



# REPORT TO CONGRESS

## MARINE RECREATIONAL INFORMATION PROGRAM: REPORT ON STATE PARTNERSHIPS

---

*Developed pursuant to: Section 202 of the Modernizing Recreational Fisheries  
Management Act of 2018 and Senate Report 115-264*

Janet Coit  
Assistant Administrator for Fisheries  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Dr. Richard W. Spinrad  
Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere  
and NOAA Administrator

THE MODERNIZING RECREATIONAL FISHERIES MANAGEMENT ACT OF 2018,  
PUBLIC LAW 115-405 (12/31/18), INCLUDED THE FOLLOWING LANGUAGE

*(2) State Programs—The Secretary shall exempt from registration under the program recreational fishermen and charter fishing vessels licensed, permitted, or registered under the laws of a State if the Secretary determines that information from the State program is suitable for the Secretary’s use or is used to assist in completing marine recreational fisheries statistical surveys, or evaluating the effects of proposed conservation and management measures for marine recreational fisheries.*

*(4) Federal-State Partnerships*

*(A) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary shall establish a partnership with a State to develop best practices for implementing the State program established under paragraph (2)*

*(B) GUIDANCE.—The Secretary shall develop guidance, in cooperation with the States, that details best practices for administering State programs pursuant to paragraph (2), and provide such guidance to the States.*

*(C) BIENNIAL REPORT.—The Secretary shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress and publish biennial reports that include—*

*(i) the estimated accuracy of—*

*(I) the information provided under subparagraphs (A) and (B) of paragraph (1) for each registry program established under that paragraph; and*

*(II) the information from each State program that is used to assist in completing surveys or evaluating effects of conservation and management measures under paragraph (2);*

*(ii) priorities for improving recreational fishing data collection; and*

*(iii) an explanation of any use of information collected by such State programs and by the Secretary.*

SENATE REPORT 115-264 (6/5/18), FOR S. 1520, WHICH BECAME LAW  
AS THE MODERNIZING RECREATIONAL FISHERIES MANAGEMENT ACT OF 2018,  
STATED

*[Section 202] would add a provision to section 401(g) of the [Magnuson-Stevens] Act on Federal-State partnerships, including directing the Secretary to establish a partnership with States to develop guidance detailing best practices for administering State programs, providing biennial reports to Congress on the accuracy of registry programs. This section also would direct the Secretary to make grants to States to improve implementation of State programs and assist them in complying with requirements related to changes in recreational data collection.*

THIS REPORT RESPONDS TO THE COMMITTEE’S REQUEST.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

		Page
I.	Executive Summary	5
II.	Plan for State Partnerships	5
III.	Evaluation of State Data Submitted Pursuant to Section 401(g)(1) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act	6
IV.	Priorities for Improvement of Surveys to Meet MRIP Regional Partner Needs	7
V.	Uses of Data Provided by MRIP State Survey Partners	7
	Appendix A: Characteristics of Exempted States' License and Registration Data Submitted Pursuant to State/NOAA Memoranda of Agreement Under the National Saltwater Angler Registry and State Exemption Program – 2024 Update	9
	Appendix B: Characteristics of Exempted States' Recreational Catch and Effort Data Submitted Pursuant to State/NOAA Memoranda of Agreement Under the National Saltwater Angler Registry and State Exemption Program – 2024 Update	14
	Appendix C: MRIP Regional Implementation Plan Priorities	20

## **I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

In 2021, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) completed and submitted to Congress the Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) Plan for State Partnerships to support state-Federal partnership in conducting surveys of marine recreational fishing and in improving survey designs and estimates of catch and effort. The plan relies on existing partnership agreements between NMFS and the states and Fisheries Information Networks (FIN). It describes the existing cooperative agreements for data collection, memoranda of agreement in place under the National Saltwater Angler Registry and State Exemption Program (NSAR), and state participation in MRIP Regional Implementation Teams and regional planning and priority setting. In 2024, NMFS has initiated a process to work with partners to develop a collaborative vision for a modernized recreational fisheries data partnership, which will inform future reports to Congress.

This report includes a tabular assessment of states' current status in meeting their required data submissions, including applicable data quality evaluations under their NSAR Memoranda of Agreement with NMFS. The assessment for angler registries is based on the final rule for NSAR at 50 CFR 600, subpart P, and the assessment for state surveys is based on the MRIP Survey and Data Standards<sup>1</sup> adopted in December 2020. The Atlantic and Gulf coast states all meet the requirements for Exempted State status by submitting complete state license or registry data annually, and 18 of 19 states voluntarily update their data monthly to facilitate use of the data. All of the Pacific Coast States and the three Western Pacific Territories meet the Exempted State requirement by submitting recreational catch and effort data to NMFS pursuant to a qualifying regional survey. All these states and territories are also working toward meeting the MRIP standards, including certifying their survey designs. Since the 2022 report, California and Washington have received partial survey certification and additional components of surveys in California and Oregon are expected to be certified in 2024 and 2025. In addition, this report includes a list of uses made of recreational catch and effort data collected by states, as well as a summary of data collection priorities by state or region.

## **II. MRIP PLAN FOR STATE PARTNERSHIPS**

NMFS completed the MRIP Plan for State Partnerships,<sup>2</sup> in consultation with state partners and the FINs, to address the provisions of section 202 of the Modernizing Recreational Fisheries Management Act of 2018 (sec. 202), Public Law 115-405 (MFA). The plan recognizes that NMFS, through MRIP and FIN programs, has established and long maintained partnerships with states and other regional partners in fisheries data collection. The plan for implementation of the provisions of sec. 202 leverages these existing programs as the foundation of the required state partnership program and adds new program components, as needed, to address all MFA requirements. The current state programs are primarily derived from regional FIN programs for the principal fisheries regions, which represent well-established, longstanding active partnerships, including Federal funding support for state data collection activities. These FIN programs include: Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP) for the Atlantic Coast; Gulf Fisheries Information Network (GulfFIN) for the Gulf Coast; Pacific Recreational

---

<sup>1</sup> [www.fisheries.noaa.gov/recreational-fishing-data/recreational-fishing-survey-and-data-standards](https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/recreational-fishing-data/recreational-fishing-survey-and-data-standards)

<sup>2</sup> [www.fisheries.noaa.gov/resource/document/mrip-plan-state-partnerships](https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/resource/document/mrip-plan-state-partnerships)

Fisheries Information Network (RecFIN) for the Pacific Coast of California through Washington; and the Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center-coordinated Western Pacific Fishery Information Network (WPacFIN) for Hawaii and the territories of Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI). Through ACCSP, GulfFIN, and RecFIN, NMFS provides funding support to states for MRIP recreational survey work as specified in Cooperative Agreements. In addition, NMFS has established partnerships, including funding recreational data collection, via Cooperative Agreements with GulfFIN for Puerto Rico and directly with Hawaii.

MRIP has Regional Implementation Teams,<sup>3</sup> consisting of all primary partners in each region, to assess partner data collection needs and priorities. The Regional Implementation Teams consist of the FINs for the Atlantic, Gulf, and West Coast regions, and ad hoc teams for the Alaska, Pacific Islands, Caribbean, and Atlantic Highly Migratory Species (HMS) regions. The ad hoc teams include all regional partners, including states and territories, regional fishery management councils, interstate marine fisheries commissions, NMFS Headquarters offices of Sustainable Fisheries and Science and Technology, and NMFS Regional Offices and Fisheries Science Centers. The MRIP Regional Implementation Teams develop MRIP Regional Implementation Plans that define regional recreational catch and effort data needs, preferred survey methods, and priorities for data collection improvements, including priorities identified by the state partner members. These plans are updated at least every 5 years.

Furthermore, NMFS and all states except Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands have adopted Memoranda of Agreement (MOA) for data sharing under the NSAR (see 50 CFR 600, subpart P). Under these MOAs, qualifying states agree to submit either state saltwater fishing license/registration data or state recreational catch and effort survey data and are, in turn, designated as Exempted States by NMFS. Anglers and for-hire vessels from Exempted States are not required to register federally with NMFS.

The current MRIP Plan for State Partnerships – prepared in consultation with states, FINs, and MRIP Regional Implementation Teams – incorporates and builds on the existing Cooperative Agreements, MOAs, and Regional Implementation Plans. In 2024, NMFS commenced an initiative, working with our regional partners, to re-envision the recreational fisheries data partnership. NMFS recognizes the need to re-evaluate our approaches and strive for a new collaboratively developed vision for data collection that builds on the strengths of our state and regional partners. Once that process has been completed over the next 1.5 years, the MRIP Plan for State Partnerships prepared to comply with sec. 202 will be revised, and the 2026 and future Reports to Congress on State Partnerships will reflect the partnership’s new provisions.

### **III. EVALUATION OF STATE DATA SUBMITTED PURSUANT TO §401(g)(1) OF THE MSA**

In consultation with the FINs and Exempted States, NMFS prepared spreadsheets, updated through 2023, that describe each Exempted State’s data submission status with respect to fulfilling its agreement in the NSAR MOA and the currently applicable MRIP Survey and Data

---

<sup>3</sup> [www.fisheries.noaa.gov/recreational-fishing-data/marine-recreational-information-program-teams#regional-implementation-teams](https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/recreational-fishing-data/marine-recreational-information-program-teams#regional-implementation-teams)

Standards. Appendix A includes information for the states designated as Exempted States based on submission of state license or registration data. Appendix B includes information from state contributions to qualifying regional surveys of recreational catch and effort.

#### **IV. PRIORITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT OF SURVEYS TO MEET MRIP REGIONAL PARTNER NEEDS**

The MRIP Plan for State Partnerships (see section II above) describes the MRIP Regional Implementation Planning process and the role of Regional Implementation Teams. Each team is responsible for identifying regional needs and developing MRIP Regional Implementation Plans<sup>4</sup> to implement improved data collection designs that address regional and national needs. Specifically, the plans include:

- Descriptions of regional needs for recreational fishing statistics, including needs for coverage, resolution, precision, and timeliness of survey estimates.
- A baseline assessment of current data collection programs, including the extent to which current programs satisfy needs and identification of data collection gaps.
- Recommendations and justification for a sequential, prioritized approach for implementing improved methods that address national and regional needs that are currently unmet.
- A proposed process for combining statistics derived from multiple sources.
- Estimated costs, overall and for individual survey components.

NMFS expects that future funding opportunities to state and other partner recreational catch and effort data collection and estimation programs will be based on needs and priorities identified through the MRIP regional implementation planning process.

Regional Implementation Plans have been adopted for all regions. Appendix C compiles priority needs extracted from the plans adopted by the MRIP Regional Implementation Teams.

#### **V. USES OF DATA PROVIDED BY MRIP STATE SURVEY PARTNERS**

Recreational catch and effort data – whether collected by state agencies as part of state-conducted survey programs, by state partners under NMFS-FIN or NMFS-state MOAs, or by NMFS contractors – are used to prepare estimates of the numbers and weight of marine fish species removed from the population as a result of recreational harvest or (combined with independently derived release mortality proportions) of recreational catch and release. The catch estimates are stratified by species, sub-region, state, fishing mode, area fished, sampling period or wave (usually 2 months or 1 month), and catch type.

Multi-year time series of estimates of population removals are an integral part of fisheries stock assessments. The data collected by states under the NMFS-state partnerships described herein are essential to support analyses in fisheries stock assessments conducted by NMFS and the states.

---

<sup>4</sup> [www.fisheries.noaa.gov/recreational-fishing-data/about-marine-recreational-information-program#regional-priorities](http://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/recreational-fishing-data/about-marine-recreational-information-program#regional-priorities)

Estimates of harvested fish are also essential to supporting fisheries management decision-making. Catch data from various strata are used to conduct analyses that facilitate decisions on what combinations of management measures will allow sustainable fishing and prevent overfishing. Catch estimates are used to monitor whether annual catch limits or other periodic management targets have been met or exceeded and to suggest when and how management intervention is needed to achieve conservation goals.

In October 2022, NMFS completed a Transition Plan<sup>5</sup> for use of Gulf state-generated catch data in Gulf of Mexico fisheries stock assessment and management. This Transition Plan will allow use of state survey data for all Gulf states in red snapper analysis and management. In addition, Florida's State Reef Fish Survey data and Louisiana's LA Creel data will be available for use in reef fish and all managed fisheries, respectively.

---

<sup>5</sup> [www.fisheries.noaa.gov/southeast/recreational-fishing-data/gulf-state-data-transition-process](https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/southeast/recreational-fishing-data/gulf-state-data-transition-process)



**APPENDIX A: Characteristics of Exempted States' License and Registration Data Submitted Pursuant to State/NOAA Memoranda of Agreement Under the National Saltwater Angler Registry and State Exemption Program – 2024 Update  
(changes since 2022 Report italicized)**

State/ Territory	Does the Exempted State submit its registry updates to NOAA at least annually in January as required by section IV (A) of its NSAR MOA (Y/N)?	(FES states only; ME-MS) Does the Exempted State submit updated current license holder lists electronically each month (Y/N)?	Comments on frequency of submission	Other than fishing on for-hire vessels and by anglers under age 16, does the state provide significant exceptions to license or registration requirements for certain anglers (Y/N)? If so, what are the exceptions?	Comments on state license/registration exceptions.	Does the state issue a license, registration, stamp, or other endorsement that specifically provides saltwater-only fishing privileges?	Are there exceptions to saltwater-only license, etc. requirements? (e.g., combination or lifetime licenses that include saltwater fishing with other privileges)? If yes, describe.	(FES states only; ME -MS) For 2023, what was the percent of saltwater shore and private boat fishing trips reported by households in the non-matched sample frame (those that do not have licenses)?	(FES states only; ME -MS) For 2023, what was the rate at which NSAR addresses match to the address frame by state?
Maine	Y	Y	none	Y	1. Residents under age 70 who purchase a freshwater fishing license, if they state they fish in saltwater. 2. Persons fishing on a licensed fishing pier.	Yes, but see comment 1 in the preceding column.	N	57.4	89.3
New Hampshire	Y	Y	none	N	None	Y	N	55.9	89.1
Massachusetts	Y	Y	none	N	None	Y	N	72.2	84.3
Rhode Island	Y	Y	none	N	None	Y	N	66.4	80.6

Connecticut	Y	Y	none	N	None	Y	Y, for certain combination licenses that include saltwater privileges	72.8	86.6
New York	Y	N	<i>New York submits several times per year, when they can get data out of their registration system.</i>	N	None	Y	N	81.6	82.3
New Jersey	Y	Y	none	N	None	Y	N	81.5	89.9
Pennsylvania	N	Y (by agreement, PA submitted its limited updates quarterly).	none	none	none	Y	N	N/A	N/A
Delaware	Y	Y	none	N	none	Y	N	56.9	93.3
Maryland	Y	Y	none	Y	1. Persons who fish on a vessel with a Consolidated Bay and Sport Boat license. However, all such persons must obtain a free Bay and Coastal Sport Registration.	Y, when license and registration requirements are combined	Y, for a Senior Consolidated Fishing License for persons over 65 to fish in any state waters	54.9	93.7

Virginia	Y	Y	none	Y	1. Persons who fish on a boat with a Recreational Boat license; with MD or PRFC license; from licensed pier; are residents over age 65; from private property. However, all such persons must register with the Fishing Identification Program.	Y, when license and registration requirements are combined	Y, for a number of lifetime and combination license categories.	71.8	93.7
North Carolina	Y	Y	none	Y	1. Persons who fish on a fishing pier that holds an Ocean Fishing Pier Blanket CRFL. 2. 269,000 holders of lifetime licenses as of 1/1/2006 were grandfathered.	Y	Y, for several Unified Lifetime and Annual Unified license options.	43.5	91.7

South Carolina	Y	Y	none	Y	1. Persons who fish on a state-licensed fishing pier.	Y	Y, for holders of Disability Licenses and of Senior fishing licenses for persons over age 64.	48.7	93.6
Georgia	Y	Y	none	Y	1. Persons who fish on a state-licensed fishing pier.	Y	N	74.3	94.1
Florida	Y	Y	none	Y	1. Persons who fish on a state-licensed fishing pier. 2. State residents age 65 and older. Residents who fish for reef fish species are required to have a no-cost reef fish permit, which adds unlicensed seniors to the state registry database.	Y	Y, for holders of a number of combination licenses	48.4	93.8
Alabama	Y	Y	none	Y	1. State residents age 65 and older.	Y	Y, for holders of several lifetime combination licenses	69.9	93.9

Mississippi	Y	Y	Y	N	1. MS provides for a discounted lifetime license for residents over age 65.	Y	Yes, for holders of several lifetime combination licenses.	61.0	92,3
Louisiana	Y	N/A	none	N	1. LA exempts seniors born before June 1, 1940, from licensing.	Y	Yes, for holders of certain lifetime combination licenses and annual Sportsman's Paradise combination licenses.	N/A	N/A
Texas	Y	N/A	none	N	none	Y, with saltwater stamp	Y, for several combination and lifetime licenses.	N/A	N/A

**APPENDIX B: Characteristics of Exempted States’ Recreational Catch and Effort Data Submitted Pursuant to  
State/NOAA Memoranda of Agreement Under the National Saltwater Angler Registry and State Exemption  
Program – 2024 Update  
(changes since 2022 Report italicized)**

State/Territory	Has the Qualifying Regional Survey adopted governing documents, including a formal agreement among the partners establishing partner roles and responsibilities, data sharing commitments, and a strategic plan or equivalent process for establishing shared goals and objectives?	Comments on governing documents.	Has the qualifying Regional Survey established standards for data quality, confidentiality, and access?	Comments on standards.
Alaska	N	None	N	
Washington	N	The collective participation in RecFIN by the states of Washington, Oregon, and California is indicative of the agreement among the partners (states and PSMFC) to share data, strategically plan for funding and fishery data needs, and collaborate on research and management projects. However, formal RecFIN centralized documentation and agreements do not currently exist. RecFIN is prepared to cooperate with its partner agencies and MRIP to consolidate and enhance its governing documents to fulfill this requirement.	N	RecFIN has developed confidentiality policy and non-disclosure agreement documentation establishing confidentiality and data access standards and procedures. However, RecFIN does not have dedicated documentation and agreements that establish formal standards for data quality, confidentiality, and access for all three partner states. To fulfill this requirement, RecFIN will coordinate with MRIP and the partner states regarding updates to MRIP survey and data standards, and will continue to work with its partners to develop data sharing agreements between RecFIN and each respective state.

Oregon	N	<p>The collective participation in RecFIN by the states of Washington, Oregon, and California is indicative of the agreement among the partners (states and PSMFC) to share data, strategically plan for funding and fishery data needs, and collaborate on research and management projects. However, formal RecFIN centralized documentation and agreements do not currently exist. RecFIN is prepared to cooperate with its partner agencies and MRIP to consolidate and enhance its governing documents to fulfill this requirement.</p>	N	<p>Data collected by the ODFW Ocean Recreational Boat Survey (ORBS) is governed by several state strategies, standards, and statutes, including the “Open Data Standard” and confidentiality requirements. RecFIN has developed confidentiality policy and non-disclosure agreement documentation establishing confidentiality and data access standards and procedures. However, RecFIN does not have dedicated documentation and agreements that establish formal standards for data quality, confidentiality, and access for all three partner states. To fulfill this requirement, RecFIN will coordinate with MRIP and the partner states regarding updates to MRIP survey and data standards, and will continue to work with its partners to develop data sharing agreements between RecFIN and each respective state.</p>
--------	---	--	---	--

State/Territory	Has the Qualifying Regional Survey adopted governing documents, including a formal agreement among the partners establishing partner roles and responsibilities, data sharing commitments, and a strategic plan or equivalent process for establishing shared goals and objectives?	Comments on governing documents.	Has the qualifying Regional Survey established standards for data quality, confidentiality, and access?	Comments on standards.
California	N	The collective participation in RecFIN by the states of Washington, Oregon, and California is indicative of the agreement among the partners (states and PSMFC) to share data, strategically plan for funding and fishery data needs, and collaborate on research and management projects. However, formal RecFIN centralized documentation and agreements do not currently exist. RecFIN is prepared to cooperate with its partner agencies and MRIP to consolidate and enhance its governing documents to fulfill this requirement.	N	California has adopted data standards for quality, confidentiality and promotes access to California data through RecFIN. In 2021 CDFW and Pacific States Fisheries Commission (PSMFC) ratified a Data Sharing MOU to establish confidentiality and access standards. After the development of state data sharing MOUs, PSMFC may align and update regional confidential and access standards. RecFIN has developed confidentiality policy and non-disclosure agreement documentation establishing confidentiality and data access standards and procedures. However, RecFIN does not have dedicated documentation and agreements that establish formal standards for data quality, confidentiality, and access for all three partner states. To fulfill this requirement, RecFIN will coordinate with MRIP and the partner states regarding updates to MRIP survey and data standards, and will continue to work with its partners to develop data sharing agreements between RecFIN and each respective state.
American Samoa	N		N	
Guam	N		N	
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands	N		N	



State/Territory	Is the Qualifying Regional Survey funded in whole or in part with NMFS funds? (Y/N, source)	Does the Exempted State submit its survey-derived catch and effort data as required by section IV (A) of its NSAR MOA (Y/N)?	Comments on submission of Exempted State catch and effort data	Has the Exempted State completed any survey or data related analyses or improvements specified in Addendum II to its NSAR MOA?	Comments on Exempted State completion of Addendum II provisions.	Is the qualifying state survey MRIP-certified?
Alaska	N	Y	none	N/A	none	N
Washington	Y	Y	none	Y	none	<i>Y (OSP)</i>
Oregon	Y	Y	none	Y	none	N
California	Y	N	CA is not providing Ocean Salmon Project data and certain CRFS highly migratory species data due to concerns regarding data quality and when appropriate to be made available.	N/A	none	<i>Y, in part (ALDOS and CRFS Private Boat)</i>
American Samoa	N	Y	none	N/A	none	N
Guam	N	Y	none	N/A	none	N
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands	N	Y	none	N/A	none	N

State/Territory	Comments on status of MRIP certification.	Are the Terms of Reference for the certification still met?	Does the qualifying state survey meet requirements of the MRIP Preliminary Standards for Survey Coverage and Basic Data Elements	Comments on state survey conformance to MRIP Preliminary Standards for Survey Coverage and Basic Data Elements	Does the state survey program include quality assurance/quality control procedures?
Alaska	<i>Certification may be sought following completion of the pending Statewide Harvest Survey Modernization project begun in 2024.</i>	N/A	Y	none	?
Washington	<i>Certification of the Ocean Sampling Program was completed in FY 23. The Puget Sound Sampling Survey certification review is pending.</i>	N/A	Y	none	Y
Oregon	<i>Certification review of the Oregon Recreational Boat Survey is in progress and is expected to be completed in FY 25. The application for certification for the Shore and Estuarine Boat Survey application is pending.</i>	N/A	Y	none	Y
California	<i>Certification review for CRFS Man-Made and Beach and Bank modes is in progress and is expected to be completed in FY 24. ALDOS and CRFS private boat surveys were certified in 2023. PC mode certification review is pending. The Ocean Salmon Project survey is not included in the certification review process at this time"</i>	N/A	Y	none	Y
American Samoa	<i>Pre-certification technical design review has been requested by the territory and is planned for FY 23 or 24</i>	N/A	Y	none	N

Guam	<i>Pre-certification technical design review has been requested by the territory and is planned for FY 23 or 24</i>	N/A	Y	none	N
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands	<i>Pre-certification technical design review has been requested by the commonwealth and is planned for FY 23 or 24</i>	N/A	Y	none	N

## APPENDIX C: MRIP Regional Implementation Plan Priorities

<b>Alaska Regional Implementation Priorities (Adopted 5/2023)</b>
<b>Priority: Maintain support for existing program.</b>
<b>Priority: Modernization of Statewide Harvest Survey Program.</b>
<b>Priority: Saltwater Guide Electronic Logbook Support and Outreach</b>
<b>Priority: Expansion of Southeast Marine Harvest Studies program to inclusion of marine species, samples, and locations not currently sampled by dockside sampling programs.</b>
<b>Priority: Expansion of South Central port sampling.</b>
<b>Priority: Develop data storage and assimilation structure and policy.</b>
<b>Priority: Improved recreational release data with emphasis on halibut and rockfish.</b>
<b>Atlantic Coast Regional Implementation Priorities (Updated 3/2023)</b>
<b>Priority: Improved precision (PSE) and presentation of MRIP estimates.</b>
<b>Priority: Comprehensive for-hire data collection and monitoring.</b>
<b>Priority: Improve recreational fishery discard and release data.</b>
<b>Priority: Expanded biological sampling for recreational fisheries.</b>
<b>Priority: Improved in-season monitoring.</b>
<b>Priority: Improved timeliness of MRIP recreational catch and harvest estimates.</b>
<b>Atlantic Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Regional Implementation Priorities (Adopted 10/2017)</b>

<b>Priority: Redesign the Large Pelagics Survey (LPS)</b>
<b>Priority: Expand the LPS</b>
<b>Priority: Include Atlantic HMS for-hire vessels in Federal for-hire electronic logbook reporting programs.</b>
<b>Priority: Reduce the reporting burden placed on anglers</b>
<b>Priority: Develop a method of integrating Atlantic HMS catch and effort data from multiple sources (e.g., the LPS, APAIS, the Fishing Effort Survey, and the Greater Atlantic vessel trip reports).</b>
<b>Priority: Evaluate the combination of catch card harvest reporting programs with tournament landings reporting programs, as well as the expansion of tournament landings reporting programs.</b>
<b>Priority: Improve and expand data collection on recreational shark fisheries.</b>
<b>Priority: Revise the HMS charter/headboat permit category</b>
<b>Priority: Evaluate opportunities to revise the Large Pelagics Biological Survey</b>
<b>Priority: Improve HMS recreational data collection in the Caribbean.</b>
<b>Gulf Coast Regional Implementation Priorities (Updated 2/2024)</b>
<b>Priority: Improved timeliness of recreational catch and effort estimates.</b>
<b>Priority: Biological data collection.</b>
<b>Priority: Transition Plan for for-hire data collection methods.</b>
<b>Priority: Improved recreational fishery discard data.</b>

<b>Priority: Additional methods for collecting spatial data.</b>
<b>Priority: Inclusive and Transparent Process for Review of Recreational Estimates and Treatment of Outliers.</b>
<b>Pacific Coast Regional Implementation Priorities (Updated 9/2023)</b>
<b>Priority: Maintain current survey sampling levels and restore base levels of sampling, including new funding for NOAA Fisheries-certified programs.</b>
<b>Priority: Implement and support enhanced electronic data collection applications by survey field samplers.</b>
<b>Priority: Increase on-board sampling of commercial passenger fishing vessels or recreational charter boats (OR).</b>
<b>Priority: Investigate and maintain video-based methods and technology to estimate fishing effort.</b>
<b>Priority: Stratify party charter sampling by trip type and sampling period for Southern California.</b>
<b>Priority: Provide improved access to the Marine Recreational Fisheries Statistics Survey (MRFSS) database.</b>
<b>Priority: State calibration of historical catch (WA).</b>
<b>Priority: Update state survey designs, estimation methods, and data system to meet NOAA Fisheries' recreational fishing data collection program's survey and data standards.</b>
<b>Priority: Address peer review recommendations to continue progress on NOAA Fisheries' certification for all state recreational fishing surveys to ensure surveys are statistically valid to meet objectives and provide key estimates.</b>
<b>Priority: Continue ongoing improvements to the RecFIN database and reporting system and modernize data transfer</b>

<b>Priority: Expand California’s sampling for collection and processing to determine the age of recreationally caught groundfish.</b>
<b>Priority: Increase age reading capacity (OR).</b>
<b>Priority: Outreach and education.</b>
<b>Pacific Islands Regional Implementation Priorities (Adopted 12/2017)</b>
<b>Priority: Expert technical review of the Territorial creel surveys.</b>
<b>Priority: Complete the review process and secure MRIP certifications for the recommended regional survey designs.</b>
<b>Priority: Full funding for the surveys that meet the minimum survey standards for Hawaii, American Samoa, and the Mariana Archipelago.</b>
<b>Priority: Improved timeliness of non-commercial catch estimates.</b>
<b>U.S. Caribbean Regional Implementation Priorities (Adopted 05/2017)</b>
<b>Priority: Develop a governance structure that will ensure consistent, accurate, and stable staff administration and data collection and management outcomes.</b>
<b>Priority: Design and implement a saltwater recreational fishing data collection program for the U.S. Virgin Islands that is attuned to and functions within the unique character of that island group.</b>
<b>Priority: Refine the existing saltwater recreational fishing data collection program in Puerto Rico to strengthen programmatic oversight and administration and ensure data are being collected from all fishing modes and for all species important to management.</b>