

Marine Recreational Information Program

Fishing Effort Survey

Nonresponse Follow-up Study

9/12/2019

The MRIP Fishing Effort Survey (FES) was implemented in Massachusetts, New York, North Carolina and Florida in October 2012 to test a revised data collection design for monitoring marine recreational fishing effort. The survey, which collects information for two-month reference waves, included a nonresponse follow-up study (NRFU) to assess nonresponse bias in the FES.

Each wave, a sample of 320 FES nonrespondents was randomly selected and mailed a follow-up questionnaire. Data collection for the study was initiated six weeks after the final contact for the FES with the delivery of an advanced letter via regular first-class mail. Five days later, a survey packet, including a cover letter, questionnaire, post-paid return envelope and a \$5.00 cash incentive was delivered via FedEx. The NRFU survey instrument was identical to the instrument used for the FES.

Table 1 provides the initial sample sizes, number of completed interviews and response rates for the NRFU. Overall, 839 nonresponse surveys were completed, resulting in an unweighted response rate (AAPOR RR1) of 37.5%.

Table 1. Sample sizes, completed interviews and response rates.

State	Sample Size	Completed Interviews	Response Rate (%)
Florida	598	203	34
Massachusetts	533	216	40.5
New York	510	172	33.7
North Carolina	599	248	41.4
All	2240	839	37.5

We assessed nonresponse bias by comparing estimated fishing prevalence (percent of households that reported fishing during the wave) between the initial FES and NRFU samples. Differences between FES and NRFU estimates would suggest that FES and NRFU samples are different with respect to recreational fishing activity, resulting in biased FES estimates.

Table 2 shows that differences in estimated fishing prevalence between initial samples and NRFU samples are neither significant nor systematic, demonstrating that FES respondents and nonrespondents are not significantly different with respect to saltwater fishing activity. This suggests that nonresponse is not a significant source of bias in the FES.

Table 2. Estimated fishing prevalence for the FES sample and nonresponse follow-up sample.

State	FES Sample		Nonresponse Sample		<i>p</i> -value
	%	n	%	n	
Florida	21.5	11,767	18.4	203	0.2846
Massachussets	11	11,094	13.2	216	0.3077
New York	8.6	8,479	9.2	172	0.7795
North Carolina	11.4	13,570	9.8	248	0.4295
All	13.9	49,910	12.7	839	0.3173