

MRFSS Telephone  
“New Hire”  
Interviewer Training  
2009

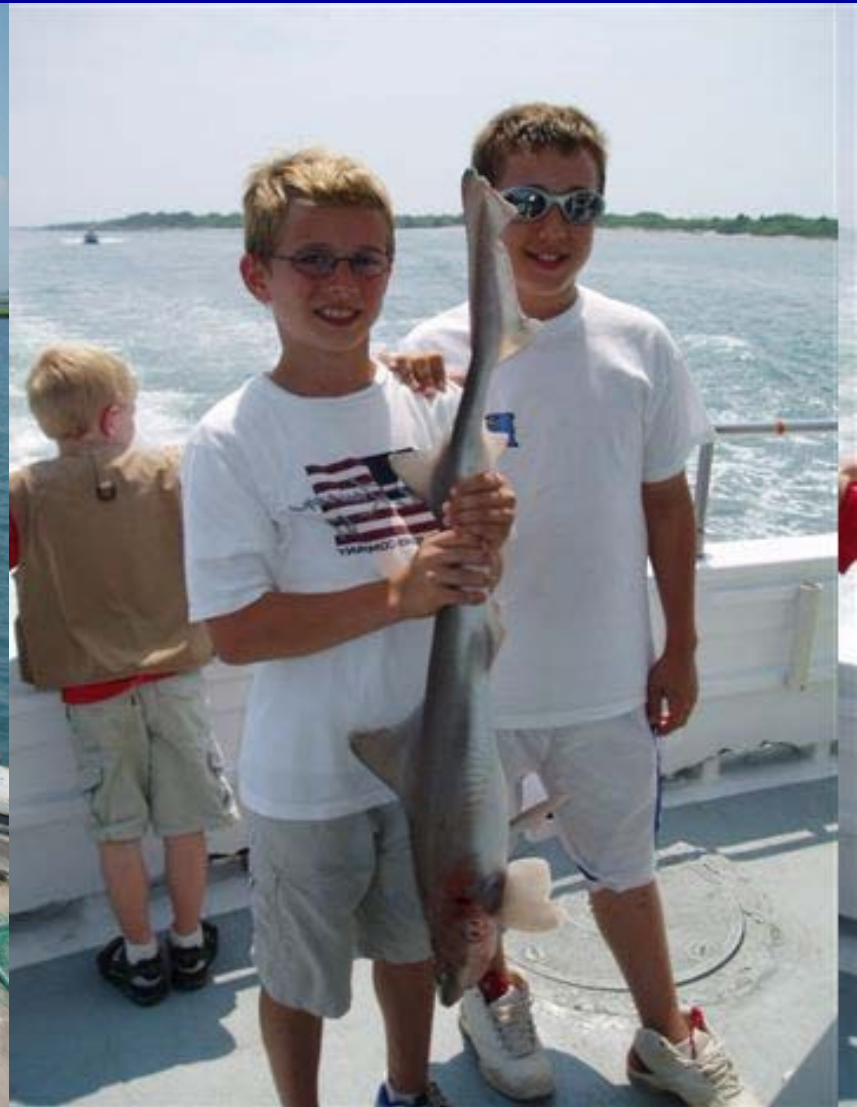
Strategic Research Group

# Survey Background and Overview

## What is the MRFSS and why is it needed?

- Recreational fishing is *very* popular
- Many don't realize collective impact of *recreational* fishing
- It's important to measure impact of *recreational* fishing

# It's a Popular Sport —enjoyed by all ages



# What is the MRFSS?

## Marine Recreational Fisheries Statistics Survey

- Created in 1979
- Nationwide survey of *recreational saltwater* anglers
- Measures *recreational* fishing catch, effort and participation

# Survey Purpose

**Purpose:** Estimate the effect of *recreational* fishing on marine (saltwater) resources, such as fish populations.

## **MRFSS helps:**

- Identify trends in *recreational* fishing
- Forecast future needs for the sport

# Why are statistics collected on *recreational* fishing?

## Each year...

- An estimated **15-17 million** people in the U.S. fish *recreationally*
- They take approx. **76 million** fishing trips!
- They harvest approx. **188 million** fish!
- They keep approx. **259 million** pounds of fish they catch!

# What is the impact of this recreational fishing activity?

- **Over-fishing:** is bad for fish populations
- **Fish stocks:** may become depleted if not monitored closely
- **Economic:** fishing has a huge impact on the economies of coastal areas where fishing takes place, and goods related to fishing are purchased.

# Critical information needed to manage fisheries responsibly

- How many people are fishing *recreationally*.
- How many people are “targeting” (or trying to catch), specific fish species.
- How many trips are they taking?
- The numbers, weights, lengths, and species of fish harvested.
- Social and economic information about anglers.



# It's A Matter of Law

**The Magnuson Fishery Conservation and Management Act of 1976 mandates:**

A national Government program manages resources between *recreational* and *commercial* fisheries and their harvests.

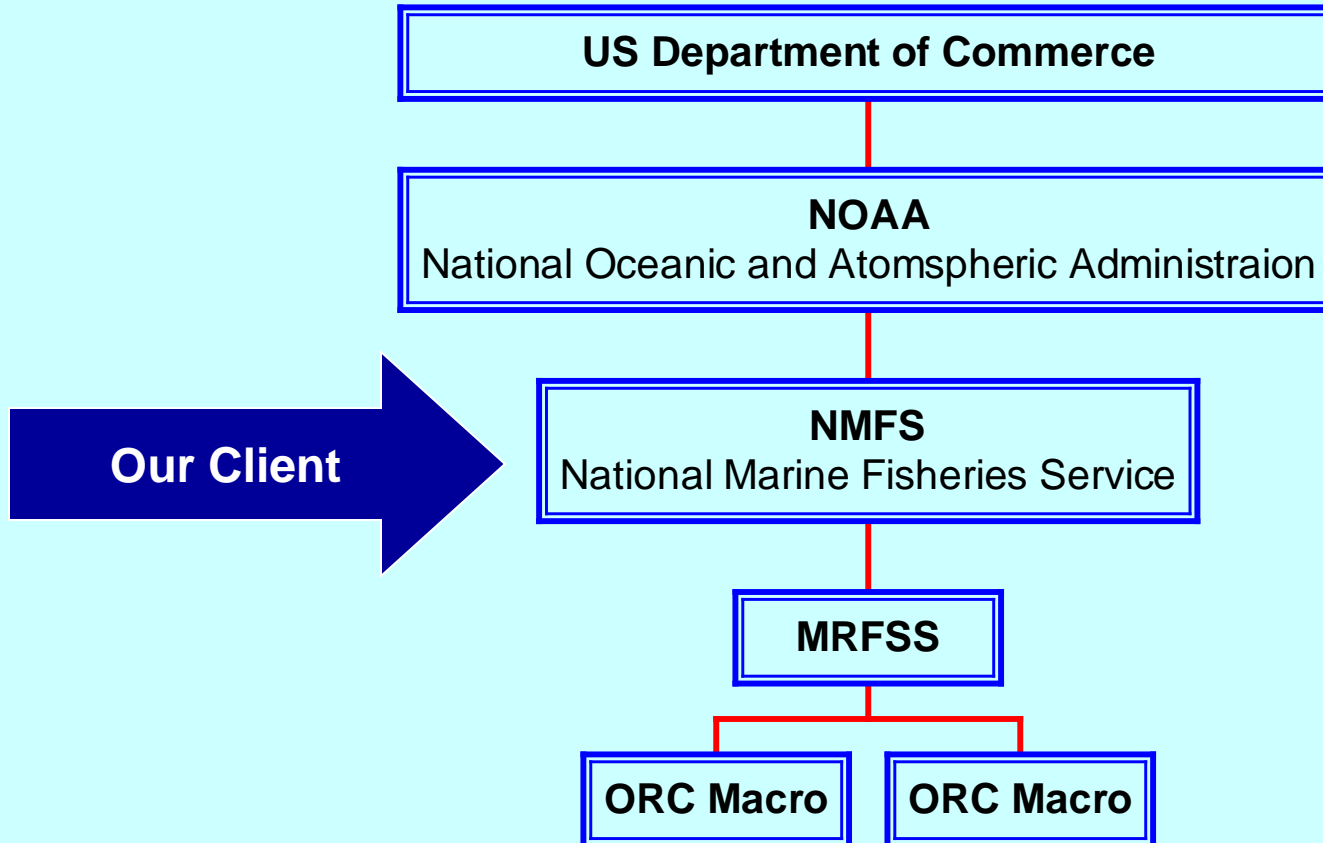
Including:

- Inland fishing (areas 0-3 miles from shore)
- Off-shore fishing (areas 3-200 miles from shore)

# The collected data is used to...

- **Establish** regulations to control fishing mortality
- **Allocate** fishery resources among competing user groups (recreational and commercial anglers)
- **Assess** impacts of regulations on anglers and the sport fishing industry
- **Determine** future recreational fishing needs

# Who is involved in the MRFSS?



# Two MRFSS (Surveys) Collect Data on *Recreational* Fishing

**MRFSS Intercept** (survey) collects *angler catch data* including:

- *Size, weight, length, and species of fish*
- *Number of fish caught*

**MRFSS Telephone** (survey) collects *fishing effort* and *participation data* including:

- *Number of people who fished in past 2 months*
- *Number of fishing trips they took*
- *Trip details (state and county of trips, etc.)*

# MRFSS Intercept: Collects Catch Data



# Intercept: Measuring and Weighing Anglers' Catch



# MRFSS Telephone: Collects Effort & Participation Data



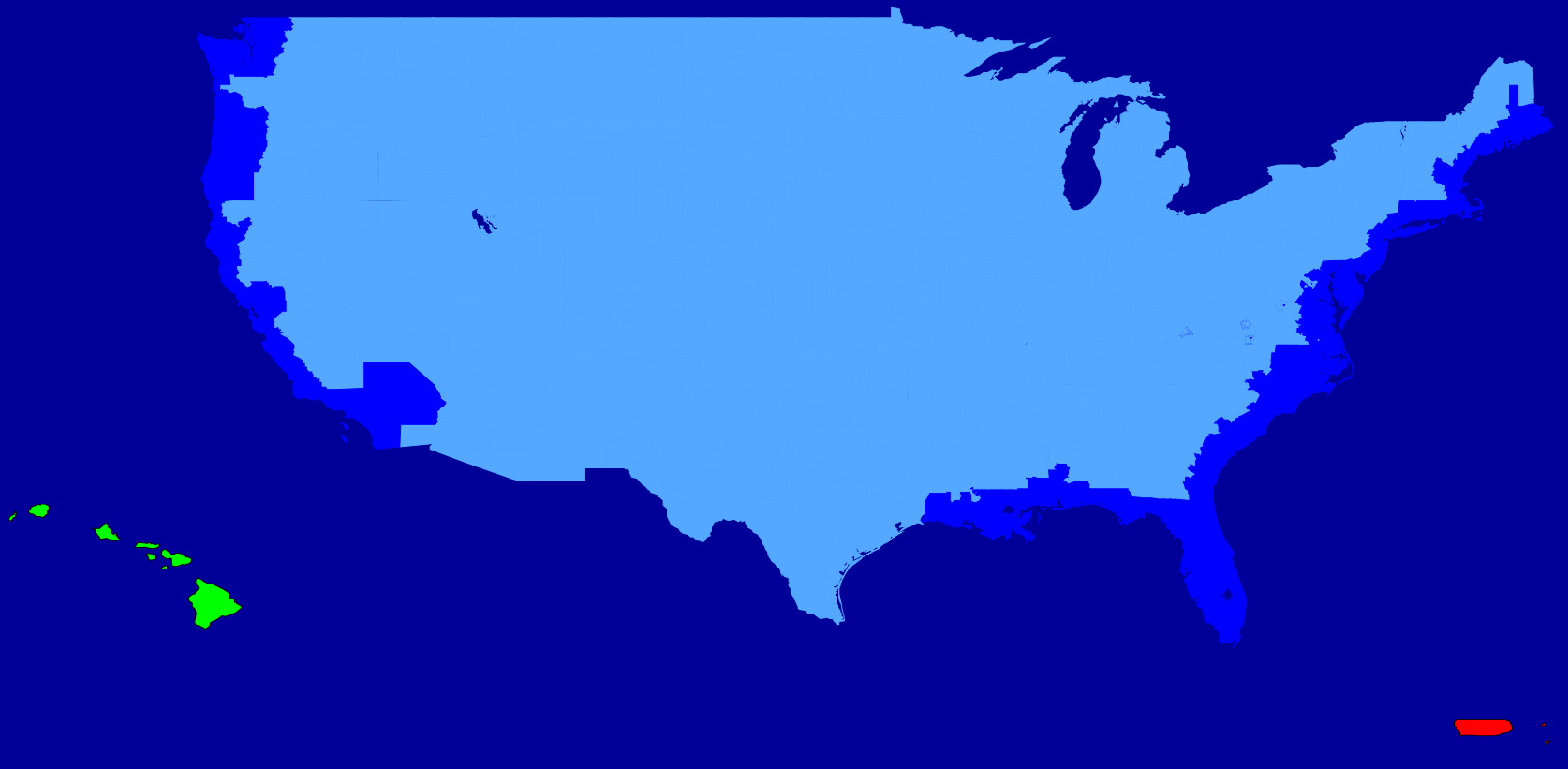
# Random Sampling Data Collection

Both surveys use *random sampling* to collect data to ensure anglers' efforts are accurately represented.

- Data from people who don't fish, or don't catch anything while fishing, is *just as important* as data we get from anglers who catch many fish.



# Telephone Survey Targets Coastal Counties (Randomly)



# Privacy Issues

**Data is aggregated:** participants are not identified through their answers

**Participation is voluntary:**

- Not a mandatory survey
- Respondents can refuse to answer *any* question
- Cooperation is important – ensures accuracy of the statistical results.

# Glossary- Coastal Terms

- **Coastal state:** A state bordering the Atlantic or Pacific Ocean, the Gulf of Mexico or the Caribbean Sea.
- **“State”** also includes “territory” (for Puerto Rico) or “commonwealth” (for Hawaii), for this survey.
- **Coastal counties:** Counties that border marine waters, or fall within 25 miles of the coastline, are included in this survey.

# Glossary Continued

- **Coastal resident:** A person who lives in a coastal county (who *may* be included in our telephone household survey).
- **Household:** all people who occupy a housing unit. The unit must be intended for year-round use, *not seasonal or migratory use*.

# Key Survey Concepts-

## *Recreational vs. Commercial fishing*

***Recreational anglers:*** People who fish *primarily for fun or relaxation.*

- Their catch may be used mostly for home consumption or as bait

***Commercial anglers:*** people who fish *primarily to earn a living.*

- Their catch may be sold as income or
- They are selling the fishing opportunity (working as a boat captain or a mate)

# Key Survey Concepts-

## *Saltwater vs. Freshwater*

- **Saltwater** (marine) **fishing**: includes fishing in oceans, sounds, bays, inlets, canals, intra-coastal waterways (inlets, estuaries), and ***brackish*** portions of rivers.
- **Brackish water**: a mixture of saltwater and freshwater; where the ocean and river meet. ***(Fishing trips in brackish water are eligible for survey).***
- **Freshwater**: ponds and lakes that ***do not*** contain saltwater. ***(Not eligible for survey).***

# Finfish only (no shellfish)

- **Finfish vs. Shellfish:** We only interview anglers fishing *primarily for finfish*, (not shellfish).
- **Finfish:** Any fish with fins
- **Shellfish:** Any fish with shells (clams, oysters, lobster, shrimp, etc).

# Key Survey Concepts-

## 3 Modes of Fishing

**Mode of fishing:** how an angler *accessed* the water. Three modes exist for this survey:

1. **Shore mode**
2. **Party/charter boat mode**
3. **Private/rental boat mode**



# Shore Mode includes: *Piers*



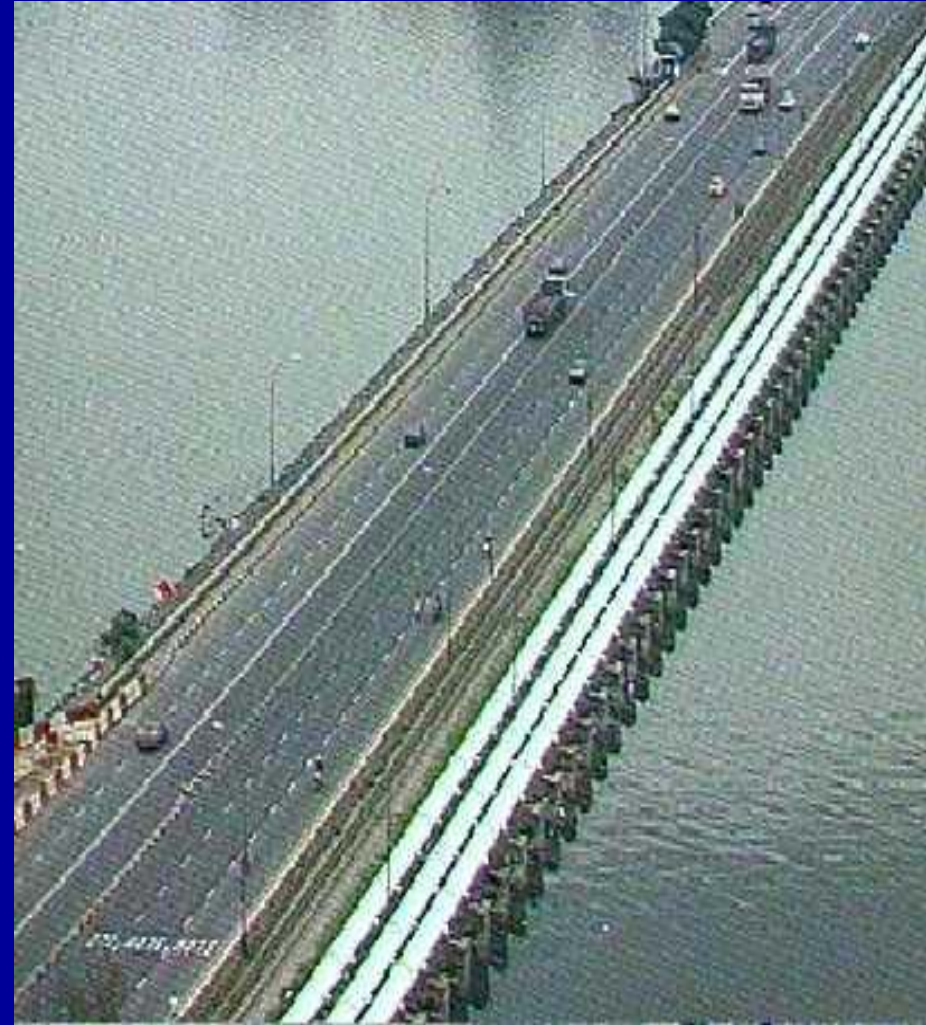
# Shore Mode includes: *Docks*



Shore Mode includes:  
***Jetty/Breakwater/Breachways***



# Shore Mode includes: *Bridges and Causeways*



# Shore Mode includes: *Beaches*



# Shore Mode includes: *Banks*



# Party/Charter Boat Mode includes:

## *Party Boats*

**Party boats or head boats** (known in some parts of the country as **open boats**):

- Fishing space is provided for a fee
- Boat is launched when a specified number of anglers have paid and boarded
- Anglers usually ***don't know*** other anglers on the boat
- Operated by a licensed captain and crew

# *Party Boat*



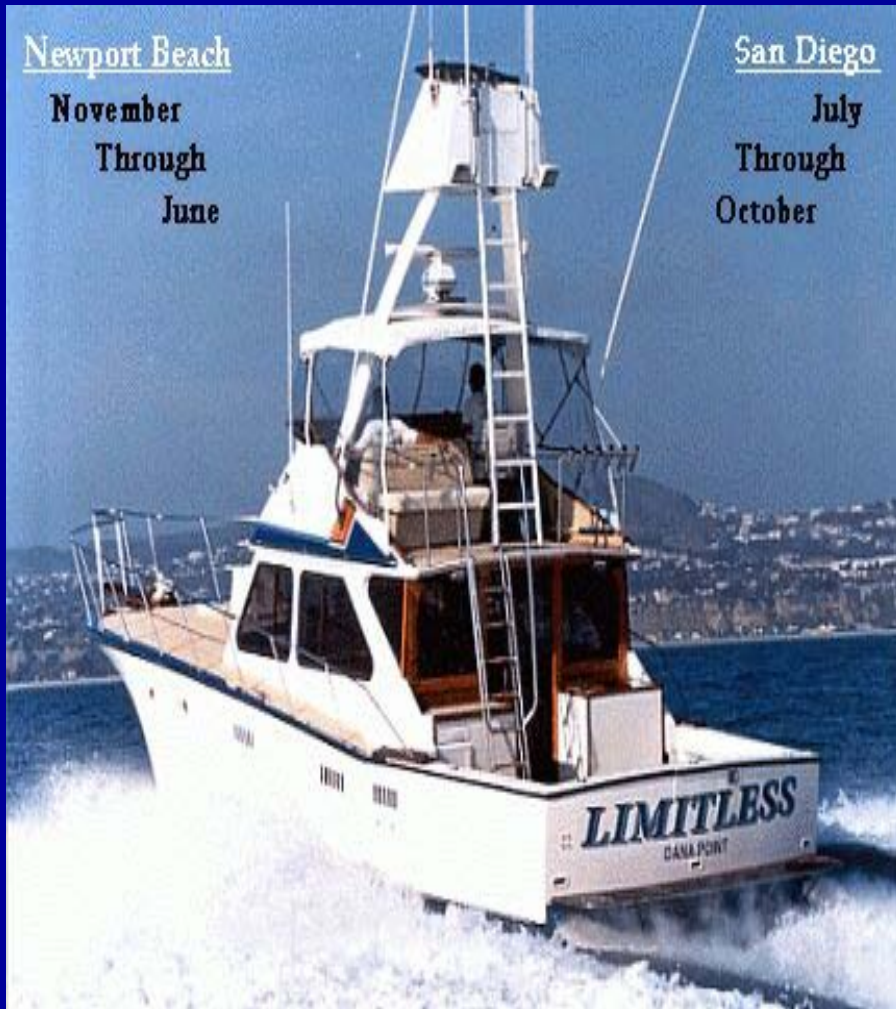


# Party/Charter Boat Mode includes: *Charter Boats*

## Charter boats:

- Operate under charter for a price and specific amount of time
- Anglers are part of a *pre-formed group* (friends, family members, etc).
- *Closed parties*: not open to the public
- Operated by a licensed captain and crew

# Party/Charter Boat Mode includes: *Charter & Guide Boats*



# Private and Rental Boat Mode includes:

***Private boat:*** A boat belonging to an individual.

***Rental boat:*** A boat that is rented where no crew is provided. The renter operates the boat.

# *Private Boats*



# ***Rental Boats***



# Key Survey Concepts- “Fishing Trip”

“**Fishing trip**”: For this survey, we define a fishing trip as fishing in one mode during part or all of one “waking day”.