

Data Collection Committee Report
June 5, 2023
Ms. Susan Boggs, Chair

The Committee adopted the agenda (**Tab F, No. 1**) and approved the minutes (**Tab F, No. 2**) of the April 2023 meeting as written.

Southeast For-Hire Integrated Electronic Reporting (SEFHIER) Program (Tab F, No. 4 and 4a)

Dr. Jessica Stephen (Southeast Regional Office [SERO]) provided a presentation updating the Committee on for-hire data collection in the Gulf of Mexico (Gulf). With SEFHIER being set aside, several other data collection programs are still being conducted for the for-hire sector. SERO suggested giving a presentation to the Committee at the October 2023 meeting to report information collected from SEFHIER that would provide context for the program's design. Several Committee members asked whether a new document could be developed and brought before the Committee during the August 2023 meeting. SERO staff replied that there was nothing to preclude working on a new document, but the information presented in October would be beneficial when considering objectives for a new program.

Several Committee members expressed a desire for a simplified document that would include language to limit any additional data collection questions after the Council approves the document. Another Committee member mentioned that the survey questions could be as simple as those for the Southeast Regional Headboat Survey. The member continued that validation was an important component of a fisheries data collection program and expressed some concern that law enforcement presence at the docks seemed to be reduced since the court decision.

Status Update on Plan with Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission (GSMFC) and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) on the Private Angler Permit

Mr. Dave Donaldson (GSMFC) provided an update on exploring novel approaches to managing federal private anglers based on the Council's recent request. The Research Track Development Team, a subgroup of the Marine Fisheries Information Program Transition Group, suggested the Commission's Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC) would be the appropriate group to task with the Council's request. A member from the Research Track Development Team will provide the TCC a presentation at the GSMFC October 2023 meeting. The TCC will be asked to consider a number of issues which includes costs, identify any potential hurdles, potential standardization across states and other topics. The TCC will meet the week before the October Council meeting and it would be possible to report their discussions to the Council then.

A Committee member expressed concern that this effort may be more complicated than needed. He recommended that collection of private recreational effort, catch, and discard information in federal waters is important and that the states are already working on collecting these data. Another Committee member followed that this endeavor could be simplified even further and focus on identifying the universe of anglers only. He continued that it should be made clear how

this information was going to be used to help estimate effort in the private recreational sector. A Committee member responded that the TCC may determine that a larger licensing program may not be a pathway forward but they have the knowledge to provide feedback on limitation, constraints, and costs. They could then provide insights on alternatives for helping better refine data collection methods.

The Committee then discussed angler buy-in and terminology between licensing and permitting. Permitting is often associated with regulations and could affect participation. General Counsel stated that there was no strict definition of those terms. She continued that the focus should be more on the functionality. The Committee decided to wait for feedback from the TCC and determine management objectives before finalizing any specific terminology.

Other business

A Committee member asked about the progress of a mailout being generated to inform commercial reef fish and coastal migratory permit holders of public hearings related to modifications to the coastal logbook program. Council staff stated the mailout was being prepared for the fall public hearings.

Mr. Chair, this concludes my report.