

JUSTIFICATION FOR CHANGE
MARINE RECREATIONAL INFORMATION PROGRAM (MRIP)
OMB CONTROL NO. 0648-0052

This request is to modify the supplemental Add-on Economic Intercept/Mail Survey (aka follow-up economic mail survey), Item 12j, of the MRFSS/MRIP supporting statement that is currently approved (OMB Control No. 0648-0052, EXP. 12/31/2014). This survey consists of three sections. The following requested changes refer to sections of the (example) survey instrument in “Attachment 06: Follow-up Economic Mail Survey” as originally approved.

Section A

- Remove question A3 regarding angler expenditures. The information in this question is collected via the Angler Expenditure Survey.
- Combine questions A4 and A5 regarding trip activity into one question with a response table.

Section B

The questions in Section B are a series of discrete choice paired comparisons between two hypothetical trips. As previously approved, the respondent is presented with two hypothetical trips and is then asked to choose one trip. The requested changes concern the specific choice situation presented to the respondent. The approved (example) survey has one type of hypothetical choice situation for *all* fishing modes (shore/pier; private boat; or for-hire boat). The requested change would create two types of hypothetical choice situations: one type for charter fishing trips and one type for private boat trips. This distinction is made to enhance the realism of the choice situations and to recover separate estimates of economic value for these different boat-based fishing experiences. We used prior experience and focus groups to select trip attributes and attribute levels that are meaningful for sportfishing trips in the Gulf of Mexico. The format of each type of hypothetical choice situation remains substantially similar to the hypothetical choice situation in the approved survey example. Examples of all three versions (original, charter boat and private boat) are shown in the Appendix.

Section C

- Remove question C3 regarding employment status.
- Remove question C5 regarding race.

Comments on the sampling strategy

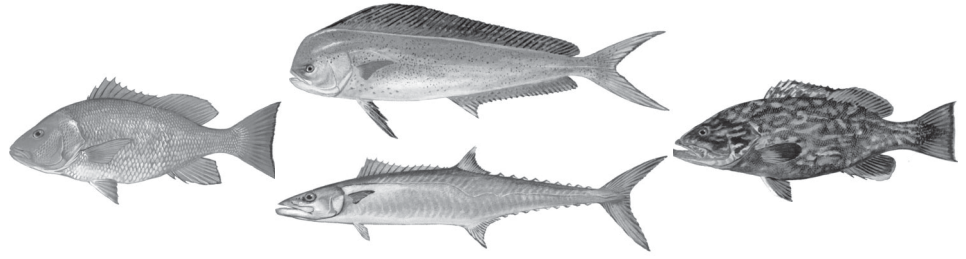
We are not requesting a change to the general sampling strategy outlined in Section B of the approved request. In this specific case, the population of interest is all anglers fishing from a boat in the Gulf of Mexico and launching from Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, and Mississippi. The original supporting statement authorizes sampling from two frames for the follow-up economic mail survey: 1) anglers providing a mailing address during the MRIP intercept survey and 2) saltwater fishing license databases. The MRIP intercept sampling frame was introduced because, at the time of the original supporting statement, saltwater license databases were not available or adequate in most states. With the implementation of the National Saltwater Angler Registry, however, NMFS now has access to saltwater fishing license frames from most coastal states, including Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, and Mississippi.

As discussed above, we are requesting to tailor the discrete choice portion of the mail survey to each boat fishing mode. This requires a sample of anglers with private boat experience and a sample of anglers with charter boat experience. For the private boat version of the survey, we will randomly sample anglers from the saltwater fishing license databases of Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, and Mississippi.

No sampling frame exists for charter anglers fishing in the Gulf of Mexico because the only state that requires a saltwater fishing license to fish from a charter boat is Louisiana. Therefore, we will combine a simple random sample drawn from the Louisiana database of licensed charter boat anglers with a sample collected through the MRIP intercept survey. The initial mail-out sample size for Louisiana will be based on the share of MRIP estimated charter trips in the Gulf of Mexico originating from Louisiana (15.35% in 2011). The sample of Gulf of Mexico charter anglers launching from Alabama, Florida, and Mississippi will be based on anglers interviewed as part of the MRIP intercept survey in these states as described in the original supporting statement.

Appendix: Examples of the Original and Proposed Charter Boat and Private Boat Versions of the Discrete Choice Paired Comparison Questions

Fishing Trips



B1 Please look at the table, compare all the features of each fishing trip, and then answer the question below.

Definitions

- **Target species:** The species of fish you expect to catch on the trip.
- **Total number of fish caught per trip:** Your expected total catch of the target species. Your total may be restricted by the bag limit and/or the minimum size limit.
- **Bag limit:** The number of the target species that you are legally allowed to keep per fishing trip.
- **Minimum size limit:** The minimum length of the target species that you may keep. You are not legally allowed to keep fish that measure less than this length.
- **Catch at or above minimum size:** Your expected catch of the target species that are equal to or longer than the minimum size limit.
- **Trip cost:** Includes your personal share of the costs associated with gas, wear and tear on your vehicle, tolls, ferries, parking, access fees, food, ice, bait, and fishing equipment used on this trip.
- **Other fish:** Any fish you might expect to catch on a fishing trip for the target species (not including the target species).

Features	Trip A	Trip B	No Trip
Target species	King Mackerel	Grouper	Do something else, but not take a saltwater fishing trip.
Total number caught per trip	5 King Mackerel	6 Grouper	
Bag limit	1 King Mackerel	2 Grouper	
Minimum size limit	20 inches	18 inches	
Catch at or above the minimum size	3 King Mackerel	2 Grouper	
Trip cost	\$70	\$45	
Catch of target species you are legally allowed to keep	1 King Mackerel	2 Grouper	
Catch of other fish you are legally allowed to keep	1 fish	1 fish	



Would you choose trip A, trip B or no trip at all? Please select only one.

- Trip A
- Trip B
- No Trip



B1 Please compare the features of Gulf of Mexico offshore charter fishing trips A and B and answer the questions below. Please keep in mind that:

- You can take up to **6 passengers**
- You **might catch** various types of fish, but **catch is not guaranteed**
- Trips A and B are **exactly the same** except for differences shown

Trip Features		Trip A	Trip B
Length of trip		Full-day	Full-day
Vessel size		50 ft	40 ft
Captain's reputation		Unknown	Known
Charter fee (excluding tip)		\$1,000	\$1,200
Regulations in effect at the place and time of trip	Dolphin fish	10 bag	5 bag
	All snappers / Red snapper	10 bag / 2 bag	5 bag / 1 bag
	All groupers	6 bag	closed
	King mackerel	closed	3 bag
	Other regulations	As in 2013	As in 2013

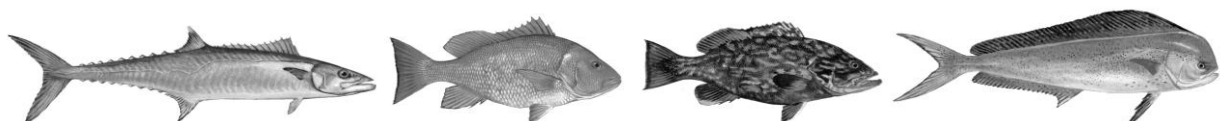


B1 i) Which of these two trips do you **prefer**? Trip A Trip B
 I don't know



B1 ii) If your **preferred trip** was the only option available for your next saltwater charter fishing trip, then what would you choose to do?

- Take my preferred trip
- Do something else, but not take a saltwater charter fishing trip
- I don't know





C1 Please compare the features of Gulf of Mexico offshore fishing trips A and B and answer the questions below. Please keep in mind that:

- You can use your own boat, a friend’s boat, or a rental, but **not a charter**
- **You might catch** various types of fish, but **catch is not guaranteed**
- Trips A and B are **exactly the same** except for differences shown

Trip Features		Trip A	Trip B
Hours on the water		4 hours	8 hours
Cloud Cover		Sunny	Cloudy
Bottom type of area fished		Natural	Artificial
Trip cost (boat fuel, bait, and ice)		\$25	\$100
Regulations in effect at the place and time of trip	Dolphin fish	5 bag	10 bag
	Snappers / Red Snapper	5 bag / Closed	10 bag / 3 bag
	Groupers	Closed	6 bag
	King Mackerel	Closed	3 bag
	Other regulations	As in 2013	As in 2013



C1 a) Which of these two trips do you **prefer**? Trip A Trip B
 I don't know



C1 b) If your **preferred trip** was the only option available for your next saltwater fishing trip, then what would you choose to do?

- Take my preferred trip
- Not fish because my boat cannot handle this type of trip
- Not fish because I do not take this type of trip
- I don't know