



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**ACCSP Staff Members among Recipients of the ASMFC Annual Award of Excellence
for the American Lobster Trap Tag Project**

Alexandria, VA- Three staff members of the Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP) were among the recipients of an Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's (ASMFC) Annual Award of Excellence presented to the American Lobster Trap Tag Team on Tuesday. The team was awarded for its management and policy contributions for its centralized system designed to coordinate cross-jurisdictional management of American lobster permitting and trap tag allocation.

The American lobster fishery occurs in both state and federal waters, meaning both state and federal agencies issue lobster harvest permits and allocate trap tags. Effort control plans that restrict the number of traps fished have been implemented in several designated Lobster Conservation Management Areas (LCMAs), yet permit holders are allowed to transfer trap tag allocations across jurisdictional lines. This trap transferability program makes tracking the movement of trap tag allocations difficult for state and federal regulators and necessitates a coordinated approach across these jurisdictions.

In recognition of this need, the ASMFC American Lobster Board requested and received funding from ACCSP to create a trap tag tracking system. The American Lobster Trap Tag team, comprised of state and federal agency representatives and ACCSP staff, was formed to develop a centralized system capable of tracking both state and federal lobster permits and associated trap tag allocations throughout certain LCMAs and jurisdictions. While developing the system, the 19 members of the American Lobster Trap Tag team worked to overcome several obstacles to centralized management of lobster trap tag allocations, including differences in permitting approaches and data fields across state and federal agencies jurisdictions.

ACCSP Director Mike Cahall and ACCSP programmers Karen Holmes and Nico Mwai constructed the Oracle database within the ACCSP's Standard Atlantic Fisheries Information System. By facilitating tracking of the movement of trap tag allocations, the system enables state and federal lobster fishery managers to check and manage American lobster fishery effort and provides improved effort data that is used for management decisions. The database became fully operational in late 2015.

The other members of the American Lobster Trap Tag Team who represent a cross-section of ACCSP Program partners and received the award are: Peter Burns, Chip Lynch, Allison Murphy, Julie Mackey and Ted Hawes with NOAA Fisheries; Cheri Patterson and Renee Zobel with NH Fish and Game; Tom Hoopes, Story Reed and Kerry Allard with MA Division of Marine Fisheries; Scott Olszewski, Daniel Costa and John Lake with RI Division of Fish and Wildlife; Mark Alexander and Colleen Giannini with CT Dept

About the Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program

ACCSP is a cooperative state-federal program to design, implement, and conduct marine fisheries statistics data collection programs and to integrate those data into a single data management system that will meet the needs of fishery managers, scientists, and fishermen. It is composed of representatives from natural resource management agencies coastwide, including the ASMFC, NEFMC, MAFMC, SAFMC, the 15 Atlantic states, PRFC, D.C. Fisheries and Wildlife Division, NOAA Fisheries Service, and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. For more information please visit <http://www.accsp.org>.



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on Energy and Environmental Protection; and Kim McKown with NY State Dept. of Environmental Conservation.

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