



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
GREATER ATLANTIC REGIONAL FISHERIES OFFICE
55 Great Republic Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930

August 18, 2025

A.I.S, Inc.
540 Hawthorn St
Dartmouth, MA 02747

Dear Approved Electronic Monitoring Service Provider,

On July 1, 2025, NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) completed the fishing year 2024 year-end reconciliation process for Northeast multispecies (groundfish) sectors. Electronic monitoring (EM) service providers must retain all EM data and reports for a period of 12 months after the date on which catch data for the fishing year are finalized. EM data are any data created in the collection of fishery-dependent data by EM systems during fishing operations, including the video, images, and other sensor data, as well as the metadata that provides information about the raw data (e.g., trip sail date, vessel information). EM service providers may not dispose of fishing year 2024 EM data and reports (data and reports submitted for trips landed from May 1, 2024, through April 30, 2025) until on or after July 2, 2026.

NMFS codified the requirement for the groundfish sector monitoring program at 50 CFR 648.11(h)(5)(vii)(M):

“Ensure that electronic monitoring data and reports are retained for a minimum of 12 months after catch data are finalized for the fishing year. NMFS will notify monitoring service providers of the catch data finalization date each year. The electronic monitoring service provider must provide NMFS access to electronic monitoring data or reports upon request.”

Failure to timely produce EM data and reports upon NMFS's request during the retention period may result in enforcement or administrative actions.

This requirement is for EM data and reports held by an approved EM service provider contracted on behalf of vessels participating in an EM program to meet groundfish sector monitoring requirements. It does not apply to EM data received and held by NMFS in the conduct of its official business, or EM reports already submitted to and in the possession of NMFS as required by the Northeast Multispecies Fishery Management Plan. EM data held by NMFS are retained as Federal Records for a period of 5 years as stipulated by the National Archives and Records Administration¹, and EM reports are held

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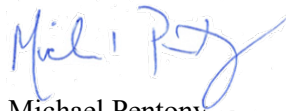


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The requirement we have summarized in this letter and that is included in the regulations is consistent with our policy directive, "Third-Party Minimum Data Retention Period in Electronic Monitoring Programs for Federally Managed U.S. Fisheries"².

Please contact Heather Nelson at heather.nelson@noaa.gov or (978) 281-9334 with questions.

Sincerely,



Michael Pentony
Regional Administrator

cc: Daniel Salerno, Acting Chairman, New England Fishery Management Council
Dr. Jon Hare, Director, Northeast Fisheries Science Center

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August 18, 2025

Archipelago Marine Research, Ltd.
525 Head St.
Victoria, BC V9A 5S1
Canada

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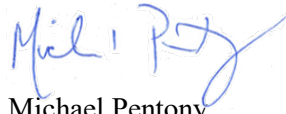


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August 18, 2025

East West Technical Services, LLC
91 Point Judith Rd.
Suite 26 Unit 347
Narragansett, RI 02882

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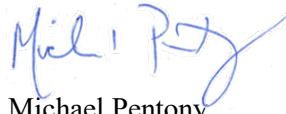


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Fathom Resources, LLC
855 Aquidneck Ave.
Unit 9
Middletown, RI 02842

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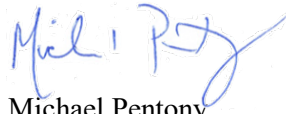


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Flywire Cameras
PO BOX 55048
Lexington, KY 40511

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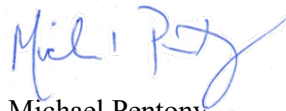


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New England Marine Monitoring
350 Commercial St
Portland, ME
04101

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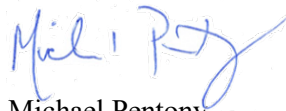


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August 18, 2025

Saltwater, Inc.
733 N St
Anchorage, AK 99501

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August 18, 2025

Satlink US, LLC
16423 Sawgrass Drive
Rehoboth Beach, DE 19971

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Teem Fish Monitoring, Inc.
309 2nd Ave
Suite 363
Prince Rupert, BC V8J 3T1
Canada

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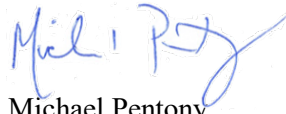


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New England Fishery Management Council

50 WATER STREET | NEWBURYPORT, MASSACHUSETTS 01950 | PHONE 978 465 0492

Rick Bellavance, *Chair* | Cate O'Keefe, PhD, *Executive Director*

July 1, 2025

Mr. Michael Pentony
GARFO Regional Administrator
NMFS/NOAA Fisheries
55 Great Republic Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930

RE: Comments on Eastern Gulf of Maine Sentinel Survey

Dear Mike:

The New England Fishery Management Council has no objection to the exempted fishing permit to continue the Eastern Gulf of Maine sentinel jig survey for groundfish in Statistical Areas 511 and 512, as published in the *Federal Register* on June 18, 2025. While overall fishing effort associated with this jig survey is limited, the Council suggests that the research proposal include an estimate of expected cod catch during the survey.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Cate O'Keefe". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Cate" and last name "O'Keefe" clearly distinguishable.

Cate O'Keefe
Executive Director

From: Katherine McArdle - NOAA Federal <katherine.mcardle@noaa.gov>

Sent: Friday, August 15, 2025 8:00 AM

Subject: Final 2025-2026 Northeast Observer Coverage Schedule Now Available

Hello All:

NOAA Fisheries has released the 2025–2026 sea day schedule for commercial fishing trips selected for Northeast Fisheries Observer Program observer coverage, as well as two analytical reports on discards and observer sea day allocation that support the schedule. The documents are posted [online](#).

To achieve our targeted statistical standard for estimating discards across all 64 fleets and 14 species groups and sea turtles covered by the analysis, 10,329 sea days are needed.

Based on available funding for agency costs, there are 3,998 (1,952 agency-funded and 2,046 industry-funded) sea days available for fishery monitoring intended to estimate the amount of discarded federally managed commercial fishery species and 374 agency-funded days to monitor protected species interactions during commercial fishing operations in the greater Atlantic region.

The available 1,952 agency-funded days is fewer than the 8,374 sea days needed to achieve our targeted statistical standard for estimating discards across all 54 agency-funded fleets covered by the analysis. Therefore, we used the preferred prioritization process described in the Standardized Bycatch Reporting Methodology Omnibus Amendment to allocate available funds to fishing fleets monitored using the available sea days.

Observers are an essential component of commercial fishing operations and provide critical information that is necessary to keep fisheries open and to provide sustainable seafood to our nation.

Please distribute as you see fit.

Sincerely,

KB McArdle

Katherine McArdle, Director
Fishery Monitoring & Research Division
NOAA Fisheries, Northeast Fisheries Science Center
166 Water Street
Woods Hole, MA 02543
Office: 508-495-2377 Mobile: 774-392-5308 Fax: 508-495-2124
Email: Katherine.McArdle@noaa.gov

<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/new-england-mid-atlantic/fisheries-observers/fisheries-monitoring-operations-northeast>

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August 19, 2025

[The Northeast Fisheries Science Center and the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission \(ASMFC\) seek a science-industry team to conduct a pilot regional industry-based bottom trawl survey \(RIBTS\).](#) This pilot survey will be used to define the operational requirements for a full scale, shelf-wide, multispecies, industry-based bottom trawl survey that will complement our federal Bottom Trawl Survey conducted aboard the NOAA Ship *Henry B. Bigelow*.

The Commission will issue a funding contract to a science and fishing industry team to conduct field work off the coast of southern New England to:

- Collect catch, biological, and oceanographic data
- Assess operational requirements
- Produce documentation of best practices

The pilot survey will need to be conducted in the fall of 2025 or spring 2026. Data processing will need to be completed and standard operating procedures drafted within six months of field work completion.

Application Instructions

The deadline to submit proposals is midnight ET on September 5, 2025. Please see the [RFP online](#) for complete proposal details, qualifying requirements, and submission instructions.

Questions?

Please contact Anna Mercer at anna.mercer@noaa.gov.

From: NOAA Fisheries Marine Recreational Information Program

[<noaafisheries.mrip@public.govdelivery.com>](mailto:noaafisheries.mrip@public.govdelivery.com)

Sent: Thursday, August 21, 2025 4:12 PM

To: Cate O'Keefe [<cokeefe@nefmc.org>](mailto:cokeefe@nefmc.org)

Subject: NOAA Fisheries' Recreational Fishing Data Partnership Updates - Summer 2025

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**NOAA
FISHERIES**

NEWSCAST

Summer 2025

Recreational Fishing Data Partnership Roundup



National Updates

Fishing Effort Survey

NOAA Fisheries Office of Science and Technology (OST) will facilitate two independent, expert peer reviews this summer and fall prior to the anticipated implementation of the improved FES in January 2026.

The FES 2024 study report and proposed survey redesign will undergo a desk peer review by the Center for Independent Experts in September. Following the peer review, we plan to publicly share the peer-reviewed report and next steps for implementation of the improved survey.

NOAA Fisheries OST will also host a 2-day virtual workshop Sept. 23 - 24, 2025, with the opportunity for partner and public comment for the independent peer review of the proposed FES calibration model methodology. The model is proposed for use to update the historical recreational fishing estimates produced using the FES to the scale of the improved FES. Pending peer review results and associated next steps, calibrated estimates using the peer-reviewed calibration model are anticipated to be available for use in subsequent stock assessments and fisheries management decisions in spring 2026. We will publish a Federal Register Notice with additional information and registration details for the second workshop soon. View [this page for FES study updates and details, including an updated implementation timeline](#).

This fall and winter, OST plans to provide FES updates and next steps at a series of regional fishery management council and marine fisheries commission meetings (See Meetings section below for tentative schedule).

National Academies Peer Review of the NOAA Fisheries Survey and Data Standards

The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine has met monthly since April 2025 (including three open sessions) as part of their [peer review](#) of the [agency's survey and data standards](#). The standards are intended to support the program's commitment to transparency; promote data quality, consistency, and comparability across [data collection programs](#); facilitate the shared use of the statistics these programs produce; and ensure the scientific integrity of the data collection efforts and the quality of the recreational fisheries statistics.

The committee is anticipated to produce a brief final report in October 2025 focused on its assessment of the standards, including conclusions and recommendations for improvements to the standards.

Atlantic Coast Updates

[Logging into Efficiency: Modernizing Atlantic Coastwide Permit and Vessel Logbooks](#)

NOAA Fisheries is modernizing Atlantic Coast logbook reporting systems for both commercial and for-hire fishermen to improve efficiency and lower costs.

“Combining five independent logbook systems into a single system for the Atlantic Coast will save costs and create opportunities, through economies of scale, to build a higher functioning system. The end result will be more and higher-quality data, which will allow for more agile management of fisheries,” states Torey Adler, software development manager at NOAA Fisheries Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office.

[Large Pelagics Survey At-a-Glance Web Page Updates](#)

We have updated our LPS web page to include more information on the estimate publication schedule and review procedures and status of the LPS redesign, among other updates.

Gulf Coast Updates

[NOAA Fisheries and Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission Announce Red Snapper Data Improvement Projects](#)

NOAA Fisheries and the [Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission](#) announced six new partnerships and seven projects aimed at improving recreational fishing effort and discard data collection in the Gulf of America (formerly Gulf of Mexico). This effort represents a key investment in enhancing data quality and reducing data uncertainty to support sustainable fisheries management across the region.

The projects will receive \$7.5 million from the Commission. They will focus on advancing innovative methods to collect more accurate, timely, and regionally relevant data on recreational fishing activities and released catch, commonly known as discards. These projects will address known data gaps and challenges in current reporting systems. They will contribute directly to better-informed stock assessments, management decisions, and conservation strategies.

[Gulf Transition Plan](#)

We collaborated with Gulf of America regional and state partners on an [interim update](#) and [projected timeline](#) (both products now live) to the [Gulf Transition Plan](#). The plan provides a framework for:

- Transitioning to the effective use of Gulf state recreational fishing data in southeast stock assessments and Gulf Fishery Management Council management processes
- Making necessary research-informed survey improvements

- Producing estimates from different Gulf survey designs into the same scale (calibration) and/or producing a composite estimate that integrates the data from all the Gulf surveys

Hawai'i Updates

Strengthened State Partner Estimate Review Process

Hawaii has been added to our [Procedures for State Partner Review of NOAA Fisheries' Marine Recreational Information Program Estimates](#).

This process was implemented in 2024 to better leverage regional and state partner local fisheries expertise in MRIP estimate reviews. See more on this process below!

Hot Topic

[NOAA Fisheries, Partners Collaborate to Strengthen Review of Recreational Catch Estimates](#)

Read the full article [here](#).

Over the past year, NOAA Fisheries developed, refined, and launched a [strengthened procedure](#) for review of recreational fishing catch and effort estimates. This effort was in close collaboration with our Atlantic and Gulf of America state and interstate marine fishery commission partners. In summer 2025, we updated the process to include Hawaii state partners.

This is an evolving process that has benefitted greatly from our regional and state partners' local fisheries expertise and knowledge in identifying estimates that appear inconsistent with expected fishing behavior patterns or past trends, including results that could have important implications for fisheries management.

This partner review process augments NOAA Fisheries' existing internal [data review quality checks](#). These include estimate reviews from regional experts at our regional offices and science centers.

To maximize efficiency, we request partners be as specific as possible when flagging estimates and include information such as the state, year, wave, fishing mode, area fished, catch type, and/or effort, and the rationale for flagging the estimate, referencing one or more scenarios outlined in the procedure. Scenarios include an

unexpectedly high or low estimate for a high-profile species in comparison to other estimates in the year/season or the same 2-month wave over time; an estimate that unexpectedly exceeds an annual catch limit by a significant amount; an estimate that is significantly misaligned with seasonal or in-season projections; and landings for prohibited species or species landed out of season.

Positive Partner Response

Partner response to the strengthened review procedure has been positive.

Alex DiJohnson, Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program recreational team lead, said, “It’s been really, really great so far,” adding that states feel a new sense of ownership in the estimate review process. “The states seem excited,” he noted. “They’re ready to get their hands dirty.”

Dawn Franco, Georgia Department of Natural Resources Coastal Resources Division marine biologist, agrees. “We greatly appreciate the open dialogue and the renewed emphasis on estimate review over the past year. The process has become more streamlined along the way.”

Additional Estimate Review and Tracking Tool Forthcoming

We are also developing a new online data review tracking tool to streamline and improve efficiency of data reviews. It will serve as a comprehensive, transparent record of estimate reviews and outcomes. A prototype is anticipated by the end of 2025.

State Survey Sampler Spotlight

Meet Patrick Conley, Access Point Angler Intercept Survey interviewer with the Hawai'i Division of Aquatic Resources

APAIS is one NOAA Fisheries' recreational fishing survey, and it gathers catch-per-trip information from anglers as they complete their fishing trips. The survey is conducted by specially trained state survey samplers at marinas, boat ramps, beaches, piers, and other public fishing access sites.



- **Time as an APAIS interviewer**
 - Patrick has been an APAIS survey interviewer with HDAR since 2004
- **Educational background**
 - New England Culinary Institute, associate degree in Culinary Arts
- **Favorite fishing activity and why**
 - Patrick loves snapper fishing in the winter on light wind days. He uses electric reels in water depths between 600 and 1,200 feet and targets long tail red snapper.
 - "It's a really fun challenge to fish on submerged prehistoric reefs. You have to know the fish's behavior patterns and become really familiar with each spot. You also need to know the currents and have expert boat handling. It's always fun to catch your bait first, like opelu or aku."
- **What I like most about my job**
 - "Talking to fishermen. I love learning from them, sharing tips and other fishing stories, and exchanging recipes. It's great to be near the ocean every day, to see the weather fronts move through, experience the rhythm of the ocean, and see the tidal changes. When a school like big eye scad moves in near a survey interview location, it can get really exciting."
- **Clearing up common misconceptions**
 - "When I first walk up to fishers, so many initially think I am law enforcement. Many fishers think providing their fishing data will shut

down fisheries or lead to tighter restrictions. However, contributing to non-commercial data collection efforts helps support optimal fishing opportunities. Participating in surveys lets the fishing community have a little more voice and visibility. We all have the same goal: we want to keep catching fish and have a healthy ocean. If we have no idea what's going on out there, it's really hard to have good management."

In the News

- [Department of Commerce Announces 2025 Appointments to the Regional Fishery Management Councils](#)
- [NOAA Fisheries Assistant Administrator Charts Course to Strengthen Support for Marine Communities and Coastal Economies](#)
- [The Gulf's red snapper decline is real](#)
- [Advocating for fisheries in Washington, DC](#)
- [US senators lay out NOAA Fisheries priorities in budget bill](#)
- [Clues From the Catch: How Small Samples Lead to Big Fish Insights](#)

Recent and Upcoming Key Meetings

- **Aug. 7, 2025** - NOAA Fisheries Office of Science and Technology virtually held their third quarter Transition Team Meeting with Gulf partners. During this meeting, Alabama and Mississippi state partners shared preliminary findings from their dockside and effort state creel survey pilot studies.
- **September 2025** - Desk peer review of the Fishing Effort Survey 2024 study report and improved design proposal (more info above). The peer review and report is anticipated in October.
- **Sept. 3 - 4, 2025** - [Atlantic Highly Migratory Species Advisory Panel meeting.](#)
- **Sept. 9 - 10, 2025** - [Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program Recreational Technical Committee meeting](#) in Alexandria, Virginia.
- **Sept. 23 - 24, 2025** - Independent virtual peer review of the proposed FES calibration model methodology (open to the public, more info above).
- **Sept. 29, 2025** - MRIP Transition Team meeting with Atlantic, Gulf, and Hawai'i Transition Team subgroups to discuss the transition plan for effectively implementing the improved FES.

- **Oct. 14 - 16, 2025** - Pacific Coast Recreational Fisheries Information Network Technical Committee Meeting.
- **Oct. 20 - 29, 2025** - [NOAA Fisheries New Council Member Training](#). The MRIP presentation is slated for Oct. 27.
- **Oct. 27 - 30, 2025** - [Gulf](#) and [Atlantic](#) states marine fisheries commissions annual meetings in Biloxi, Mississippi, and Dewey Beach, Delaware, respectively.
- **Nov. 17 - 21, 2025** - NOAA Fisheries OST will participate in the Southeast [Marine Resource Education Program](#) in St. Petersburg, Florida.
- **Nov. 19 - 20, 2025** - National State Directors Meeting in New Orleans, Louisiana.
- **Dec. 8 - 12, 2025 (TBD)** - During the [South Atlantic Fishery Management Council Meeting](#) in Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, representatives from NOAA Fisheries Southeast Fisheries Science Center and OST will present considerations for how a potential private recreational permit for the snapper grouper fishery would be incorporated into MRIP survey methodology and recreational catch and effort estimation. This presentation request is in relation to [Snapper Grouper Amendment 46 \(recently paused by the Council to focus on de-regulatory actions\)](#).
- Fishing Effort Survey updates scheduled at the following meetings:
 - Sept. 9 - 10, 2025 - Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (MAFMC) Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) meeting, Baltimore, Maryland
 - Oct. 7 - 9, 2025 - Gulf Council SSC meeting, Tampa, Florida; MAFMC meeting, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
 - Oct. 27 - 30, 2025 - Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission annual meeting, Dewey Beach, Delaware
 - Dec. 8 - 12, 2025 - South Atlantic Fishery Management Council meeting, Kitty Hawk, North Carolina
 - Dec. TBD - Western Pacific Fishery Management Council meeting
 - Jan. 27 - 29, 2026 - New England Fishery Management Council meeting, virtual

Key Resources

- [MRIP Outreach and Education Materials](#)
- [Fishing Effort Survey Research and Improvements](#)
- [MRIP Data User Handbook](#)
- [MRIP Survey Design and Statistical Methods Manual](#)

- [Info and Q&As on the Estimate Review Process](#)
- [MRIP Data Query Tool \(access to the recreational fishing microdata and estimates\)](#)
- [MRIP Data Updates Email Subscription](#)
- [Recreational Fishing Data Glossary](#)
- [Public Fishing Access Site Register](#)
- [National Saltwater Angler Registry](#)
- [Annual Survey Reports](#)
- [NOAA Fisheries Survey and Data Standards](#)
- [Transitioning to New or Improved Survey Designs](#)

About the Recreational Fishing Data Collection Partnership

This state-regional-federal partnership is responsible for developing, implementing, and improving surveys that measure how many trips saltwater anglers take and how many fish they catch. Combined with information from commercial, biological, and observer data, this recreational fishing data informs stock assessments and management decisions that aim to achieve sustainable fisheries for future generations.

Do you have a question about recreational fishing data collection or estimation? Email fisheries.mrip@noaa.gov or visit countmyfish.noaa.gov.