



# Cooperative Party Charter Phone Survey Newsletter

Vol.1 No.2

March 2002

## Inside this Issue

- 1 Response rates from cooperative Vessels
- 1 Economic Sampler
- 2 Adjusting the results to reduce Bias
- 3 The characteristics of the Fleet
- 3 Anglers per trip and vessel Trips
- 4 Logbooks and the phone Survey

## In the next Issue

- National Objective** PCPS on the Gulf and Atlantic Coasts.
- Florida Logbook** The logbook systems in South Carolina and California Compared
- Trip Estimates** How the trip estimates are calculated from your Data.
- How you can Help** How operators can make improvements to the survey.

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

## Response rates from cooperative Vessels

*Getting timely data difficult at Times*

The ultimate success of this new survey approach and the credibility of the estimates of charter boat fishing effort will depend greatly on the level of response by survey participants. We can get a more accurate picture of what is really happening in the fishery if more of you would take the time to provide information on your fishing activity when we randomly select your boat. We wish to keep the survey voluntary and to keep your reporting burdens as low as possible.

We hoped that a 10% sampling rate would provide enough data to allow accurate estimates of fishing effort while keeping your reporting burdens low. We are concerned that further decreases in response levels may significantly reduce the accuracy of the survey estimates of fishing effort. There have been a number of cooperative boats from which data cannot be obtained due to response problems.

### Fixing the Problem

If you feel that there is a better contact method or person for your vessel, contact us so that we have the best persons and telephone numbers for operators or landing offices to report on your boat's fishing effort. Also check to be sure that we know the preferred time and day of the week when you would like us to call when your boat has been selected for a survey interview. ➔

## Economic Sampler

*A sample of basic economic statistics*

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.

In California, one trip from among the weekly trips of each sampled vessel is profiled with economic data about that trip. Since the day of the week and the vessel is chosen at random, the mean data is expected to be representative of all the vessels.

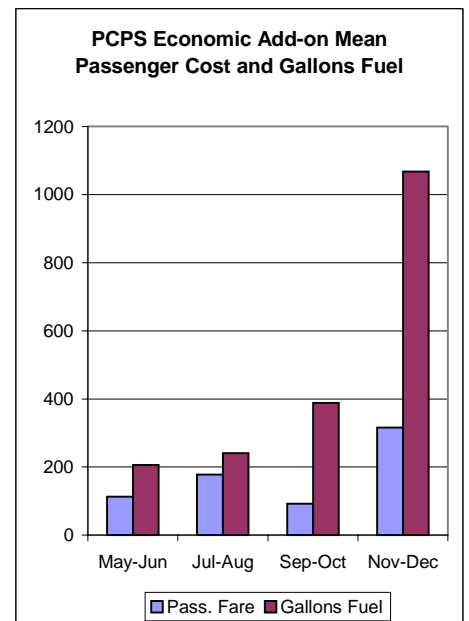


Figure 1. Mean passenger fee and mean gallons of fuel, May-December 2001.

The responses to the economic survey can be summarized in many ways. One of the large expenses of vessel opera-



tions is fuel. Figure 1 shows the seasonal relationship between cost per passenger and fuel consumption. It might be expected that increased consumption of fuel would result in higher passenger fares and charter fees on a per trip basis. However, the number of paid anglers on the trip can cause this relationship to disagree. It appears that during the fall (Sep-Oct) sufficient anglers per trip are available to offset increased fuel consumption and keep passenger fees relatively low.

Please contact the following individuals if you have any questions, suggestions or concerns regarding the add-on economic survey (ending June, 2001):

**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

## PCPS OBJECTIVES

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

If the uncooperative vessels are significantly different as a group from the cooperative vessels, then the estimates will be incorrect (biased) unless a correction is made for the difference in activity levels.

### Examining uncooperatives

The characteristics and activity levels of uncooperative vessels is determined by looking several sources of information. The licensed capacity and size of the vessels, the reports of field samplers and the mandatory logbook data are the primary sources of data on the uncooperative vessels. This information is put into vessel category groups and compared with the same data for cooperative vessels as well as the reported data from cooperative vessels (Figure 2). Differences between the activity levels are calculated as adjustment factors. The adjustment factors may be positive, negative or neutral. If the uncooperative vessels have lower activity levels than the cooperative vessels, then the adjustment factor will be negative and the angler trip estimate will decrease.

### Examining unresponsive Operators

We have found that it can be difficult to contact vessel operators by phone at times. Sometimes we receive incomplete information on faxed or mailed forms and must attempt to make a phone contact as well. It may take many days

of several attempts to reach someone with the necessary information. We often never get the information. A non-response in a particular week is similar to being uncooperative for the calculation of a bias correction. For example, if the unresponsive vessels are significantly more active with anglers than the responsive vessels, then a positive adjustment factor that increases the angler trip estimate is calculated.

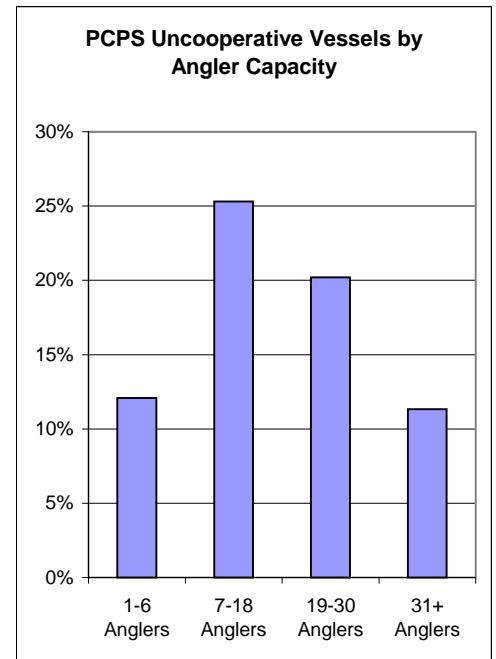


Figure 2 Distribution of uncooperative vessels by length category. An uneven distributions has a potential for bias.

### Avoiding potential bias

The estimates of charter boat fishing effort from the PCPS are expected to be more precise than those produced by the traditional Marine Recreational Fisheries Statistics Survey (MRFSS) random telephone survey of angler households. However, large bias adjustment factors due to poor participation can decrease the precision of the PCPS estimates. This problem can be avoided by increasing the level of responsiveness and cooperation of the active and eligible marine vessels. You can make arrangements to report your data by using the toll free number, **888-274-7838**, when it is convenient for you. You can also give the information to someone else that is available to be called, such as your booking agent or assistant. You can also mail

## Adjusting the results to reduce Bias

### Accounting for uncooperative Operators

One of the objectives of the PCPS is to have good cooperation. When there is not complete cooperation the characteristics of the uncooperative vessels must be examined to maintain the integrity of the estimates. Uncooperative vessels are those that are still active as passenger fishing vessels, but do not report their activity levels. Uncooperative vessels must still be counted as active vessels for the purpose of total working fleet size.

“ The number of angler trips for uncooperative vessels are estimated based on the computed average of the cooperative vessels. “

of fax your information to us if you will be unavailable and there is no other person who can report the data for you. ✉

## The characteristics of the Fleet

### Pattern of boats being sampled

The PCPS collects data from a random selection of the party and charter vessels that are active in marine sport fishing in California. The survey maintains a list of all the vessels and operators from which to sample weekly. This list can be examined and summarized in many ways.

In addition to the list of vessels, we have the responses from the vessel operators, number of anglers, type of trip, etc. The response data can also be summarized (see Anglers per vessel and vessel Trips on page 3).

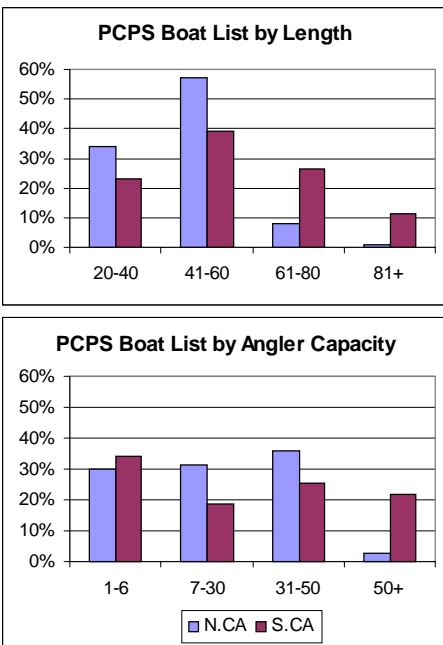


Figure 3. All vessels by length in feet and Capacity, February 2002.

Figure 3 shows distributions of vessels in the list in Northern California (Oregon to San Luis Obispo County) and Southern California (Mexico to Santa Barbara County). The first graph shows the percent distribution by vessel length in feet

in four length categories. In California most party and charter vessels fall into the 41 to 60 foot category.

The second graph in Figure 3 shows the percent distribution of vessel angler capacity in four categories. Southern California has a much larger proportion of boats in the 50 or more angler capacity category than Northern California. ✉

## Anglers per trip and vessel trips

### Activity of boats being sampled

The main purpose of the PCPS is to estimate the number of angler trips on party and charter boats fishing in marine waters for finfish by sampling some of the vessels. Vessel activity is determined by contacting the operators or a suitable representative about the number of trips for fishing and the number of anglers who fished.

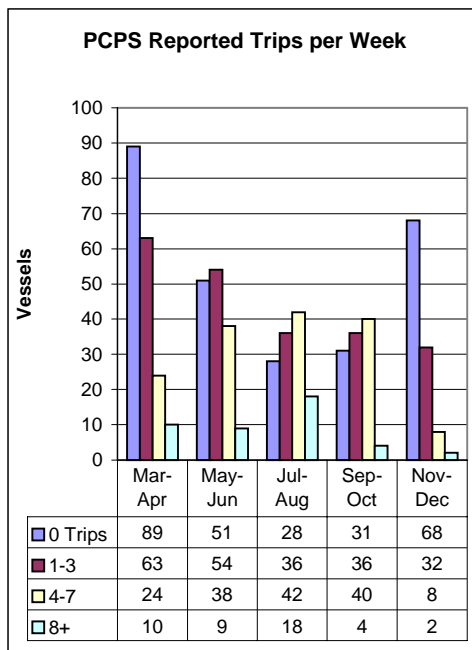


Figure 4. Reported trips per week March-December, 2001

Other information is also collected, such as trip type, distance from shore, length of trip, etc., which can be used to summarize the data in various ways. An

analysis of the distribution of reported trips per week is graphed in Figure X.

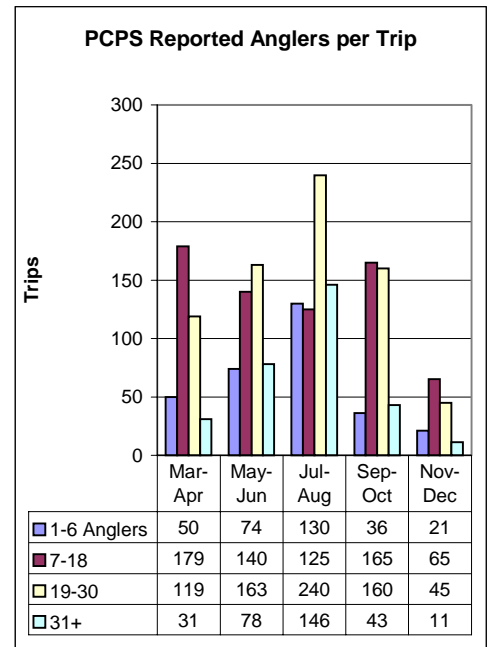


Figure 5. Reported anglers per trip March-December, 2001

As expected, the distribution of trips among the categories is distributed seasonally. Vessels make more trips per week during the summer when conditions are more conducive to fishing. The vessels making 1-3 trips per week did not follow this pattern. Vessels making 1-3 trips per week decreased from spring into summer and decreased further into late fall.

An analysis of anglers per trip in Figure X also shows a strong seasonal distribution. Vessels make trips with more anglers onboard during the summer in most categories.

In the 7-18 anglers per trip category, the number of trips decreased going into the summer, increased in the early fall then fell again in the late fall. This indicates that vessels are willing to go out under their capacity (in the 7-18 anglers per trip range) in the spring and fall.

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

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

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

accuracy between the two methods of data collection. In the future the two systems will be streamlined.

Since the logbooks are a complete census of all trips, any under-reporting or late reporting results in an under estimate of the trips. Until the logbook data can be processed and verified more quickly, the PCPS survey is currently our best hope for good trip estimates. Still, the logbooks are very useful for post-season analysis and will be compared with the PCPS at many levels.



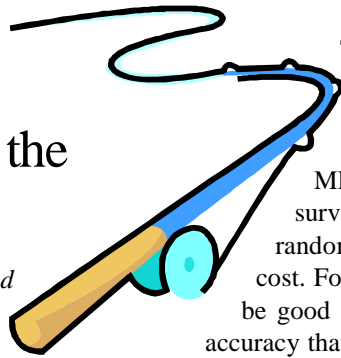
## Logbooks and the phone Survey

*Why have both a survey and a logbook?*

One question we have been expecting from party and charter boat operators is; “why do we have this phone survey when we already have the logbooks?”

“Isn’t all the information we need in the logbooks?”

These are reasonable questions since the two systems, on the surface, appear to be collecting the same data. However, there are differences in burden, timeliness and



The main purpose of the new survey is to provide better estimates of total trips than the traditional MRFSS random household survey (contacting anglers at random) and doing it at the least cost. For these new trip estimates to be good there must be a measure of accuracy that includes an estimate of the response rate. Also the data needs to be available soon enough to allow for management of the fisheries that need harvest limits. The new survey has these characteristics of timeliness and accuracy that the logbooks do not currently have.

The logbook system does not yet have complete compliance on the reporting of all trips. Compliance in the logbooks varies widely among ports and the actual reporting rates are difficult to estimate.

The logbook system is still evolving to collect the necessary data in a timely manner. Until an evaluation of the PCPS and the future logbook systems are made, both are necessary in determining how fisheries will be managed. We are hopeful that our changes in data collection are understood as positive steps to produce accurate information about the trips and harvest from party and charter boats in California. The industry at large will ultimately help determine which systems will be used to make estimates. Will vessel operators cooperate in the improvements or will many decide they are just too busy to be involved?

4

Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission  
45 SE 82<sup>nd</sup> Drive  
Gladstone, Oregon 97027



«VSL\_ID»  
«note»

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