



# NEWS RELEASE



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## **Atlantic Coastal States to Collect Recreational Intercept Data for MRIP**

Arlington, VA – Beginning in 2016, all coastal states from Maine through Georgia will transition to conducting the Access Point Angler Intercept Survey (APAIS) to collect information on marine recreational fishing catch and effort data in their own waters. APAIS, which is a component of the Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP), has been administered by NOAA Fisheries through a third party contractor. Over the past decade several states (e.g., Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia) have successfully improved data quality, and stakeholder confidence in that data, through greater state involvement with APAIS contractors.

Based on these successes, the states, through the Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP) and the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC), approved a plan to transition to state conduct of APAIS in 2016. The approved plan details the transition from a NOAA Fisheries contractor to ASMFC/ACCSP and state conduct of the APAIS. Under this plan, NOAA Fisheries will retain primary accountability for APAIS and will be responsible for survey design, catch and effort estimation, and public dissemination. ASMFC/ACCSP will act as the central coordinator of the state-conducted APAIS and be responsible for data entry, compilation, quality control checks and edits, as well as formatting and delivery of intercept data to NOAA Fisheries. States will manage field collection, which will be conducted by state employees in accordance with APAIS standard data collection protocols.

The goals of the state conduct of APAIS are to:

- Build more cooperative ownership of recreational data and the data collection program
- Support field data collection via state staff with vested interest in fisheries
- Maximize angler participation and minimize refusal rates
- Improve and maximize data quality and efficiency of data collection

“The states, ACCSP, and ASMFC are very appreciative of the hard work and dedication provided by Geoff White and the ACCSP Recreational Technical Committee in developing the APAIS transition plan,” stated Cheri Patterson, ACCSP Coordinating Council Chair from New Hampshire. “Through their efforts, the plan establishes a solid framework for the states and NOAA Fisheries to better meet the needs of fishery stakeholders, scientists and managers.”

For more information on the details of the transition plan, please contact Geoff White, ACCSP Data Team Leader, at [Geoff.white@accsp.org](mailto:Geoff.white@accsp.org) or 703.842.0785.

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*The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission’s vision is to sustainably manage Atlantic coastal fisheries. The Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program vision is to be the principal source of fisheries-dependent information on the Atlantic coast through the cooperation of all program partners.*