

# **ANNUAL REPORT**

**OF THE**

## **RECREATIONAL FISHERIES INFORMATION NETWORK IN THE SOUTHEAST REGION [RecFIN(SE)]**

**JANUARY 1, 1994 - DECEMBER 31, 1994**

**MARCH 1995**

**REC95-1**



## INTRODUCTION

The Southeast Recreational Fisheries Information Network [RecFIN(SE)] is a three year pilot project to establish a state-federal cooperative program to collect, manage, and disseminate statistical data and information on the recreational fisheries of the Southeast Region.<sup>1</sup>

The need for a comprehensive and cooperative data collection program has never been greater because of the magnitude of the recreational fisheries and the differing roles and responsibilities of the agencies involved. Many southeastern stocks targeted by anglers are now depleted, due primarily to excessive harvest, habitat loss, and degradation. The information needs of today's management regimes require data which are statistically sound, long-term in scope, timely, and comprehensive. A cooperative partnership between state and federal agencies is the most appropriate mechanism to accomplish these goals.

Efforts by state and federal agencies to develop a cooperative program for the collection and management of recreational fishery data in the Region began in the mid to late 1980s. In 1992, the National Marine Fisheries Service formally proposed a planning activity to establish the RecFIN(SE). Planning was conducted by a multi-agency Plan Development Team through October 1992 at which time the program partners approved a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) which established clear intent to implement the RecFIN(SE). Upon signing the MOU, a RecFIN(SE) Committee was established.

The scope of the RecFIN(SE) includes the Region's recreational fisheries for marine, estuarine, and anadromous species, including shellfish. Constituencies served by the program are state and federal agencies responsible for management of fisheries in the Region. Direct benefits will also accrue to federal fishery management councils, the interstate marine fisheries commissions, the National Park Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the NOAA National Marine Sanctuaries Program. Benefits which accrue to management of fisheries will benefit not only recreational fishermen and the associated recreational fishing industry, but the resources, the states, and the nation.

The mission of the RecFIN(SE) is to cooperatively collect, manage, and disseminate marine recreational fisheries statistical data and information for the conservation and management of fishery resources in the Region; and to support the development and operation of a national program. The four goals of the RecFIN(SE) are:

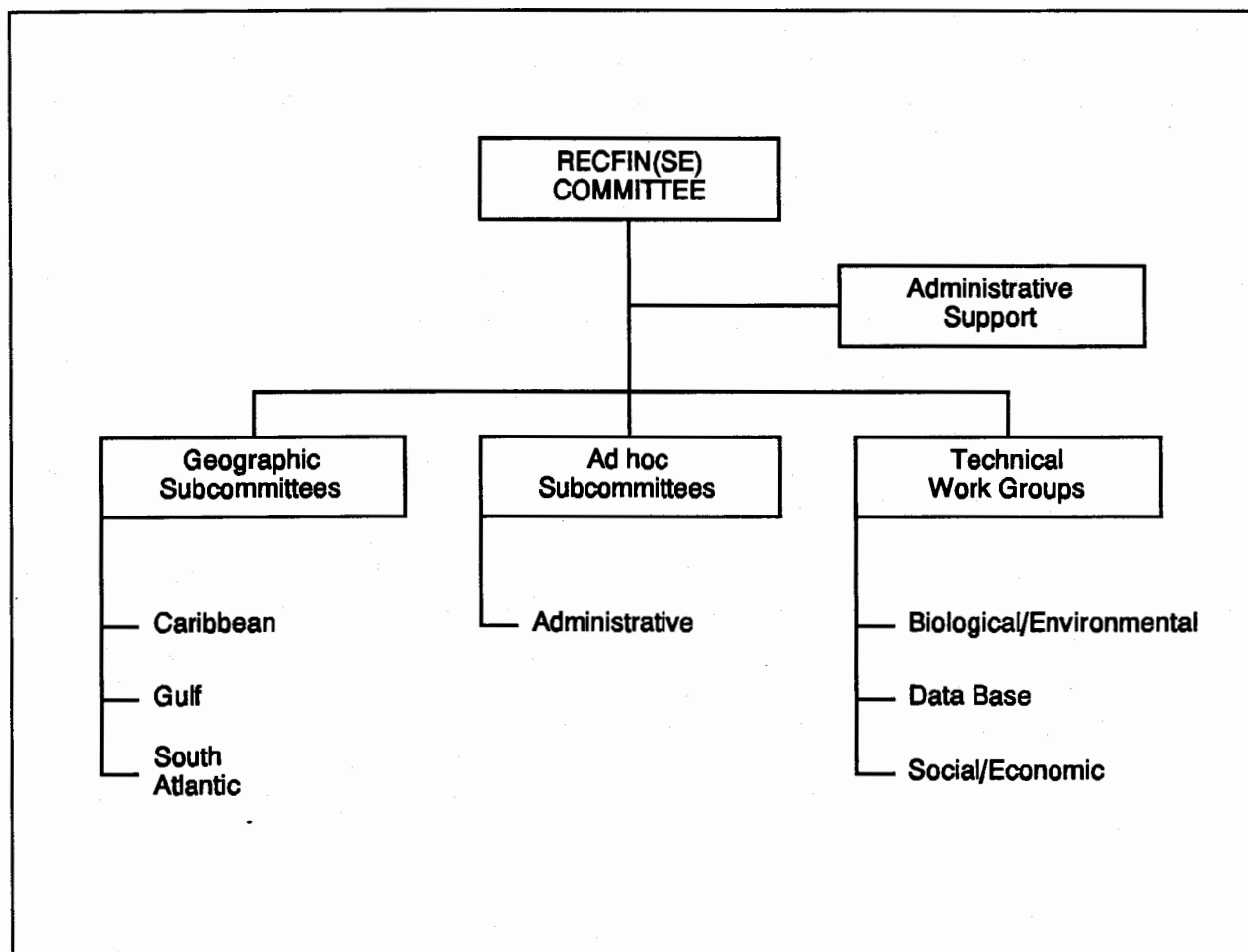
- planning, management, and evaluation of data collection and management activities;
- implementation of data collection activities;
- establishment and maintenance of a data management system; and
- support for the establishment of a national program.

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<sup>1</sup>The Southeast Region (the Region) includes Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Texas, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

## PROGRAM ORGANIZATION

The organizational structure of the program consists of the RecFIN(SE) Committee, three geographic subcommittees (Caribbean, Gulf, and South Atlantic), ad hoc subcommittees (Administrative), technical work groups (Biological/Environmental, Data Base, and Social/Economic), and administrative support (Figure 1).



**Figure 1.** Organizational structure of the RecFIN(SE).

The RecFIN(SE) Committee consists of the signatories to the MOU or their designees, and is responsible for planning, managing, and evaluating the program. Agencies represented by signatories to the MOU are the National Marine Fisheries Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service, Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, Mississippi Department of Marine Resources, North Carolina Department of Environment, Health, and Natural Resources, Puerto Rico Department of Natural and Environmental Resources, South Carolina Department of Natural

Resources, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, U.S. Virgin Islands Department of Planning and Natural Resources, Caribbean Fishery Management Council, Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, and Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission

The RecFIN(SE) Committee is divided into three standing subcommittees representing the major geographical areas of the Region: Caribbean, Gulf, and South Atlantic. These subcommittees are responsible for making recommendations to the Committee on the needs of these areas. Ad hoc subcommittees are established as needed by the RecFIN(SE) Committee to address administrative issues and technical work groups are established as needed by the RecFIN(SE) Committee to carry out tasks on specific technical issues. Coordination and administrative support of the RecFIN(SE) is accomplished through administrative structures established in the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic areas.

## **PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

The RecFIN(SE) is a comprehensive program comprised of coordinated data collection activities, an integrated data management and retrieval system, and procedures for information dissemination. Activities during 1994 were associated almost entirely with staffing and planning. With respect to data management and collection, ongoing MRF surveys were conducted by various state and federal agencies. The RecFIN(SE) Committee reviewed and evaluated progress towards the integration of these surveys into the RecFIN(SE).

### **RecFIN(SE) Committee**

Major RecFIN(SE) meetings were held in February and September 1994. The major issues discussed during these meetings included:

- identify tasks to be accomplished in 1994 and directing the Administrative Subcommittee and the Biological/Environmental, Social/Economic, and Data Base Work Groups to either begin or continue work on these tasks;
- develop the 1994 Operations Plan which presented the second year's activities in data collection, data management, and information dissemination;
- begin development of the 1995 Operations Plan;
- review activities and accomplishments of 1994;
- begin evaluation of adequacy of current MRF programs for RecFIN;
- review findings of technical work groups, and receive recommendations from these groups for activities to be carried out during 1995;

- prepare and submit a proposal for financial assistance to support activities of the RecFIN(SE); and
- continue internal evaluation of the program and begin preparing for an external review in 1995.

Committee members are listed in Table 1. Minutes for all meetings are included in Appendix A and the approved 1994 Operations Plan is included in Appendix B.

### **Subcommittee and Work Groups**

RecFIN(SE) subcommittees and work groups met this year to provide recommendations to the Committee to formulate administrative policies, address specific technical issues for accomplishing many of the RecFIN(SE) goals and objectives, and examine other issues as decided by the Committee. Subcommittee and work group members are listed in Table 2 and the Social/Economic Work Group Report is included in Appendix C. Their activities included:

- The Administrative Subcommittee met in March and November 1994 (via conference call) to continue plans for setting up the 1995 program review, and to discuss meeting locations and procedures for selection of chairman and vice-chairman as well as other topics.
- The Biological/Environmental Work Group met in June and December 1994 (via conference call) to address such issues as election of a new work group leader, development of criteria for a RecFIN metadata data base, review of metadata information, presentation of metadata and the Quality Assurance and Control document to the RecFIN(SE) Committee, and evaluation of the utility of a licensing framework as a sampling protocol.
- The Social/Economic Work Group was involved with a number of parallel efforts regarding social and economic data needs such as development of the NMFS Fisheries Statistics Strategic Plan, identification of MRF economic data needs by the NMFS Northeast Region, and development of a social and cultural data and analysis plan for the Southeast Region. The Work Group plans to extract appropriate portions of these works into a RecFIN document describing social and economic data needs. Input will be solicited from fishery managers, economists, and social scientists to assist in developing priorities as well as modifying the QA/QC document prepared by the Biological/Environmental Work Group to incorporate social and economic data collection issues.
- The Data Base Work Group met in August 1994 (via conference call) to review the results of the RecFIN(SE) Equipment/Software questionnaire and recommend the document be used in the design of the RecFIN data management system. This document was also presented to and accepted by the RecFIN(SE) Committee.

## **Coordination and Administrative Support**

Working closely with the Committee in all aspects of program coordination, administration, and operation was a major function of RecFIN(SE) coordination and administrative support. Other important coordination and administrative activities included but were not limited to providing coordination and logistical support, including communications and organization of meetings for the Committee, subcommittees, and work groups; serving as liaison between the Committee, other program participants, and other interested organizations; preparing annual operations plans under the direction of the Committee; preparing and/or supervising and coordinating preparation of selected documents, including written records of all meetings; and distributing approved RecFIN(SE) information and data in accordance with accepted policies and procedures as set forth by the Committee. Activities of the RecFIN(SE) for 1993 - 1995 are outlined in Table 3.

## **Information Dissemination**

Committee members and staff provided program information in 1994 via a variety of different methods such as distribution of program documents, and presentation to various groups interested in the RecFIN(SE):

### Documents

- Biological/Environmental Work Group. 1994 draft. *Metadata related to Fisheries in the Southeastern United States*. Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission, Ocean Springs. 35 pp.
- Biological/Environmental Work Group. 1994 draft. *Quality Assurance and Control Standards for the Recreational Fisheries Information Network RecFIN(SE)*. Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission, Ocean Springs. 27 pp.
- Data Base Work Group. 1994 draft. *Results of the Recreational Fisheries Information Network - RecFIN(SE) Hardware and Software Questionnaire*. Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission, Ocean Springs. 23 pp.
- RecFIN(SE) Committee. 1994. *1994 Operations Plan for Recreational Fisheries Information Network for the Southeastern United States RecFIN(SE)*. Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission, Ocean Springs. 12 pp + appendix.
- March 1994. RecFIN(SE) article in the ASMFC quarterly newsletter.
- December 1994. RecFIN(SE) article in the GSMFC quarterly newsletter.

If you are interested in any of the documents, they are available upon request from the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission office.

### Presentations

- April 1994. GSMFC personnel presented an overview and status the RecFIN(SE) with NMFS and Regional Directorate.
- May 1994. ASMFC personnel presented an overview of the RecFIN(SE) to their Statistics Policy Committee
- May 1994. GSMFC personnel discussed the RecFIN(SE) with Region 4 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.
- June 1994. GSMFC personnel presented an overview and status the RecFIN(SE) with NMFS Headquarters Statistics Division.
- July 1994. ASMFC personnel discussed the RecFIN(SE) with their MRFSS and Management and Science Committees.
- August 1994. RecFIN(SE) presentation by GSMFC staff during the ASMFC Trawl Data Workshop in Folly Beach, South Carolina.
- September 1994. GSMFC personnel provided presentation of the RecFIN(SE) to the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies' Marine and Estuarine Committee.
- November 1994. ASMFC personnel provided a briefing concerning the RecFIN(SE) to their Northeast Statistics and Statistics Policy Committees.

### Other Activities

- NPS personnel periodically provided information concerning the RecFIN(SE) (meeting notices, available documents, etc.) to the EPA's Gulf of Mexico Program computer Bulletin Board System.



**TABLE 1.**

**RecFIN(SE) COMMITTEE MEMBERS FOR 1994**

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**TABLE 2.**

**RecFIN(SE) SUBCOMMITTEE AND WORK GROUP MEMBERS FOR 1994**

**Administrative Subcommittee**

Walter Padilla  
Puerto Rico Department of Natural and  
Environmental Resources

Jack Dunnigan  
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

Ronald Lukens  
Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission

Henry Lazauski  
Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural  
Resources

Maury Osborn  
National Marine Fisheries Service  
Silver Spring

Albert Jones  
National Marine Fisheries Service  
Southeast Fisheries Science Center

Wilson Laney  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
South Atlantic Fisheries Coordination Office

**Social/Economic Work Group**

Ron Schmied  
National Marine Fisheries Service  
Southeast Regional Office

Mike Street  
North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries

Steven Atran  
Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council

Jack Dunnigan  
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

Steven Meyers  
U.S. Virgin Islands Division of Fish and Wildlife

**Biological/Environmental Work Group**

Albert Jones  
National Marine Fisheries Service  
Southeast Fisheries Science Center

Wayne Waltz  
South Carolina Department of Natural Resources

Steve Meyers  
U.S. Virgin Islands Division of Fish and Wildlife

Ron Salz  
National Marine Fisheries Service  
Silver Spring

Tom Van Devender  
Mississippi Department of Marine Resources

Thomas Schmidt  
National Park Service  
South Florida Research Center

Lisa Kline  
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

### Data Base Work Group

Ken Savastano  
National Marine Fisheries Service  
Stennis Space Center

Gerard Bruger  
Florida Marine Research Institute

Sylvia Cabrera  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Division of Federal Aid

Representative  
National Marine Fisheries Service  
Silver Spring

### TABLE 3.

#### PROPOSED ACTIVITIES FOR RecFIN(SE) 1993 - 1995

[RecFIN(SE) Goals and Objectives are in Appendix D]

	<u>1993</u>	<u>1994</u>	<u>1995</u>
<b>Goal 1:</b>			
Objective 1	X		
Objective 2	X		
Objective 3	X	X	X*
Objective 4	X	X	X
Objective 5		X	X
<b>Goal 2:</b>			
Objective 1	X		
Objective 2	X	X	
Objective 3	X	X	X
Objective 4	X	X	X
Objective 5		X	X
Objective 6		X	X
<b>Goal 3:</b>			
Objective 1	X		
Objective 2	X	X	
Objective 3		X	
Objective 4	X	X	X
Objective 5	X	X	
Objective 6		X	X
<b>Goal 4:</b>			
Objective 1	X	X	X
Objective 2	X	X	X
Objective 3	X	X	X

\* If program continues.

## APPENDIX A.

### RECFIN(SE) COMMITTEE MINUTES

February 2-3, 1994

Jacksonville, Florida

Chairman Skip Lazauski called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m. The following people were present:

Steve Brown, FMRI, St. Petersburg, FL  
Jane DiCosimo, SAFMC, Charleston, SC  
David Donaldson, GSMFC, Ocean Springs, MS  
Lee Green, TPWD, Rockport, TX  
Albert Jones, NMFS, Miami, FL  
Lisa Kline, ASMFC, Washington, D.C.  
Skip Lazauski, ADCNR, Gulf Shores, AL  
Ron Lukens, GSMFC, Ocean Springs, MS  
Joe Moran, SCWMRD, Charleston, SC  
Nick Nicholson, GDNR, Brunswick, GA  
Maury Osborn, NMFS, Washington, D.C.  
Tom Schmidt, USNPS, Homestead, FL  
Ron Schmied, NMFS, St. Petersburg, FL  
Tom Van Devender, BMR, Biloxi, MS

#### Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved with the following changes:

- \* Deleting Discussion of Supplementing MRFSS Sampling to Obtain Age Composition Data;
- \* Adding Update of the National Fisheries Statistics Strategic Plan before Status of Administrative Proposal;
- \* Adding Status of the MRFSS under Other Business.

#### Approval of Minutes

- \* The minutes from the meeting held on September 16-17, 1993 in Jacksonville, Florida were approved with minor editorial changes.

#### Update of National Fisheries Statistics Strategic Plan

M. Osborn stated that all of the participants (the three teams) have met and the feedback from these meetings has been positive. The next step will be to approve a draft strategic plan (May 1994) and send the plan out for comment by other interested people in the Southeast Region. The strategic plan identifies both general and specific items. There is still much work to be completed for the plan. R. Lukens asked if the constituents will have a good opportunity to feed information into these activities and M. Osborn stated that all interested groups will have plenty of opportunities to provide information during this process.

#### Status of Administrative Proposal

R. Lukens reported that it has been difficult to put this proposal into a MARFIN format since the proposed work does not really fit into any of MARFIN's specified areas of interest. The Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission's (GSMFC) staff met with Andy Kemmerer who gave his full support of RecFIN and ComFIN and

is working with the GSMFC to provide funding to support these activities. There are plans to meet with the head of NMFS, Rolland Schmitt, to talk about RecFIN and ComFIN. The draft proposal incorporates both RecFIN and ComFIN activities. The majority of funding will be used to pay for travel of committee and work group members and other expenses include staff and publication costs. The time frame for receiving funding to administer these programs is uncertain at this time. The Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) is also interested in providing money for these activities but would only cover travel costs. There is a tentative agreement with the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) that the GSMFC will take the lead since the ASMFC is currently not able to provide staff for these functions. M. Osborn stated that another funding possibility is for the states to use Wallop/Breaux (W/B) funds to pay for travel. R. Lukens stated that this issue has been briefly examined in the Gulf region and if the states were willing to do this, it would be more beneficial for the states to enter into a joint agreement with the GSMFC since the GSMFC is able to bypass travel and other restrictions imposed by the states.

#### Report from Administrative Subcommittee concerning 1995 Program Review

R. Lukens reported that the Administrative Subcommittee met on December 3 via conference call. The main topic was the development of a program evaluation. The Subcommittee decided that the program should consist of an panel of 3 to 5 people who have no affiliation with the RecFIN(SE). There were two approaches for conducting the program review. The first was using the FWS management assistance team (MAT). This group assists offices with administrative management activities. Initially, the possibility of FWS helping with the review was good; however, from a fax received from Wilson Laney, the MAT currently has insufficient personnel to assist in this activity. The MAT is willing to seek someone else to assist RecFIN(SE) in doing the evaluation. There is still a chance that the MAT may assist in setting up the program review. T. Schmidt mentioned that another possibility could be the National Biological Survey and R. Lukens stated that the Subcommittee will pursue this possibility. The other option was using the American Fisheries Society (AFS). M. Osborn stated that she had talked with Paul Brouha of the AFS and he believed conducting the RecFIN(SE) review would be a great idea. The AFS is willing to help pursue grant money to pay for the review. She stated that P. Brouha would write a letter to Churchill Grimes, president of the Southern Division, and have him address this issue. In addition, M. Osborn will prepare an outline of the process for the program review which will be included with the letter to Churchill Grimes. The Committee believed the AFS was a good candidate for conducting the program review and the Subcommittee will continue to work on this issue.

#### Data Base Work Group Report

D. Donaldson reported that the Data Base Work Group met via conference call on November 30, 1993. The main topic of discussion was the prioritization of existing historical data bases for integration into the RecFIN centralized data base. Initially, the Work Group was charged with completing this task. The Data Base Work Group decided that the Biological/Environmental and Social/Economic Work Groups should also be involved. The Biological/Environmental and Social/Economic Work Groups have completed a prioritization list in relation to the group's field of expertise. The Data Base Work Group was charged with compiling a final priority list and presenting it to the RecFIN(SE) Committee. The final list was compiled by the group and after some discussion and modification, the list (attached) was approved by the Committee.

M. Osborn said that the ESDIM proposal, which will hire personnel to migrate the MRFSS data base onto the mainframe and provide money for needed computer work, has received high marks from the ESDIM reviewers. Currently, the proposal is being reviewed and evaluated by NMFS personnel in Washington, D.C. All personnel involved in the MRFSS needs to compile a "wish list" of the types of information they want to be able to access on the new system. If the ESDIM proposal is not funded, there is money in the CDC contract (the IT-95 contract) which will provide money for migration of the MRFSS data base to the IT-95. Also, John Witzig will no longer be on the Data Base Work Group, and NMFS will leave the spot vacant for now.

### Completion of 1994 Operations Plan

\* The draft 1994 Operations Plan was distributed to the Committee. After some discussion and minor changes, R. Schmied moved to accept the 1994 Operations Plan. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously. Next, the Committee reviewed the identified tasks to be addressed during this year and their status. Task 2 is being addressed and S. Lazauski stated he would develop a RecFIN(SE) data sheet for the AFS newsletter. This is an ongoing task. Task 3 is currently being addressed, and the next step is to determine who will conduct the program review, how much it will cost and who will pay for the review. A. Jones will send some information concerning other program reviews conducted in the Southeast to the Administrative Subcommittee for their information. A conference call of the Subcommittee will be set up for the week of March 21st to address these issues. This task will be completed by the fall 1994 meeting. Tasks 4 and 5 pertain to biological/environmental issues which are being addressed and a conference call may be needed to ascertain their status. Tasks 6 and 7 refer to items the Social/Economic Work Group need to address and a conference call will be scheduled to examine these items. Task 8 will be addressed later in the current meeting. The Committee identified some actions to address Task 9, an ongoing activity, such as routine presentation to the RecFIN(SE) Committee concerning new and upcoming state MRF data collection programs. Task 10 is an ongoing activity, and the Committee identified several actions to address this task, such as presentation to the RecFIN(SE) Committee regarding pen-based and EPRIB technologies, computer-based data base regulation in the Southeast, and GIS symposium. Work on Task 11 is presently being conducted and a report will be presented at the 1994 fall meeting. Work on Task 12 is beginning now and information concerning design, implementation and maintenance of the data management system will be sent to the Committee and work groups for their review. Task 13 is directly linked to Task 12 and will be affected by the results of that task. Task 14 has been accomplished and was presented at the current meeting. Task 15 is an ongoing activity, and the Committee identified some actions to address this task, such as a presentation concerning IT-95 and Oracle. Task 16 and 17 are ongoing activities, and the Committee identified some actions to address this task, such as participation in the RecFIN-Pacific meeting by GSMFC, ASMFC and MRFSS staff members.

### Discussion of the Annual Report for RecFIN(SE)

\* The Annual Report was distributed to the Committee. J. Moran noted that the minutes and 1993 Operations Plan for RecFIN(SE) were not included in the copies distributed. D. Donaldson stated that although they are not included in these copies, they will be included in the final document. The Committee suggested that work group reports be included in Appendix C and the Goals and Objectives in Appendix D. After some discussion and other minor editorial changes, R. Schmied moved to approve the 1993 Annual Report of RecFIN(SE). The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

### Time Schedule for Next Meeting

R. Lukens reported that at the CSP meeting held yesterday, the group agreed to continue piggybacking with the RecFIN(SE) meeting and decided to have the next meeting in September 1994. After discussing several possibilities, the group decided to continue piggybacking the meetings and to have the meetings during the week of September 26th in either New Orleans, Jacksonville, Tampa/St. Petersburg, or Pensacola. The GSMFC staff will determine the best location, handle the arrangements and contact the Committee with the hotel and meeting information later in the year.

### Evaluation of Adequacy of Current MRF Programs for RecFIN(SE)

At the last meeting, the Committee developed seven items to evaluate MRF programs in the Southeast. The criteria were: statistical validity, which refers to the accuracy of the survey and if bias is present; noting the biases that are present; statistical precision, which refers to the coefficient of variance (CV) ranges associated with the mean; data accessibility, which refers to how easy it is to access and use the data; timeliness of data, which refers to how quickly the data are available to the user; compatibility and comparability, which refers to the

consistency of design through time and use the data for time trend analyses; spatial scope, which refers to the geographic area covered by the project; and temporal scope, which refers to the length of time the project has been operating. Based on these criteria, the Committee reviewed and evaluated MRFSS, NMFS Headboat and Charterboat, and Billfish Tournament and Non-tournament surveys. The following is a result of the discussion conducted regarding the evaluation of the adequacy of current MRF programs for RecFIN(SE).

## MRFSS

Statistical validity:	Overall, the MRFSS is valid and accurate. There are some areas which need improvement. One of those areas is cluster sampling, however, this affects precision more than accuracy. The allocation of the telephone sample is based on the square root of the county population. This was done to ensure that small, rural counties received some sampling activity. However, when the estimates are being calculated, the estimates need to be reweighted based on this sampling allocation, which has not been done. Beginning in 1993, the estimation program has been modified to take this into account. MRFSS staff is in the process of recalculating the old estimates. Another issue is the gaps in sampling of charter and head boats. Because of these gaps, MRFSS estimates of charter and head boat trips suffer.
Statistical precision:	There is a pilot study in Florida where all of the information from fishing trips is collected. Currently, there are only estimates made for the number of in-state trips. At a low cost, information on all trips can be collected which will increase precision. If the results from this study prove positive, it could be implemented throughout the entire survey. M. Osborn stated that she will develop a table of precision measures for this task which will include all of the surveys. Another pilot study was conducted using fishing licenses as a sampling frame instead of a random telephone survey. The information from this study and the random telephone survey will be compared to see if using licenses is a viable option. The results from this study should be available by the end of 1994. R. Lukens asked that when the results of this study are available, the Committee have an opportunity to discuss them. Gerry Gray has developed several SAS programs which determine how to divide sampling between intercept, telephone and between waves to maximize the precision for particular species, gear, area, etc. The states can use these programs to maximize their effort to get the most out of the increased sampling.
Data accessibility:	Accessibility of data before 1993 is good; however, 1993 data are not so accessible due to the problems discussed earlier. MRFSS staff is developing documentation of historical intercept databases which will be in a standard ASCII format. Hopefully, this activity will be accomplished by the end of April 1994. The documentation for the estimate surveys is pretty good, and the work on the telephone survey documentation has begun and should be finished by mid-1995. There are some concerns regarding using the random dialing telephone survey for the effort estimate.
Timeliness of data:	The timeliness will improve with the migration to the IT-95 although it is already good. Usually, an user can access the raw intercept data within three weeks of the completion of a particular wave. The time scope is bimonthly.
Compat. & compar:	Overall, the MRFSS estimates are compatible and comparable. The new estimates from 1993 are more accurate.
Spat. & temp scope:	MRFSS has operated in the Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico since 1979 with 2.5 times the



sampling for the last three years; the Pacific from 1979-1989 and 1993-1994; Hawaii, Samoa, and Guam from 1979-1980; and the Caribbean from 1979-1981.

The Committee then discussed the **Issues and Recommendations for Future Action** section of the Marine Recreational Fishery Data Collection and Management Programs in the Gulf of Mexico Region document. The following issues were discussed:

**(1) Site selection**

- (a) There are inaccuracies in the site inventory which is sent to the states.  
M. Osborn noted that the MRFSS staff has asked the states to provide updates for the site register but they have not yet received any comments. In addition, several quality control measures have been implemented to ensure that sites are operational and are valid sampling locations. The Committee agrees that this problem could be resolved through constant communication between the states and the MRFSS staff. R. Lukens suggested that the Data Management Subcommittee and the other geographic subcommittees address this issue on an annual basis to help facilitate this communication.
- (b) The states are not receiving the site inventory on a regular basis.  
M. Osborn stated that the list is updated periodically through the year and the final list is produced at the end of the year. She stated that she will send a final list to all of the states.
- (c) Inadequate procedures, documentation and specified time frames for updating inventories.  
M. Osborn stated that the current MRFSS manual outlines the procedures and documentation for updating the inventory. The two recommendations from the document were to use historical intercept data to set sampling probabilities, rather than relying on hearsay information from access operators, fishermen, or subjective interviewer opinion. Current thinking is that using historical intercept data which may be flawed due to past site selection procedures may result in erroneous site data. The other recommendation was to schedule regular rather than opportunistic site inventory updates. While this is thought to be a continuous process, there is no single factor that will automatically trigger a review of the site inventory and any necessary updates. The Committee believed that these issues should still be investigated and thoroughly reviewed.
- (d) Inadequate sampling of some fish species due to seasonality.  
Due to limited sample sizes, seasonality of some fish species may cause some problems. R. Lukens stated that this issue has never been fully explored and it may be something that cannot be changed. M. Osborn stated that one of the RecFIN(SE) work groups could investigate the seasonality of fish by access sites.
- (e) The MRFSS does not rely on pure probabilities for site selection.  
M. Osborn stated that NMFS has been examining this issue. The method used which did not rely on pure probability is that NMFS got estimates of activity for sites and the sites are then coded and the total sample is allocated based on these codes. The problem with this method is that it is not adjusted by the number of sites in a particular state. The result of this is an oversampling of some of the lower-use sites. The MRFSS staff is currently working on this issue.

**(2) Residential waterfront sites**

This issue is still a problem, and currently there is no solution. M. Osborn stated that North Carolina conducted a survey of waterfront property and found that catch rates were different for these fishermen. The Committee requested that the RecFIN(SE) staff ask M. Street to provide the findings from this study to the group. Currently, it is assumed that catch rates for all groups are equal.

**(3) MRFSS telephone survey methodology**

**(a) Freshwater/saltwater issue**

R. Lukens stated that the question allowing both telephone and on-site respondents to identify themselves as freshwater or saltwater results in corresponding data for both components, but it causes underestimation of saltwater fish landed by fishermen who fish in brackish water areas but consider themselves freshwater fishermen. There is confusion between saltwater and freshwater areas. Several states have expressed an interest in adding on to the MRFSS to include freshwater sites to address this issue. The Committee believes that perhaps a special study could resolve the issue.

**(b) Telephone trip estimates**

Expansion of coastal telephone trip estimates by observed, on-site ratios of coastal/non-coastal residents is a cause for concern with small sample sizes. Some adjustments are made to ratios by pooling historical data when small sample sizes cause extreme estimates of non-coastal resident and non-resident trips. It may be appropriate for the telephone survey to be conducted in a stratified fashion to allow for sampling for inland and coastal areas which was discussed earlier. The MRFSS staff will address this issue and there is a possibility of convening workshops.

**(4) Subsampling procedures**

The MRFSS procedure for subsampling stipulates that when an interviewer finishes an interview and sees that too many fishermen remain for all to be interviewed, the interviewer should estimate how many can be interviewed, count all remaining fishermen, and then pick the  $n^{\text{th}}$  fisherman to obtain the number of anticipated interviews. Pragmatically, interviewers most likely move on to the next closest fisherman as they finish an interview. M. Osborn stated that beginning in 1993, interviewers began collecting the total count of all the fishermen at the site. This figure can be compared to the total number of interviews conducted which can be tracked. This is not an extremely contentious issue, at the present time.

**(5) Time of day for sampling**

**(a) Rules for specifying time of day to conduct interviews are not specific enough.**

Interviewing procedures specify that at least one interview per hour should be collected. If activity is too low, the interviewer moves to an alternate site. There is concern about the potential for the introduction of interviewer bias through individual selection of times to begin and end interviewing. M. Osborn stated that there is much more control on what site an interviewer goes to, how many times an interviewer goes to a particular site, selection of an alternate site, etc. and the chance for bias has been reduced. The quality control measures have addressed this issue and it appears to no longer be a problem.

**(b) There are no rules or procedures to specify or eliminate night sampling.**

The telephone survey estimates include night trips, yet they cannot be identified. The telephone survey should distinguish night and day trips. Night sampling in the on-site survey needs to be addressed when developing time of day sampling procedures. It is now possible to identify night sampling but further investigation on this issue needs to be conducted.

**(6) Combining telephone and on-site data**

The NMFS assumes that within the MRFSS, catch rates are similar between complete and incomplete trips. Studies on freshwater surveys have found no differences between the two, yet there still remains a degree of uncertainty regarding the reliance on incomplete trip interviews. M. Osborn stated that only 1/3 of the

trips by the shore mode are allowed to be incomplete trips. The Committee believed that this issue should be investigated further and resolved.

**(7) Cluster sampling, variance estimates, and unequal sampling probability**

M. Osborn stated that cluster sampling is being addressed and she would provide information to the Committee concerning this issue. R. Lukens asked if periodic statistical reviews regarding this issue was needed. The Committee decided the issue had been addressed thoroughly and there was no need for further review.

**(8) Trips by mode at state level**

It is not clear why state level estimates by mode are not included in annual publications, since such estimates are produced and used by managers. The MRFSS was designed for regional estimates, and that state estimates by mode may be misleading or inaccurate due to limited sample sizes. The only agreed upon resolution to this issue is to provide for increased sample sizes through state/federal cooperation. Sample size has been increased 2.5 times throughout the Southeast Region, and this issue is being addressed.

**(9) Validity of self-reported data**

The accuracy of self-reported data, such as catch not available for examination and length of fishing time are of concern. Self-reported data should be validated where possible through special studies. L. Green reported that Texas has conducted a by-catch study. This study examined the difference in self-reported data which was collected from recall versus data that is collected by filling out cards which are distributed to the fishermen prior to their trip. The data is currently being analyzed and preliminary analyses shows that there is a higher estimate of by-catch from fishermen using only recall. M. Osborn stated that there are inaccuracies in self-reported data and for that reason, it is stored in a separate data base. The Committee stated that the Texas' study might be an interesting agenda item for an upcoming meeting.

**(10) Publication of Texas data**

M. Osborn stated that the Texas survey data has been included in the Fisheries of the U.S. document. R. Lukens and R. Schmied pointed out there are still two issues to be resolved before the publication of Texas data becomes routine. M. Osborn stated that although that is true, the answer to these issues will not be solved through the Fisheries of the U.S. document. The answer is developing user-friendly data bases where there is easy access, summarization, etc. This is an issue which is being addressed and will continue to be examined by all involved in the process.

**(11) Long term improvements in collection of recreational fishery statistics**

Future improvements and modifications to the MRFSS and other recreational fishery statistics programs were discussed and the following objectives established: a) increase cost effectiveness and efficiency, b) collect all data vital for effective management, c) assure accuracy of estimates for all states, and d) provide for cooperative estimates. The following long-term issues were identified as items that need to be examined:

- (a) The NMFS should explore evaluation of the MRFSS and other MRF survey estimates to compare for possible bias in estimation procedures. After some discussion, the Committee believed that this issue should be tabled at the present time. Some of the activities being conducted by the MRFSS staff and the Committee are exploring components of this issue and it would be premature to address it at this time.

- (b) The MRFSS should incorporate screening procedures in the on-site survey to record recreational shellfish activity for future use in incorporating shellfish estimates. Estimation of recreational shellfish statistics in the MRFSS or associated programs should be addressed. M. Osborn stated that this procedure can be accomplished but it will increase the costs of conducting the MRFSS. The bottom line is that if personnel wants to add more procedures, money needs to be found to fund this activity. R. Schmied stated that this is still an important issue and should not be forgotten because there is not enough manpower and funding.
- (c) Investigations into alternate techniques for estimating pressure and participation to increase cost effectiveness and precision should be pursued. After some discussion, the Committee believed that this issue should be tabled at the present time. Some of the activities being conducted by the MRFSS staff and the Committee are exploring components of this issue and it would be premature to address it at this time.
- (d) Publication of trend data and analyses of recreational fisheries data should be improved and increased. This issue will be addressed by some of the present and future activities of this Committee and the MRFSS staff.

The meeting recessed at 5:05 p.m.

### February 3, 1994

The meeting reconvened at 8:05 a.m.

### Evaluation of Adequacy of Current MRF Programs for RecFIN (continued)

#### NMFS Headboat

A. Jones reported that the documents, Workshop on Marine "For Hire" Recreational Fisheries Survey Methodology and Marine Recreational Fisheries Data Collection Project Summaries are good references for the NMFS Headboat program. The survey was started in 1972 in North Carolina, and was expanded in 1976 to include South Carolina, Georgia and the eastern shore of Florida down to Cape Canaveral. In 1980, it was expanded again to cover the entire eastern coast of Florida. Initially, the objective was to obtain an index of stock abundance. Later in the survey, a secondary objective to obtain an estimate of total landings and fishing pressure was added. The headboat population is defined as boats which carry 15 or more people and charge per person. The number of headboats has been decreasing since 1985. The data are collected by census. It is not a sample survey, but attempts to cover all headboats and collect data such as catch by species, number of anglers, hours fished, area fished, size distribution, weight, sex determination, etc. In respect to results from the survey, the time series has shown that there has been a change in species and size composition over the years.

#### Statistical validity:

Since it is not a statistical sample survey, all one can say is that the survey attempts to cover all boats. There are some non-reporting problems but the seriousness of this problem is not known. The accuracy of the data collected (number of trips, species caught, etc.) is a matter of judgement. The samplers believe they can determine when the boats are not reporting correctly. For verification, some samplers will ride on the vessels that are being surveyed in an effort to check the data.

#### Statistical precision:

There are no variance estimates for the data. For the biological data collected, estimates can be determined and should be calculated for this data. M. Osborn pointed out that by not providing variance estimates with the data, it gives the

impression that the data for the number of fish for a particular month are exact numbers. R. Lukens noted that the total number of fish for a trip is provided by the mate onboard the vessel. This number is not a statistical measure and therefore cannot have a variance assigned to it. So, the issue is the accuracy of the estimates which are determined by the mate onboard the vessel.

- Data accessibility: In the last two or three years, the data have been published in the MRFSS document and also provided to fishery managers for annual stock assessments which are conducted. In addition, the data will be available on the new NMFS's ORACLE data base when it becomes operational.
- Timeliness of data: Two or three years ago, there was quite a backlog of data. Recently, NMFS has stated that they are up-to-date with the data and have improved the amount of time it takes to make the data available. NMFS is capable of providing monthly estimates to those interested personnel.
- Compat. & compar: The survey format has remained the same throughout the survey, and the compatibility and comparability is fairly good. There have been some minor changes but these have not impacted the compatibility and comparability.
- Spatial scope: North Carolina to Texas.
- Temporal scope: The survey began in 1972 and is continuing to date.

A. Jones stated that there are a couple of questions which need to be asked. The first question deals with perhaps developing a more effective method for collecting these data based on the amount of money available (the survey costs approximately \$300,000 per year). The second question relates to the statistic validity of the data. M. Osborn noted that there are several different but related surveys (headboat, charterboat, large pelagic, etc.) being conducted throughout the Gulf and Atlantic coasts. It is a question of possibly integrating all of these programs so that they are working more efficiently. It might be possible to merge the methods to have one large headboat and charterboat survey. A. Jones noted that the RecFIN(SE) Committee was designed to address issues like this and help formulate solutions.

#### NMFS Charterboat

J. Moran stated that the NMFS Charterboat Survey has been operating since March 1982. It is conducted from North Carolina to Texas and information such as biological data, CPUE, and associated information are collected.

- Statistical validity: This survey utilizing a logbook-type system. Charterboats from each state are selected to participate. It does not include all charterboats except for in the State of South Carolina. Of the boats selected, greater than 90 percent sent information for the survey. Also, there may be some bias in the selection process. There is a mandatory requirement to participate, but this regulation has never been enforced. This problem is more an enforcement issue rather than a selection problem.
- Statistical precision: There is no analysis of the data. The data collected includes CPUE which is fish by species, per hour fished, by depth, by gear, and no estimates or variances are calculated. M. Osborn stated that there should be some variances associated with the CPUE data. It may not be calculated, but it can be calculated.

Data accessibility:	The data (fish per hour, by depth, by gear) is published in a monthly newsletter (Channel 68) which is distributed to interested personnel. Any data requests have a fairly rapid turn around time. The documentation for the data elements is readily available and very descriptive.
Timeliness of data:	The data are available on a monthly basis. They provide a postage-paid envelop to the captains so they will send in their data.
Compat. & compar:	The same problem which occurs with the Headboat survey is present in this survey. The format has essentially been the same throughout the survey. The data uses its own species, depth, gear, etc. codes which can cause some problems.
Spatial scope:	North Carolina to Texas. In 1983, the survey included the Caribbean.
Temporal scope:	March 1982 to present.

### Billfish Tournament

R. Schmied stated that the Recreational Billfish Tournament Sampling Program has been conducted since 1971. The information collected is obtained from billfish, wahoo, tunas and other big game fish and includes hook per unit effort (HPUE), catch per unit effort (CPUE), biological data including hard parts for age and growth analysis, and some environmental and metadata. The purpose of the survey is to determine the abundance and monitor the trends in stocks.

Statistical validity:	The survey does not cover all tournaments and only surveys selected tournaments. To a certain extent, the tournaments which are selected are determined by the availability of personnel, travel funds, etc. The methodology needs to sample more thoroughly. The tournaments to be sampled are not selected in a statistical manner. The selection process is essentially opportunistic.
Statistical precision:	There are no estimates for total effort or harvest and there are no variances associated with the HPUE and CPUE.
Data accessibility:	The data are stored on the A10 computer in Miami, Florida and are available in annual reports.
Timeliness of data:	The data are published on an annual basis and are probably accessible through the A10 computer to users rather quickly after it is collected.
Compat. & compar:	The survey has been operating for a long time and provides a good time series. The methods have been fairly consistent throughout the survey.
Spatial scope:	Maine to Key West, Florida and Clearwater, Florida to the Texas/Mexican border. There is an area where no surveying occurs in central Florida in the Gulf of Mexico. Also, there is some sampling conducted in the Caribbean.
Temporal scope:	January 1971 to present, surveyed year around.

## Billfish Non-tournament

R. Schmied stated that the Recreational Billfish Non-tournament Sampling Program has also been conducted since 1971. The information collected is obtained from billfish, wahoo, tunas and other big game fish and includes HPUE, CPUE, biological data including hard parts for age and growth analysis, and some environmental and metadata. The purpose of the survey is to determine the abundance and monitor the trends in stocks.

Statistical validity:	The same problems that are present in the Billfish Tournament Sampling Program are present in this survey. The methodology needs to be altered for more thorough sampling. The sites to be sampled are not selected in a statistical manner. The selection process is essentially opportunistic.
Statistical precision:	The same problems are present that are associated with the tournament program. There are no estimates for total effort or harvest and there are no variances associated with the HPUE and CPUE.
Data accessibility:	The data are stored on the A10 computer in Miami, Florida and are available in annual reports.
Timeliness of data:	The data are published on an annual basis and are probably accessible through the A10 computer to users rather quickly after it is collected.
Compat. & compar:	The survey has been operating for a long time and provides a good time series. The methods have been fairly consistent throughout the survey.
Spatial scope:	St. Petersburg, Florida to Port Isabel, Texas. The South Atlantic and Caribbean are not sampled.
Temporal scope:	January 1971 to present, sampling from March to December.

R. Lukens stated that the purpose of this activity is to develop a list of priorities and recommendations. These priorities and recommendations will be presented to the appropriate personnel for their use and information. M. Osborn stated that she will develop a table which outlines the criteria for each of the programs that were discussed by the Committee. In addition, the Committee believed Utility of Data Collected should be added to the list of criteria for each survey the Committee reviews. The end goal of this activity is to develop a product which can be applied towards improving data collection.

## Other Business

M. Osborn presented the status of the MRFSS. The MRFSS staff is trying to complete the estimates by the end of February 1994. MRFSS is using a new imputation procedure. In the past, MRFSS has contacted households which indicate that they are saltwater fishing homes, but they are unable to speak with anyone who can relate pertinent information. In addition, MRFSS may contact a fisherman in the household when there are other fishermen in the household. In this case, MRFSS will attempt to obtain proxy information from that person, but only as a last resort. Starting this year, there are improvements on the description, documentation and methods for when and how to get proxy information. However, in the past, there were times when getting proxy information could not be accomplished, and thus there has been an underestimation for the total number of trips due to these missing data. Imputation programs have been developed which will calculate and adjust for these missing data for the 1993 estimates. In addition, these procedures will be conducted on the historical data. The end result will be an improved data base with more accurate data. The MRFSS is conducting an economic add-on in the Northeast Region. The add-on will be conducted from Maine to Virginia. The questions on the survey were designed by the NMFS-NE Region. The data which will be collected are intended to develop species-specific demand models for

seven species which are under management. During the intercept portion, the MRFSS will ask interviewees if they would be willing to participate in the follow-up survey. If they answer "yes", they will be called and asked a series of economic and social questions.

**There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:30 a.m.**



# FINAL PRIORITY LIST FOR INCLUSION IN RecFIN DATA BASE

PROJECT TITLE	STAGE
Marine Recreational Fishery Statistics Survey (MRFSS)	I
Atlantic Bluefin Tuna Recreational Fishery Survey	III
Economic Data Collection for the Gulf of Mexico Recreational Reef Fish Fishery	III
Headboat Survey	I
Southeast Charterboat Survey	III
Recreational Billfish Tournament Sampling Program	III
Recreational Billfish Non-Tournament Sampling Program	III
Creel Survey of Mississippi Sound and Adjacent Waters	III
Survey of Louisiana Recreational Anglers, 1990 and 1991	II
Monitoring of Coastal Finfish Resources for Sportfish Management (Boat-based)	I
Monitoring of Coastal Finfish Resources for Sportfish Management (Shore-based)	II
Attitude and Opinion Surveys	II
Marine Sport Fisheries Creel Survey	II
Recreational Port Sampling - U.S. Virgin Islands, Mar 1, 1981 - Sept 30, 1985	III
Recreational Port Sampling - St. Croix, USVI, Oct 1, 1985 - Sept 30, 1990	III
Recreational Port Sampling - St. Croix, 1991-1995	III
Recreational Port Sampling - St. Thomas	II
A Survey of Recreational Shrimpers in the Bay & Sound Systems of the Gulf Coast	III

In compiling this final list, the Data Base Work Group considered only the projects which were prioritized H or Y by the other work groups. The group prioritized these projects as either Stage I, II or III. A project categorized as Stage I would be included in the data base within 18 months; Stage II - included between 18 to 30 months; and Stage III - included after 30 months.

RecFIN(SE) COMMITTEE MINUTES  
September 28 - 29, 1994  
St. Petersburg, Florida

Chairman Skip Lazauski called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m. The following people were present:

Steven Atran, GMFMC, Tampa, FL  
Mike Buchanan, MDMR, Biloxi, MS  
Steven Candileri, Tampa, FL  
David Donaldson, GSMFC, Ocean Springs, MS  
Jack Dunnigan, ASMFC, Washington, D.C.  
Lee Green, TPWD, Rockport, TX  
Lisa Kline, ASMFC, Washington, D.C.  
Wilson Laney, FWS, Raleigh, NC  
Skip Lazauski, ADCNR, Gulf Shores, AL  
Ron Lukens, GSMFC, Ocean Springs, MS  
Bob Mahood, SAFMC, Charleston, SC  
Maury Osborn, NMFS, Silver Spring, MD  
Walter Padilla, PRDNER, Mayaguez, PR  
John Poffenberger, NMFS, Miami, FL  
Ron Salz, NMFS, Silver Spring, MD  
Tom Schmidt, NPS, Homestead, FL  
Ron Schmied, NMFS, Tampa, FL  
Joe Shepard, LDWF, Baton Rouge, LA  
Mike Street, NCDMR, Morehead City, NC  
William Tobias, VIDFW, St. Croix, VI  
Tom Van Devender, MDMR, Biloxi, MS  
Wayne Waltz, SCDNR, Charleston, SC

Adoption of Agenda

The agenda was approved with the following changes:

- \* Moving items 4 - 8 after items 9-11;
- \* Adding discussions regarding data technologies, election of officers, and results from North Carolina's private access point survey under Other Business.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the RecFIN(SE) meeting held on February 2-3, 1994 in Jacksonville, Florida were approved with minor editorial changes.

Work Group Reports

a. Biological/Environmental

\* D. Donaldson reported for Work Group Leader, Steve Meyers that the group met via a conference call on June 27, 1994. There were two issues that were discussed. The first was the metadata data base. M. Osborn stated that NMFS is working on developing a program to include this information whenever someone accesses the data. NMFS is currently evaluating software systems to determine the best software that will meet its needs for this activity. The Committee decided the data base should encompass both the recreational and commercial arenas. The Committee recommended that an introduction be added to the document which defines metadata and states the purpose of the document. The last recommendation was for the group to develop recommendations concerning

using a licensing framework as a sampling protocol. The Committee charged the Work Group with refining the criteria for the data and cleaning up the document. The Work Group will schedule a meeting either before or after the RecFIN(SE) meeting in Spring 1995. The other issue that was discussed during the call was the QA/QC document. This document was sent out for review by the Committee and needs final approval. The Committee briefly review the document making minor changes but not changing the content. The group believed the document was fine except that it appeared to be slanted towards the MRFSS. M. Osborn and D. Donaldson will modify the document to make it more generic. The QA/QC document will be revised and sent out to the Committee for their review and the document will be up for final approval at the next meeting. The Committee also charged the Social/Economic Work Group with developing a similar document. The Social/Economic Work Group can use the Biological/Environmental document as a starting point and add pertinent social and economic information. **The Committee moved to accept the report and its actions. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.**

**b. Data Base**

\* D. Donaldson stated that the Work Group met via a conference call on August 30, 1994. The first order of business was to elect a work group leader. The group decided that the NMFS representative from the MRFSS program would be the appropriate leader. However, NMFS-HQ has not named a replacement for Work Group. Thus, the group decided that once a replacement is named, that person will be the new Data Base Work Group leader. Next, the Committee reviewed and discussed the results of the RecFIN(SE) hardware/software questionnaire. The recommendation from the Work Group is that this document should be forwarded to the MRFSS staff and the information should be incorporated into the design of the RecFIN data management system currently being developed. In addition, the MRFSS staff should develop a formal system design document which describes hardware/software requirements, capabilities, and other pertinent information for the RecFIN data management system. The Committee decided that the Hardware/Software document should be sent to NMFS with the intent of using it where it is applicable. The Committee also expressed their desire to be part of the design of the RecFIN data management system. **R. Lukens moved to accept the report and its actions. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.**

**c. Social/Economic**

\* R. Schmied reported that the Work Group has not met since the last Committee meeting. He distributed several documents concerning the collection of social and economic data. The Work Group has not made much progress concerning the tasks due to two main reasons. The first is there is a historical lack of information concerning social and economic data. Another task of the group pertains to the development of list of data requirements and recommendations for social and economic data. The reason for delays regarding this task is that a lot of parallel work has been conducted and the Work Group believed that instead of reinventing the wheel, they could use the results from this similar work to help address the issue of social and economic data needs. He briefly outlined some of the parallel work that was being conducted in the field. Fisheries Statistics Strategic Plan (FSSP) process is continuing and emphasis is being placed on the need for social and economic data. There has been some work in the northeast region regarding identification of recreational fisheries economic data needs. A list of economic data items that are needed to estimate recreational fishing benefits and measure the impacts of management actions has been developed. The objective of this work was to develop a consensus on needed data elements. The MRFSS is using an add-on in the northeast to conduct an economic survey. The purpose of the survey is to collect descriptive information on recreational fisheries in the region and begin to develop economic models to evaluate changes in management actions. There will be add-ons to the intercept and telephone portions of the MRFSS. A plan for social and cultural data and analysis was developed in June 1994 by the Southeast Regional Office in cooperation with the region's three fishery management councils. The plan seeks to enable the Region to respond to an existing NMFS policy mandating that social impacts be fully considered along with economic and ecological impacts in the fishery management process. Currently, plan implementation is scheduled for this fall pending funding availability. Due to the availability of these documents, the Work Group will move ahead to extract appropriate portions into a RecFIN document describing social and economic data needs. Input will be solicited

from fishery managers, economists, and social scientists to assist in developing priorities. Further, the Work Group will modify the QA/QC document prepared by the Biological/Environmental Work Group and use this as a working draft for the social and economic data collection area. The ASMFC conducted a Social/Economic data workshop in June. Results of the workshop were a list of social and economic data elements and identification of how each element could be collected and the priority of each data element. **R. Lukens moved to accept the modified report (attached).** The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

#### Operations Plan

##### a. Status of 1994 Activities

D. Donaldson provided a list of tasks from the 1994 Operations Plan. Their status was distributed and the Committee looked at the tasks individually. After reviewing the list, the Committee agreed that all the activities identified in the 1994 Operations Plan have been completed, or work is currently being conducted to complete them in the allotted time frame. The list of tasks and their revised status is attached.

##### b. Development of 1995 Operations Plan

\* A draft copy of the 1995 Operations Plan was distributed to the Committee. The Committee completed a thorough review of each task. For Task 1, Annual Operation Plan, 1996, there was some discussion concerning the Schedule section of the task in regards to the need for notation that this task will be done if the program continues past the pilot time frame. After some discussion, **R. Lukens moved to keep the section as written.** The motion was seconded and passed with GMFMC, North Carolina and South Carolina voting against. The review was completed and **R. Lukens moved to accept the 1995 Operations Plan as amended.** The motion was seconded and passed unanimously. The revised 1994 Operations Plan represents the administrative record for this portion of the meeting.

#### Evaluation of Adequacy of Current MRF Programs for RecFIN

At the last meeting, the Committee reviewed and evaluated MRFSS, NMFS Headboat and Charterboat, and Billfish Tournament and Non-tournament surveys. These surveys were reviewed based on the following criteria: statistical validity, statistical precision, data accessibility, timeliness of data, compatibility and comparability, spatial scope, and temporal scope. Based on these criteria, the following is a result of the discussion conducted regarding the evaluation of the adequacy of the Texas, Puerto Rico and U.S. Virgin Islands Surveys for RecFIN(SE).

##### a. Texas Surveys

###### Statistical validity:

The purpose of survey is to estimate daylight landings, CPUE, and size composition by species for sport boat fishermen in the Gulf of Mexico and Texas bays. The sampling year is split into two seasons: high and low use. It is also stratified by day type: weekend and weekday. There are 305 boat access sites on the site register and sampling occurs in eight different bay systems. The distribution of sampling sites is based on relative pressure for each site in each bay system. To determine where sampling will occur, roving counts are used and are based on the particular bay system. This information is distributed into four different files: high and low use files and weekend and weekday files. Allocation of the survey sites is determine from all files and uses a proportional random sampling design. Survey sites are also spread evenly throughout the year. The survey time is from 10:00 a.m. to 6 p.m. and data are used from only completed trips. Any activity that occurs at a site is documented during this time frame. There is a quality control mechanism where the TPWD personnel go out to the

interview site and evaluate the interview process and personnel. One of the possible biases of the survey include allotment of survey sites based on pressure, not landings. It is assumed that fishing pressure does not vary among sites within a bay system. Another bias is that the survey collects data only during daylight and at public access points. Another bias is that the mean daily estimates are adjusted to reflect the number of trips missed and the daylight hours where sampling does not occur. It is assumed that the interviews missed are the same as the interviews obtained.

**Statistical precision:**

Due to budgetary and personnel constraints, it is not possible to design a program that estimates total fishing pressure for all segments of the Texas fishery, therefore key segments (boat access site fishermen) of the fishery are targeted to obtain long-term estimates. For sportboat landings for the major species, the coefficient of variances (CV) are approximately 10 percent. Over the last 10 years, CVs for estimates have been about 6-10% on a coast-wide basis. On a bay system basis, the CVs values are not quite as low. M. Osborn estimated that the CV levels for the bay systems are approximately 20 percent.

**Data accessibility:**

Currently, only TPWD personnel can access the data. The data are available upon written request to TPWD. Annually, the raw survey data and estimates are sent to NMFS-Miami. In the near future, the data will be loaded into a GIS which will allow for a vast array of uses. Annual summary reports are published generally one year after the data are collected. Currently, the reports are one year behind because of method of data base storage has been changed. To rectify this problem, more than one year will be published at one time.

**Timeliness of data:**

The estimates are generated in about 3-5 months after the data are collected. The data are sent to TPWD-Headquarters so the data can be keyed. Unfortunately, the data are not always entered in a timely manner. This process used to take 5-7 months but now the individual field stations have on-site editing capabilities and error-checking programs which has trimmed down the turn-around time for the data.

**Compat. & compar:**

The survey began in 1976 and the survey design has not changed since 1980. The data before 1980 have been reformatted and recalculated into the current form.

**Spatial scope:**

The survey covers the entire Texas coast, split into eight major bay systems.

**Temporal scope:**

The survey began in the mid-70s and is continuing to date. In addition, special surveys such as the wade and bank, and lighted pier fishermen surveys (shore-based) occurred in mid-70s, 1979-80, 1990-91. In addition, there have been a variety of short-term surveys conducted over the years.

**b. Puerto Rico Surveys**

W. Padilla stated that currently there are no data collection activities which occur in Puerto Rico. From 1985 to 1987, Puerto Rico conducted a marine sport fisheries creel survey which covered all big game tournaments as well as a roving creel survey to cover non-competitive shorefishing. He provided a listing of recent surveys which were conducted in Puerto Rico. Each survey is described based on the seven criteria outlined earlier (attached).

### c. U.S. Virgin Islands Surveys

W. Tobias stated that the U.S. Virgin Islands has no statistical surveys conducted in their area; however, recreational port sampling data have been conducted since 1981. Through this activity, catch and effort information is collected to get CPUE data. Shore and pier anglers and inshore and offshore fishermen are sampled through this survey. This effort has been refined and is now referred to as the recreational fisheries assessment program. In addition to this program, logbooks and intercept interviews are used to collect data regarding recreational fishermen such as charter boat operators and avid fishermen in the area. If the information cannot be collected via the logbooks, telephone interviews are used to gather these data. The logbooks are voluntary and no validation studies have been conducted for the data. The Division regularly participates in the local tournaments, both billfish and non-billfish, conducted in the region. The Division provides a certified scale for weigh-out, thus enabling Division personnel to collect data on the species caught as well as interviewing fishermen. Approximately 50-100 interviews are conducted per month depending on the activity in the billfish fishery. The samplers primarily target high activity areas to ensure that they will be able to obtain data. The samplers work a rotating schedule which varies the days and locations where they will collect the data. Total effort estimates are obtained from the data. For the most part, the data are stored in hard copy only but work has begun to computerize the data. The Division submits annual and five-year reports regarding the effort estimates for finfish to the FWS.

M. Osborn presented a format for presenting the information that was given during these discussions. The Committee reviewed the format and believed that putting the presentations in this type of format would be useful when the Committee conducts the final evaluations of the programs. D. Donaldson will put all of the presentations in the format and distribute it to the Committee. This topic will be discussed at the next meeting in regards to review of the compiled information and what the next step will be.

**The meeting was recessed at 5:00 p.m.**

**September 29, 1994**

**The meeting reconvened at 8:15 a.m.**

### Administrative Issues

S. Lazauski stated that RecFIN(SE) is a three-year project and the question is what does the group do after those three years. The Committee needs to examine some long-term planning regarding this program. R. Lukens asked the Committee to begin thinking about issues to be addressed in regards to some long-term planning for the program. The Committee needs to address development of new planning documents, the time frame of the program, etc. This issue needs to be addressed during 1995.

#### a. Status of Administrative Proposal

R. Lukens stated that the proposal has been formally resubmitted to NMFS for funding of ComFIN and RecFIN activities. There was positive feedback from NMFS, however, no decision can be made until the outcome concerning the 1995 budget is known. NMFS is waiting on the regional allocation of funds before an answer regarding the proposal can be given. GSMFC is dedicated to these programs and will continue to provide limited funding to support them. The total amount requested was \$137,000 which covers full-time staff, travel for all committee and work group members, publication costs, and other miscellaneous costs. M. Osborn asked if the problem of overlap between the GSMFC and ASMFC has been resolved. R. Lukens stated that he has talked with J. Dunnigan and although the issue is not really been resolved, it is not an issue that will affect the programs. It is a complication which the two commissions need to resolve between themselves.

#### b. Discussion of FIN meeting

The Committee discussed the issue of having a meeting of both RecFIN and ComFIN to address mutual issues. During this meeting, issues which affect both sectors would be discussed so each committee would not have to discuss them separately. The meeting would be held in the afternoon of the CSP meeting. R. Lukens pointed out that this meeting would require the RecFIN Committee members to come in a little early so they could attend the meeting. The Committee agreed that this type of meeting would be beneficial and directed the staff to schedule such a meeting during the next CSP/RecFIN meeting week.

R. Lukens stated that the Regional Council members need to be told of the existence of RecFIN so they can utilize the framework established to address needs for data and other information necessary for fisheries management. M. Street suggested that industry members should be involved with the RecFIN and begin attending meetings of the Committee. Several members disagreed and believed that the use of existing advisory panels would be a better way of getting industry personnel involved with the program. Agreement was not reached on this issue.

#### Update on NMFS Fisheries Statistics Strategic Plan

M. Osborn stated that NMFS is still in the process of completing the plan. The various planning teams met in the fall 1993 to begin development of the plan. An initial draft was developed from these meetings. Rolie Schmitten directed NMFS personnel to get feedback from the Red Team (regional directors, science center directors, and office directors) regarding the plan. The NMFS personnel is currently in the process of collecting and collating this feedback from the various NMFS regions. Once all the feedback is received and processed, they will meet with R. Schmitten to discuss it. It is projected that a report will be presented at the next Board of Directors meeting in December 1994. From this presentation, the top leadership of NMFS will provide some resolution and direction on what the next step will be in the development of the plan. It is envisioned that the infrastructures such as RecFIN, ComFIN, ACFIN, etc., would probably be the bodies that implement the NMFS plans for the future where it integrate with the states. S. Lazauski asked at what level the states will be involved in this process. M. Osborn stated that NMFS planning process is geared toward fulfilling their mandates, and the states need to also examine their mandates. From that, you can look at the two pictures and see where there is intersect. J. Dunnigan stated that he disagreed with that type of planning and noted that the planning process will be more successful if NMFS involves the states from the beginning. M. Osborn reassure the Committee that NMFS will not proceed with the development of the plan without involvement and input from the states.

#### Discussion of Recalculation of MRFSS Data

R. Salz stated that the recalculation of the data is on schedule. The data back to 1979 will be revised by March 15, 1995. The 1991-1993 data have been reestimated and were distributed to the appropriate personnel. The NMFS is currently working on the 1988-1990 data, which should be ready by mid- to late-October 1994. The MRFSS staff is striving to deliver three years of data approximately every two months. There are problems with the 1979 data, and, due to some missing variables, it will probably not be reestimated. R. Lukens asked if the MRFSS books will be republished with the reestimated data. M. Osborn stated that this issue has been discussed and has not been resolved. R. Lukens stated that the books need to be reprinted. M. Osborn agreed and there needs to be a change in how the information is presented. However, this change in format will take some time to develop. Several years ago, the ASMFC conducted a workshop regarding utilization of the MRFSS. As a product from the workshop, a user manual for all the coastal states is being developed. This manual will be in a loose leaf format and provide information concerning how to conduct certain analyses and other pertinent information regarding the MRFSS.

#### Discussion of ACFIN

L. Kline stated that the ASMFC has postponed the MOU that would establish the Atlantic Coast Fisheries Information Network (ACFIN), and instead are building support within the member states of the Commission.

There have been meetings with NMFS, FWS and ASMFC personnel to discuss this issue. As part of this building of support, a vision document and statistics resolution were developed by ASMFC. These documents outlines the structure, attributes, and framework of the program. It is believed that there is consensus among the ASMFC commissioners, and these documents will formalizes that commitment. ASMFC is looking at the long-term approach regarding this issue. The ASMFC are in the early stages of the planning process, will need to determine how ACFIN will interact with other data programs (i.e. RecFIN and ComFIN). L. Kline stated that the member states of ASMFC decided it was time to proceed with ACFIN. The next step is to bring this issue to the policy board for their questions and comments.

#### Time Schedule for Next Meeting

The Committee decided that the week of February 27 - March 2, 1995 would be the time for the next meeting and directed the staff to examine the possibility of holding the meeting in either Jacksonville, Florida; Atlanta, Georgia; Baton Rouge, Louisiana; or Tampa, Florida. The Administrative Subcommittee and staff will conduct an analysis to determine the best location and contact the Committee with the final location at the appropriate time.

#### Other Business

D. Donaldson stated that Jane DiCosimo sent the GSMFC a fax concerning electronic reporting and record keeping in the Northwest. He and R. Lukens believed it was an interesting document and thought the Committee might be interested in the information. This activity falls under Goal 2, Objective 6, "Evaluation of Innovative Data Collection Technologies". There is no action needed from the Committee. The paper was distributed for information only.

\* The election of officers was omitted from the agenda and was addressed at this time. As per the operating procedures of the Committee, the Vice-Chairman succeeds to the Chair. The Vice-Chairman, W. Padilla, however, was not able to accept the chairmanship of the Committee. The Committee discussed several different scenarios to address this issue but were not able to resolve it. Therefore, J. Dunnigan suggested that this issue be tabled and that this issue will be addressed by the Administrative Subcommittee. **M. Street moved that this issue be tabled until the spring 1995 meeting and be the first order of business addressed by the Committee. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.**

M. Street stated that in 1992, North Carolina conducted a study through additions to the MRFSS telephone survey of the differences between private/rental boat trips from public versus private access points. Historically, it has been assumed that data from trips initiated from private versus public access points are essentially the same. A series of questions concerning vessel, avidity, length of trip, etc. were asked of the fishermen. The preliminary findings from this study found that there are significant statistical differences between the two groups for such items as target species, length of trip, and number of trips per household per wave. Vessel size did not differ significantly between the groups. Once the final report is complete, it will be distributed to the Committee.

**There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:45 a.m.**



**APPENDIX B.**  
**1994 Operations Plan for the**  
**Recreational Fisheries Information Network in the**  
**Southeastern United States [RecFIN(SE)]**

January 1, 1994 to December 31, 1994

**I. INTRODUCTION**

The RecFIN(SE) is a cooperative state-federal marine recreational fisheries (MRF) data collection program. It is intended to coordinate present and future MRF data collection and data management activities through cooperative planning, innovative uses of statistical theory and design, and consolidation of appropriate data into a useful data base system. This operations plan implements the RecFIN(SE) Strategic Plan for 1994. All tasks will be completed dependent upon availability of funds.

**II. MISSION AND GOALS**

The mission of the RecFIN(SE) program is to cooperatively collect, manage, and disseminate MRF statistical data and information for the conservation and management of fishery resources in the Southeast Region<sup>2</sup> and to support the development and operation of a national program.

The four goals of the RecFIN(SE) are:

- planning, management, and evaluation of data collection and management activities;
- implementation of data collection activities;
- establishment and maintenance of a data management system; and
- support for establishment of a national program.

The goals and objectives of RecFIN(SE) are found in Appendix A.

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<sup>2</sup>The Southeast Region (the Region) includes Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Texas and the U.S. Virgin Islands

### **III. OPERATIONS**

#### **A. Data Collection and Management**

Ongoing MRF surveys will be conducted by various state and federal agencies (RecFIN(SE) 1993). The RecFIN(SE) Committee will review and evaluate progress towards integration of the surveys into the RecFIN(SE).

#### **B. Committee and Work Group Activities (see Section F for membership)**

The tasks below cover all 1994 objectives (see Section D).

##### **Task 1: Annual Operations Plan, 1995 (Goal 1, Objective 3)**

Objective:	Develop 1995 Annual Operations Plan including identification of available resources, that implements the Strategic Plan.
Team Members:	RecFIN(SE) Committee.
Approach:	Through meetings and mail, the Committee will develop and complete an Annual Operations Plan for 1995.
Resources:	Travel/meeting costs, report costs, and inkind (time) and staff time.
Product:	1995 Annual Operations Plan.
Schedule:	Annual Operations Plan will be drafted by mid/late spring 1994 and completed by the fall 1994.

##### **Task 2: Information Dissemination (Goal 1, Objective 4)**

Objective:	Distribute program information to cooperators and interested parties.
Team Members:	RecFIN(SE) Committee and staff.
Approach:	The Committee will distribute program information to cooperators and interested parties documented by a request log. Each committee member is responsible for maintaining a list of information distributed and providing that list to the RecFIN(SE) staff.
Resources:	Copy and mailing expenses and inkind (time) and staff time.
Product:	Development and distribution of a fact sheet concerning RecFIN(SE) and a report which compiles a record of information distributed and presentations given by the Committee and staff.
Schedule:	This task will be an ongoing activity.

##### **Task 3: Planning Activities for Program Review (Goal 1, Objective 5)**

Objective:	Provide an outline of the method to be used to conduct the program review.
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Team Members: Administrative Subcommittee  
 Approach: The Administrative Subcommittee will explore several methods for conducting the program review and prepare an outline which presents the best method for handling the review. The Subcommittee will offer its recommendations to the RecFIN(SE) Committee at the next meeting. Accomplished by conference calls, mail and meetings, if necessary.  
 Resources: Conference call costs, report costs, and inkind (time) and staff time.  
 Product: Outline which presents methods to be used for the program review.  
 Schedule: This task will be addressed during the February 1994 RecFIN(SE) meeting.

Task 4: Biological/Environmental Data Elements (Goal 2, Objective 2)

Objective: Identify biological and environmental data elements required for each fishery component.  
 Team Members: Biological/Environmental Work Group.  
 Approach: Develop criteria for establishment of a metadata data base. Begin compilation of metadata events from 1980 to present which affected the Region. Accomplished by conference calls, mail and meetings, if necessary.  
 Resources: Travel/meeting costs, conference call costs, report costs, and inkind (time) and staff time.  
 Product: Criteria for compilation of metadata and initial database.  
 Schedule: Work has begun on this task and will continue. Several work group meetings will be held during 1994. This task will be completed by the end of this year.

Task 5: Biological/Environmental Quality Assurance and Quality Control (Goal 2, Objective 3)

Objective: Identify and determine standards for biological and environmental data collection, including statistical, training, and quality assurance and quality control standards.  
 Team Members: Biological/Environmental Work Group.  
 Approach: Complete review of existing quality assurance and quality control documents and modify as necessary for application to RecFIN(SE). Accomplished by conference calls, mail and meetings, if necessary.  
 Resources: Travel/meeting costs, conference calls costs, report costs, and inkind (time) and staff time.  
 Product: Quality assurance and quality control standards.  
 Schedule: Work has begun on this task and will continue. Several work group meetings will be held during 1994. This task will be completed by the end of this year.

**Task 6: Social/Economic Data Elements (Goal 2, Objective 2)**

**Objective:** Identify sociological and economic data elements required for each fishery component.

**Team Members:** Social/Economic Work Group.

**Approach:** Identify sociological and economic data needs by reviewing and refining the NMFS Northeast Region data needs report and other applicable documents. Begin reviewing existing data bases and surveys to identify data gaps. Participate in National Fisheries Statistics Strategic Plan process to explore priorities and methods for collecting needed data. Recommend additional action needed to complete this task.

**Resources:** Workshop costs, travel costs, conference call costs, report costs, and inkind (time) and staff time.

**Product:** Progress report.

**Schedule:** Work has begun on this task and will continue. The need for a workshop will be evaluated in early 1994 and scheduled, if appropriate, pending availability of funds. This task will be completed by the end of this year.

**Task 7: Social/Economic Quality Assurance and Quality Control (Goal 2, Objective 3)**

**Objective:** Identify and determine standards for sociological and economic data collection, including statistical, training, and quality assurance and quality control standards.

**Team Members:** Social/Economic Work Group.

**Approach:** Determine standards for collection and management of social and economic data. Begin by reviewing ongoing surveys and methods and , if necessary, by convening a workshop.

**Resources:** Workshop costs, travel costs, conference call costs, report costs, and inkind (time) and staff time.

**Product:** Progress report.

**Schedule:** Schedule will be determined based on outcome of Task 6 and sufficiency of review findings.

**Task 8: Identification and Evaluation of Current Programs (Goal 2, Objective 4)**

**Objective:** Identify and evaluate the adequacy of current programs for meeting RecFIN(SE) requirements.

**Team Members:** RecFIN(SE) Committee.

**Approach:** Evaluate reports from Biological/Environmental and Social/Economic Work Groups in relation to existing programs.

**Resources:** Travel/meeting costs, report costs, and inkind (time) and staff time.

**Product:** Recommendations for MRF surveys.

Schedule: This task will be completed by the end of this year.

Task 9: Coordination and Integration of Data Collection Efforts (Goal 2, Objective 5)

Objective: Encourage coordination, integration, and augmentation, as appropriate, of data collection efforts to meet the RecFIN(SE) requirements.

Team Members: RecFIN(SE) Committee.

Approach: Communicate results of Task 8 to agencies conducting MRF surveys.

Resources: Travel/meeting costs, report costs, and inkind (time) and staff time.

Product: Communication of recommendations to ongoing programs.

Schedule: This will be an ongoing activity.

Task 10: Evaluation of Innovative Data Collection Technologies (Goal 2, Objective 6)

Objective: To evaluate and recommend innovative data collection technologies.

Team Members: RecFIN(SE) Committee.

Approach: RecFIN(SE) members report to the Committee any new technologies which will aid in the collection of MRF data. Also, have appropriate personnel report to the Committee concerning such advancements. Request a presentation from NMFS on the use of pen-based technologies.

Resources: Travel/meeting costs, report costs, and inkind (time) and staff time.

Product: Progress reports.

Schedule: This will be an ongoing activity.

Task 11: Equipment and Software Needs (Goal 3, Objective 2)

Objective: Evaluate current hardware, software, and communication capabilities of program partners and make recommendations for support and upgrades.

Team Members: Data Base Work Group.

Approach: Send hardware/software capability questionnaire to appropriate agencies and compile results. Accomplished by conference calls, mail and meetings.

Resources: Travel/meeting costs, conference call costs, report costs, and inkind (time) and staff time.

Product: Equipment and software inventory for RecFIN(SE) participants.

Schedule: Work has begun on this task and the group will continue to develop an inventory of computer capabilities for participants. Several work group meetings and/or conference calls will be held during 1994. This task will be completed by the end of this year.

**Task 12: Design, Implementation and Maintenance of Data Management System (Goal 3, Objective 3)**

**Objective:** To design, implement, and maintain an MRF data management system to accommodate fishery management/research and other needs (e.g., trade and tourism).

**Team Members:** MRFSS staff, Data Base Work Group, Non-MRFSS Data Base Managers.

**Approach:** Design Oracle Data Bases for catch and trip estimates, and summarized intercept data bases for specialized needs such as bag limits and size distributions. Incorporate non-MRFSS data bases identified as high priority for inclusion in the MRF data management system. Place Oracle data bases and SAS intercept and telephone interview data bases on the NMFS IT-95 computer system which allows distributed processing to the NMFS Southeast Regional Office, Science Center and laboratories. Develop user-friendly, menu-driven access system to MRF Oracle/SAS data bases. Develop menu-driven Decision Support System allowing easy, standard queries and manipulation of the MRF data.

**Resources:** A NOAA ESDIM grant proposal was submitted for 1994 funding and has been given high marks. If the grant is funded, approximately \$95,000 will be available to contract Oracle data base development work to a system analyst. The IT-95 contract also has requirements for migrating current high priority data bases to the IT-95 system. The MRFSS data base is listed as high priority, but no decision on timing has been made yet. MRFSS staff time will be necessary, as well as from data base managers in charge of non-MRFSS data bases that are to be included in the MRF system. The Data Base Work Group and other committees within RecFIN(SE) will be consulted concerning design components throughout the development of the MRF system.

**Product:** MRF Data Base and software to access and use the data.

**Schedule:** Work on migrating MRFSS data bases to the IT-95 system will begin in 1994. Development of the Decision Support System will begin in 1994 or 1995.

**Task 13: Standards/Protocols/Documentation for Data Management (Goal 3, Objective 4)**

**Objective:** Develop standard protocols and documentation for data formats, input, editing, quality control, storage, access, transfer, dissemination, and application.

**Team Members:** MRFSS staff, Data Base Work Group, Non-MRFSS Data Base Managers.

**Approach:** Develop dial-up protocols for access to the MRF system by state personnel and other researchers. Menu-driven access to MRF Oracle/SAS data bases will provide quality control through standardized queries and summarization procedures. The Decision Support System will provide quality control through standardization, with proper use of MRFSS data (weighting for unequal sample size, etc.). Continue development of MRFSS documentation and standardization of formats and codes of historical intercept, telephone and estimate data bases and incorporate them on-line in the MRF system. Develop documentation of non-MRFSS data bases as they are incorporated into the system. Develop MRF Metadata Data Base to help users properly interpret their results. Provide error-checking software on the MRF data management system.

**Resources:** MRFSS staff time, Data Base Work Group time, other RecFIN(SE) Committees, and staff time as needed.

**Product:** Standard protocols and documentation on-line on the MRF Data Management System. Published portions needed for access to the system.

**Schedule:** Documentation and standardization of MRFSS intercept and telephone historical data bases was begun in 1993. The final intercept format will be adopted by MRFSS staff by May 1994 and be available for distribution. Similar documentation of the telephone data base has just begun and will be finished by December 1994. Basic documentation of the catch and trip estimate data bases exists and will be updated when these data bases are placed on the MRF data management system. Standardization of variables will also occur then. The MRFSS staff is currently contracting with KCA for clean-up and standardization of 1986-1992 intercept data, which should be completed in 1994. Development of dial-up protocols and on-line documentation will depend on work identified under Task 12.

**Task 14: Data base Identification and Prioritization of Existing Data Bases (Goal 3, Objective 5)**

**Objective:** Identify and prioritize existing historical data bases for integration into the centralized data base.

**Team Members:** Biological/Environmental, Data Base and Social/Economic Work Groups.

**Approach:** The Biological/Environmental and Social/Economic Work Groups will prioritize the existing data bases according to their focus areas. The Data Base Work Group will compile a final priority list based on the lists provided by the Biological/Environmental and

Resources: Social/Economic Work Groups and present it to the RecFIN(SE) Committee. Accomplished by mail, conference calls and meetings. Travel/meeting costs, conference call costs, report costs, and inkind (time) and staff time.

Product: Final priority list.

Schedule: Work has begun on this task and will continue. Several work group meetings and/or conference calls will be held to address this issue. The Data Base Work Group will present the list during the February 1994 RecFIN(SE) meeting.

Task 15: Equipment and Software Needs (Goal 3, Objective 6)

Objective: To evaluate and recommend innovative, cost-effective information management technologies.

Team Members: Data Base Work Group.

Approach: Work group members will report to the Committee any new technologies which will aid in the management of MRF data. Also, industry personnel will report to the Committee concerning such advancements.

Resources: Travel/meeting costs, conference call costs, report costs, and inkind (time) and staff time.

Product: Progress reports.

Schedule: This will be an ongoing activity.

Task 16: Long-term National Program Planning (Goal 4, Objective 1)

Objective: Provide for long-term national program planning.

Team Members: RecFIN(SE) Committee.

Approach: The RecFIN(SE) Committee members, GSMFC staff and ASMFC staff will attend Pacific RecFIN and ASMFC Marine Recreational Fishery Statistics meetings and coordinate activities as appropriate. Accomplished by mail and meetings.

Resources: Travel/meeting costs, report costs, and inkind (time) and staff time.

Product: Record of coordination activities.

Schedule: The planning aspect of this task will be an ongoing activity.

Task 17: Coordination, Consistency and Comparability with Other RecFIN Programs (Goal 4, Objective 2 and Objective 3)

Objective: Coordinate RecFIN(SE) with other regional RecFIN programs and encourage consistency and comparability among regional programs over time.

Team Members: RecFIN(SE) Committee.



Approach: The RecFIN(SE) Committee members, GSMFC staff and ASMFC staff will coordinate activities with the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission and Pacific RecFIN on the West Coast. The MRFSS staff is revising data files and will get input from the RecFIN(SE) Committee. Distribute appropriate program results and recommendations to other RecFIN programs. Accomplished by mail and meetings.

Resources: Travel/meeting costs, report costs, and inkind (time) and staff time.

Product: Ensure adequate information exchange, consistency and comparability between all regional RecFIN programs and compilation of a record of information exchange.

Schedule: This task will be an ongoing activity.

### **C. Administrative Activities**

Coordination and administrative support of RecFIN(SE) will be accomplished through administrative structures established in the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic areas. Major tasks involved in the coordination and administration of the various levels of RecFIN(SE) include but are not limited to the following:

- Work closely with the RecFIN(SE) Committee in all aspects of program coordination, administration, and operation;
- Implement plans and program directives approved by the RecFIN(SE) Committee;
- Provide coordination and logistical support, including communications and organization of meetings for the RecFIN(SE) Committee, subcommittees, and work groups;
- Develop and/or administer cooperative agreements, grants, and contracts;
- Serve as liaison between the RecFIN(SE) Committee, other program participants, and other interested organizations;
- Assist the RecFIN(SE) Committee in preparation or review of annual spending plans;
- Prepare annual operations plans under the direction of the RecFIN(SE) Committee;
- Prepare and/or supervise and coordinate preparation of selected documents, including written records of all meetings;

- Distribute approved RecFIN(SE) information and data in accordance with accepted policies and procedures as set forth by the RecFIN(SE) Committee;
- Assist in the identification of regional and geographic needs that can be satisfied through RecFIN(SE) activities;
- Seek funding for RecFIN(SE) activities as the need develops; and
- Conduct or participate in other activities as identified.

**D. Time Table for RecFIN(SE)**

	<u>1993</u>	<u>1994</u>	<u>1995</u>
<b>Goal 1:</b>			
Objective 1	X		
Objective 2	X		
Objective 3	X	X	X*
Objective 4	X	X	X
Objective 5		X	X
<b>Goal 2:</b>			
Objective 1	X		
Objective 2	X	X	
Objective 3	X	X	X
Objective 4	X	X	X
Objective 5		X	X
Objective 6		X	X
<b>Goal 3:</b>			
Objective 1	X		
Objective 2	X	X	
Objective 3		X	X
Objective 4	X	X	X
Objective 5	X	X	
Objective 6		X	X
<b>Goal 4:</b>			
Objective 1	X	X	X
Objective 2	X	X	X
Objective 3	X	X	X

\* If program continues.

**E. References**

RecFIN(SE). 1993. Marine recreational fisheries data collection project summaries.  
REC93-2. Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission, Ocean Springs. 78 pp.

## **F. Committee, Subcommittee, and Work Group Membership**

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### **Biological/Environmental Work Group**

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### **Data Base Work Group**

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National Marine Fisheries Service  
Southeast Regional Office

### Cost Element Breakdown

1. Telephone

Conference Calls (estimated @ \$125 each)

2 Work Group calls/2 Committee calls

4 calls X \$125 per call = \$ 500

2. Meeting Cost

Includes meeting room charges, rental for audio  
visual and/or other equipment or needs

7 meetings X \$150 per meeting = \$1,050

3. Travel

a. RecFIN(SE) Committee Meetings

2 days @ \$175 per day

X 20 members = 7,000

X 3 meetings = 21,000

b. Administrative Subcommittee

1 day @ \$175 per day

X 7 members = 1,225

X 1 meeting = 1,225

c. Biological/Environmental Work Group

1 day @ \$175 per day

X 7 members = 1,225

X 1 meeting = 1,225

d. Social/Economic Work Group

1 day @ \$175 per day

X 6 members = 1,050

X 1 meeting = 1,050

e. Data Base Work Group

1 day @ \$175 per day

X 5 members = 875

X 1 meeting = 875

f. TOTAL TRAVEL \$25,375

**TOTAL PROPOSED BUDGET \$26,925**



## **APPENDIX C.**

### **PROGRESS REPORT**

#### **RecFIN (SE) SOCIAL & ECONOMIC DATA WORK GROUP**

**September 28, 1994**

Submitted By:

Ron Schmied  
Work Group Chair  
NMFS Southeast Regional Office  
9721 Executive Center Drive, North  
St. Petersburg, FL 33702

#### **Accomplishments - Tasks 6 & 7, 1994 Operations Plan**

Progress in this work area has been slowed by two factors. First, the historical lack of emphasis given to the use and collection of social and economic data by fisheries management agencies provides a very lean knowledge base upon which to develop a meaningful prioritized listing of social and economic data needs. Second, on a rather positive note, there are thankfully a number of parallel efforts underway within NMFS and the ASMFC. Rather than duplicate, Work Group members have chosen to participate in these activities and utilize or expand on their results as appropriate to meet RecFIN (SE) purposes. Accordingly, this report describes and provides a status report on these parallel efforts.

#### **Development of the NMFS Fisheries Statistics Strategic Plan (FSSP)**

NMFS Headquarters has initiated a process by which the agency will develop and implement a national plan for the collection of fisheries statistics needed to support fisheries management efforts. In spite of an initial rush of activity, progress seems to have slowed in this effort and there seems to be a near absence of mention or attention regarding social-cultural data needs. Notably, however, project personnel continue to provide updates on the FSSP at RecFIN meetings and emphasize that input and reviews will be solicited eventually from individuals outside of the FSSP planning team.

#### **Identification of MRF Economic Data Needs - NMFS Northeast Region**

Economists at the NMFS Northeast Fisheries Science Center in Woods Hole, Massachusetts have produced a listing of economic data items needed for estimating marine recreational fishing benefits derived from the Nation's ocean resources and for measuring the impacts of fishery

management decisions. As admitted by involved scientists, the document's chief goal is to develop consensus on data needs. Eventually, priorities must be assigned to the data elements and a strategy developed for their long term collection.

Notably, the NEFSC has received \$200K from NMFS Headquarters to fund an add-on to the MRFSS to collect economic data needed to: 1) collect descriptive information on recreational fisheries in the Northeast and, 2) develop economic models to evaluate how marginal changes in management affect angler's valuation of 7 recreational species. Survey methods include addition of key questions to the telephone and intercept surveys as well as a follow-up mail survey of participating anglers after the completion of their fishing trip. Pending analysis of the success of this effort, these methods could be used in the Southeast or elsewhere.

#### Development of a Social and Cultural Data and Analysis Plan for the Southeast

This plan was developed in June 1994 by the Southeast Regional Office in cooperation with the region's three fishery management councils. The plan seeks to enable the Region to respond to an existing NMFS policy mandating that social impacts be fully considered along with economic and ecological impacts in the fishery management process. Included in the plan is an outline of social and cultural data and analysis needs, a description of expected products, a list of organizational responsibilities for producing the products, and fiscal requirements for meeting minimal data collection requirements. Currently, plan implementation is scheduled for this fall pending funding availability.

#### Strategy for Addressing RecFIN Social and Economic Work Tasks

Based on the availability of these documents, the Work Group will move ahead to extract appropriate portions into a RecFIN document describing social and economic data needs. Input will be solicited from fishery managers, economists, and social scientists to assist in developing priorities. Further, the Group will modify the QA/QC document prepared by the Biological/Environmental Work Group and use this as a working draft for the social and economic data collection area.

## **APPENDIX D.**

### **RecFIN(SE) GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

**Goal 1:** To plan, manage, and evaluate a coordinated state-federal MRF data collection program for the Southeast Region.

**Objective 1:** To establish a RecFIN(SE) Committee consisting of MOU signatories or their designees to develop, implement, monitor, and evaluate the program.

**Objective 2:** To complete during the first year a three-year Strategic Plan that outlines policies and protocols of the program.

**Objective 3:** To develop annual operations plans, including identification of available resources, that implement the Strategic Plan.

**Objective 4:** To distribute program information to cooperators and interested parties.

**Objective 5:** To conduct a program review after two years of operation to evaluate the program's success in meeting needs in the Southeast Region.

**Goal 2:** To implement a coordinated state-federal MRF data collection program for the Southeast Region.

**Objective 1:** To identify the components of the fishery (modes, areas, etc.) and the required data priorities for each component.

**Objective 2:** To identify data elements (environmental, biological, sociological, economic) required for each fishery component.

**Objective 3:** To identify and determine standards for data collection, including statistical, training, and quality assurance and quality control standards.

**Objective 4:** To identify and evaluate the adequacy of current programs for meeting the RecFIN(SE) requirements.

**Objective 5:** To coordinate, integrate, and augment, as appropriate, data collection efforts to meet the RecFIN(SE) requirements.

**Objective 6:** To evaluate and recommend innovative data collection technologies.

**Goal 3:** To establish and maintain an integrated, centralized MRF data management system for the Southeast Region.

**Objective 1:** To identify the location and administrative responsibility for a centralized the RecFIN(SE) data management system.

**Objective 2:** To evaluate the current hardware, software, and communication capabilities of program partners and make recommendations for support and upgrades.

**Objective 3:** To design, implement, and maintain an MRF data management system to accommodate fishery management/research and other needs (e.g., trade and tourism).

**Objective 4:** To develop standard protocols and documentation for data formats, input, editing, quality control, storage, access, transfer, dissemination, and application.

**Objective 5:** To identify and prioritize existing historical data bases for integration into the centralized data base.

**Objective 6:** To evaluate and recommend innovative, cost-effective information management technologies.

**Goal 4:** To support the development and operation of a national program to collect, manage, and disseminate MRF information for use by states, territories, councils, interstate commissions, and federal marine fishery management agencies.

**Objective 1:** To provide for long-term national program planning.

**Objective 2:** To coordinate the RecFIN(SE) with other regional RecFIN programs.

**Objective 3:** To encourage consistency and comparability among regional programs over time.