



Cooperative Party Charter Phone Survey Newsletter

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The RecFIN Program
45 82nd Drive
Gladstone, OR 97045
503-650-5400
recfin@psmfc.org

Purpose of your being Surveyed

Why we call 10% of the boats per Week

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) provided funds to test a new survey in California for tracking marine recreational angler fishing effort from party and charter vessels. The NMFS, the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission (PSMFC) and the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) are working cooperatively to conduct the new Party Charter Phone Survey (PCPS). In 2002 we will compare the new method results with the current telephone survey method for party and charter vessels used by the Marine Recreational Fishery Statistics Survey (MRFSS).

Objectives

1. More efficient data collection methods
2. More reliable fishing effort estimates and therefore better catch statistics
3. Better public understanding of survey methods
4. More accurate statistics for fisheries management
5. Closer association between government agencies and the user-groups.

Preliminary Results

Compared with traditional MRFSS

The intent is to replace the traditional MRFSS trip estimate with this new method. We are currently conducting an evaluation of this survey. In 2002 NMFS will complete the evaluation and determine what, if any, changes need to be made. Once the evaluation is complete, we will begin to make presentations to various groups (regional fishery management councils,



interstate commission, industry organizations, etc.) regarding the results of the PCPS in comparison with the MRFSS. We plan to talk with industry representatives about the survey and provide preliminary data regarding the trip information collected during the

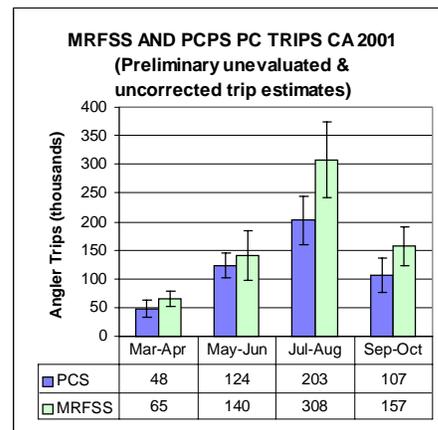


Figure 1. Preliminary Results



survey. We will attempt to meet in conjunction with scheduled charter boat association meetings (where possible) to ensure attendance of as many charter boat operators as possible. The preliminary PCPS estimates are compared with the traditional MRFSS trip estimates in Figure 1. However, until the evaluation is complete and all of the adjustments are validated, these numbers are not being used by managers. The numbers may change once non-compliance and reporting errors have been fully evaluated.

Cooperation falling

A frequently asked question is,

“ Why should I participate in this survey? ”

The success of this survey will depend greatly on the cooperation of the charter boat operators and their crews. The response rate for the survey declined during 2001. For November-December 2001 about 78% of all those eligible agreed to participate in the survey (see Figure 4, page 3). It is important for charter boat operators to provide accurate data regarding fishing trips because this will allow fisheries managers to use the best data available to make decisions that can affect your business. We have found that it can be difficult to contact vessel operators by phone. We encourage you to use our toll free number, **888-274-7838**, to report your trips when it is convenient for you. This survey is a cooperative state, federal and industry approach to furnish better information to managers. **We ask for your support and cooperation to make this survey successful and to keep the charter boat fishing industry successful for years to come!**

Favorable early results

The new survey provides more detailed information on the distributions of charter boat fishing among fishing ports, fishing areas, and fishing methods. The estimates of charter boat fishing effort from the PCPS are more precise than those produced by the current Marine Recreational Fisheries Statistics Survey

(MRFSS) random telephone survey method. The distribution of trips varies regionally and may be dependent on the presence of seasonal fisheries in the particular regions. **Future newsletters will illustrate sample distributions.**

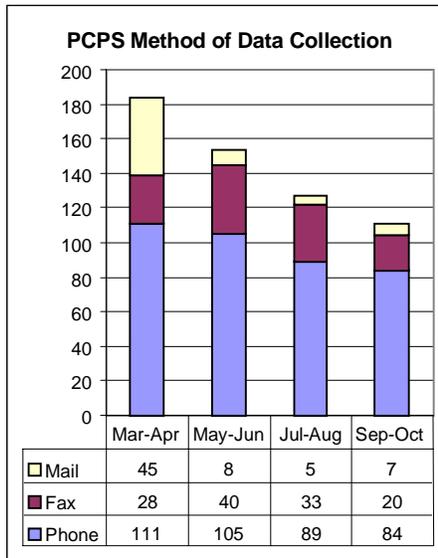


Figure 2. Collection Method

The future of the PCPS

Further decreases in cooperation may have significant impacts on the accuracy of the survey estimates for fishing effort.

The success of this new method and the credibility of the estimates of charter boat fishing effort depend on your level of cooperation. We can get an accurate picture of what is really happening in the fishery if more of you would provide information on your fishing activity.

Some boats are luckier than Others

One of the most frequently asked questions from charter operators who have been selected for the survey numerous times is

“ Why have I been selected so many times? ”

Is the sampling truly random? I’ve been contacted 4 times in the last 2 months.” This is a matter of chance, or random effects. In random sampling, some people may be drawn more often than others, and the pattern of draws (how often you are selected in a two month period) may be clumped in time. This is similar to a coin toss. Sometimes you may get a number of ‘heads’ in a row, but on average, ‘heads’ comes up 50% of the time.

To illustrate, Figure 3 shows the percentage of boats that will be selected multiple times throughout this survey when 10% are selected at random each week. You will notice that there is a distinct probability that some boats will not be selected at all, just as there is a distinct probability that some boats may be selected as many as 12-13 times during any particular year. Most boats, however, will be selected between 3-8 times during the survey. In addition, if an individual has more than one boat, that person should expect to be contacted between 3-8 times for each boat, not for all boats combined. ➡

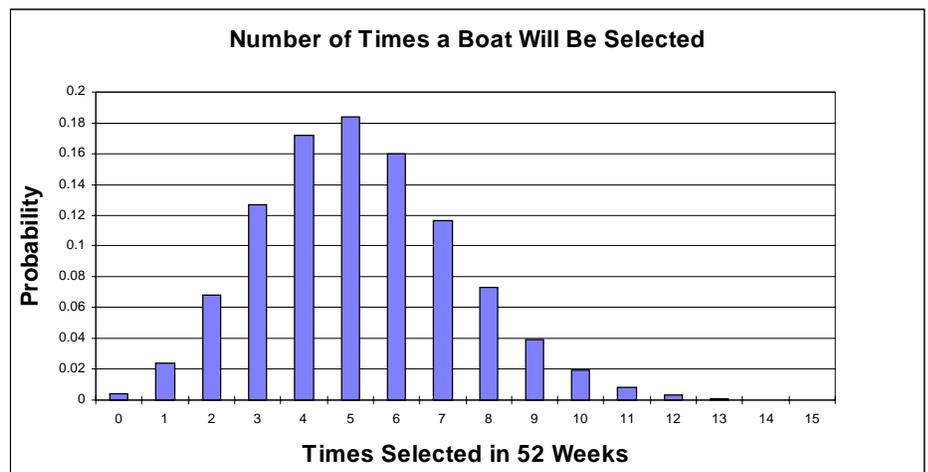


Figure 3. Boat selection

How cooperative have we Been?

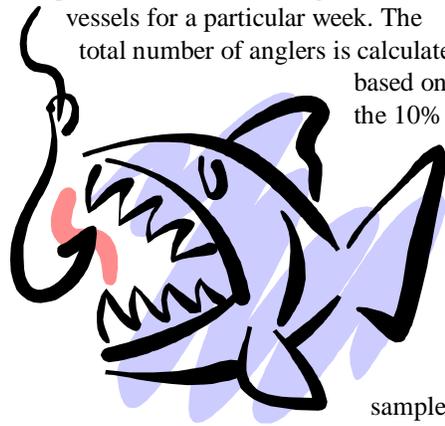
Call 888-274-7838 to join the PCPS

The level of cooperation has declined over the life of the survey in 2001 (See Figure 4). **It is hoped that the 82 uncooperative vessel operators will rejoin the survey in 2002.** The phone contractor will be re-contacting all uncooperative or ineligible vessels to determine their status. The number of uncooperative vessels has increased to near unacceptable levels. If the activity of the uncooperative boats is substantially different, the new estimates might be too high or too low. This skewing of the results depends on the trip rates of the uncooperative vessels.

Some operators have also refused to allow samplers on their vessels. Managers have had to be fairly conservative in setting restrictions due to the uncertainty in the data. It is hoped that this new survey will provide accurate data on catch because of increased precision of the trip estimates. However, if the catch per trip information does not represent the average, due to dockside sampler refusals, then the expected improvements in the certainty of the catch estimates will not appear. 🐟

Your data will be used to estimate total Catch

The trip information you provide will be used to estimate total trips of all party and charter anglers. Rather than contact every vessel about every trip, a 10% random selection of vessels is used to represent all active and eligible marine vessels for a particular week. The total number of anglers is calculated based on the 10% sample size and the average number of anglers per trip. Adjustments are made for uncooperative vessels and other factors.



The trip estimates are next used to estimate total catch. Data collected by field samplers determines the average catch per trip (catch rate) for anglers. The catch survey data is used to calculate the fish per angler trip by species of fish. The rates are multiplied by the estimate of trips to get the estimates of total harvest.

Total trips X catch rate = **total catch**

The catch survey most often requires that the sampler ride the boat to sample anglers' fish and count discards. Fish are weighed and measured. The creel data is used to calculate average catch rate and average weight. The average weight by species is multiplied by the catch estimate to calculate the estimate of metric tons.

Total catch X mean weight = **metric tons**

The catch survey also requires your cooperation to produce accurate catch rates and mean weights. **Please allow CDFG / PSMFC samplers to interview**

the anglers on your vessel. The samplers also gather important data about the anglers that is used to estimate the size of the fishery in terms of numbers of anglers and where they come from and how often they fish. That data is used in economic models to estimate the value of the sport fishery. Please see the RecFIN web site or contact RecFIN to get reports on the economic value of the sport fishery.

Please contact the following individuals if you have any questions, suggestions or concerns regarding the PCPS estimates:

Tom Sminkey, NMFS, F/ST1, Room 12362, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910, 301-713-2328

Wade Van Buskirk, PSMFC, 45 SE 82nd Dr., Gladstone, OR 97027 503-650-5400, wade@recfin.org

Economic questions will end June 2002

The purpose of the economic questions is to obtain the information needed to estimate the economic value of fish and other marine resources to the party charter fleet and evaluate the economic impact of present and future management decisions on the fisheries.

A specialized economic survey was planned in 2001-2002 for the Pacific Coast at about the same time that RecFIN was working on starting the new Party Charter Phone Survey.

“ Once the Party Charter Phone Survey was established, economists developed an add-on to the PCPS to gather some of the needed information. “

Rather than run an additional survey to collect this information, NMFS

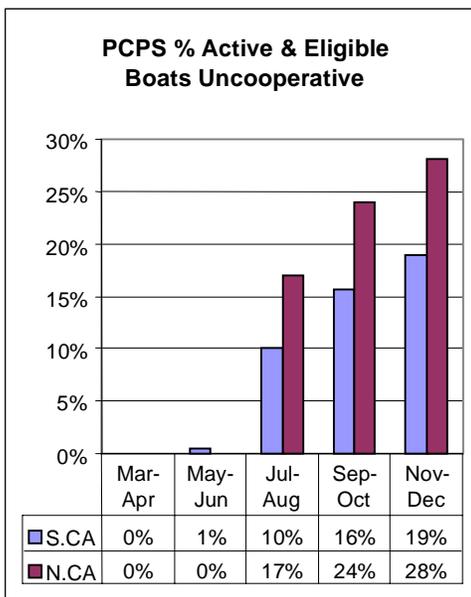


Figure 4. Percent Uncooperative

determined that the new Party Charter Phone Survey would be a useful way to collect much of the needed economic information. The economic add-on began during May 2001 and will run for 14 months, ending at the end of June 2002.

Costs and earnings information for different vessel types and trip types will provide a better understanding of how the recreational fishing industry will be impacted by and respond to any regulations likely to be considered by managers regulating the fisheries. Importantly, your participation in this survey will help identify management alternatives that minimize negative impacts to industry participants while still achieving conservation goals.

“ Economists are interviewing some operators to gather annual expenditure data on the fleet. ”

The second component of the economic survey consists of random selection of boat operators for a one-time additional interview that will collect information on annual costs and vessel characteristics. **Again, we want to emphasize that this information is strictly confidential.**

Data from the two surveys will be merged and analyzed to make value estimates. The value estimates will be available for future management consideration. Please contact the following individuals if you have any questions, suggestions or concerns regarding the economic survey:

Cindy Thomson, NMFS, 110 Shaffer Road Santa Cruz, CA 95060, 831-420-3911 Voice, 831-420-3977 Fax
Cindy.Thomson@noaa.gov

Dave Colpo, PSMFC, 7600 Sand Point Way NE, Bldg 4, Seattle, WA 98115, 888-421-4251 Toll free, 206-526-4074
Fax dave_colpo@psmfc.org ←

Additional Information

Association Meetings California Locations

Survey leaders will visit charter association meetings to explain the survey and results.

Web Site www.recfin.org

We maintain a library of survey materials and data tables on our web site.

Questions 503-650-5400

If you have questions that you think should be addressed in future issues of this newsletter please call RecFIN and let us know.

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Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission
45 SE 82nd Drive
Gladstone, Oregon 97045

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED
«VSL_ID»
«note»

«name»
«vessel»
«address»
«city», «state» «zip»