Funding Proposal
FY21 ACCSP Administrative Budget

Applicant Name: Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

Project Title: Administrative Support to the Atlantic Coastal Cooperative
                         Statistics Program

Principal Investigator: Geoff White, Director, ACCSP

Requested Award Amount: $2,122,916 (Leadership Option 3)

Request Type: Maintenance/Administrative

Requested Award Period: March 1, 2021 through February 28, 2022

A. Goals

The Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP) is a state-federal cooperative partnership between 23 entities responsible for fisheries management, and fisheries data collection on the Atlantic Coast: the 15 Atlantic coast states and the District of Columbia, two federal fisheries agencies (Commerce's NOAA Fisheries and Interior's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service), three regional fisheries management councils (New England, Mid-Atlantic, and South Atlantic), the Potomac River Fisheries Commission, and the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC). Partner agencies are listed in the original ACCSP Memorandum of Understanding.

The Program was established in 1995 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 the general public.

By establishing and maintaining data collection standards and providing a data management system that incorporates state and federal data, ACCSP will ensure that the best available statistics can be used for fisheries management.

B. Objectives

1. Manage and expand a fully integrated data set that represents the best available fisheries-dependent data;
2. Continue working with the program partners to improve fisheries data collection and management in accordance with the evolving ACCSP standards within the confines of limited funds;

3. Explore the allocation of existing Program funds and work with partners to pursue additional funding;
4. Maintain strong executive leadership and collaborative involvement among partners at all committee levels;
5. Monitor and improve the usefulness of products and services provided by the ACCSP;
6. Collaborate with program partners in their funding processes by providing outreach materials and other support to demonstrate the value of ACCSP products and the importance of maintaining base support for fishery-dependent data collection programs to state partners and their executive and legislative branches as well as to all other partner agencies; and,
7. Support nationwide systems as defined in the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA).

C. Need

Various state and federal fishery management agencies on the Atlantic coast collect data on the status and trends of specific fish populations and the fisheries that utilize these resources; however, it is often difficult to develop sound recommendations to fisheries managers due to inconsistencies in the way data are collected and managed. The various data sets often cannot be integrated to provide accurate information at the state, regional, or coast-wide level. In addition, the disparate manner in which these data are collected and managed places duplicative burdens on fishermen and dealers reporting to multiple state and federal agencies and regions. Due to rapidly changing stock conditions, within-season regulatory changes and catch quotas have become common fishery management strategies. Timely and accurate harvest information for both recreational and commercial fisheries is required to determine the need for and effects of these management measures.

The [Atlantic Coastal Fisheries Cooperative Management Act of 1993](#) mandated a cooperative state-federal program for the conservation of Atlantic coastal fisheries. Section 804 of the Act requires the Secretaries of Commerce and the Interior to develop a program to support state fisheries programs and those of the ASMFC, including improvements in statistics programs. Since the mid-1990s, the ASMFC has provided administrative support for this coordinated effort to improve data collection and management activities.

In 1995 the states, the ASMFC, and the federal fishery management agencies on the Atlantic coast entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to develop and implement a cooperative state-federal statistics program that would meet the management needs of all participating agencies. All program partners signed the MOU for the ACCSP at the Commission's 54th Annual Meeting in Charleston, SC. Following signing, an Operations Plan was developed to outline the specific tasks and timetables required to develop and initiate implementation of this program. In October of 2016, an [updated MOU](#) was approved that made the ACCSP a program of the ASMFC. This governance change integrates the long-term and annual planning processes with those already in existence for the ASMFC and conform to policy as set by the ACCSP Coordinating Council.

D. Results and Benefits

The ACCSP developed and adopted 1999, 2004 and 2012 versions of the Program Design (now renamed Atlantic Coast Fisheries Data Collection Standards), which document the standards and protocols for collection and management of commercial, recreational, and for-hire fisheries statistics. Program partners developed and approved minimum data elements for collection of catch, effort, biological, social, and economic statistics. The ACCSP also developed standard codes and formats to ensure consistency of all data collected under the Program. These standards require periodic review and revision as the needs of fisheries managers and the state of the art of fisheries science change.

In 2000, the first version of the Data Warehouse was made available to the program partners. Since then, it has grown to encompass almost a 70 year time series of fisheries-dependent catch and effort data. Loading of biological data has begun. These data are constantly reviewed and updated as needed.

In 2004, the first version of the Standard Atlantic Fisheries Information System (SAFIS) Electronic Dealer Reports (eDR) was deployed, followed in 2008, by Electronic Trip Reports (eTRIPS). This system is used to collect Program-compliant data from commercial and recreational fishermen and dealers and is now deployed from Maine to Georgia. SAFIS is an ongoing and evolving system, requiring support, review and revision.

The ACCSP will continue to reduce duplication of effort by dealers and fishermen, make more efficient use of limited funds, promote education of resource users, and provide a more complete information base for formulating management policies, strategies, and tactics for shared resources. An integrated multi-agency program using standard protocols for reporting compatible information will lead to more efficient and cost-effective use of current federally and state funded data collection and management programs. The ACCSP will reduce the burden on the fishing industry to provide information in multiple formats to multiple agencies, and will provide more accurate and timely information to achieve optimum public benefits from the use of fishery resources along the Atlantic coast. The ACCSP will ensure the timely dissemination of accurate data on commercial and recreational fisheries for use in stock assessments and fisheries management through a comprehensive and easily accessible data management system.

E. Approach

The ACCSP is managed collaboratively by committee: the Coordinating Council, composed of high level fisheries policy makers from all the program partners, is the governing body; the Operations Committee provides guidance in standards setting and funding priorities. An Advisory Committee provides industry input into the process. A number of other technical committees provide input into various aspects of the process.

Program planning builds on basic principles related to the goals stated in the ACCSP MOU:

- Development of data collection standards and the implementation of data collection programs will be done cooperatively, across jurisdictional lines;
- Consistent coast-wide data collection standards will be implemented by all program partners that include data on all fishing activities -- commercial, recreational and for-hire fisheries;
- Once achieved, data collection improvements will be maintained;
- These data will be loaded and maintained in a central data repository and provided to data users through a user-friendly query system;
- Program planning will be done collaboratively, by consensus;
- The program will be responsive and accountable to partner and end-user needs; and
- Focus on activities that yield maximum benefit.

Goal 3 of the ASMFC Strategic Plan (Attachment I) details activities to be conducted by ACCSP staff and committees under the FY21 Administrative Budget. Note that program activities and staff in support of the Marine Recreational Information Program are separately funded and therefore not included in this plan.

The ACCSP initially developed common standards collaboratively, by consensus, then began to work with program partners to implement the standards, according to a commonly agreed upon priority. All ACCSP technical committees, except for the Advisory Committee which is composed of industry and recreational representatives, are comprised of managers and staff of the partner agencies and set policy by consensus. Only the Coordinating Council votes directly on motions.

The standards, known as the [Atlantic Coast Fisheries Data Collection Standards](#), for data collection and management are developed and maintained by ACCSP Technical Committees, with review and oversight by the Operations Committee, and advice from the Advisory Committee. The ACCSP Coordinating Council makes policy level decisions to adopt the program standards. The full-time ACCSP staff coordinates all activities conducted by the ACCSP.

The [Atlantic Coast Fisheries Data Collection Standards](#) documents all completed standards and provides the basic framework for full implementation of the ACCSP by all program partners. Administrative support of ACCSP activities is provided by the ASMFC and funded through overhead charges. The ACCSP is continuously evolving as technology and the needs of management and science change over time. Therefore the *Standards* and supporting systems are still in development. Support for the implementation of ACCSP modules is provided by staff in various jurisdictions. To this end, funding is required to provide for full-time staff for all ACCSP activities, as well as for travel and meeting expenses.

The ACCSP Director, reporting to the Executive Director of the ASMFC, provides leadership for the Program, overall programmatic management and guidance, and is responsible for the day-to-day operations. The ACCSP Deputy Director supports the ACCSP Director on operation and development of the Program and is responsible for managing the competitive ACCSP funding process, coordinating cross-team project management, and providing support for a wide range of Program activities. The ACCSP Program Assistant provides assistance to the ACCSP Director and ACCSP Deputy Director, provides staff support for program and technical committees by drafting, maintaining and coordinating program documents, and publicizes the availability and benefits of the Program. The Software Team Leader coordinates the development and management of ACCSP data collection systems. The ACCSP IT Manager manages the information systems infrastructure and security. The Data Team Leader provides guidance for data compilation and dissemination related activities. The Recreational Team Lead coordinates MRIP survey implementation and recreational and for-hire data standards. The Data Coordinators and Developers provide programming services and system support required to develop and fine-tune the data management systems, assist users as they access the system and provide quality management and control. The Data Coordinators also complete custom data requests, QAQC existing data, maintain data feeds, and directly participate in data intensive activities such as a stock assessment data workshops. The Software Team staff provides expert consultation to partners as they implement new reporting, and licensing/permitting systems. The Software Team will continue to support development of SAFIS.

ACCSP staff will follow Goal 3 of the ASMFC 2019 Strategic Plan during FY21, in consultation with all partners. Specific tasks to be accomplished during the period include initiation and maintenance of Partner data feeds from the commercial, recreational, and biological modules; implement dealer reporting component of SAFIS redesign maintenance of Federal Information Security Management Act procedures;; and support of other partner projects by providing technical expertise as necessary.

The ASMFC has basic responsibility for the logistics of all committee meetings which support the development of the ACCSP, including: the ACCSP Coordinating Council, the ACCSP Operations Committee, the Advisory Committee, the Recreational Technical Committee, the Commercial Technical Committee, the Information Systems Committee, the Biological Review Panel, the Bycatch Prioritization Committee, the Standard Codes Committee. Full-time ACCSP personnel staff these committees for planning of work, providing minutes and other documents, and other follow-up.

The ACCSP has helped foster an improved atmosphere of cooperation among its partners. The Program has succeeded in establishing coast-wide fisheries data standards that all program partners have agreed to adopt. Data collection and management systems will be developed and deployed and maintained as the standards and Partner needs evolve. Program partners remain engaged in the process, and the program has made substantial progress towards its goals.

1. Geographic Location: Atlantic Coast (Maine through Florida); systems are being developed for coordination with Gulf of Mexico

2. Milestone Schedule: See Goal 3 of the ASMFC 2019 Strategic Plan (Attachment I)

This is a continuation from previous projects. Table 1 contains the base administrative budget amounts by year since implementation began in 1999.

Table 1. Administrative funding for ACCSP from 1999-2020

Year	Funding	Number of Staff
1999	$907,902	3
2000	$681,451	3
2001	$1,054,466	5
2002	$1,178,677	6
2003	$1,302,768	7
2004	$1,298,319	8
2005	$1,409,545	8
2006	$1,380,598	8
2007	$1,489,189	8
2008	$1,447,620	9
2009	$1,527,996	9
2010	$1,509,899	9
2011	$1,530,699	9
2012	$1,509,555	9
2013	$1,582,780	9
2014	$1,718,447	9.5
2015	$1,731,666	9.5
2016	$1,623,360	9.5
2017	$1,855,113	9.5
2018	$1,854,249	9.5
2019	$1,816,503	9.5
2020	$2,012,744	11

3. Cost Summary: The ACCSP requests $1,818,967 (Leadership Option 3) for administrative support, committee travel and systems operations during FY21. The addition of the 16.71% overhead rate raises the request to $2,122,916.

The funds used for the ACCSP shall be accounted for separately from all other ASMFC funds.

4. Personnel

Program personnel funded through this grant, except the Recreational Team Lead, are dedicated 100% to the ACCSP and are full-time employees of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission. Note that personnel associated with the MRIP state conduct and 85% of the

Recreational Team Leader are funded under separate authority and not accounted for in this document. Fringe benefits which include health care, vision, dental, annual and sick leave are calculated at 27%. ASMFC salaries are kept confidential, thus only totals are displayed. Additionally, an agreement has been put in place with NMFS Highly Migratory Species (HMS) to partially fund the Information Systems Specialist responsible for maintaining HMS data feeds. The addition of a software development position would transition some contract support for mobile software maintenance to staff role.

- ACCSP Director - Geoff White
- ACCSP Deputy Director – Julie Defilippi Simpson
- Program Assistant – Marisa Powell
- ACCSP IT Manager and Software Developer – Edward Martino
- Recreational Team Lead (15%) – Alex DiJohnson
- Software Team Lead - Karen Holmes
- Senior Software Developer – Nicolas Mwai
- Software Developer – VACANT (**OPTION 1 ONLY**) - Delayed
- Data Team Lead – Julie Defilippi Simpson (To be backfilled in 2021)
- Data Analyst - Jennifer Ni
- Senior Data Coordinator – Joseph Myers
- Senior Data Coordinator – Heather Konell
- Data Coordinator – Michael Rinaldi
- Data Coordinator – Lindsey Aubart

Salaries and Wages	Option 1	Option 2	Leadership Option 3
Total Salary	$1,229,993	$1,164,993	1,164,993
Benefits @27%	$332,098	$314,548	$314,548
Total Costs	$1,562,091	$1,479,541	$1,479,541

5. Travel

Travel is broken down into two general categories; committee meetings and staff travel. The bulk of travel is in support of committee meetings. While significant savings have been achieved by using remote meeting technologies (such as online meetings), face-to-face meetings are often required to complete the tasks assigned. In general, each committee will have at least one face-to-face meeting during the year. In addition to staff travel to support committee meetings, staff travel is needed for implementation planning, data collection activities, outreach efforts, and information system development meetings with partners.

The Program funds fares to and from the meeting site, per diem according to Office of Personnel and Management guidelines and facilities costs for the meeting itself. (The daily rate per meeting

includes cost of airfare or mileage, lodging, meals and other travel related expenses.) Reimbursable participants include state fisheries directors and biologists, state and university scientists, law enforcement personnel and citizen advisors from Maine through Florida. Meetings will be held in various locations on the Eastern Seaboard, including but not limited to: Annapolis, MD; Norfolk, VA; Charleston, SC; Philadelphia, PA; Alexandria, VA; Providence, RI; Jacksonville, FL; Washington, D.C.

The travel budget is based on an ASMFC average estimated $275 per day multiplied by meetings multiplied by days multiplied by non-federal membership plus staff.

Committee Travel	Meetings	Days	Membership	Total	Staff	Total	Grand Total
Biological Review panel	1	1.5	15	$6,188	1	$413	$6,600
Bycatch Prioritization	1	1	15	$4,125	1	$275	$4,400
Commercial Technical Committee	1	2	15	$8,250	1	$550	$8,800
Coordinating Council (with ASMFC)	3	0.5	12	$4,950	2	$825	$5,775
Operations and Advisory Committees	2	2	20	$22,000	2	$2,200	$24,200
Recreational Technical	1	2	15	$8,250	1	$550	$8,800
Information Systems Committee	1	1	15	$4,125	1	$275	$4,400
Total Committees				$57,888		$5,088	$62,975
Staff Travel							
Partner Coordination	5	2	2	$5,500			
Data Support (Stock Assessment etc.)	1	5	2	$2,750			
IT Support	3	1	1	$825			
Outreach	2	2	1	$1,100			
GulfFIN Coordination	2	1.5	1	$825			
SAFIS Support/Training	4	1	4	0			
Total Staff Travel				$15,400			
Grand Total							$73,975

Attachment II provides the FY20 schedule of the funding cycle and calendar of meetings, which serves as a tentative schedule for FY21.

6. Supplies

Supply costs include supplies not covered by the ASMFC overhead. This includes ACCSP specific materials for outreach, smaller information systems items such as network switches and cables.

Supplies	
Misc Hardware (cables, network hubs etc)	$4,651
Backup Tapes	$1,000
Total	$5,651

7. Equipment

ACCSP maintains several large server systems and related hardware in support of the Data Warehouse, website, SAFIS and administrative functions. These systems typically have a 5 year life cycle after which they require upgrade or replacement. In cases of the larger items, lease options have been explored, but it appears that, in part due to current staffing, it is more cost effective to own and maintain the equipment internally.

Included are the costs are normal life cycle replacements of laptop and desktop systems, assuming replacement of 3 systems annually. Costs are based upon current market surveys and an estimate of our needs. We assume the replacement of one major infrastructure component (server, router, firewall, etc.) yearly.

Equipment	
Infrastructure Replacements (servers, UPS systems, etc.)	$18,000
Desktop/Laptop Systems	$4,500
Total	**$22,500**

8. Other Costs

Hardware and software support are supplied by a number of different vendors and includes costs associated with licensing and maintenance fees (such as *Oracle* licensing).

The Program maintains two high speed internet connections and associated infrastructure in support of the server systems. The primary internet connection is covered by ASMFC. The first ACCSP funded connection is a dedicated line to the NOAA Fisheries Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office (GARFO). This second line provides full time secure connectivity requested by the Region. The third connection, using an entirely different technology and provider provides redundancy to the primary connection in case of failure. The system is configured to automatically fail over in the event of a failure of the primary internet connection.

Outside vendors include Hewlett Packard for systems hardware and software support; Oracle for database management systems support; DLT Solutions and Trident Solutions for hardware support. All pricing is based on the GSA schedule.

Communications supports high-speed internet connectivity for ACCSP and related systems and a direct secure connection to the GARFO Data Center in Gloucester, MA. Costs are based upon negotiated contracts with Cogent Communications, Level 3 Communications and Verizon.

Software maintenance and development workload at times exceeds staff's resources. Contract services will be utilized to provide services that staff may be unable to perform.

E-Reporting Support

Funds are requested for electronic reporting outreach and support activities. Interest among state Partners and harvesters has been steadily rising and a steady stream of new users are adopting the system where agencies will accept electronic reports though SAFIS. In addition, recent and pending management actions mandate electronic reporting. SAFIS eTrips in both the mobile and on-line versions are likely to be used by the majority of harvesters as the reporting tool. In addition, the majority of trips will be reported to the SAFIS system regardless of the tool selected.

Funds requested include both costs associated with the initial deployment and ongoing support. Initial startup costs include but are not limited to in-person training workshops for harvesters and Partner Agency personnel and published training guides and videos that will be available via the ACCSP website. ACCSP continues to contract for help desk support for SAFIS which includes 24/7 helpdesk support, a toll free number to contact support personnel and a helpdesk ticketing program designed to keep track of all requests and provide feedback to the Program. With increases to mandatory electronic federal reporting in 2021 additional helpdesk support is anticipated.

Other Expenses	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Software License Support	$60,000	$60,000	$60,000
Hardware Support	$7,500	$7,500	$7,500
Communications/ Internet Connectivity	$22,700	$22,700	$16,700
Printing (outreach)	$2,500	$2,500	$2,500
Software Development	$75,000	$125,000	$125,000
Help Desk Support	$60,000	$60,000	$30,000
Total	**$227,700**	**$277,700**	**$241,700**

Budget Summary

	2021 (Option 1)	2021 (Option 2)	2021 (Option 3)
Personnel	$1,229,993	$1,164,993	$1,164,993
Fringe Benefits	$332,098	$314,548	$314,548
Travel	$78,375	$78,375	$69,575
Equipment	$22,500	$22,500	$22,500
Supplies	$5,651	$5,651	$5,651
Other	$227,700	$277,700	$241,700
Total Program	$1,896,317	$1,863,767	$1,818,967
ASMFC Overhead 16.71%	$316,874	$311,435	$303,949
Total Proposal	$2,213,191	$2,175,202	$2,122,916

Resources actively sought to support full range of ACCSP activities in addition to the ADMIN Grant

2021 Support	Coverage	Funding Expected
GARFO (for FISMA)	Partial IT Manager & Contracts for ongoing monitoring and reviews	$ 125,000
HMS	Partial Data Analyst	$ 40,000
FIS Quality Management FY21 Proposal	Atlantic Coast Project Scoping for Implementation of Automated Data Auditing Validation for Electronic Logbooks	$ 77,000
FIS FIN Development FY21 Proposal	Continued Development and Enhancement to the ACCSP Online Data Query Tool and the ACCSP Assignment Tracking Application	$ 181,500
MRIP	State Conduct of MRIP APAIS, FHTS ME-GA, and additional surveys in some states (LPIS in ME, Catch Cards in MD & NC, and LPBS in NC). Includes Recreational Team Staff (4).	$ 5,781,554 * Majority of funds passed on to States