's its primary goal and we would say yes.

38 If you look at the removals, they do
39 what it's designed to do, estimate how many fish
40 are being removed.

41 Then there's an auxiliary use of it,
42 which is the relative abundance. So that is the
43 rate of fish being caught. No, the rate at which
44 they're being caught.

45 And that is sort of a function of two
46 things as we view it. It's the availability of
47 fish to the fishery. As you mentioned, it can
48 move inshore or offshore, and that can affect

1 your encounter rates, and then it's the
2 catchability. How efficient is the gear type
3 you're using?

4 And so this is where really the
5 modeling aspect comes in, as John mentioned
6 before.

7 It's essential to have that auxiliary
8 information to know how to use that rate of
9 catch.

10 If, for example, the gear types have
11 doubled their efficiency, you want to -- you want
12 to form the model that if you see a doubling of
13 that catch rate, there's an effect in there
14 that's separate from abundance.

15 And so this is a dynamic of what drove
16 our three months or four months of weekly
17 discussions is to improve an index to say, okay,
18 an index has sort of been flat for the last years
19 up to 2018, is that because the population is
20 stable.

21 Well, we found out there were all
22 these other factors that had been included, and
23 it comes at two levels.

24 One is the standardization of that,
25 how we treat that data to generate an index so
26 you can account for it in the time series itself.

27 For example, the Wicked Tuna effect,
28 we looked at the sea surface temperature, all
29 these things that would drive that, and then
30 there's putting that into the stock assessment
31 model to tell it what auxiliary information do we
32 have that we should inform the model?

33 And so there's two tiers, but those
34 don't necessarily affect the actual estimates of
35 fish being removed by the fisher, right?

36 That is sort of an absolute estimate
37 of, here's what was caught. But then what you do
38 with that catch information is another tier, and
39 that's where those discussions we had in the back
40 and forth of saying, tell us how the availability
41 has changed, the shift northward.

42 We're making some assumptions about
43 fixed area effects, so that if a fisher moved
44 away from Virginia, it looked as if the abundance
45 went down.

46 No, the abundance shift northward, and
47 when new expanded the survey, and took that
48 effect out of the model, indeed we get a

1 different index.

2 So it's sort of tiers of information,
3 but from its basic standpoint, the removals are
4 the removals, regardless of what causes them, but
5 then the index of abundance is sort of really
6 where you have to truly understand how to use
7 that time series in a model.

8 And so for me, the dialogue was really
9 critically informative, and I think we produced a
10 better index out of that.

11 And it showed. We saw some dynamics
12 in the data that we hadn't seen before when we
13 integrated stakeholder knowledge.

14 And I think that that is an extremely
15 valuable exercise that we probably want to find a
16 way to continue, but it's separate from the
17 survey itself, okay, to be a little-winded but --

18 MR. BROOKS: Nope, that's super
19 helpful. Thank you. Let's bring in Mike
20 Pierdinock and then Jeff Kneebone. Mike?

21 MR. PIERDINOCK: Thank you. Thank
22 you, Bennett. Thank you for the additional
23 details.

24 Yeah, I had left a comment earlier
25 there in the chat page. I believe that the
26 recreational leadership and the different
27 recreational organizations and for-hire
28 organizations did a great job last year with
29 outreach from Maine down to Maryland, Virginia,
30 and so on.

31 And that's where we're part of the
32 process. We're at the frontline and we were able
33 to provide tremendous numbers of daily
34 photographs of schoolies and other fish, landed
35 from Maine down south.

36 And it just weren't photographs that,
37 the photographs were tied into with the time of
38 year, wherein this occurred.

39 So it provided additional lines of
40 evidence of climatic shift. So that's what my
41 comment was, to continue doing that, continue to
42 reach out to us and we'll continue to reach out
43 to our membership and provide those details.

44 In a sense, that was an aerial survey,
45 which showed where the fish were, showed where
46 they were up and down the coast in the timeline,
47 and it appeared consistent with the observations
48 of that climatic shift.

1 So I just wanted to note that. And
2 we'll continue to do such. Now, with bluefin,
3 just to know with bluefin, it's a different
4 fishery north of Cape Cod or south of Cape Cod.

5 We typically have cycles. The bluefin
6 cycle, how many or whether you're going to see
7 schoolies that are north of Cape Cod and what
8 numbers you will see depends upon a lot of
9 variables, water temperature and foraged fish and
10 so on, as it breaks off way out at the canyons at
11 the Gulf Stream and what we normally see in the
12 western Gulf of Maine.

13 But there used to be a cycle there
14 that that cycle would be, maybe we'd see the
15 schoolies every 5, 10, 15 years.

16 Past few years, you see them every
17 year, and we're seeing them near shore. We're
18 not seeing them 50-100 miles offshore.

19 And this is where the climatic shift
20 comes in. It's consistent with this observation.

21 And as you know, if they're 50-100
22 miles offshore, that's in your typical distance
23 beyond what your typical recreational angler is,
24 or for-hire, is going to go out and target.

25 But who's always out there are
26 harpooners and the commercial fleet, and their
27 observations are consistent with ours if we're
28 not there that there's tremendous numbers of
29 schoolies there 50-100 miles offshore.

30 So what's changed now is it's closer
31 and it's more accessible to recreational for-
32 hire, or for the commercial size fish to the
33 commercial fleet.

34 So these cycles, and I can provide
35 multiple examples of other species that now we
36 see annually in Massachusetts waters or farther
37 north than we used to see every 5, 10, 20 years,
38 but we see them every year now.

39 Another point or question that I'd
40 like to make, because I know we have difficulty
41 up here in Massachusetts with dockside intercepts
42 and MRIP and so on, and it's more a result of the
43 fact of where you need to go to get -- to get
44 them done.

45 And I'll use Menemsha. Menemsha's on
46 the Vineyard. That's where they filmed Jaws.
47 Actually, it's a beautiful location, and that's
48 typical, the hopping point for people north of

1 the Cape to come through to fuel up before
2 they're going south, they're going to the canyons
3 as well as coming back.
4 You can almost -- island the same way,
5 the ports of Nantucket, as well as Chatham, maybe
6 even Montauk, so I'm curious --
7 MR. BROOKS: Mike, you're breaking up
8 just a tiny drop. I don't know if there's
9 something different, but keep going. Just be
10 aware.
11 MR. PIERDINOCK: All right, am I back?
12 MR. BROOKS: You are.
13 MR. PIERDINOCK: Did you lose a lot?
14 MR. BROOKS: No, just a -- no, just a
15 little bit. Keep going.
16 MR. PIERDINOCK: Okay. So I'm almost
17 done. So I'm curious whether you have those
18 dockside intercepts, because for example, I
19 would, you have to do Menemsha, you have to do
20 Block, because in Menemsha, you're getting
21 yellowfin, you're getting bigeye, you're getting
22 bluefin, you're getting white marlin, you're
23 getting them whether they go to the canyons or --
24 MR. BROOKS: You just cut out again,
25 Mike.
26 MR. PIERDINOCK: -- shore and mahi,
27 depending upon the --
28 MR. BROOKS: Mike, you're cutting out.
29 MR. PIERDINOCK: Am I back? Did you
30 get -- did you get that?
31 MR. BROOKS: Not --
32 MR. PIERDINOCK: The point I was
33 trying to make about -- well, the question.
34 MR. BROOKS: You were just saying
35 basically the need to do dockside intercepts in
36 Menemsha and Block Island because of the variety
37 of what they're bringing back in.
38 MR. PIERDINOCK: Now, how then -- how
39 then do they select, how does the LPS select
40 whether they go there?
41 I know for Massachusetts, it's
42 difficult to get dockside intercepts because it's
43 so difficult to get over there and costs a
44 fortune for somebody to be there.
45 So there's not as many that are done.
46 But these are fruitful ports where you have a lot
47 of data and information for what's been landing.
48 Thanks.

1 MR. BROOKS: Let's let the LPS team
2 jump in on that one. Thanks, Mike.

3 MR. SCHREIBER: Yes, there are sites
4 in those locations on the vineyard and on Block
5 Island, besides our selected using the
6 probability proportional to size without
7 replacement that Yong-Woo referred to earlier.

8 And, yeah, so, I hope that answers
9 that question there, Mike.

10 MR. BROOKS: Okay. Thanks, Mike.
11 Let's go to Jeff Kneebone and then Rick Weber.

12 DR. KNEEBONE: Hey, man, thanks again.
13 You got me?

14 MR. BROOKS: Yep.

15 DR. KNEEBONE: Okay, so thanks for the
16 opportunity to ask questions. I've always had
17 this question and maybe this is the right time to
18 ask it to the right people.

19 So I'm really interested in a catch
20 and effort quantification in North Carolina.

21 Obviously, there's tons of
22 recreational fishing effort there for HMS, and
23 that's not a state that's part of the LPS.

24 But when I look at the presentations
25 before, we see all these landings of something
26 like yellowfin going up and I know that there's
27 tons of yellowfin landed in North Carolina.

28 So I'd like to get a better idea of
29 how those, how that effort is quantified. Is it
30 through the Catch Card program?

31 Is it just through MRIP? And how that
32 all comes together in what we see in the SAFE
33 report and things like that when it comes to
34 total recreational landings for species like
35 yellowfin and bigeye that are caught a lot off
36 North Carolina. Thank you.

37 MR. BROOKS: Okay, thanks. Who wants
38 to jump in on that one?

39 MR. FOSTER: This is John Foster. So,
40 I mean, I can speak to the programs we administer
41 that cover North Carolina, but it might be better
42 for one of the management division folks to speak
43 to what we do or don't use.

44 MR. BROOKS: Sure. Anyone from HMS
45 want to jump in first on this? I'm not seeing
46 anybody jumping in here.

47 MR. MCHALE: Sorry, a little bit of
48 lag on our end.

1 MR. BROOKS: Okay. Go ahead, Brad.

2 MR. MCHALE: So, I'm not sure I'm
3 going to have a definitive answer when it comes
4 to some of the other species that you just raised
5 there, yellowfin, bigeye, because there aren't
6 the same level of mandated reporting requirements
7 for all of HMS across the board.

8 And so there are going to be some
9 challenges where currently there are HMS
10 requirements dominated by bluefin tuna at the
11 individual vessel owner and operator level that
12 they must report not only landings but also fish
13 that are released and dispositioned and then
14 approximate size classes.

15 We currently do not have the same
16 requirements for yellowfin and bigeye. As it
17 relates to the large pelagic survey, Jeff, I
18 think what you're getting at is then there's that
19 spatial/temporal coverage aspect, and then as you
20 also noted is the state of North Carolina has
21 implemented a census Catch Card program similar
22 to the one implemented in Maryland that also has
23 some of these species limitations of whether it's
24 collecting billfish information, bluefin tuna
25 information, and shark information, but it may
26 not be mandated at the state level for all highly
27 migratory species.

28 I think that's an arena that we're
29 going to have to continue to look at, because
30 luckily these programs have all -- what sources
31 of information are at our disposal?

32 I'll just stop there.

33 MR. BROOKS: Thanks, Brad.

34 DR. KNEEBONE: If I could ask a
35 follow-up --

36 MR. BROOKS: Yeah, go ahead, Jeff.

37 DR. KNEEBONE: So I guess my follow-up
38 question, and this doesn't need to be answered
39 now.

40 Maybe it's just a comment, is that as
41 someone who uses these catch data for a lot of
42 things, proposal writing analyses, is there any
43 conversation about adding North Carolina to the
44 LPS states?

45 Because it's obviously a state with a
46 ton of recreational fishing effort for HMS. And
47 most of the species that we're talking about
48 here, all of the tunas, certain billfish, a lot

1 of different sharks, that's a haven for them and
2 there's a lot of them down there.

3 So it seems like it might be good to
4 add that state. Not sure if it's being
5 considered, but I just wanted to make that point.
6 Thank you.

7 MR. BROOKS: Thanks, Jeff. So we'll
8 take that as a comment and then I don't know if
9 there's anyone in HMS who wants to weigh in on
10 whether or not that's at all something that has
11 been considered or could be considered or will be
12 considered.

13 MR. BLANKINSHIP: Well, I'll just
14 mention that, yes, that is a very good idea, and
15 it is something that has been thought about over
16 the years and discussed.

17 And it's not outside the realm of
18 possibility for continued discussion. Some of
19 what also comes into play there is the
20 availability of resources to be able to actually
21 do that.

22 So it comes down to a lot of times the
23 funding, the different sampling protocols of the
24 large pelagic survey to be expanded and applied
25 elsewhere and have a cost associated with them.

26 So that would have to be taken into
27 consideration. And adding onto what Brad was
28 saying, which was right on, is, I think, Jeff,
29 you were talking about yellowfin in particular.

30 Of course, we don't have a requirement
31 for reporting landings of yellowfin like we do
32 bluefin and billfish.

33 And we do augment outside of the LPS
34 area the imminent sampling that is other than the
35 large pelagic protocol that applies to other
36 states.

37 And that can be helpful for some more
38 frequently landed species, but because of the
39 design of that survey, it's not quite as reliable
40 as the LPS for certain species.

41 And so we do utilize that information,
42 however, and to the extent that we can.

43 And then also, there's the ability to
44 utilize some of the state surveys once they're
45 available and that information is available to
46 add in there as well.

47 So it's a combination of things that
48 go into, and you were specifically asking about a

1 catch estimation.

2 It's a combination of those surveys
3 that get rolled into that catch estimate process.

4 MR. BROOKS: Great. And then let's
5 bring in, let's take Dewey off mute. I think he
6 was going to weigh in on this North Carolina
7 question as well. Dewey?

8 MR. HEMILRIGHT: How about now?

9 MR. BROOKS: Yep, you're good. Yep.

10 MR. HEMILRIGHT: From my experience
11 with North Carolina, predominantly when you look
12 at North Carolina's catch, you have two inlets
13 where majority of the yellowfin tuna would be
14 caught at would be Hatteras or Oregon Inlet.

15 North Carolina is a state that, to my
16 knowledge, has an enhanced MRIP reporting where
17 it's, they have low PSEs and pretty good
18 accounting of the catch during the times of the
19 year, particularly to the charter boat.

20 But also a question to add on, given
21 the new regulations in south Atlantic with
22 charter boats having to report their catch, is
23 eight -- I believe, and somebody maybe correct
24 me, but I believe that they have to report all
25 their catch.

26 If you possess a permit, any permit,
27 that you have to report all your catch. And so I
28 found North Carolina in some things, especially
29 the MRIP, my frustration with mako sharks where a
30 couple sharks landed in Wave 1 in 2019, produced
31 100 metric tons. I mean, stuff that's not
32 believable.

33 Other things, North Carolina, the
34 program that they have to use does a good job,
35 but some rare event species, or whatever it's
36 called like that, but my question, could somebody
37 answer that?

38 Because I know with the reporting, I
39 believe started January 1 of this year, charter
40 boats have to report their catch in the south
41 Atlantic, and I wonder is that everything that
42 they catch.

43 It's my belief that it is. Maybe
44 somebody can help me with that. Thank you.

45 MR. HUTT: Dewey, I can answer that.
46 You are correct. Any charter boat with a council
47 charter or headboat permit in the south Atlantic
48 has to report all their catch now via their

1 council logbook.

2 That doesn't include necessarily
3 captains with HMS permits.

4 However, most of the guys who are
5 fishing for HMS out of North Carolina probably
6 have the Atlantic dolphin/wahoo permit, which is
7 one of the permits that triggers that logbook
8 reporting requirement.

9 And you were correct about the MRIP
10 estimate for yellowfin tuna out of North
11 Carolina.

12 They are actually pretty good, and
13 their PSEs are, typically range in the 20s, which
14 for MRIP, particularly for an HMS species, is
15 very, very good.

16 So at least for that species and all,
17 MRIP is doing a fine job in North Carolina. But
18 you're right, there are, yes, some of those rare
19 event species like Mako.

20 Every once in a while we get a very
21 large extrapolated estimated out of North
22 Carolina that is a bit problematic.

23 MRIP is taking steps to deal with some
24 of those estimates. We've got some new data
25 standards coming out that are going to be
26 addressing some of that, and I might turn it to
27 John Foster to address some of that, because he
28 works a lot more closely on those issues.

29 MR. FOSTER: Sure. Just to just add
30 on quickly, a couple of things. So specifically
31 for North Carolina, something that we have
32 implemented in other states that have fairly
33 robust offshore fisheries outside of the LPS
34 range, Florida, one in particular, we've
35 introduced, we've changed the stratification of
36 the intercept design to include sort of an
37 offshore stratum.

38 And essentially what that does is
39 takes sites, individual fishing access sites, big
40 boat ramp complexes, big marinas, where there are
41 appreciable numbers of offshore trips that can be
42 encountered and put those into a separate stratum
43 so they can essentially be sampled at a higher
44 rate to help improve the likelihood of
45 encountering these more rare events, rare in the
46 overall recreational sector, whether it's pull or
47 charter, private angler or charter.

48 And so North Carolina is another

1 state. We've had discussions with our state
2 agency partner to try to get that in place.

3 A lot of that was going on right
4 before the pandemic hit and we will be working to
5 get back to it as soon as we can.

6 That should improve things for the
7 more -- for the less common things like shortfin
8 mako, not yellowfin tuna.

9 It will also improve the yellowfin
10 tuna estimates in terms of their precision. But
11 for the things that are rare, with MRIP designed
12 to be a general survey, it's just going to have a
13 very hard time estimating those rare events very
14 precisely.

15 So what you tend to see when you do
16 encounter that rare event species, it's a -- it's
17 a big estimate, relatively speaking, but most of
18 the time, you don't see it all so you've just got
19 a bunch of zeros.

20 You can average the big spikes with
21 the zeros, you would have something that would be
22 closer on average to a more accurate estimate.

23 But the issue is, how do you average
24 and getting a trend that has some resolution in
25 it and not just sort of flat lines that represent
26 multiple years, things like that.

27 So there's work ongoing, but again, it
28 will always be a bit of a challenge for the
29 general survey to get real precise estimates on
30 those very rare event species.

31 MR. BROOKS: Thanks, John. Let me go
32 to Rick Weber, then Rusty, and then back to Mike
33 Pierdinock. And then we'll go. Rick?

34 MR. WEBER: That was a really great
35 discussion from Jeff over to Dewey, and it
36 covered a lot of what I was going to at least
37 ask.

38 I wanted to take advantage of having
39 the LPS team here, being that we're in the middle
40 of a seven-year project, and just kind of open
41 the floor to you guys to, whether there should be
42 changes.

43 Now, Randy brought up a great question
44 of funding. That's a fact. It feels to me that
45 a coast wide survey would be better.

46 I guess I'm going to leave that to you
47 guys to discuss for us about what the strengths
48 are about a single, homogenous survey.

1 And I also want, just from when we
2 deal with ICCAT and even within the HMS, every
3 now and then we hear this idea of moving towards
4 a census because of those rare events.

5 And I wanted to give the LPS team a
6 chance to remind us how much confidence they have
7 in the survey model as opposed to the census
8 model, because we always hear people going, well,
9 it's easy, just count every one.

10 I don't have a clear question, so much
11 as I'd like to be reminded of things and let the
12 whole group hear some of the -- some of the
13 thoughts that I've heard at times. Thank you.

14 MR. BROOKS: And it sounds like just
15 sort of getting a sense from the LPS team as you
16 ruminate on these kinds of things, what do you
17 think and where does your -- where does your
18 thinking go?

19 MR. FOSTER: I'll be happy to start
20 this. In terms of expanding the LPFS, we are
21 certainly supportive of that idea, again, working
22 in conjunction with all of the HMS partners.

23 It is essentially a resource
24 limitation issue. It would cost somewhere in the
25 neighborhood of \$3 million. That's essentially a
26 floor, I think, conservative estimate.

27 Each year, if we were to expand LPS to
28 cover the southeast, essentially, south Atlantic
29 and Gulf, and perhaps a bit more to try to
30 provide full temporal coverage, full annual, 12-
31 month coverage or 10-month coverage in the
32 existing LPS range.

33 So that's a -- that's an obstacle to
34 overcome, to implement it everywhere. Clearly,
35 we would support a standardized approach where it
36 makes sense.

37 It helps ensure that the estimates are
38 comparable from one state to another, one year to
39 another, one species to another, potentially,
40 depending on the use.

41 So whether the LPS is the right fit or
42 not, that can be sort of an open question. It
43 depends on the nature of the fishery.

44 If things are exceedingly rare, LPS
45 does a good job, but for most of the species, I
46 would say it covers maybe everything it's
47 essentially managed.

48 But there can still be species that

1 are even rarer than that. And at some point, you
2 do need sort of a very specialized program to try
3 to get at those.

4 And then it's, well, you have to
5 consider kind of reporting burden. So we're
6 going to get a census on something.

7 What are the enforcement
8 considerations? What is the outreach
9 consideration to try to maintain compliance,
10 participation, but we need specialized permits?

11 If we can cover it in sort of a survey
12 approach, we're going to keep the burden down.

13 It's whether or not it can -- it's
14 picking up the signal for those fisheries,
15 particularly as they become more and more rare.

16 But just as sort of an example, the
17 MRIP estimates in the LPS range on some of the
18 more common tunas, for example, bluefin or the
19 bays, in the LPS, the PSEs might be sort of 20
20 percent or less.

21 Pretty tight. Pretty precise. The
22 MRIP estimates, you might be looking at a 50
23 percent PSE or higher.

24 It really is very different. So
25 you're gaining, we're gaining a precision on
26 those estimates with the LPS model.

27 And I think if we extended that, we'd
28 see similar gains across the rest of the region.

29 But again, the fisheries still, same
30 species but different geographies, different
31 fleets.

32 There's no guarantee we would see the
33 exact same gain without testing it and just
34 seeing what we got. And I'll stop there.

35 MR. BROOKS: Thanks. Does anyone else
36 from the LPS care to weigh in on that?

37 MR. LEE: May I share one graph?

38 MR. BROOKS: Yes.

39 MR. LEE: Comparability between the
40 LPS elements and Catch Card record.

41 MR. BROOKS: Yep, please go ahead.

42 MR. LEE: I don't -- I don't have a
43 share button highlighted.

44 MR. BROOKS: Oh. Can someone enable
45 Yong-Woo so he can share his screen? There you
46 go.

47 MR. LEE: Okay, this is the -- do you
48 see the graph?

1 MR. BROOKS: No, we see a Word
2 document.
3 MR. LEE: Yeah. Word document with
4 the graph only?
5 MR. BROOKS: Now we see the graph.
6 Okay.
7 MR. LEE: Oh, you don't see a graph?
8 Sorry.
9 MR. BROOKS: No, we see the graph now,
10 Yong-Woo.
11 MR. LEE: Yeah, so basically, I put --
12 this is a relative catch estimates, meaning I
13 have relativized the catch and the catch estimate
14 of LPS and also relativized based on the average
15 across this 10-year LPFS estimates.
16 And also, red line is the relativized
17 landing amount based on the relative catch card.
18 Please remember the LPS estimate is a combined
19 estimate for Maryland and Delaware.
20 That's how we estimate for the LPS
21 area. And as you can see, they track very
22 closely. And the correlation is above 85
23 percent.
24 So for the question of how reliable
25 are LPS assessments relative to census data, this
26 has been very, very good.
27 This is bluefin, tuna, by the way,
28 across all size classes except giant.
29 MR. BROOKS: Thank you.
30 MR. WEBER: Thank you all very much.
31 I really, pardon me, I really appreciate you
32 going through that, and I don't believe there's a
33 soul in the world outside of this country that
34 would believe the effort that we actually put
35 into recreational landings. I really don't. So
36 thank you for what you do.
37 MR. BROOKS: Thanks, Rick. Let's go
38 to Rusty Hudson. Rusty?
39 MR. HUDSON: Can you hear me, Bennett?
40 MR. BROOKS: We got you, Rusty.
41 MR. HUDSON: Fantastic. John Foster,
42 Rusty here. In the past shark stock assessments,
43 particularly sandbar and dusky, we had to review
44 the LPS.
45 And one of the things that concerns me
46 about getting down to North Carolina and is that
47 sandbar and dusky for you all was not often
48 encountered as much.

1 And so sometimes it wasn't a type of
2 input we could always flesh some stuff out. But
3 once you start getting around south part of
4 Virginia and North Carolina you get into areas
5 that will have a variety of different age classes
6 of sandbars and duskies.

7 So how would you handle that if
8 suddenly you had an uptick? And on upticks, have
9 you seen an uptick in your LPS and sandbar and
10 dusky, say, for the last five or ten years, like
11 the Narragansett? That's it.

12 MR. BROOKS: Thanks, Rusty.

13 MR. FOSTER: I may need Daemian or
14 Yong-Woo to jump in here, too. In terms of
15 expanding, so let's just say expanded the LPS to
16 North Carolina, we would almost certainly produce
17 estimates -- the North Carolina data would just
18 be used to produce estimates for North Carolina.

19 It wouldn't be sort of averaged in in
20 some way to produce the overall LPS estimate.
21 And we would, obviously, be careful about any
22 sort of time series.

23 If North Carolina were added, that
24 would clearly be noted that if you're using the
25 sum of all the LPS estimates across all the
26 states, you have to recognize that now North
27 Carolina is part of it starting in this year and
28 before it wasn't.

29 So that's one answer I guess I'd give.
30 In terms of -- in terms of sharks being, say in
31 North Carolina, sharks being more common in the
32 overall mix of LPS species, really that should be
33 a problem in terms of producing the estimates for
34 North Carolina.

35 Again, because there's a statistical
36 design in place. So we would expect to encounter
37 trip with shark catch, let's say shark trips, in
38 the right proportion to tuna trips, billfish
39 trips, trips among the different species groups.

40 So that really shouldn't be an issue.
41 If it were, then that would point to something
42 that we need to fix with the design, specific to
43 North Carolina.

44 Maybe there's some sites we're
45 missing, maybe there's a different distribution
46 of trips across the day or between weekends and
47 weekends, things like that.

48 But in general, the design would

1 handle the fact that the fishery conditions in
2 North Carolina that are aren't the same as they
3 are in other states, just like within the LPS
4 range, fishery conditions in Massachusetts aren't
5 the same as they are in Maryland or Virginia, for
6 example.

7 MR. BROOKS: Thanks, John.

8 MR. HUTT: I'd like that add something
9 there, too.

10 MR. BROOKS: Okay. Go ahead.

11 MR. HUTT: Something I want to let
12 folks know, ACCSP is currently actively doing,
13 taking on an effort to increase sampling in the
14 APAIS survey, the intercept survey for MRIP, in
15 various states.

16 And they are targeting increased
17 intercepts at offshore fishing sites in the south
18 Atlantic because they want to improve some of
19 these estimates for these various offshore
20 fisheries, not just HMS but also the council
21 offshore reef fish fisheries.

22 That effort kind of became last year
23 and it's going to be ongoing for the next few
24 years and we're excited to see how that might
25 affect some of the PSEs.

26 Regarding Rusty's questions about
27 sandbar sharks, we actually get fairly frequent
28 reports of releases of those in MRIP, and the
29 PSEs aren't bad for that particular species.

30 MR. BROOKS: Thanks, Cliff.

31 MR. FOSTER: Sorry, Bennett, could I
32 just jump in on that real quick?

33 MR. BROOKS: Yeah.

34 MR. FOSTER: So, I'm glad Cliff
35 mentioned the ACCSP project. I just wanted to
36 maybe clarify, though, that trying to target
37 sample to those offshore trips won't be
38 introducing a bias.

39 It won't suddenly mean that now
40 there's a lot more trips in the -- I mean,
41 hopefully it will mean there are more trips in
42 the data that we have that encountered those
43 species, have catch of those species.

44 But again, because it's going to be
45 done within the statistical design, there will be
46 appropriate weighting on those trips.

47 So basically, as you see more of a
48 certain type of trip in the data, the sample

1 weights on those trips tend to go down, so
2 there's a compensation there.

3 So instead of it meaning now suddenly
4 we're going to be over-representing those species
5 and the estimates are going to go through the
6 roof, that's not going to be the case.

7 We're actually just trying to get more
8 precise estimates for those, and hopefully what
9 it will mean is it will balance out that pattern
10 of normal estimates and then suddenly a spike.

11 We will get to a more stable, usable
12 trend in those estimates. And maybe everyone
13 understood that. I just wanted to make sure that
14 that was the case.

15 MR. BROOKS: Thanks, John. We're
16 starting to get a little tight on time for this
17 conversation. Willy Goldsmith, you have not had
18 a chance to weigh in yet. So let me hand it off
19 to you.

20 MR. GOLDSMITH: Thanks, Bennett. And,
21 yeah, really appreciating this discussion on LPS
22 and North Carolina in particular.

23 I guess, to follow up on what -- on
24 what Jeff was saying and then what Dewey
25 highlighted, certainly for those of us who rely
26 on LPS for grant proposals and that sort of
27 thing, it's helpful to know what information is
28 being included and isn't being included, and just
29 kind of a back of the envelope, looking at the --
30 at the data query online.

31 LPS yellowfin landings in 2019 were
32 about 42,000 fish with a 15 percent standard
33 error and then, Cliff, to your point, MRIP for
34 North Carolina in 2019 was about 45,000 fish with
35 a 20.4 percent standard error.

36 So certainly, it looks like there's
37 obviously a big impact, which isn't a surprise to
38 anybody.

39 My question in thinking about those
40 two kind of parallel data sources with the LPS
41 and the MRIP intercept survey, what's the
42 appropriate way to integrate those results in
43 order to really get a sense of the overall
44 impact?

45 And how does HMS kind of consider
46 that? So in the example that I just mentioned,
47 for 2019, you were thinking of these as apples to
48 apples, you end with about 25,000 fish.

1 I'm just wondering, is that something
2 that the agency works to integrate and is that
3 something that could be made available to folks?

4 MR. BROOKS: Not sure who's best to
5 jump in on that question, so I'm just looking at
6 all the different Zoom boxes and figuring one of
7 you will.

8 MR. HUTT: So I just want to clarify
9 with Willy, I guess what you're asking is how to
10 we combine the MRIP and LPS data to get our --

11 MR. GOLDSMITH: From the outside
12 looking in, if you're interested in learning what
13 harvest would be, you would consider just going
14 to the LPS data set.

15 Obviously, given the limitations and
16 the range only going to Virginia, you only, you
17 don't include that big North Carolina impact.

18 But as you alluded to, Cliff, the data
19 are not only pretty large in terms of numbers of
20 fish, but fairly for size, 20 percent standard
21 error.

22 So how would you integrate those two
23 data sources that are in the overall removal?

24 MR. HUTT: I guess when we're doing
25 our reports for ICCAT or for stock assessments,
26 generally, our primary data source is the LPS for
27 most of these species.

28 And during the time period that it
29 covers, the states it covers, those estimates
30 take precedent.

31 For months and states where the LPS
32 does not provide coverage, for most species,
33 particularly like yellowfin, that don't have the
34 catch reporting requirements, then we fall back
35 to MRIP and use those estimates.

36 However, for the species that have
37 their -- you have the mandatory catch reporting
38 requirements like bluefin tuna, our secondary
39 data source, primarily for those estimations, is
40 the ALRS catch reporting and the state Catch Card
41 report.

42 So we don't have to prep as much for
43 bluefin tuna or billfish. But --

44 MR. GOLDSMITH: Sorry, Cliff, just a
45 quick follow-up. I know we're short on time. So
46 in other words, in the ICCAT reporting, these
47 MRIP data are considered sort of a complementary
48 data source in addition to the LPS, for example,

1 for yellowfin tuna, the total number of fish
2 would incorporate that to some extent?

3 MR. HUTT: In a sense. It was
4 definitely like the secondary complementary for
5 the LPS region. Outside the LPS region, it
6 becomes the primary data source.

7 MR. BROOKS: Makes sense.

8 MR. HUTT: Also now, from the Gulf of
9 Mexico, we're also adding LA Creel and data
10 reporting from Texas Parks and Wildlife.

11 And LA Creel actually produces some
12 pretty good estimates for yellowfin tuna in terms
13 of their local precision.

14 That's the Louisiana Creel, for people
15 who don't recognize the abbreviation.

16 MR. BROOKS: Thanks, Cliff. I think
17 at this point, everyone has had a chance to weigh
18 in at least once here.

19 And I know we want to start turning
20 toward the listening session.

21 If there's one hand left that just
22 absolutely is convinced that your question and
23 comment is something that everyone would really
24 benefit from, leave your hand up.

25 Otherwise, if you could lower your
26 hand, then I'll know who's got the little golden
27 nugget that we want to close out on.

28 And you all don't. One of you does.
29 All right. Well, you've left me in a horrible
30 position here. All right, Mike Pierdinock, weigh
31 in, and then we're going to move on. Quick
32 comment.

33 MR. PIERDINOCK: Thank you, Bennett.
34 You keep going in and out. It must be me. I
35 want to just expand upon that Dewey had
36 mentioned, because there is a problem with the
37 data and how it's reported.

38 -- with the proposed wind turbine
39 locations and if there's going to be also
40 aquacultural areas, they're going to look at the
41 same thing.

42 Do we fish these areas or don't? And
43 how do we record them? Now, I'll give an
44 example. I have a northeast federal groundfish
45 permit, and I've had it for a long time, and as a
46 result, I have to report everything.

47 And what is great now today is it's
48 just one stop shopping. HMS gets reported

1 because I have the HMS permit and then I have a
2 southeast permit for mahi and wahoo.

3 Push the button, everybody gets
4 reported. But now what we found through
5 addressing the wind turbine areas, which are the
6 size of Rhode Island south of the vineyard, that
7 if -- there's 684 Massachusetts state --

8 MR. BROOKS: Mike, we're losing you
9 again.

10 MR. PIERDINOCK: -- fish for --

11 MR. BROOKS: Mike, we're not hearing
12 you. You're going to have to put it in the chat.
13 If you can hear me, Mike, we're going to have to
14 have you put it in the chat.

15 MR. PIERDINOCK: You know what? I'll
16 try another mechanism and I guess I can talk
17 about it later.

18 MR. BROOKS: Okay. Yeah.

19 MR. PIERDINOCK: Let me call back and
20 we'll talk later.

21 MR. HUTT: Sorry, Mike, when we can
22 hear you, we can hear you, but when you're gone,
23 you're just completely gone.

24 MR. BROOKS: You're just completely
25 gone. We're missing too much of it. All right,
26 well, I'm going to take -- I'm going to take that
27 as a sign that it's time to transition.

28 So John, I want to just give you a
29 chance if you want to, sort of, any closing
30 remarks from your perspective on behalf of the
31 team of this conversation and next steps or any
32 questions you want to fold in here.

33 MR. FOSTER: Sure. Thanks, Bennett.
34 And I'll just start again with saying thanks to
35 Randy and the HMS management folks for
36 coordinating this and organizing it, and again,
37 all of -- all of the participants.

38 It's good that we did this. We're
39 happy to get the information about the survey
40 program out.

41 We're also equally happy to hear back,
42 particularly on where the survey seems to be
43 working, things that might be able to be
44 improved, again, whether it's the direct products
45 of the survey, the catch and effort estimates, or
46 this information that could be provided, could be
47 added to the program, collected for addition sort
48 of derived uses, but still that are key for

1 assessment and management purposes.

2 So again, just a big thanks to
3 everybody involved today. We're certainly
4 available for continued dialog moving forward.

5 And as we keep making progress on the
6 redesign project, obviously we'll continue to
7 give updates to that through say maybe future AP
8 meetings or other special meetings like this one
9 as needed.

10 And in particular, if there's going to
11 be a delay in implementation of the new -- the
12 new program or if we're seeing sort of surprising
13 things that might suggest there will be bigger
14 changes with the redesign once its implemented,
15 and it certain will, we'll work to get that
16 information out as quickly as we can.

17 So again, I'll just finish with a big
18 thanks and glad that we were able to make this
19 happen today. Thank you.

20 MR. BROOKS: Thank you. Thanks John
21 and to the whole team, and I'll just fold in,
22 really good conversations and questions and
23 comments.

24 A few of the sort of themes that
25 jumped out at me were comments around compliance,
26 sort of early on, wanting to understand are there
27 biases in the sampling approach that we need to
28 be mindful of and thinking about, a lot of
29 questions swirling around shifts in fishing
30 patterns, shifts in fishing movement, and how
31 nimble is LPS in catching that and adapting to
32 that, a lot of comments on the value of dialogue
33 with recreational leaderships and stakeholders to
34 be informing your work and then sort of toward
35 the end here, conversation around scope and in
36 particular, North Carolina.

37 So thanks, everyone, for the comments
38 and contributions. At this point, I want to
39 shift to the Rec Roundtable, but take 60 seconds,
40 move your bodies, stand up, just stretch, move
41 around, do whatever you need to do.

42 I'm going to turn off my video and
43 move my body, and we will reconvene in one
44 minute.

45 (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter
46 went off the record at 2:01 p.m. and resumed at
47 2:02 p.m.)

48 MR. BROOKS: All right. So 2:00, I

1 want to jump into our last conversation then
2 about the next hour and a quarter or so in a
3 really open HMS listening session, what HMS
4 refers to as a Recreational Roundtable.

5 The intent here really, this is a
6 listening session. It's an opportunity for you
7 all to share issues that you want the HMS program
8 to be thinking about.

9 There's of areas you could go with and
10 lots of issues that have come up over time in HMS
11 conversations.

12 But this is really wide open. But I
13 think I want to hand it off to Brad and Cliff
14 just to say a few introductory words and then
15 we'll really open it up to you all.

16 MR. MCHALE: Great. Yeah, yeah, thank
17 you very much, Bennett, and thanks, everyone, for
18 your time here.

19 We understand we're in the homestretch
20 before a holiday weekend and I know that there's
21 other places you can be spending your time, so we
22 appreciate it.

23 So what we've really kind of set up
24 this afternoon for was to really kind of move
25 beyond what we discussed this morning in the
26 first portion of this afternoon, survey-centric
27 issues, and really just open it up.

28 Really, I'm here at the HMS Management
29 Division. Know that there's a whole litany of
30 different issues at play when it comes to
31 managing these species recreationally or
32 collectively, which is recreationally.

33 And we want to take this opportunity
34 to make sure that there weren't issues that we do
35 not have on our radar, so we're giving them the
36 proper attention at our level.

37 But even if we need to go beyond to
38 more of that action level of bringing in Russ and
39 some of his thoughts of what he's hearing around
40 the country, just to make sure that we're not
41 having any blind spots.

42 And I know, for those of you that have
43 had the pleasure of enduring the HMS Advisory
44 Panel meeting throughout most of this week, I
45 know shark depredation was a big issue that got
46 some air time throughout the week, obviously,
47 reporting, large pelagic surveys as well as
48 electronic technologies, which we've touched on a

1 little it.

2 But what are the constrainers? We
3 really want to open it up. We're not going to
4 have answers to everything, honestly, but we do
5 want to make sure that we have things on our
6 radar.

7 Cliff, anything else you'd like to add
8 before we kind of --

9 MR. HUTT: Yeah, I was just going to
10 -- I was just going to throw out there, all kind
11 of subjects related to the HMS Recreational
12 Fishery are on the table.

13 And this isn't just a period for you
14 to ask us questions. This is also a period for
15 you to give us your thoughts on those issues and
16 provide your comments.

17 Russ Dunn is on the line here with us
18 as well, and he is interested in hearing any
19 thoughts you might have on HMS-related topics
20 that would be of interest to consider for the
21 upcoming Recreational Summit as well.

22 So the table is yours. Just raise
23 your hand in the chat box and we will take you
24 one at a time.

25 MR. BROOKS: Great. Let's open it up.
26 I'll take them in the order that the hands just
27 went up. David Schalit, Rick Weber, and then
28 Willy Goldsmith.

29 MR. SCHALIT: Okay. Cliff and Brad,
30 I've got three items for you. Recently, the
31 decision was taken to combine the two indices of
32 abundance.

33 That would be fish from 66 to 144
34 centimeters, okay? That's fine. But are we
35 aware that there is -- there is another group of
36 fish from 145-177 centimeters, which would be
37 nominally, let's say 60 inch to 73 inch fish,
38 which are recreational sized fish, for which we
39 have no index?

40 And I'm not necessarily proposing that
41 we should have it, but what I'm worried about is
42 that there seems to be an absolute dearth on that
43 -- on that size of fish, when I know personally
44 that there are many of those fish being caught.

45 So it's kind of awkward to consider
46 that the data is suggesting that these fish, when
47 they reach 60 inches disappear from our data and
48 only reappear when they reach 73 inches.

1 So there's something that could be --
2 that could be a potential blind spot. That's
3 item one.

4 The second item I wanted to mention
5 is, has to do with ICCAT. Until now, bigeye and
6 yellowfin have been managed by ICCAT under a
7 single Atlantic-wide tack.

8 So that means one magic number,
9 110,000 tons for yellowfin for all the nations
10 that harvest that fish, and something similar for
11 bigeye.

12 More recently, bigeye has adopted a
13 fixed quota for the largest harvesters, but not
14 for everyone, just the largest harvesters, and we
15 are headed towards an allocation key where it is,
16 there is this certain probability that the U.S.
17 will be looking at a hard quota.

18 And the same thing could be said of
19 yellowfin as well. So in your seven-year
20 planning, it might be worth, it might be worth
21 considering the possibility that we're going to
22 have to sharpen our pencil on these landings that
23 are taking place on bigeye and yellowfin in a way
24 that we haven't in the past, only because ICCAT
25 is going to be looking for more precise
26 information.

27 And then I want to -- I want to end my
28 comments with what I consider to be the most
29 vexing problem I have with regard to the
30 recreational fishery, and that is, I believe that
31 a lot of catch and release of fish that are
32 caught and released, that data is falling between
33 the cracks.

34 I believe that if, in any area where
35 we have a high density of bluefin, and speaking
36 of bluefin now, we have a high density of
37 bluefin, we could have the reasonable expectation
38 that we will have lots of catch and release going
39 on, because the fishermen will catch the fish
40 that they're allowed to keep, and then they will
41 continue to fish for the rest of the day.

42 And I receive regular reports from the
43 fishermen on this, in which I'm told that they
44 interacted with 15 fish in one day, 20 fish, 25,
45 even up to 30 fish in one day.

46 So when they come back to the dock and
47 there's an intercept that takes place, maybe that
48 guy has one fish on his boat but he's interacted

1 with 20.

2 But the only one that gets reported is
3 the one that's on the boat. Or maybe it -- maybe
4 if the guy's in the mood to say something to the
5 -- to the -- to the interviewer, the interviewer
6 will ask him, what else did you do out there
7 besides catch this one fish?

8 If he's in the mood to be honest, he
9 might tell you, or if he's -- or maybe he'll
10 lowball and say, which I think is more typical.

11 I have not yet been able to find a way
12 to address this problem, but this is a serious
13 problem which will -- which will affect our
14 estimates of recruitment for sure.

15 And the other aspect that -- just one
16 thing, I want to bring is that -- is that I don't
17 believe the survey captures catch and size data
18 for releases.

19 It only asks if a release -- if
20 anything else was done. And catch and size data
21 is critical.

22 So that might be something which we
23 want to add to an estimate of the actual length
24 of the fish. We might want to add to that
25 questionnaire. Thanks.

26 MR. BROOKS: Thanks. I'm going to
27 leave it to the HMS Team whether or not you want
28 to be responding to some of these or just
29 listening, so your call.

30 MR. HUTT: I saw John Foster come back
31 on and I think he's edging to answer some of
32 those questions, the last point.

33 MR. BROOKS: John?

34 MR. FOSTER: I can hold --

35 MR. BROOKS: No, it's fine.

36 MR. FOSTER: Okay. Just quickly then.
37 So specifically on the last point about the
38 bluefins release, it is by size class.

39 We are relying on the captain's
40 recall, but we do, again, we do record for
41 bluefin the releases by size class.

42 And in terms of, again, it's self-
43 reported information, we can't confirm it, but in
44 terms of the relationship between landed fish and
45 released fish, typically when we have landings,
46 we also have releases that are to the same
47 magnitude or sometimes two, three, or more times
48 higher than the landing.

1 So it's in the queries and we can
2 provide additional summaries if needed, but
3 released information is reported as well as the
4 landings information.

5 MR. MCHALE: To build off of that,
6 David, in the self-reporting capabilities in the
7 automated landing reporting, so whether through
8 the HMS app or on the website, you can also have
9 the ability to collect the release information by
10 size class.

11 Just like John had mentioned, there's
12 really no verification tool to then substantiate
13 it's there, but I think the issue that you raised
14 is paramount to everyone that's on the call.

15 And this was discussed throughout the
16 week at the AP as well is how do we then take a
17 concerted effort to inform the fishing community
18 why certain data elements are being asked about
19 and what importance they have to that individual.

20 All of a sudden, if somebody's asking
21 how many yellowfin tuna did you release, that it
22 becomes less of a mindset that that information
23 is going to be used fishing opportunities for
24 that individual, versus what are the downstream
25 implications?

26 And this becomes paramount, especially
27 when some of the bluefin tuna indices discussions
28 is that if individuals think, well, if I report I
29 caught ten fish, is the agency going to impose
30 some sort of tally estimate on that, therefore
31 I'm going to say zero, versus John Walter and
32 Matts of the world want to know that you
33 interacted with those ten fish because they
34 aren't going to show up in any landing data.

35 So I think that's going to be this
36 challenge, both the industry and publication and
37 regulator, as well as the fishermen themselves,
38 to try to shift that culture of how powerful this
39 data can be versus threat.

40 MR. BROOKS: Thank you.

41 MR. SCHALIT: Thank you.

42 MR. BROOKS: Rick Weber, your hand
43 went back down, is that because you are not in
44 the queue anymore?

45 MR. WEBER: Yes, that is correct. I
46 don't --

47 MR. BROOKS: Okay. You've run out of
48 things to say, Rick. Okay. Willy Goldsmith?

1 MR. GOLDSMITH: Sure, thanks, Bennett,
2 and everybody again. I guess somebody has to
3 bring it up, so it might as well be me.

4 As everybody well knows, a few weeks
5 ago Vineyard Wind 1 was approved, 16 lease areas
6 up and down the east coast.

7 And there's obviously a whole lot of
8 attention being given right now to collecting
9 baseline information to inform offshore wind
10 development as well as putting modern guidance in
11 place and we're certainly supportive of what
12 we've seen with NOAA's general involvement in
13 informing that effort, and saw the report that
14 was released earlier this week about potential
15 socioeconomic impacts on the for-hire industry.

16 And my understanding is that most of
17 the data that was used to inform that were from
18 vessel trip reports, which the coarseness of that
19 data, as well as what's in the large pelagic
20 survey as described earlier, can make any real
21 conclusion about the utilization of this wind
22 areas not particularly precise.

23 I think, off the top of my head, I
24 think it said the Vineyard Wind 1 area was
25 visited off three trips for example in 2018,
26 which I think anybody who fishes in that area is
27 aware that's a pretty significant underestimate.

28 And so I guess I have kind of a
29 comment and a question. The comment is that I
30 really hope that the HMS division is going to be
31 involved in the -- I the process when it comes to
32 helping with baseline data.

33 Obviously, a lot of these areas are,
34 and offshore areas might be frequented by HMS
35 permit holders.

36 So on the recreational side, I would
37 certainly hope for some engagement by the HMS
38 folks and just wondering if there's a plan to be
39 working with others at GARFO and elsewhere who
40 are in the process of trying to get a good sense
41 of what areas are frequented by permit holders
42 and what they catch there to get a sense of how
43 offshore wind development is going to impact
44 them. Thank you.

45 MR. MCHALE: So, thank you for that,
46 Willy. I can let you know that HMS staff are
47 involved in those internal discussions and
48 collaborating with other parts of the agency.

1 So from the management perspective, we
2 are sharing what we have available. That comes
3 with some challenges.

4 First and foremost, I think as
5 everybody on the call is aware, that having
6 precise geographical location information on for-
7 hire fishing or recreational fishing is difficult
8 to come by.

9 Folks don't want to necessarily want
10 to share that data, and that history goes back
11 for a number of years, and therefore, we don't
12 necessarily have that level of precision in the
13 data to forward onto the agencies that are kind
14 of at the raids of the wind, BOEM.

15 And that does pose challenges. That
16 posed challenges in the establishment of
17 protected areas, monuments, and then in turn
18 wind, if we don't have that level of precision.

19 And so that's something that
20 collectively, I think we're going to need to
21 overcome.

22 But to that effect, we are actively
23 contributing what HMS data we have, at least from
24 the agency side, to at least do our diligence in
25 trying to inform BOEM and their analytical
26 documents to the best of our ability with what we
27 have on hand.

28 Obviously, it's then incumbent upon
29 them to use that information, but I think we can
30 also recognize that there are some challenges in
31 the spatial resolution of the data to help really
32 support what the industry is kind of looking for
33 there as far as importance on particular grounds
34 in their fishing activities historically.

35 MR. BROOKS: Thanks, Brad. Marty, I
36 don't think we've heard from you today yet. Why
37 don't you jump in?

38 MR. SCANLON: Yes, Brad, you just said
39 something just now about these people should
40 believe in you that you're using this information
41 that they're voluntarily giving you to their
42 benefit.

43 But how do you expect them to believe
44 that when you see the way the agency has treated
45 pelagic longline industry over the past 30 years
46 that all the data that we produced for you?

47 We are the leaders in data collection.
48 We had a research platforms for HMS in the

1 Atlantic and you've regulated out fishery to the
2 point where we're just about out of business.

3 So why would any believe when you tell
4 them that you're giving -- they're giving that
5 data to you and you're going to extrapolate that
6 data and use it on their behalf to better their
7 fishing and better their fishing opportunities
8 when you look and see what you've done to us.

9 MR. BROOKS: Thanks, Marty.

10 MR. MCHALE: I hear your concerns
11 there, Marty. I don't think I used that exact
12 verbiage. I pretty much just said to Willy's
13 question there is that we're passing along the
14 data that we do have, helping to inform the
15 decisions, wind forms, or shall I say the wind
16 farms, isn't necessarily in HMS.

17 But the data that we have to help
18 inform decision making is being passed along.

19 I would say in the same context, I had
20 discussed earlier in the week, Marty, and I know
21 that your feelings have come through accurately
22 and strongly, but the agency has done things with
23 the data derived from the pelagic longline
24 fishery in numerous ways, and I don't necessarily
25 want to go over the ground like we did over the
26 past week, but for at least one data point in
27 particular, there is a number of gear restricted
28 areas or previously closed areas of for bluefin
29 tuna have been converted to monitoring with the
30 potential of just having them open wide.

31 So those are steps in the right
32 direction. I believe strongly about that. Also
33 have heard you as well as others that the
34 expediency that some of the shifts are taking
35 place in the commercial fishery, in particular
36 the spatial management as it relates to the
37 longline gear type, aren't coming nearly as
38 quickly as you desire.

39 And that hasn't fallen on deaf ears,
40 either. But again, to get back to what Willy was
41 raising is that we're passing information through
42 to the regulatory agencies that are at the helm
43 of wind and wind energy.

44 There's some challenges with that data
45 around spatial resolution, and that's really what
46 my response was hinging.

47 MR. BLANKINSHIP: If I could jump in
48 to bolster support for Brad's response here, and

1 I also want to kind of -- while I appreciate
2 Marty's comment, I want to put us back on track
3 too of not get too sidetracked into the
4 discussion of project longline fishery.

5 This is a Recreational Roundtable, so
6 I'd like to try to refocus on the recreational
7 aspects.

8 MR. BROOKS: Thanks, Randy, that's
9 just what I was about to say. Thanks for jumping
10 in on that. Ray Bogan, jump on in.

11 MR. BOGAN: Thanks very much. I want
12 to add a couple of things in this regard from a
13 perspective standpoint, and that is the concern
14 over the use of data.

15 There has long been a tendency on the
16 part of fishermen to try to guess what may be
17 done with data, as a result of which there have
18 been some challenges that have arisen.

19 And part of that is a trust issue
20 that, to state it otherwise would be disingenuous
21 on my part.

22 So certainly, it's there. Having said
23 that, however, the attempt here is improvement in
24 data.

25 It must be stated here, and it must be
26 stated often that we have a data system that can
27 always be improved, but we have a data system.

28 When I hear folks refer to the
29 international community, having been involved in
30 the process on behalf of the United States for a
31 good long time and having had an opportunity to
32 speak to representatives of many, many entities,
33 international entities, whether it be the EU,
34 Japan, Canada, whatever entity we've dealt with
35 at the time, we have a strong track record that
36 folks are trying to make stronger.

37 I do want to make that editorial
38 comment because walking out of here, I don't want
39 there to be this thought that, oh, gosh, we are
40 all broken.

41 No, we are in a quest to improve.
42 What we have is considerably better than the rest
43 of the international community has.

44 So I think that needs to be stated in
45 light of the public comments that have been
46 previously made.

47 Take it a step further, there is no
48 doubt, there is no question that improvement is

1 sought both by the fishing community as well as
2 by NOAA.

3 So again, I think that's a perspective
4 that I just felt as a result of that which had
5 been stated so far had to be raised.

6 I want to raise an experience that
7 many of us have had in the past with regard to
8 data.

9 This is not something that is
10 restricted to highly migratory species, and that
11 is the reluctance of fisherman to turn over data
12 with regard to geographical location of catches.

13 It applies in almost all fisheries.
14 And one of the -- I'm sorry -- cut -- more than
15 one side had the experience, both meaning the
16 Army Corps of Engineers and various governmental
17 entities to provide additional data so that when
18 certain plans were done, primarily on bottom
19 related areas, an example would be the mud dump
20 site and the proposed expansion within the New
21 York Bight, we were able to provide essential
22 data to the governmental entity, which was
23 checked, worked on as a result of which, plans
24 were changed.

25 With all that NOAA has on its plate
26 right now, this would be very difficult, but it
27 might be worth looking into as it relates to wind
28 farms, which some of us think will be very, very
29 deleterious to the fishing communities.

30 There are those that take a different
31 position, but it's relevant because of how it was
32 raised both by Willy and others, who I think has
33 a very different position than many of us
34 fisherman, full-time fishermen in particular, and
35 that is the ability to go to folks that have been
36 long involved in highly migratory species to give
37 areas of concern, fishing areas of concern,
38 whether it be bringing log books or whatever.

39 I've done it. We've been successful.
40 It's with governmental entities and it went into
41 the decision making process.

42 So I would suggest that that kind of
43 thing be considered to the extent that highly
44 migratory species, or rather the data -- the data
45 group that deals with highly migratory species,
46 both through LPS and MRIP, consider getting some
47 of that additional data.

48 I think it would be very, very

1 helpful, and we can provide it and I've seen it
2 historically successful.

3 And it can be done here in that same
4 regard. Getting back to it, I have been critical
5 and I've tried to make recommendations and worked
6 very hard last year, for example, with regard to
7 bluefin reporting.

8 I've done it with yellowfin, I've done
9 it with bigeye, I've done it with every species
10 of the course of however many years, far too many
11 decades to recall.

12 However, I get the frustration that
13 was expressed by a number of these folks and the
14 concern, and it is a real concern.

15 How will the data be used? Will it be
16 used against us? And whether that perception is
17 accurate or not, doesn't make as much a different
18 as whether it is the perceive reality.

19 So just a thought and I can sure
20 relate to the idea that the longline industry has
21 been beaten down enough, despite their sacrifices
22 and promises to feel very, very weary.

23 You get beaten up that much, you get
24 beaten down that much, you're going to feel it,
25 in the data context or any other.

26 So thank you for your time, but just
27 consider that perspective.

28 MR. BROOKS: Thanks. Thanks, Ray.
29 And I know from working I've done on the west
30 coast, there's definitely been issues with green
31 protected areas out there where industry has been
32 able to share information and it's been really
33 helpful in informing managers if they're drawing
34 lines in the water.

35 MR. BROOKS: Russ, you wanted to jump
36 in for a second here?

37 MR. DUNN: Yeah, just a comment on
38 this, if I could. And to step it back to just a
39 larger context, with, one of my concerns for the
40 recreation community, whether it's for hire or
41 private, and I guess it's a little heavier on the
42 private side because of the systems that are
43 either in place or emerging in the for hire with
44 electronic reporting is this data issue with the
45 expanding interest in those ocean uses that we're
46 talking about with wind, with aquaculture, with
47 contamination of areas for conservation under
48 30x30.

1 I don't see a good mechanism of use
2 right now for particularly in private rec
3 communities --

4 MR. BROOKS: You're breaking up a
5 little bit. If you just cut off your video, we
6 might get a better sound quality.

7 MR. DUNN: All right, sorry.

8 MR. BROOKS: That's okay. Go ahead.

9 MR. DUNN: So what I'm concerned about
10 is how do we ensure that the recreational
11 communities, fishing grounds, locations, are
12 factored into all these different interests,
13 wind, aquaculture, conservation, and other
14 emerging ocean uses.

15 I understand people are reluctant to
16 hand over the data. We don't frankly even have a
17 mechanism to capture it right now, particularly
18 from the -- from the private rec side, but if we
19 can't figure out some way to inform these
20 deliberations, the rec community is likely to
21 find itself in a difficult spot.

22 NOAA's not in charge of, for example,
23 wind. We aren't leading that effort. We are
24 simply a consulting agency providing information.

25 And so we've got to make sure these
26 other agencies are informed about where location
27 is occurring for a whole range of reasons.

28 So it's something that we all need to
29 think about. How do we resolve, how do we get
30 past our fears of the data is going to be used
31 against me, because I can assure you, if we can't
32 figure it out, you're going to see things popping
33 up in the areas where you fish because you didn't
34 have any data to show.

35 MR. BROOKS: Thanks, Russ. Mike
36 Pierdinock, let's see if we can try you again.
37 And if you do have your video on -- well, you
38 don't have your video on. Never mind. Go ahead.

39 MR. PIERDINOCK: No, I changed. I'm
40 on the phone. Does this work?

41 MR. BROOKS: Yes, if you can -- it's
42 a tiny bit faint, but go at it. Speak up.

43 MR. PIERDINOCK: Well, thank you.
44 When I got disconnected I was in the midst of
45 going down the road to expand upon the issues
46 with wind turbines, the proposed wind turbines.

47 And Willy did a good job of explaining
48 the issues. Both me and Willy are the

1 recreational representatives on ROSA for the mid-
2 Atlantic and New England, so we've been
3 intimately involved in this.

4 One thing that I wanted to point out
5 is the inconsistency with data is that, for
6 instance, there's 680-some state permitted,
7 Massachusetts state permitted charter boats.

8 They don't have Northeast Multi-
9 Species permits because they don't groundfish in
10 federal waters.

11 They only have HMS permits. So if
12 they go out into federal waters, they go out to
13 pelagics, the only thing they have to report if
14 they catch them is for bluefin.

15 So there's a whole major data gap with
16 that state, with Massachusetts.

17 And I have to suspect other states up
18 and down the coast are catching fish and they
19 never get recorded.

20 Now, maybe I'm getting old and been
21 doing this for too long, but there was a designed
22 habitat research away proposed at Stellwagen Bank
23 National Marine Sanctuary close to 10 years ago.

24 And I kind of chuckle because this
25 whole process is consistent today with what we
26 went with back then to identify the data gaps and
27 show the errors in what you rely upon for VTRs
28 because it's the center point of where you fish
29 for the day, it's not exactly where you may fish.

30 Unfortunately, well, fortunately or
31 unfortunately, the way we had to address that,
32 and we're addressing it right now for the
33 Massachusetts for-hire fleet, is that I have to
34 assemble all the charter boat captains.

35 And we assembled -- and we assembled
36 through the sanctuary and showed up in tremendous
37 numbers and showed them in detail, we do fish
38 these areas, no doubt.

39 Now, fortunately, we're doing the same
40 now for Cox's Ledge and those other areas,
41 because, for instance, there's a \$42,000
42 compensation number for Cox's Ledge.

43 And as Willy said, he mentioned what
44 was outlined just for Gordon's Gully location,
45 which is just ridiculously low.

46 So ultimately, the only way we're able
47 to fight it is to spend a tremendous amount of
48 time, assemble the forces, and get them there.

1 But now for us to do that for every
2 single wind turbine company, it's just not
3 feasible.

4 So I don't know what the answer is,
5 but one of the things to throw out there is that
6 it's always been my understanding that for
7 fishery management purposes, the transiting
8 details remain confidential.

9 And there seems to be a lack of
10 understand of that by others that want to site
11 wind turbines, want to site oil platforms or
12 aquaculture or so on, because that's different.
13 That is not for fishery management. That's for
14 siting location.

15 So that's where we get into
16 confidentiality. That's where we get into
17 concerns with all ultimately was attempted with
18 the DHRA at Stellwagen and we ultimately won.

19 And now we're up against the fact
20 that, let me use Vineyard Wind as a perfect
21 example.

22 We've been fighting this up here in
23 Massachusetts for five years while a lot of
24 people on this call or beyond this call didn't
25 even know what was going on.

26 Yet we fought and we tried to prevent.
27 First started with something as simple as Captain
28 Seagull's Fishing Charts to show where we fish.

29 And then the fish, then us in the
30 fishing community showed up and showed them
31 exactly where we fish.

32 Now the thing to point out is, Russ is
33 right, the National Marine Fisheries Service
34 agrees with us. The state regulatory agencies
35 agree with us. It's BOEM that does not.

36 They don't care to hear what we're
37 saying, and then they put the proposed wind
38 turbine right where our fruitful fishing area is,
39 not only for the rec where I am, but also for the
40 commercial fleet.

41 Why don't move, I might not
42 understand. Now, we've been able to demonstrate
43 to them, and I'll give you an example.

44 If I go sharking, I'm going to have a
45 chumsman. I'm going to power chum for a mile,
46 then I may drift two to three miles.

47 And I may hook up to a ballistic mako,
48 and now with the grid pattern with these wind

1 turbines, I'm not going in there.

2 Or if I catch a monster bluefin, I'm
3 not going in there, either. There's too many
4 safety factors.

5 So we're going to have an access issue
6 and they're already aware of that (audio
7 interference) gear types or approach, because you
8 have to break it into whether you're ground
9 fishing, where there's still safety factors going
10 in there, or whether you're targeting pelagic.

11 So we have a lot of grounds that it's
12 understood. These are artificial reef, they're
13 fish aggregating devices, and they're going to
14 have a benefit for certain species, and it's
15 going to be a mystery of whether it's -- there's
16 a problem with others.

17 Now, for Cox's Ledge, for example
18 where we go after pelagics, we go there for cod.

19 If the wind turbine's now change that
20 to a black sea bass area, we can get that near
21 shore. It needs to remain that way for cod.

22 These are the kind of questions that
23 those that want to do nothing but say it's a good
24 thing but not recognize the issues with it don't
25 care to discuss.

26 Now, what we've all, what I or we have
27 all simply tried to do, and I believe Jeff
28 Kneebone's on this call, is that I think, and
29 I've been pushing it, that what Jeff Kneebone did
30 for Vineyard Wind to identify baseline sampling
31 for the recreational for-hire fleets be done for
32 every single wind turbine area.

33 Because if he was able to, through the
34 data search that he did, of tag and release,
35 tournaments, you name it, yeah, there's, no doubt
36 we fish there.

37 Now that deals with that, then you
38 have to get the baseline conditions of what are
39 there.

40 Then to get who's fishing there for
41 potential damages, the fishery changes for the
42 for-hire fleet. That's another problem.

43 And as I said, the only way we're
44 dealing with that right now is to assemble the
45 masses and have them show up and basically
46 indicate they're fishing these areas, but it
47 doesn't reflect that in the VTR because it says
48 I'm fishing at the Claw for today, where I may

1 have left Menemsha, went to the Claw, went to
2 Cox's, went to Vineyard Sound and then went home,
3 and it provides the center point.

4 And I think you all know the
5 difficulty with that. And lastly, I agree, the
6 purpose of this webinar is to provide
7 recommendations of how to improve it.

8 We have a system in place. We're
9 trying to improve it. It can be frustrating, and
10 hopefully there's going to be ways down the road
11 to fix it, because we're dealing with it now up
12 here and they're coming.

13 The wind turbines are on their way.
14 They're going in. And hopefully they're not
15 going to be the detriment for us or the resource.
16 Thank you.

17 MR. BROOKS: Excellent. Thanks, Mike.
18 And just to your point, Jeff was on the call
19 earlier.

20 I don't think he's on anymore, so just
21 as an FYI. Dewey, I think you've been waiting to
22 jump in here.

23 MR. HEMILRIGHT: Yeah, thank you. And
24 I also thank Mike for giving us some of his
25 secrets, how he fishes for large makos.

26 I appreciate your presentation today
27 with the LPS. It's interesting to me where I'm
28 in North Carolina and the use of the MRIP survey
29 here.

30 I think that before any furthering of
31 transporting the LPS further south, I think
32 there's a wealth of information that can be
33 gathered from environment conditions or water
34 temperatures, the catch of the charter boat
35 industry, what particular species they're
36 catching, the times of the year.

37 You don't catch bigeye tuna in
38 Morehead City. And there's only two inlets,
39 three, one used very little, north of Cape
40 Lookout, which would be Oregon Inlet and Cape
41 Hatteras, similar to Ocean City, Maryland.

42 So you have most of the fishing
43 predominantly for a few species here that's in a
44 certain area.

45 And there was a -- there was a
46 dolphin/wahoo roundtable that was done by Mandy
47 Karnauskas, might have pronounced that wrong, and
48 Matthew McPherson.

1 And it looked at the catches of mahi
2 in North Carolina and Florida and it gave a
3 presentation where they met with stakeholders and
4 they showed the difference between the two.

5 But not only that, they went on social
6 media and they looked at, they had a student look
7 at 1,900 pictures over the couple areas that they
8 picked out, and they counted 35,000 fish.

9 And it also showed the different time,
10 what was being caught during that period of time.

11 So there's a wealth of -- and I don't
12 mean this disrespect, but there's a wealth of
13 common sense knowledge on social media that's out
14 there that might could be used to be incorporated
15 or somehow looked at with the science knowledge
16 that has to be done.

17 Because boats in the -- in the -- they
18 want to take pictures and they're going to tell
19 about what they caught and show what they caught.

20 And it might be some way to gauge to
21 help these surveys that have these PSEs that
22 ridiculous, crazy, and managers haven't been able
23 through time constraints or financial dollars in
24 three or four to fix -- to fix the spikes.

25 So there's a wealth of knowledge
26 that's out there that could be done in the
27 future, probably from participants that would
28 help influence or get a better understanding of
29 what's caught and the makeup through the seasons
30 and all that.

31 So thanks for the discussion and
32 thanks for letting me participate.

33 MR. BROOKS: Thanks, Dewey. David
34 Schalit, is that a new hand or is that left over?
35 Will you take David Schalit off?

36 MR. SCHALIT: No, I'm here.

37 MR. BROOKS: You're there. Okay, go
38 ahead.

39 MR. SCHALIT: Hi. I hope John Walter
40 and Matt Laurretta are still on this call. The
41 SCRS is planning on moving to a management
42 strategy evaluation in 2023, as compared with a
43 conventional assessment.

44 The promise that MSE presents is this
45 possibility of quantifying the mixing of the two
46 stocks, the Mediterranean and the Gulf stocks.

47 One of the -- one of the issues we've
48 had in the past in estimating spawning stock

1 biomass has been, in the past, using the
2 conventional methods, is that the resultants are
3 somewhat clouded by the fact that we're counting
4 eastern migrants as well as western spawns.

5 Okay, so there is this terrific new
6 toy called CKMR, close-kin mark-recapture, and we
7 also have otolith data, and you guys are all
8 familiar with because you're doing some sampling
9 of these.

10 And what I'm suggesting is that we
11 have a singled out opportunity because of this
12 upcoming MSE to actually do something with this
13 data.

14 And so what I'm suggesting is that
15 maybe you guys would look with a view toward
16 perhaps ratcheting up your sampling of these
17 otoliths.

18 Otoliths is providing age and natal
19 origin, and CKMR is providing absolute biomass
20 and also natal origin.

21 And I remember having a conversation
22 with Matt at one point, in which Matt suggested
23 that there could be a problem.

24 I'm not sure exactly how that went,
25 but that there might be an issue with regard to
26 sampling juveniles, and I just don't recall what
27 it was. So maybe he could comment on that.
28 Thanks very much.

29 MR. BROOKS: Yep, and Matt is indeed
30 on. Matt, you want to jump in on any of that?

31 DR. LAURETTA: Sure, David. You're
32 absolutely right that for me, we should be
33 looking to the future to understand stock mixing
34 through the genetic sampling, which this LPS
35 program is getting a pretty good spatial
36 coverage, but not high numbers.

37 And then there's the Gulf of Maine
38 program that's been funded through BTRP, which is
39 pulling in about 1,000 to 1,200 fish from the --
40 from the commercial industry.

41 And that's giving us a very good
42 snapshot of the composition in our fisheries, and
43 we have that now going back to 2016.

44 So the genetics are going to be a game
45 changer and we should look to the future for that
46 data when we hopefully roll out a population
47 estimate and then we also get the composition.

48 The problem we're having from the

1 close-king standpoint as it was sort of
2 traditionally defined from the Australian CSIRO
3 and for southern bluefin is that they're able to
4 get high numbers of ages, especially two and
5 three that they're using as their recapture of
6 adults.

7 And so we attempted to put a sort of
8 a call to fishers to see if they could go get
9 young of the year or small juveniles with some
10 exempted permits for collection, and so far we've
11 come up with I think two to five fish over four
12 years.

13 So on one end it's a good thing we
14 don't have a fishery that harvests juveniles like
15 in the Pacific. We see where that's gone with
16 the large scale purse seine.

17 We saw what happened to the
18 Mediterranean when they harvested a ton of
19 juveniles, and especially what happened to our
20 fisheries in the mid-2000s or so.

21 And so it's a good thing but it's also
22 a double edged sword for these estimates. So
23 where we've gone to is the larval sampling where
24 we can get Gulf of Mexico juveniles.

25 By definition, if you collect a larvae
26 floating in the Gulf of Mexico, it is a -- it is
27 a western born fish without a doubt, but what we
28 don't know is the composition of juveniles before
29 they hit the fishery.

30 There would be a lot of value to
31 having these stock composition estimates of two-
32 to three-year-olds where we still have about a
33 five-year lag period.

34 And it really comes down to the
35 conservation of the western stock, is that we
36 want to know if the juvenile pool is moving up to
37 100 percent western origin.

38 That means the supplement from the
39 eastern or potentially either a high western
40 cohort or a low eastern cohort, we'll know that
41 when we couple it with the stock assessment.

42 But right now we're getting the
43 composition as they are in the fishery, and we
44 would have better predictive power if we could
45 define these compositions when they were smaller,
46 before they really hit what is our core fishery,
47 is eight to twelve years and then Canada is
48 probably eight to -- out there, the oldest fish

1 out there.

2 So what we really want to move to in
3 our modeling is the ability to project forward
4 these cohorts to say, okay, like, right now, the
5 LPS has detected a ton of small fish in 2020, and
6 we want to know, is that a western recruitment
7 event, which would be amazing?

8 Is it half-west, half-east, which
9 would still be a strong indication? Or is this
10 purely eastern migrants feeding into our system?
11 And we should expect those to be around later.

12 There's a lot of power in knowing them
13 before they hit the fishery. And so that's what,
14 I think an area where we could really build on
15 our stock assessment is to get some sort of
16 sampling of those to know where the cohorts are
17 coming, so when the stock assessment either has a
18 large cohort, we have some sense of what stock of
19 origin they came from.

20 Right now we don't have that, and I
21 have to say, I have to go to an appointment and
22 I'll try and jump on my phone, but I'm going to
23 have to log off my computer.

24 MR. BROOKS: No worries. Thanks.

25 MR. SCHALIT: Before we say goodbye,
26 I just wanted to -- is it possible I can add a
27 little something here?

28 MR. BROOKS: Sure.

29 MR. SCHALIT: Just very briefly?

30 MR. BROOKS: Very briefly.

31 MR. SCHALIT: I think we have an
32 opportunity with the recreational sector that we
33 don't have to the same degree with the commercial
34 sector.

35 In the commercial sector, generally,
36 fishermen tend to remove the head of the fish
37 while they're in the -- while they're on the boat
38 and they throw the head overboard.

39 In the case of recreational fishing,
40 fishermen tend to leave that work until they get
41 to the dock. Not always, but generally.

42 And that might be an opportunity for
43 these, for large pelagic survey interviews to
44 suggest if they see a fish that still has its
45 head on, well, why not give that, turn that had
46 over for otolith microchemistry, and at the same
47 time, there's plenty of genetic data to get in
48 the -- in the -- in the fish's head.

1 So you're effectively killing two
2 birds with one stone. The question that then
3 arises is how do you collect those samples? But
4 the samples are coming, for the most part, to the
5 dock, unlike in the commercial sector where
6 they're being thrown overboard. Thanks.

7 MR. BROOKS: Thanks. Let me bring Ray
8 Bogan back in and Walt Golet and then Mike
9 Pierdinock. Ray? Or is your hand left over?
10 Maybe that was left over from Ray. Walt, why
11 don't you jump in?

12 MR. GOLET: Great. Thanks, Bennett.
13 Appreciate it. And I just wanted to say thank
14 you to everybody involved today.

15 Preparing and presenting all of the
16 material was great and I thought the overviews
17 were wonderful. So just a big thanks to
18 everybody.

19 And I guess my point will sort of
20 segue quite well with David and Matt's. We've
21 been very successful up here, thanks almost
22 entirely to NOAA-supported BTRP funding.

23 But as much as I'd like to take credit
24 for that, I think where the credit really lies,
25 in addition to our lab efforts, is really the
26 sort of relationships that we've developed with
27 the commercial industry and the commercial
28 dealers.

29 And in that case, they act as sort of
30 these perfect funnels, if you will, where we can
31 target our resources and basically get the most
32 bang for our buck.

33 And so that's why we're able to
34 collect 1,000 or 1,500 otoliths from these
35 commercial fish over here.

36 And sort of where we are this year and
37 what we're trying to launch is the next step in
38 taking those types of partnerships, and this is
39 where I'll come in with a comment for Russ, is to
40 the recreational community.

41 And I'm with U Maine but I'm also
42 located at a non-profit here who relies a lot on
43 citizen science.

44 And I think based on the relationships
45 that we've established with the commercial
46 fishery, we could have sort of a copycat program
47 that could work very well with the commercial,
48 excuse me, very well with the recreational

1 industry.

2 And something that I might propose for
3 this next summit is, and I see in the 2018
4 agenda, there was Angler Engagement in Data
5 Collection and Reporting.

6 And as the biologist, I don't think of
7 data collection and reporting of where were you,
8 how many fish you collect, it's more how can I
9 get my hands dirty and get the samples from you?

10 And so, maybe something that I would
11 think of that would be a -- be a high priority or
12 something that we might be able to include is
13 because of the disparate nature of the rec fleet,
14 how do we get these individuals involved and
15 train them to do these approaches for us?

16 Matt mentioned the genetics. This is
17 simple. Actually, we already are doing this with
18 some of our boats in the mid-Atlantic now.

19 We are basically sending them these
20 kits. And some of these boats have the ability
21 to catch 80, 100, 200, 300 small bluefin a year.

22 So that can add up exceptionally fast,
23 and maybe a talking point for that summit might
24 be how we get these recreational individuals
25 involved in doing that.

26 Data collection's really simple. It
27 might seem a little bit in depth, but our boats
28 up here, they're taking otoliths out, they're
29 taking otoliths out, they're sexing the fish,
30 they're fixing gonads, they're collecting
31 stomachs, they're labeling.

32 I mean, they do it better than some of
33 the people in my lab. So anyway, as a point of
34 discussion, Russ, I'll send you some details, but
35 I'm happy to chat about that a little bit later
36 on, and I'd even be happy if it's something that
37 is of interest and is a focus, I'd be happy to
38 even help lead that portion.

39 So thank you, everybody, for your time
40 and, Bennett, thank you for the chance to
41 comment. I appreciate it.

42 MR. BROOKS: Thanks, Walt. Russ, you
43 want to jump in on that at all or --

44 MR. DUNN: No, no, I was just going to
45 say, great, that's great. I look forward to it.
46 Please, yeah, feel free to email or call me any
47 time. Happy to talk.

48 MR. GOLET: Thanks.

1 MR. BROOKS: Thanks. And Brad, did
2 you want to jump in on that?

3 MR. MCHALE: No, but one thing, no,
4 because all that was good so I didn't even really
5 have anything to go off of what Walter shared.

6 But one thing I wanted to do is I was
7 looking down the attendee list. There's a number
8 of these who aren't our usual suspects who attend
9 either our advisory panel meetings or something
10 else.

11 And I wanted to make sure that we were
12 giving those members of the public that may not
13 have some other direct connection to Russ and
14 Cliff and Randy and myself, an opportunity to
15 chime in.

16 This is kind of a public meeting, so
17 just to make sure we're giving equal billing, and
18 just to see if any of them had any thoughts based
19 upon the discussion we've had today that may have
20 triggered them to want to weigh in on any
21 particular thing.

22 MR. BROOKS: Great. Thanks. Thanks,
23 Brad. Just going to pause here. And again, I
24 think Brad's ask is a good one.

25 We'd love to hear whether there's
26 folks who haven't had a chance to weigh in, who
27 aren't part of these groups that meet more
28 regularly and have access to regular
29 communications with folks on this call.

30 If you'd just raise your hand. Yeah,
31 who's that?

32 MR. HUTT: I was just going to say
33 about the raise the hand feature in the webinar,
34 for folks who haven't been in the AP meeting all
35 week, there's a little raise hands button in the
36 participants list, down at the bottom of that
37 next to what looks like a megaphone.

38 Just click on that raised hand one and
39 we'll call you and you can chime in on the
40 conversation.

41 MR. BROOKS: And if you can't find
42 that, again, at the bottom of your screen, you'll
43 see a chat, something that says chat in blue with
44 a little bubble.

45 You can just throw in there that you
46 want to be recognized and come into the
47 conversation.

48 I'm going to linger for a couple of

1 seconds here just to give anyone a chance.

2 MR. BLANKINSHIP: Sure. And just also
3 remember that this is, while it's a recreational
4 fishery roundtable for highly migratory species,
5 we're not limited on the recreational topics we
6 can talk about.

7 So if there's something else that
8 somebody has in mind that we haven't talked about
9 already, feel free to bring it up.

10 MR. BROOKS: All right. I am not
11 seeing anyone leaping at that invitation. But I
12 do see two other hands still up. Let's go to
13 Mike Pierdinock and then Bob Humphrey.

14 MR. PIERDINOCK: Thanks, Bob. Can you
15 hear me?

16 MR. BROOKS: Yeah.

17 MR. PIERDINOCK: Thank you, and I'm
18 happy you reached out. I know that for us up
19 here, May 18 was opening for black sea bass and
20 that has a lot of people on the water.

21 I'm only, well, I'm here because I
22 need to be here, but my boat's still not in. But
23 the weather was pretty nasty today, and I know
24 someone people called in, but I don't know if
25 they're still on, but I appreciate that outreach.

26 Thinking about what I was going to
27 respond to. Since we have the time, I just want
28 to expand upon a little bit more with the
29 proposed wind turbine.

30 And it's almost like it's a Jeff
31 Kneebone commercial because I think his work's
32 been great.

33 His step one was to do those baseline
34 conditions that demonstrate that, yes, we fish in
35 those areas.

36 I really recommend that that's the
37 baseline up and down the coast. That's step one.
38 But then also, and Jeff and Enspire and that
39 entity, were able to get research dollars in
40 order to tag pelagics, the Claw, Gordon's Gully
41 and Saw.

42 And they did that last year and they
43 did it for sharks. I think he got -- I know he
44 got bluefin and I believe he also may have got
45 the yellowfin or white marlin, I'm not sure.

46 But the biggest, one of the biggest
47 problems we do have, what is the baseline? What
48 is out there in these areas? Because of a lack

1 of data, it's not clear.

2 So those are the two hurdles that we
3 need to overcome, and there's two different ways
4 to do it.

5 Now maybe you can all help me with
6 this, because it's my understanding, now let's
7 say if tomorrow, a recreational and for-hire
8 fleet provided all transiting details but it
9 would remain confidential. You did it for three
10 years.

11 I would think because of just the
12 nature of the fishery, fish move, they got tails,
13 where they are is based on temperature and
14 foraged fish.

15 That's going to be different from year
16 to year. And with the whole issue with climatic
17 shift, our stocks now are not where they were 3,
18 5, 10, 15 years ago.

19 But with that then, I'm -- from what
20 I understand, you need 10 plus years of data you
21 want to look at.

22 So we have this data gap and we don't
23 have that good data going way back. And even if
24 you did do this, you need a 5-year study.

25 But unfortunately, I know for up here,
26 Vineyard Wind's going in. It's going to be the
27 pilot test for the whole east coast.

28 And we're still involved and we're
29 providing additional recommendations on what they
30 can do to monitor the baseline conditions, to
31 monitor conditions during and after construction.

32 But I wanted to throw that out there
33 because there's some that say let's give all
34 transiting details, which as I mentioned earlier,
35 fishery management, that remains confidential,
36 and for siting platforms and so on, that's a
37 different story.

38 But even if you didn't, three years of
39 data, you need five, and I expect the timeline
40 for most of these proposed projects are, it's not
41 going to work for that.

42 So I throw that out there.

43 MR. BROOKS: Thanks, Mike.

44 MR. PIERDINOCK: Last thing, and as
45 far as recreational or for-hire participation
46 with otoliths and fish heads and science, I guess
47 I can only go by what we're doing here in
48 Massachusetts and we've been doing for a long

1 time, whether you're in Green Harbor, Scituate,
2 P-town, Chatham, Gloucester, to name a few.

3 They come in whether it's rec, for-
4 hire, or commercial, if they provide the head.
5 But Dewey said it, I want to keep the head for
6 going after sharks.

7 So I don't want to even bring the head
8 in if I caught one. So I'm going to freeze it
9 and keep it later for sharking.

10 But there already is some of that
11 going on. It's been going on for a long time.
12 But I'd be happy for Walt to reach out to the
13 Stellwagen Bank Charter Boat Association, the
14 RFA, and other organizations that are active and
15 everybody get the word out to get participation.

16 But there is some participation we
17 need more, and we'd be happy to participate and
18 help in the science to get better data to move
19 forward. Thank you.

20 MR. BROOKS: Thanks, Mike. Bob
21 Humphrey, you want to jump in?

22 MR. HUMPHREY: Yes, thank you. I
23 wasn't sure if I was going to do this or not, but
24 since Randy provided me with a perfect segue and
25 then Mike added some relevant details, here goes,
26 I'm going to step on a limb a little bit, and
27 since there's time.

28 Normally it's pretty easy to
29 distinguish between the commercial and
30 recreational categories in the western Atlantic
31 fishery, based on whether people sell fish or
32 not, but philosophically, not so much.

33 This fishery is evolving and the
34 general categories become very much a hybrid
35 fishery, wherein an increasing number of
36 participants do not make all or most of their
37 annual income from catching bluefin tuna.

38 Essentially, we're seeing a growth in
39 what you might call recreational anglers who sell
40 their catch.

41 Given our current status, abundant
42 stocks, I believe growing. We've seen the trends
43 in boat sales, on the water activity
44 participation, and maybe even to some extent
45 falling prices, and I'm not going to get into
46 cause and effect.

47 I think if the agency is not already
48 doing so, I would request and maybe challenge you

1 folks to track this a little bit more closely
2 because I suspect this trend will continue, and
3 rather than react to it, if we can watch it, we
4 could maybe take some more precise numbers.

5 I don't have too many specifics other
6 than maybe looking at number of days, number of
7 hours at sea, per individual boat, and see what
8 percentage of the General category is comprised
9 of the smaller, whatever you want to call them,
10 weekend warriors, part-timers, hobbyists.

11 It could present a stronger case for
12 one side or the other when quibbling over quota,
13 or it could provide some common ground for both
14 sides to come together and maybe bring something
15 to ICCAT.

16 Just some thoughts I wanted to share
17 with the group.

18 MR. BROOKS: Thanks, Bob. I think we
19 either have just one person left in the queue or
20 none. David Schalit, is your hand still raised
21 or is that left over?

22 MR. SCHALIT: Yeah, my hand's up.

23 MR. BROOKS: Okay, okay, maybe we'll

24 --

25 MR. SCHALIT: I'm the last one, huh?
26 Okay. I want to build on what Mike Pierdinock
27 and some others have mentioned, the connection
28 with offshore wind.

29 About a year or so ago, I took a long
30 look at the peer-reviewed literature to see what
31 was, what work had been done in Europe of a
32 comprehensive nature that's looking at how
33 offshore wind affects fisheries.

34 And what I found was that there were
35 actually very few comprehensive studies that had
36 been done on this.

37 It seems that most of the wind farms
38 just got put in place and then they checked to
39 see what the damage was later.

40 But in a couple of instances, the
41 scientists basically took this piece of aquatic
42 real estate and turned into a grid and examined
43 the marine life in that grid.

44 And then at a certain -- at a certain
45 point later on, the turbines were put in place,
46 and then the scientists came back a couple of
47 years, some years later, to see what the status
48 was, comparing before and after.

1 And the punch line is that the damage
2 that's done to the marine life in the area where
3 the turbines are placed occurs at commissioning
4 and decommissioning. So there it is. Thanks
5 very much.

6 MR. BROOKS: Thanks, David. All
7 right. I think we do have someone who wants to
8 come in.

9 I don't know your name other than
10 Bounty Hunter Charter, so I'm going to invite you
11 into the conversation, please.

12 MR. MORROW: All right, how are you
13 doing? Yeah, Eric Morrow is the name. My
14 concern is reiterating about my concern with the
15 wind farms.

16 I'm up here in the northeast and
17 that's my backyard where I fish. Primarily,
18 ground fishing but I do have pelagic trips. I
19 also have a shark cage diving business so I spend
20 a lot of time out there.

21 And I just don't believe there's
22 enough science been done, and the effect, I see
23 what it's doing already as they're doing their
24 work out there, what it's doing to the ground
25 fishing for me.

26 And I just don't believe there's been
27 enough science behind it to see where we're going
28 to be once it's constructed and different parts
29 affected, feed fish, forage fish, which lead to
30 pelagics.

31 So that's pretty much my main concern
32 is that I definitely want to see a little more
33 science behind it, a little more research, and
34 not just it's built and then we're going to go
35 deal with the after effects. That's my say.

36 MR. BROOKS: Thank you, sir. I
37 appreciate it. I don't know if Russ or Randy or
38 anyone else from HMS wants to weigh in at all in
39 terms of how you all are thinking about offshore
40 wind and it's intersection and if there's -- if
41 there's anything that would be helpful to fold
42 into the conversation at this point, I just want
43 to give you that opportunity before we sort of
44 move towards wrapping up.

45 MR. BLANKINSHIP: Sure. So I think
46 much of it's been said. Russ gave a really good
47 perspective I think with the laying out the
48 situation, of course, with BOEM having the lead,

1 NOAA being a contributor of the information.

2 And then Brad also describing
3 accurately that HMS staff are actively engaged in
4 supplying information and helping out with that
5 effort through the channels that we have
6 internally.

7 And that way, the information that we
8 have can be effectively shared and considered by
9 the folks that need to consider it.

10 And in some cases, that sometimes
11 includes the perspective that while we have
12 information that shows a lot of things, and a lot
13 of that including in the area that in some cases
14 just because we may not have exactly the
15 information that somebody might want to have as
16 far as geographic area and amount of fishing
17 activity in some particular cases, that doesn't
18 mean that the activity's not happening there and
19 that there's not an impact, and that is being
20 shared up through channels.

21 And so we will continue to do that.
22 We have staff dedicated to that effort and it's
23 an important one.

24 So I really appreciate all the
25 comments here. They're not falling on deaf ears.
26 We are all hearing it and we'll continue to be
27 aware of it and work on that issue.

28 MR. BROOKS: Thanks, Randy. I think
29 at this point we have worked out way through all
30 of the various commenters.

31 And I know it's been a long week, so
32 we could keep talking until 3:30 but I'm assuming
33 people are maybe okay if we adjourn a few minutes
34 early, but I just don't want to do that if
35 there's anyone waiting to jump in here.

36 All right, if not, Brad, Cliff, I
37 don't know if you want to offer any closing
38 thoughts based on what you just heard here in
39 this conversation.

40 MR. MCHALE: Yeah, I mean, knowing
41 that I'm between you folks and cold frosty
42 beverages to kick off holiday weekend, I'll keep
43 this very concise.

44 Thank you for your time. Thank you
45 for your input. We don't need to cover the
46 ground and that Randy and Russ and others have.

47 And just so you all know, these are
48 ongoing conversations. And so as always, feel

1 free to reach out to Cliff, myself, Russ, and
2 then in turn, Randy, if folks want to continue
3 the dialogue.

4 But as Cliff and I are the HMS
5 recreational coordinators, we're here to kind of
6 continue the dialogue because there aren't easy
7 answers to it, but I think as Mike Pierdinock had
8 mentioned as well as Ray Bogan, we do have
9 certain systems in place. They can always be
10 improved and we're striving to implement policy.

11 MR. BROOKS: Thanks, Brad. Cliff, you
12 want to weigh in with anything?

13 MR. HUTT: Just go broad. Thanks to
14 everyone for joining us today. We really
15 appreciate it.

16 And we're hearing lots of concerns
17 about offshore wind, as we expected, concerns
18 about the data, and there are other issues we
19 were expecting to hear that we really didn't get
20 to hear today, and I guess that's just kind of
21 part of who was in attendance this afternoon.

22 But, yeah, we know offshore wind's
23 going to be a big topic of discussion. I mean,
24 next summit, yeah.

25 So we are going to be continuing to
26 follow that, as Brad and Randy both said. And I
27 know we're talking a lot about Vineyard Wind
28 because that's the one that's up now because
29 there are definitely many more leases out.

30 So this is going to be an ongoing area
31 of concern for some time and we are well aware of
32 that.

33 MR. BROOKS: Thanks, Cliff. Yeah,
34 I'll just fold in, I think sort of, a level up
35 from that offshore wind conversation is how do
36 you get people, how do you improve the data,
37 share the data in a way that is mindful of some
38 of the trust issues that might be out there, some
39 of the cost issues, and there's so many needs, as
40 Rusty said.

41 Offshore wind, aquaculture,
42 conservation, right? So it's a -- it's a -- it's
43 a big issue.

44 Offshore wind is kind of what's right
45 in the face right now, but there's plenty of
46 other challenges waiting in the wings that will
47 benefit from better -- from better data.

48 A couple other things that just came

1 up are citizen science came up in a couple
2 different ways, from social media to partnerships
3 between researchers and rec industry.

4 So I think there's just a number of
5 things to be pushing at as we go forward.

6 Is there anyone else from the HMS team
7 or the LPS team that wants to weigh in with any
8 final comments or observations?

9 MR. BLANKINSHIP: I'll have some final
10 comments, but I'll pause to see if anybody else
11 has anything.

12 MR. BROOKS: Okay, Randy, I think it's
13 -- I think it's -- I think it's over to you.

14 MR. BLANKINSHIP: All right. Well, I
15 just want to say once again a big thank you to
16 everybody for plugging away to make it through to
17 the end of today, especially those of you that
18 have been on the long meetings all week.

19 And I just really appreciate
20 everyone's time. I want to say a special thank
21 you to folks that worked on LPS and the Office of
22 Sustainable -- I'm sorry, in the Office of
23 Science and Technology that were with us and for
24 the presentations and discussion this morning.

25 That was excellent. Very useful.
26 Glad to hear the positive feedback that we got
27 about that.

28 So thank you John, Yong-Woo, and
29 Daemian. Thank you to the folks from Southeast
30 Fisheries Science Center that joined us, John
31 Walter, Matt Laretta.

32 And a big thank you, Bennett, to you,
33 for leading us through the last few days and
34 doing such a great job facilitating this meeting.

35 And I want to thank Russ Dunn for
36 joining us and being a part of our discussion
37 today, as always.

38 And big thanks to Cliff and to Brad
39 for organizing our discussions today and just
40 really great job. I appreciate your continued
41 work.

42 And to Pete and everybody behind the
43 scenes, Matt and others that are working behind
44 the scenes, and Nic as well.

45 MR. BROOKS: All right. Thanks,
46 Randy. Just a big thank you from me to everyone
47 that Randy just named. I won't name them again.
48 And to everyone who's made time join in.

1 To the 18 members who have given up
2 four days, thank you. For those of you who
3 joined today, I appreciate that, too.

4 I think we're all aware of how busy we
5 are, how many other things that are sort of
6 tugging at our attention and very much appreciate
7 you making all the time.

8 So I think with that we'll let you go
9 19 minutes early, maybe start your Memorial Day
10 Weekend a little bit early, and enjoy yourself.
11 Thanks, everybody.

12 (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter
13 went off the record at 3:12 p.m.)
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Neal R Gross

Court Reporter

NEAL R. GROSS

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