



# NOAA FISHERIES

NOAA Fisheries collects recreational fishing data through our Marine Recreational Information Program. This state-regional-federal partnership develops, implements, and continually improves a national network of recreational fishing surveys to provide estimates of recreational catch and effort.

This includes working closely with our state partners to reconcile differences between NOAA Fisheries data and state data.

The information you share about your fishing helps support sustainable fisheries today, tomorrow, and for generations to come.

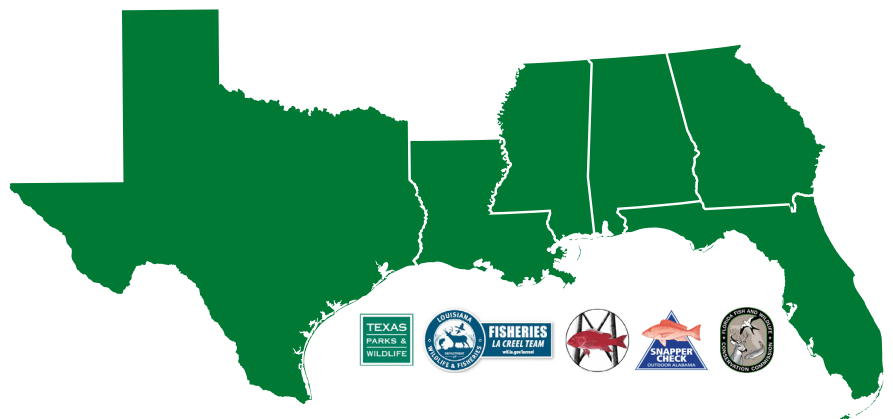
## NOAA FISHERIES and the Gulf States

### Partnering to Improve Recreational Fishing Data

**The Gulf of Mexico has unique regional management needs for high-profile species like red snapper.**

NOAA Fisheries provides support for the development and implementation of state data collection programs designed to produce more timely and precise recreational catch estimates for red snapper and other species.

NOAA Fisheries is collaborating with the Gulf states to ensure the information recreational anglers share with Florida's State Reef Fish Survey, Alabama's Snapper Check, Mississippi's Tails n' Scales, Louisiana's LA Creel, and Texas' Coastal Creel Survey can be used to inform federal stock assessment and sustainable management of U.S. fish stocks.



## Collaborating to Meet State and Federal Data Needs

Gulf state marine fisheries agencies, the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission, NOAA Fisheries, and outside expert consultants spent several years working together to develop, test, review, and refine Gulf state survey designs in Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana.

The state data collection programs in the Gulf of Mexico use different statistical methods to produce more timely and precise estimates on a smaller scale, or state level, for certain species. The states use different data collection methods from one another that also differ from the collection methods NOAA Fisheries uses, which are designed to produce estimates on a larger scale to track national and regional trends for stock assessments. As a result, it's not possible to directly compare their estimates of recreational catch.

We are collaborating with our partners to inform both state and federal survey improvements, increase the accuracy of state and federal recreational fisheries statistics, and minimize differences between our estimates. This includes determining the best approach for converting data that uses different methodology into the same scale, so meaningful comparisons can be made and the data can be used in the federal stock assessment and management processes.

We provide critical support to states and regional partners to meet their unique recreational fishing data needs, including access to technical resources, expert statisticians, and funding. This includes certification.

## Certification:

### Working Together to Ensure Quality and Comparability

The survey designs for the State Reef Fish Survey, Snapper Check, Tails n' Scales, and LA Creel have all received certification from NOAA Fisheries. Here's what that means:

- Certification means that an independent peer review has found the survey method to be a statistically valid approach to meet survey objectives and provide key estimates.
- Once a new or improved state-specific survey design is certified by NOAA Fisheries, that survey becomes eligible to receive MRIP funding.
- Certification does not guarantee survey implementation or use in federal fisheries management. Decisions as to how the data is used are made by NOAA Fisheries and partners, independent of the certification process.

## Transition Plans:

### A Vital Tool for Data Integration

Calibration allows estimates from one survey design to be expressed in the same unit as another survey design. A transition plan that includes calibration is required for any survey MRIP certifies: 1) whenever there is a change in recreational fishing survey methods, and 2) that change results in differences in the scaling of recreational fishing catch and effort estimates.

A transition plan outlines crucial steps for moving from one survey method to a new or improved survey method. It examines and accounts for potential differences between current and future estimates, or estimates derived from different surveys across a region. The goal of these plans is to preserve the continuity of historical fisheries catch and effort information and to minimize disruption to fisheries management during the transition.



Credit: NOAA Fisheries

In the Gulf of Mexico, NOAA Fisheries administers the Access Point Angler Intercept Survey, which collects data through interviews at public-access sites to estimate catch, and the Fishing Effort Survey, which collects data via a mail survey to estimate the number of fishing trips, or effort, from shore and private boats. For-hire data is collected through NOAA Fisheries' For-Hire Survey, which collects data via a telephone survey to estimate effort from charter boats and headboats, and the Southeast Fisheries Science Center's Southeast Region Headboat Survey. Together, these surveys produce the regional long-term trend information critical for stock assessments. The Southeast Data, Assessment, and Review Program (SEDAR) is the cooperative process by which stock assessment projects are conducted in NOAA Fisheries' Southeast Region.

