



NOAA FISHERIES

The **Marine Recreational Information Program**, or **MRIP**, is the state-regional-federal partnership responsible for developing, improving, and implementing surveys that measure how many trips saltwater anglers take, and how many fish they catch. This vital information – combined with other data, such as commercial catch and biological research – enables scientists and managers to assess and maintain sustainable U.S. fish stocks.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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MRIP Angler Catch Surveys

Information for Marinas and For-Hire Operators

Why are my customers getting interviewed on the dock?

On the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts from Maine to Louisiana, NOAA Fisheries works in partnership with state agencies to gather recreational catch information through the Access Point Angler Intercept Survey, or APAIS. The information we gather through APAIS is combined with other data, such as commercial catch and biological research, to enable scientists and managers to assess and maintain sustainable U.S. fish stocks.

Who conducts the surveys and what do they do?

A team of trained field samplers conducts the angler catch surveys. States hire and oversee their own field staff to conduct the survey. Samplers are assigned to specific publicly accessible fishing sites during specific times of day. Their job is to interview and count each angler coming in from a fishing trip, regardless of whether the angler caught any fish. During an interview, samplers measure and weigh all landed fish, and ask for the number and species of fish that were released. **Because it is important that we survey ALL potential fishing sites, there may be times when a sampler is on-site observing “zero activity.” This is an important part of the job. Samplers may also have to leave a site before all the fishing activity is completed to travel to another site as part of that day’s assignment.**

Why is there more than one sampler at the same site?

We conduct different surveys to gather catch data on different types of fish. In addition to the angler catch survey interviews with recreational anglers, we conduct a mandatory Large Pelagics Survey, or LPS, on the Atlantic Coast. This survey is required for captains with an LPS permit. There may be times when field samplers conduct both surveys at the same fishing site. The surveys are part of a systematic program to ensure that we’re gathering the right information for the right purpose.

Do interviewers report fishing regulation violations?

No. A sampler’s **ONLY** job is to count and interview all anglers during the specific assignment period, and to weigh and measure all the fish observed. We do not require any personal information or check for licenses, registrations, or permits. This maximizes compliance with our voluntary survey to ensure we’re collecting the most accurate information possible. Anglers may volunteer their name and a phone number to verify that the field staff conducted the survey in the proper place and time, and followed the appropriate procedures.

Am I or my customers required to cooperate?

No. However, we strongly encourage you to do so, and ask that you urge your customers to participate as well. Getting accurate information from these surveys is key to ensuring that fishing regulations are fair, effective, and capable of safeguarding the sustainability of recreational fishing—now, and for generations to come.