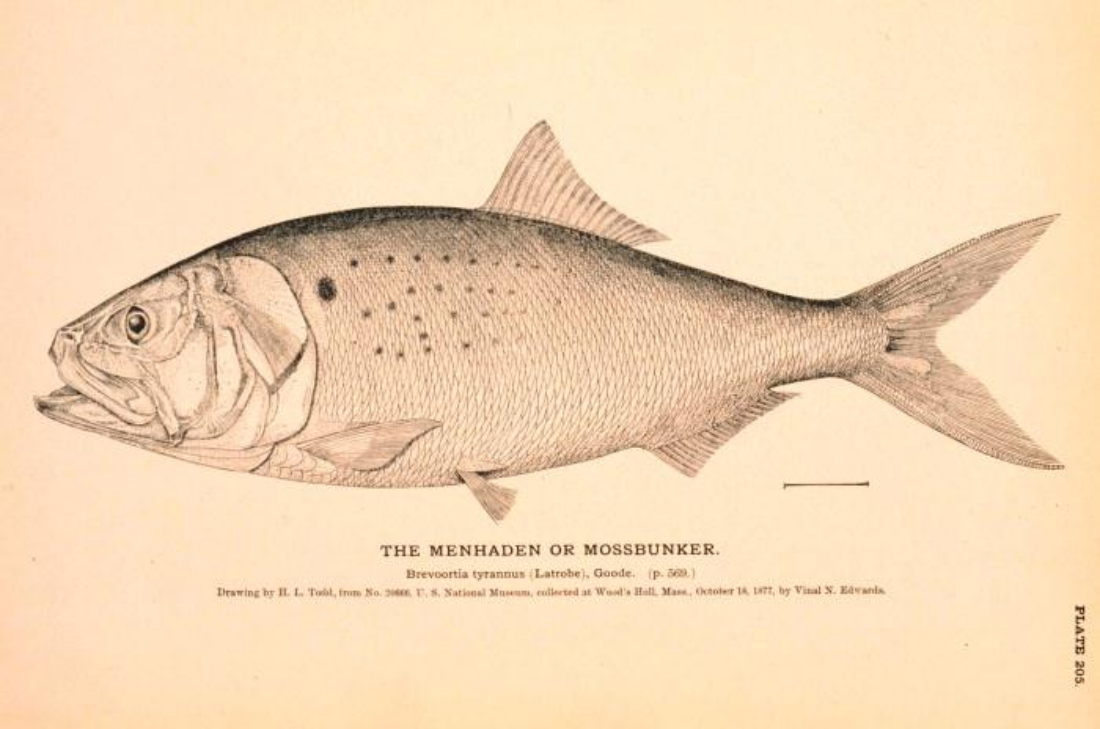
ATLANTIC COASTAL FISHERIES COOPERATIVE MANAGEMENT ACT

FEDERAL ASSISTANCE REPORT
2005 – 2006



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
National Marine Fisheries Service

ATLANTIC COASTAL FISHERIES MANAGEMENT ACT
FEDERAL ASSISTANCE REPORT 2005–2006

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Carlos M. Gutierrez, Secretary

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
Conrad C. Lautenbacher, Jr.
Vice Admiral, U.S. Navy (Ret.)
Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere

National Marine Fisheries Service
William T. Hogarth, Ph.D.
Assistant Administrator for Fisheries

May 2007

This report was prepared by

Stephen Meyers, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Silver Spring, Maryland
Susan Olsen, Northeast Regional Office, Gloucester, Massachusetts
Cynthia Binkley, Southeast Regional Office, St. Petersburg, Florida

of the National Marine Fisheries Service

AUTHORIZATION

This report is submitted in compliance with the Atlantic Coastal Fisheries Cooperative Management Act of 1993, as amended (16 U.S.C. 5101 et seq.).

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ATLANTIC COASTAL FISHERIES COOPERATIVE MANAGEMENT ACT

FEDERAL ASSISTANCE ACTIVITIES FOR FY 2005 AND 2006

Introduction

With the passage of the Atlantic Coastal Fisheries Cooperative Management Act (Atlantic Coastal Act) in December 1993, NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), in cooperation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), was charged with the responsibility of supporting the interstate fisheries management efforts of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC). The Atlantic Coastal Act requires the Secretary of Commerce to submit to Congress a biennial report, starting with fiscal years 2001 and 2002, on the use of federal assistance provided to ASMFC and the Atlantic Coast states under the Atlantic Coastal Act. Each biennial report shall also evaluate the success of funded activities in implementing the Atlantic Coastal Act. In addition, this report describes funding provided to NMFS and FWS to conduct activities in support of the Atlantic Coastal Act.

This report reviews FY 2005 and FY 2006 funding for the Atlantic Coastal Act. The review was conducted by the NMFS Headquarters Office of Sustainable Fisheries, State–Federal Fisheries Division; NMFS Northeast and Southeast Regional Offices; and ASMFC. The report contains:

(1) Funding process;
(2) Project selection;
(3) Total funding appropriated by Congress to implement the Atlantic Coastal Act since passage of the Act;
(4) Available funds, distribution, and usage;
(5) Overall evaluation of the successes of such funding in the implementation of the Atlantic Coastal Act; and
(6) Abstracts of projects funded and conducted by ASMFC and Atlantic Coast states in support of the Atlantic Coastal Act.

Funding process

At the beginning of each fiscal year, NMFS determines the total available funds. NMFS determines the distribution of available funds among recipients after receiving recommendations from ASMFC and eligible Atlantic Coast states,[1] the Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP) Coordinating Council, NMFS headquarters and Atlantic Coast Regions, and FWS Atlantic Coast Regions.

[1] Eligible "states" under the Atlantic Coastal Act include all ASMFC member states, the District of Columbia, and the Potomac River Fisheries Commission.

Formula for Distribution of Funds to Eligible States

Total available funds for the eligible states, and the percentage of these funds that go to each state, are determined. The percentages are based on a formula that includes a one-third equal distribution, a one-third distribution weighted by the value of each state's commercial and recreational fisheries, and a one-third distribution weighted by the number of ASMFC fisheries management plans (FMPs) in which each state participated.

Distribution of ACCSP Funds

The ACCSP is a cooperative state–federal program to design, implement, and conduct marine fisheries statistics data collection programs and to integrate those data into a single data management system that will meet the needs of fishery managers, scientists, and fishermen. It is composed of representatives from natural resource management agencies coastwide, including the Commission, the three Atlantic fishery management councils, the 15 Atlantic states, the Potomac River Fisheries Commission, the D.C. Fisheries and Wildlife Division, NMFS, and FWS.

The ACCSP Coordinating Council—an oversight group comprising ASMFC, eligible states, NMFS, FWS, and the three Atlantic regional fishery federal fishery management councils—serves as a centralized budgeting and coordinating body for Atlantic Coastal Act funds for the implementation of the ACCSP. The ACCSP funds are allocated to recipients periodically during the year, based on the recommendations of the Coordinating Council's Operating Committee. In contrast to general state projects, which are based on each individual state's discretion and are composed of diverse projects that support the Atlantic Coastal Act, ACCSP funding is more centralized and coordinated on a coast-wide basis. The Coordinating Council is also involved in making recommendations on the allocation of these ACCSP funds.

Project selection

Section 803 of the Atlantic Coastal Act directs the Secretary of Commerce, in cooperation with the Secretary of the Interior, to develop and implement a program to support the interstate fishery management efforts of ASMFC. The program shall include activities to support and enhance state cooperation in:

(1) The collection, management, and analysis of fishery data (statistics);
(2) Fisheries management planning;
(3) Fisheries research, including stock assessment, and biological and economic research;
(4) Fisheries law enforcement; and
(5) Habitat conservation.

The selection process for specific activities to be carried out under the Atlantic Coastal Act Program has been left to the discretion of ASMFC and the states, with the stipulation that submitted projects must support one of the five project priorities listed above. This process has

resulted in enhancing individual state agency capabilities to perform activities that support ASMFC's Interstate Fisheries Management Program, which includes the development of Fisheries Management Plans (FMPs) and addenda and amendments to these FMPs. Projects were designed to strengthen individual agencies in areas where the recipients had the greatest internal needs. For instance, Maine uses some of its Atlantic Coastal Act funding to provide better marine commercial fisheries statistics, whereas Virginia uses Atlantic Coastal Act funding for increased fisheries law enforcement activities. In this respect, the agencies with the most insight into local needs have applied a considerable amount of effort toward developing a stronger state–federal system to support their responsibilities under the Atlantic Coastal Act.

Total funding appropriated by Congress since passage of the Atlantic Coastal Act

A review of the total funding appropriated by Congress to implement the Atlantic Coastal Act since its passage in December 1993 shows that funding was first made available to the Department of Commerce, NOAA/NMFS budget in FY 1995, and has been maintained in the budget in each subsequent fiscal year.

Congressional apportionment was $3.5 million in FY 1995 and 1996, $4.3 million in FY 1997, $6 million in FY 1998, $7 million in FY 1999 and 2000, and $7.25 million in FY 2001 and 2002. Congressional funding increased twofold from FY 1995 through FY 2000, and remained steady since. However, in FY 1999 total available funding was reduced by a Presidential budget rescission of $526,300.

In FY 2001, Congress appropriated $7.25 million for the Atlantic Coastal Act. To this amount, $230,800 was added as carryover from FY 2000, and the following amounts were deducted: $317,000 for NMFS grant administrative support, $18,000 for Presidential rescission, and $50,600 for deobligation. This resulted in a total of $7,095,200 available for distribution under the Atlantic Coastal Act to ASMFC, eligible states, NMFS, and FWS.

In FY 2002, Congress appropriated $7.25 million for the Atlantic Coastal Act. To this amount, $91,000 was added as carryover from FY 2001, and $309,000 was deducted for NMFS grant administrative support. This resulted in a total of $7,032,000 available for distribution under the Atlantic Coastal Act to the same recipients as in FY 2001. An additional $140,000 of carryover from FY 2001 was provided to the NMFS Northeast Region for projects to improve commercial harvest data collection and for an interactive voice response system (IVR) pilot program.

For FY 2003 and FY 2004, respectively, $7.25 million was appropriated for the Atlantic Coastal Act. However, given congressional rescissions and agency assessments, a total of $6,893,480 was available in FY 2003 and $6,617,750 was available in FY 2004.

The increased funding levels reflect the growing importance of the Atlantic Coastal Act and the support it provides for successful Atlantic coastal marine fisheries management and statistics programs.

Available funds, distribution, and usage

Funds available FY 2005

Under the FY 2005 Appropriations Bill, $9.25 million was noted in the Conference Report before a congressional rescission. Of these funds, $1,914,200 was given to ASMFC, $1,478,500 to ACCSP, $2,863,100 to the states, $790,200 to NMFS, and $100,000 to FWS. An additional $1,872,700 was used on specific research projects identified by the ASMFC.

Funds available FY 2006

Under the FY 2006 Appropriations Bill, $9.25 million was noted in the Conference Report before a congressional rescission. Of these funds, $1,906.300 was given to ASMFC, $1,4464,400 to ACCSP, $2,834,800 to the states, $774,500 to NMFS, and $98,000 to FWS. An additional $1,703,643 was used on specific research projects identified by the ASMFC.

Table 1 presents a breakdown of funding to Atlantic Coastal Act recipients for FY 2005 and FY 2006.

Overall evaluation of successes

FY 2005 successes

On November 9, 2004, the Commission's Atlantic Menhaden Management Board moved forward with exploring a new course for menhaden management, incorporating sound science. It has charged its Technical Committee to address outstanding issues associated with the ecological role of menhaden in the Chesapeake Bay and the feasibility of incorporating ecosystem-based management approaches into the menhaden plan.

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's Northern Shrimp Section approved a 70-day fishing season for the 2004–2005 northern shrimp fishery, a 30-day increase from last year's season. The approved season was based on a joint recommendation of the Northern Shrimp Technical Committee and Advisory Panel.

In November, the Commission's Summer Flounder, Scup and Black Sea Bass Management Board approved Addendum XV to the Management Plan. Addendum XV establishes an allocation program for increases of approximately 1.3 million pounds and 1.6 million pounds in the 2005 and 2006 commercial summer flounder fisheries, respectively. The Summer Flounder, Scup and Black Sea Bass Board approved the increase in total allowable landings in August based on stock improvements and increases in available biomass. In November, the Commission's Summer Flounder, Scup and Black Sea Bass Management Board approved Addendum XV to the Management Plan. Addendum XV establishes an allocation program for increases of approximately 1.3 million pounds and 1.6 million pounds in the 2005 and 2006 commercial summer flounder fisheries, respectively. The Summer Flounder, Scup and Black

Sea Bass Board approved the increase in total allowable landings in August based on stock improvements and increases in available biomass.

On December 3, 2004, the National Marine Fisheries Service projected that 95 percent of the Atlantic herring Total Allowable Catch (TAC) allocated to Management Area 1B for the 2004 fishing year (January–December) would be harvested by December 8, 2004. NMFS announced that pursuant to 50 CFR 648.202, effective December 8, 2004, vessels issued federal permits for Atlantic herring could not retain or land more than 2,000 pounds of Atlantic herring from Area 1B per trip or calendar day for the remainder of the 2004 fishery. The federal catch limit restriction would cease on January 1, 2005.

The Commission's Protected Species Committee, composed of ASMFC Commissioners and state and federal protected resource specialists, met to discuss relevant marine mammal, sea turtle, and seabird issues along the Atlantic coast.

In October 2004, the Commission held a workshop to examine the status of Atlantic menhaden with respect to its ecological role. This workshop was convened in response to a motion made by the Atlantic Menhaden Management Board in May 2004. Representatives from the environmental, recreational fishery, and the commercial fishery communities helped plan the details of the workshop. State, federal, and university scientists were invited to participate in the workshop.

The ASMFC approved winter flounder Amendment 1. This FMP action was to rebuild Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic stock and sustain the Gulf of Maine stock.

ACCSP examined cost-effective sampling methods for recreational fishing effort.

ASMFC approved Addendum VI to the American Lobster FMP. The Addendum directed fishermen to work with the Lobster Conservation Management Team to modify effort control. In addition, ASMFC:

- Revised benchmark stock assessment and peer review processes to ensure soundness of ASMFC stock assessments and better defined peer review methods.
- Approved the public information document for management of American eel. There was serious concern over habitat loss and predation.
- Approved the Draft Addendum to the Atlantic menhaden FMP and scheduled public meetings.
- Scheduled public meetings to Addendum XVII to the summer flounder FMP. The Addendum proposed regional allocations. The Commission later approved the Addendum.

ASMFC Atlantic Sturgeon Management Board Addendum II provided an exemption to allow for the aquaculture of sturgeon.

The ASMFC winter flounder board approved the state implementation plan. The Addendum was implemented to assist the rebuilding of winter flounder in Southern New England and the Gulf of Maine.

ASMFC hosted a natural mortality workshop to better understand how this mortality affects stock assessments.

The ACCSP continued the Atlantic For-hire Survey of charter boats.

The ASMFC Atlantic Menhaden Board approved Addendum II to Amendment 1 to the Menhaden FMP for public comment. This action established a harvest cap in Chesapeake Bay.

The Commission's Weakfish Management Board approved sending forward Draft Addendum to Amendment 4 to the Weakfish FMP. The Addendum addressed gaps in biological data, and proposed biological sampling needs.

The ASMFC and the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council met to set total allowable landings for bluefish, scup, and black sea bass.

FY 2006 successes

The Commission approved Amendment 1 to the Atlantic croaker FMP. The plan established biological reference points.

The ASMFC's Spiny Dogfish Management Board approved a 4-million-pound quota.

The ASMFC Weakfish Board approved a biological sampling and reporting program, and agreed to send the 2005 stock assessment to peer review.

The U.S. Court of Appeals upheld ASMFC and Rhode Islands position on lobster laws.

The ASMFC approved Atlantic Herring Amendment 2, which addressed fishing area boundaries, biological reference points, and gear issues.

The ASMFC Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Board approved Addendum XVII, which was intended to stabilize fishing rules across three states.

The ASMFC approved American Eel Board Addendum 1 to improve data collection.

The ACCSP began an InPort Metadata collection program. The ACCSP also updated their computer system to use ORACLE software.

The American Lobster Board approved Addendum VIII, which established new biological reference points and enhanced data collection requirements.

NMFS declined to open the EEZ to harvest of striped bass.

Horseshoe Crab Board approved additional restriction in the Delaware Bay region.

ACCSP staff met with staff of the GulfFIN program to discuss common issues.

Table 1. Atlantic Coastal Act Funding for FY 2005 and FY 2006 (in $ thousands)

	2005*	2006**
ASMFC	**1,914.2**	**1,906.3**
ACCSP Administration	**1,478.5**	**1,464.4**
States:		
Maine	194.3	193.3
New Hampshire	144.7	142.8
Massachusetts	225.4	225.4
Rhode Island	176.3	174.4
Connecticut	168.8	166.9
New York	191.8	189.9
New Jersey	219.4	219.9
Pennsylvania	112.0	108.4
Delaware	171.8	170.8
Maryland	189.7	187.6
Virginia	202.0	200.3
Potomac River Fisheries Commission	101.5	100.6
District of Columbia	39.4	39.1
North Carolina	210.1	208.3
South Carolina	156.9	154.8
Georgia	151.3	149.0
Florida	207.9	203.4
Total to States	**2,863.3**	**2,834.9**
Funds to NMFS		
Office of Sustainable Fisheries	18.3	24.4
Office of Science and Technology	25.6	25.4
Office of Habitat Conservation	12.8	12.7
Office of Protected Resources	7.9	7.8
Chesapeake Bay Program	3.9	3.9
Office for Law Enforcement	0.0	0.0
Northeast Region	565.2	521.7
Program	*274.2*	*243.6*
Admin/overhead	*291.0*	*278.1*
Southeast Region	156.5	178.6
Program	*118.3*	*141.0*
Admin/overhead	*38.2*	*37.6*
NMFS subtotal programs	**461.0**	**458.8**
NMFS subtotal admin	**329.2**	**315.7**
NMFS TOTAL	790.2	774.5
Funds to FWS	**100.0**	**98.0**

Totals:		
ASMFC	1,914.2	1,906.3
ACCSP	1,478.5	1,464.4
States	2,863.3	2,834.9
NMFS	790.2	774.5

FWS	100.0	98.0
Congressional rescissions/assessments	103.9	172.0
Grand Total	**7,250.0**	**7,250.0**

*In 2005 an additional $1,971K (after rescission) was provided for ACFCMA for five project areas.
**In 2006, $1,872.7K was allocated for ASMFC to distribute to projects, with $98.6K of overhead to Northeast Region. Also in 2006, an initial assessment/rescission of 0.38 percent was applied, followed by an additional 2 percent rescission.

Atlantic Coastal Act Projects
Ongoing or Completed During FY 2005 and 2006

NORTHEAST REGION

ATLANTIC STATES MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION

Project Title: A Cooperative Program for the Conservation of Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

Project and Award Numbers: 3-ACA-155/NA04NMF4740186

Purpose: The goal of the cooperative, state–federal program for conservation of Atlantic coastal fisheries is to manage, enhance, restore, and maintain the shared fisheries of the Atlantic coast, with principal emphasis on the conservation and restoration of migratory marine and diadromous fishery resources and their habitat, as well as the maintenance, enhancement, and improvement of public uses and benefits from these resources, including seafood production, recreation, and commerce. The program provides for coordinated, cooperative management of the interjurisdictional, territorial seas fisheries of the Atlantic coast over the long-term, including fisheries management and habitat planning, law enforcement, statistics, and research. It supports better utilization of fisheries resources for the benefit of the states and the nation. Commission activities in five major activities were identified to work toward these objectives: 1) Fisheries Management, 2) Fisheries Statistics, 3) Research and Stock Assessment, 4) Law Enforcement and 5) Habitat.

Award Status: The Commission used funds to finance seven staff positions addressing fishery management concerns, and helped to defray the costs of travel and meetings. Fisheries Statistics funds were dedicated to participation in ACCSP, FIN, NEAMAP, and maintenance of the Lobster Database. This grant has funded research studying socioeconomic data collection, and analyzing social and economic effects of fisheries management, gear selectivity and bycatch, spatial multispecies models, power generating plant effects, and lobster stock assessments. Services of law enforcement contractor was continued with efforts directed toward development of annual law enforcement reports on the horseshoe crab, Atlantic herring, American lobster, red drum, and Atlantic menhaden fisheries. Work of the Habitat Committee was also supported.

Contact: Robert Beal
Agency: Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
Date Initiated: 2004

Current Year Cost:

2005	**2006**
$ 1,909,370	$ -0-

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Project Title: Implementation of the Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program

Project and Award Numbers: 3-ACA-172/NA05NMF4741026

Purpose: The goal of the cooperative, state–federal program for conservation of Atlantic coastal fisheries is to assist in the design and implementation of a cooperative state-federal marine and coastal fisheries-dependent statistics program. The mission of the Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP) is to design, implement, and conduct marine fisheries statistics data collection programs and to integrate those data into a single data management system that will meet the needs of fishery managers, scientists, and fishermen.

Award Status: ACCSP staff developed meeting schedules and drafted the annual RFP. Proposals were reviewed, and requests for revisions were compiled and distributed. Communications continued with current projects and progress was tracked. Several Technical Series documents were updated and uploaded to the ACCSP website. The ACCSP Coordinator assisted both state and federal agencies in implementing SAFIS and other reporting tools, and presented relevant information at various meetings and events. Development of the Recreational Catch/Effort Module, the Sociological and Economic Module, the Biological Module, the Bycatch, Releases and Protected Species Interaction Module, and the Metadata Module continued. Staff began developing the Vessel Trip Reporting Module and the final version of the Dealer Reporting Module was completed and released. Refinements continued on a new ACCSP biological tracking system. Routine maintenance was performed on the database and the primary database server was replaced. Several data queries were supplied to interested parties. Lastly, regional coordination continued among the ACCSP, the Gulf Fisheries Information Network (GulfFIN), and the Pacific FIN (PacFIN) and Pacific Recreational FIN (PC RecFIN) to ensure a consistent national data collection and data management system.

Contact: Maury Osborn
Agency: Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
Date Initiated: 2005

Current Year Cost:

2005	**2006**
$ 1,506,194	$ -0-

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Project Title: A Cooperative State-Federal Program for the Conservation of Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

Project and Award Numbers: 3-ACA-180/NA05NMF4741025

Purpose: The goal of the cooperative, state–federal program for conservation of Atlantic coastal fisheries is to manage, enhance, restore and maintain the shared fisheries of the Atlantic coast, with principal emphasis on the conservation and restoration of migratory marine and diadromous fishery resources and their habitat, as well as the maintenance, enhancement, and improvement of public uses and benefits from these resources, including seafood production, recreation, and commerce. This will be accomplished through five tasks: fisheries conservation and management, fisheries statistics, research and stock assessment, law enforcement, and habitat

activities.

Award Status: The Commission used funds to finance seven staff positions directed to addressing fisheries management, and helped to defray the costs of travel and meetings Staff served on several Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP) committees and continued coordination efforts to integrate ACCSP into the stock assessment process. Research and Assessment support took the form of funding various committee meetings and workshops and drafting assessment documents for pertinent species. A law enforcement coordinator position was continued serving to facilitate communication between various ASMFC committees and ensure accurate state reporting. Annual enforcement reports on FMP managed species were prepared, and a Law Enforcement committee meeting was convened. The Habitat Committee convened several times to discuss water quality and to initiate a program under the National Fish Habitat Initiative.

Contact: Robert Beal
Agency: Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
Date Initiated: 2005

Current Year Cost:

2005	**2006**
$ 1,914,145	$ 2,078,083

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Project Title: Phase I – A Cooperative State–Federal program for the Conservation of Atlantic Coastal Fisheries – Initiatives to Respond to Ongoing and Emerging Interjurisdictional Fishery Issues

Project and Award Numbers: 3-ACA-246/NA05NMF4741268

Purpose: The goal of the cooperative, state–federal program for conservation of Atlantic coastal fisheries is to manage, enhance, restore, and maintain the shared fisheries of the Atlantic coast, with principal emphasis on the conservation and restoration of migratory marine diadromous fishery resources and their habitat. ASMFC will conduct research projects, data collection, and data analysis to address ongoing and emerging issues in Interjurisdictional fishery management. Efforts will support American Lobster, Atlantic Menhaden, Red Drum, Eel, Sturgeon, and Shad research and management and conduct the Nearshore Trawl Survey.

Award Status: ASMFC monitored port and sea sampling efforts in the Atlantic States. Generally, the necessary data has been collected, entered into a database, and analyzed. Additional staff was required in Massachusetts and New York. The peer review of Benchmark American Lobster Stock Assessment has been completed. ASMFC conducted a ventless trap survey in New England waters. Maine purchased 475 traps, contracted 6 industry participants, and the study was conducted over a 3-month period. Preliminary results indicate higher catch rates in eastern Maine than in western Maine. New Hampshire completed its database and eight

traps have been ordered and delivered. Massachusetts also contracted with six fishermen, and sampling is ongoing. Rhode Island has contracted with three fishermen and six survey trips have been conducted. A Light Detection and Ranging (LIDAR) study was initiated, and calibration and testing is planned. Installation and testing of the fish tank located at VIMS has progressed, and LIDAR equipment has been delivered. An additional menhaden study was conducted in conjunction Maryland Department of Natural Resources, investigating temporal and spatial variability in growth and production. Preliminary growth estimates for YOY menhaden were derived from monthly samples and a mid-water trawl survey. Otolith analysis and dietary analyses are underway. Five survey cruises have been conducted to determine larval influx of menhaden and preliminary length distributions indicate two cohorts, possibly of different geographic origin in Chesapeake Bay. A red drum tagging study has resulted in the tagging of 35 red drum by eight participating anglers, with the subsequent return of three tags. The creel survey resulted in 2,735 interviews, 201 of which involved anglers targeting striped bass. Demographic analyses were subsequently conducted on data obtained from the survey, yielding that the average observer was 47 years old, and were largely local, married Caucasian men.

Contact: Robert Beal
Agency: Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
Date Initiated: 2005

Current Year Cost:

2005	**2006**
$ 1,105,724	$ 1,035,127

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Project Title: A Cooperative State-Federal Program for the Conservation of Atlantic Coastal Fisheries – Maine & New Hampshire Trawl Efficiency Study

Project and Award Numbers: 3-ACA-247/NA05NMF4741275

Purpose: The goal of the cooperative, state–federal program for conservation of Atlantic coastal fisheries is to conduct a research project to address ongoing and emerging issues associated with the nearshore trawl survey conducted in Maine and New Hampshire. Through this program ASMFC will address uncertainties that have arisen in previous surveys regarding factors that can affect the consistency of data collection, and further increase the confidence in the data collected by the Maine/New Hampshire survey especially by commercial fishermen and other end users.

Award Status: Net tests in the flume tank located at Memorial University were conduced in early July which examined net performance under a variety of conditions. Tests indicated that towing speeds in excess of 2.8 knots results in a reduced efficiency of the net for bottom dwelling species. Performance was good at all other speeds. Additionally, it was determined both that net configuration held well in a cross-tide simulation and that lobster traps would not impact net performance. A variety of images and measurements were taken during the trials.

Contact: Robert Beal
Agency: Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
Date Initiated: 2005

Current Year Cost:

2005	**2006**
$ 50,000	$ -0-

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Project Title: A Cooperative State-Federal Program for the Conservation of Atlantic Coastal Fisheries – Hudson River Atlantic Sturgeon Tagging Study

Project and Award Numbers: 3-ACA-248/NA05NMF4741276

Purpose: The goal of the cooperative, state-federal program for conservation of Atlantic coastal fisheries is to address ongoing and emerging issues associated with the interjurisdictional management of Atlantic Sturgeon. ASMFC will address the following objectives through this grant: determine size and sex composition of mature Atlantic sturgeon spawning in the Hudson River Estuary; identify movement and habitat use of mature Atlantic sturgeon in the Hudson River Estuary prior to, during, and after spawning; identify specific spawning habitat in the Hudson River Estuary; and provide fish that can be tagged to identify post spawning movement and habitat use of Hudson River Atlantic sturgeon in the Atlantic Ocean.

Award Status: Investigators captured 54 adult Atlantic sturgeon in the Hudson River. Investigators have identified needed sampling conditions and net configurations, to be employed in future sampling efforts. Commercial fishermen were also consulted to improve sampling techniques. Of the 54 sturgeon captured, 10 were implanted with PAT tags. Additionally, 8 of these 10 received long term sonic tags, and four of the 10 received short-term sonic tags. This variety of tags will help collect temperature, depth and location information. Logistical problems prevented staff from utilizing the DIDSON sonic imaging system for the identification of spawning habitat. Sonic tracking of individual fish to specific locations was completed. Movements to identify habitat use were tracked weekly using sonic tagged sturgeon by staff, and by newly deployed submersible hydrophones. Sturgeon will be tracked until all have left the river.

Contact: Robert Beal
Agency: Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
Date Initiated: 2005

Current Year Cost:

2005	**2006**
$ 49,250	$ 49,250

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Project Title: A Cooperative State–Federal Program for the Conservation of Atlantic Coastal Fisheries – Longline Study of Adult Red Drum

Project and Award Numbers: 3-ACA-249/NA05NMF4741280

Purpose: The goal of the cooperative, state–federal program for conservation of Atlantic coastal fisheries is to conduct a series of research and data collection projects and data analysis to address ongoing and emerging issues associated with red drum management. ASMFC will conduct research to assess stock status and abundance; increase near-shore and estuary survey efforts and initiate a coastwide tagging program to help estimate mortality and migration patterns; and conduct biological sampling of catch to determine size and age structure of stock.

Award Status: In North Carolina, two technicians were hired and sampling gear was constructed. To date, no sampling has been conducted due to the absence of a biological opinion being issued by NMFS on the potential for the incidental take of endangered species. South Carolina completed gear maintenance and construction, and hired and trained new staff in project procedures. Additionally, staff interviewed knowledgeable individuals and studied navigation charts to determine potential sampling sites for the upcoming sampling season. During this sampling season, four sampling trips were conducted resulting in the capture of 22 adult red drum. Georgia completed scheduled modifications to the sampling vessel; however, due to funding delays the scheduled sampling remains delayed. The appropriate modifications have been requested of NMFS, and a supplemental NEPA review is in process.

Contact: Robert Beal
Agency: Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
Date Initiated: 2005

Current Year Cost:

2005	**2006**
$ 232,766	$ 258,766

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Project Title: A Cooperative State-Federal Program for the Conservation of Atlantic Coastal Fisheries – NEAMAP Pilot Program

Project and Award Numbers: 3-ACA-250/NA05NMF4741281

Purpose: The goal of the cooperative, state–federal program for conservation of Atlantic coastal fisheries is to determine the feasibility of expanding the trawl survey work into state waters and determine biomass, length, and age structures, and diet composition of finfish. This survey will employ a fishery-independent bottom trawl from New York to North Carolina as a pilot survey as part of the Northeast Area Monitoring and Assessment Program (NEAMAP).

Award Status: During the last reporting period, a formal contract was developed between the College of William and Mary and the captain of the research vessel. The vessel was inspected and determined to be safe and capable of performing the proposed work. Equipment, including two nets, has been purchased, and the majority has been received. Two pre-pilot surveys were conducted by separate researchers. Testing of the net met or exceeded design specifications in both tests. The pilot survey is scheduled to begin in September 2006.

Contact: Robert Beal
Agency: Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
Date Initiated: 2005

Current Year Cost:

2005	**2006**
$ 250,000	$ 278,000

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Project Title: Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program

Project and Award Numbers: 3-ACA-256/NA06NMF4740019

Purpose: The goal of the cooperative, state–federal program for conservation of Atlantic coastal fisheries is to assist in the design and implementation of a cooperative state–federal marine and coastal fisheries-dependent statistics program. The mission of the Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP) is to design, implement, and conduct marine fisheries statistics data collection programs and to integrate those data into a single data management system that will meet the needs of fishery managers, scientists, and fishermen.

Award Status: No reports have been received to date.

Contact: Laura Leach
Agency: Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

Current Year Cost:

2005	**2006**
$ -0-	$ 1,517,751
$ -0-	$ -0-

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CONNECTICUT

Project Title: Upgrading Connecticut's Marine Fisheries Data Collection Program & Data Management System to ACCSP Standards

Project and Award Numbers: 3-ACA-152/NA03NMF4740223

Purpose: Through this grant, Connecticut proposed to bring its existing commercial fisheries data collection program into compliance with Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP) standards and begin supplying trip-level data to the ACCSP data management system. Specifically, Connecticut will revise the existing reporting methods, report forms, and reporting frequencies for licensed commercial fishermen and dealers; migrate the Connecticut data management system for commercial fisheries statistics to the ACCSP developed SAFIS; and minimize the duplicative reporting and data entry of federal vessel trip reports, dealer reports, and weekly quota monitoring reporting.

Award Status: The Commercial Fisheries Catch Log was modified during the previous segment to collect the minimum ACCSP data elements. Development of new reporting forms and SAFIS has been delayed while ACCSP, NMFS, and CTDEP focus on the federal regulatory requirement for electronic dealer reporting. SAFIC was rolled out by NMFS in May 2004. Connecticut transferred its license data to ACCSP for upload to the SAFIS system. New computer hardware and servers are in the process of procurement and installation. In addition, the development of the fishermen portion of the SAFIS system has been delayed. Statutory changes were made that require fishermen who sell their catch directly to the public or who have their catch trucked out-of-state, report as dealers. Development of a reporting mechanism to capture this data is ongoing.

Contact: Mark Alexander
Agency: Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection
Date Initiated: 2003

Current Year Cost:

2005	**2006**
$ 124,094	$ -0-
$ -0-	$ -0-

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Project Title: Interstate Marine Fisheries Management

Project and Award Numbers: 3-ACA-178/NA05NMF4741028

Purpose: This grant was proposed to assist Connecticut in meeting compliance requirements for the effective implementation of the ASMFC FMPs through the collection of fishery-dependent information from fishermen and dealers, and a directed conservation law enforcement program. Currently, Connecticut must implement and administer FMPs for 16 species or species groups. During the first year of this multi-year award, fisheries statistics activities will be continued, including involvement with ACCSP and migration of the data management system to SAFIS. Technical and analytic support will be provided to staff participating in stock assessments and

FMP development. Lastly, enforcement activities will support dockside, dealer, and vessel inspection.

Award Status: A total of 48,012 catch reports and landings records were processed for the 2006 statistical year and 1,294 records were processed for the 2005 statistical year. Status reports were generated and used internally to resolve incomplete reporting issues. Staff successfully monitored landings for several fisheries, and the necessary notifications were mailed. An average of 214 license holders were delinquent in monthly reporting; however, no referrals were made to Law Enforcement. Audits of monthly logbook reports against dealer reports continued, but attempts to automate the auditing process remained hampered by inconsistencies. Year-to-date 2005 catch and dealer reports have been combined and summarized for inclusion in the NMFS report, *Fisheries of the United States* Data sets of summaries were made available for use by researchers and managers, and ad hoc data requests were processed by the Statistics Program staff. A total of 130 overtime hours of enforcement of ASMFC management regulations were funded during this reporting period and focused on summer flounder, lobster, alewives, scup, bluefish, winter flounder, black sea bass, tautog, Atlantic menhaden, and horseshoe crab. This effort resulted in 127 arrests and 87 warnings. Remaining funds were used to purchase replacement PFDs and to fund safety training.

Contact: Mark Alexander
Agency: Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection
Date Initiated: 2005

Current Year Cost:

2005	**2006**
$ 168,826	$ 196,926

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DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Project Title: Push-net Survey for Young-of-the-Year American Shad, American Eel Elver Trapping in Rock Creek, and Production of Yolk-sac Fry American Shad

Project and Award Numbers: 3-ACA-255/NA05NMF4741297

Purpose: The overall goal of this grant was to study the population levels of both American shad and American eel, and to try to devise a strategy which will allow for the protective management of the species so that their populations can be maintained at acceptable levels. To accomplish this objective, the District of Columbia proposed to monitor the YOY American shad and to help rebuild the population through the artificial spawning of wild caught shad, and continue to gather data on elver population through sampling.

Award Status: A total of three push-net surveys have been completed, collecting 162 YOY American shad. Analyses of samples will take place following the conclusion of the sampling

season. The use of the English elver trap was discontinued due to its ineffectiveness in previous sampling seasons, and has been replaced with backpack electrofishing. During one sampling run, 50 eels were collected, none of them elvers. Sampling will continue, and effectiveness will be evaluated at the end of the award. Gillnetting efforts for adult shad proved unsuccessful in D.C. waters,so adult shad were targeted downstream in Maryland sections of the Potomac. Fertilized eggs from captured adults were treated and hatched out at the Aquatic Resources Education Center and 180,000 fry were stocked into the Anacostia River.

Contact: Jon Siemien
Agency: District of Columbia, Department of Health
Date Initiated: 2005

Current Year Cost:

2005	**2006**
$ 39,426	$ -0-

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Project Title: Push-net Survey for Young-of-the-Year American Shad, Production of Yolk-Sac American Shad Fry, and American Eel Trapping

Project and Award Numbers: 3-ACA-264/NA06NMF4740235

Purpose: The overall goal of this grant was to study the population levels of both American shad and American eel, and to try to devise a strategy which will allow for the protective management of the species so that their populations can be maintained at acceptable levels. To accomplish this objective, the District of Columbia proposed to monitor the YOY American shad and to help rebuild the population through the artificial spawning of wild caught shad, and continue to gather data on elver population through sampling.

Award Status: No reports have been received to date.

Contact: Jon Siemien
Agency: District of Columbia, Department of Health
Date Initiated: 2006

Current Year Cost:

2005	**2006**
$ -0-	$ 39,051

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DELAWARE

Project Title: Coastal Fisheries Management Assistance

Project and Award Numbers: 3-ACA-243/NA05NMF4741210

Purpose: The goal of this multi-faceted project is to enhance state cooperation, management, and analysis of fisheries data and to support ASMFC Fishery Management Plans (FMPs). Funds will be dedicated to three specific projects: an update of the blue crab assessment and the risk/uncertainty analysis in addition to commercial catch sampling, a continuation of law enforcement to support the implementation of FMPs, and continued support of the FMP for horseshoe crabs.

Award Status: Delaware successfully completed its first year of this 5-year grant and is into its second year. There were three separate gender-related stock assessments of the blue crab resources of Delaware Bay. New male and female fishing mortality rate reference points were calculated using assembled fishery and biological data, including newly identified sex-specific growth rates. Delaware concluded that overfishing is not occurring, yet the stock is heavily exploited and at low levels of spawning biomass. Commercial and recreational blue crab harvest was compiled from 1978 to 2005 and sex-specific population models are currently being investigated. Law enforcement patrols and special operations in the first year conducted 5,514 boardings and produced 45 arrests. The Delaware Bay horseshoe crab spawning and egg survey was conducted in May and June 2006 through a unique inter-state and inter-agency collaboration, and fishery sampling of the commercial horseshoe crab was conducted throughout the first year.

Contact: Richard Wong
Agency: Delaware Department of Natural Resources & Environmental Control
Date Initiated: 2005

Current Year Cost:

2005	**2006**
$ 171,759	$ 170,833

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MAINE

Project Title: Commercial Catch Sampling and Bycatch Survey of Two Pelagic Fisheries

Project and Award Numbers: 3-ACA-245/NA05NMF4741252

Purpose: To collect commercial catch samples of Atlantic herring and Atlantic mackerel throughout the range of the fisheries, to continue the portside bycatch survey of the Atlantic herring fishery and expand the project to include the Atlantic mackerel fishery, and assist with port and sea sampling of Atlantic halibut during the Maine state waters fishery.

Award Status: Over the course of the year, a total of 192 herring samples were collected from 24 vessels in 11 ports from Maine to Rhode Island. Data generated from this program were used in the 2006 Transboundary Resource Assessment Committee and included in the NEFMC Amendment 1 to the existing FMP. Intensive sampling and timely processing allowed managers to accurately predict spawning closures. A total of 19 samples of mackerel were collected, from six ports from Maine to New Jersey. Samples were provided to the Northeast Fisheries Science Center for aging. This data was subsequently included in the recent stock assessment completed in 2006. A total of 86 herring and three mackerel bycatch samples were collected during the project's duration. 2,373 metric tons of herring were sampled for bycatch, and incidental catches of mackerel counted for 20 metric tons, or 0.84 percent, of the total observed catch. 480 metric tons of mackerel were sampled for bycatch, and incidental catches of herring accounted for 17 percent of the observed catch. The results of this project are useful in quantifying and understanding the extent of retained bycatch in the Atlantic herring and mackerel fisheries.

Contact: Kohl Kanwit
Agency: Maine Department of Marine Resources
Date Initiated: 2005

Current Year Cost:

2005	**2006**
$ 69,949	$ -0-

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Project Title: Marine Resource Monitoring of Marine Fisheries

Project and Award Numbers: 3-ACA-252/NA05NMF4741283

Purpose: The goal of this program for the conservation of Atlantic coastal fisheries is to obtain accurate recreational catch data describing year class structure and strength of sublegal fish, and monitor several commercial fisheries. To accomplish this goal, Maine will conduct a recreational fisheries statistics survey of the charterboat/headboat fleet, execute a survey through a volunteer angler logbook, monitor the Northern shrimp and American lobster fisheries and maintain marine resources and environmental information systems as needed.

Award Status: Significant preparatory work was completed in anticipation of the field and telephone portion of the charter survey. During the three survey waves, 106 attempts were made to contact charter captains, resulting in 41 angler intercepts. DMR distributed 238 logbooks for the 2006 recreational fishing season. The shrimp fishing season consisted of 140 days between December 12, 2005, and April 30, 2006. Shrimp samples were collected and processed. In addition, sample and interview data was compiled, tabulated, and recorded, and accurate information was provided to managers for stock assessment, management, and research purposes. Additionally, DMR conducted a total of 114 lobster sampling trips, during which 25,544 trap hauls were recorded from 53 ports. An average of three trips were conducted in each

zone during the reporting period.

Contact: Bruce Joule
Agency: Maine Department of Marine Resources
Date Initiated: 2005

Current Year Cost:

2005	**2006**
$ 194,283	$ 193,251

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Project Title: Continuation of Implementation of a Mandatory Dealer Reporting System for Maine Commercial Landings According to ACCSP Standards

Project and Award Numbers: 3-ACA-254/NA05NMF4741288

Purpose: The goal of this project is to bring the Maine Commercial Landings Program (CLP) into compliance with ACCSP standards by implementing mandatory trip-level data collection through a dealer-reporting system. DMR proposed to provide outreach to industry members on new reporting requirements, emphasizing the importance and significance of collection trip-level data; continue to work with industry members on the use of SAFIS and flat file uploading, as the preferred method of reporting; and comprehensively analyze and audit the dealer data submitted to identify errors and non-compliance.

Award Status: Due to an extension of a previous grant, the start date for this grant was delayed until May 1, 2006. Since that time, DMR staff have met with 35 dealers and discussed reporting options, demonstrated and set up the Trip Ticket software, and enlisted dealers to volunteer reporting trip level data before a regulation is implemented. Landings agents continued to monitor and maintain dealer reports for dealers using Trip Ticket, Electronic Upload, and paper reporting methods. ME-SAFIS is currently being updated for species categories and to show birth year for dealer fishermen identification. Newly designed paper trip tickets were distributed to 40 volunteer dealers.

Contact: Heidi Bray and David Libby
Agency: Maine Department of Marine Resources
Date Initiated: 2005

Current Year Cost:

2005	**2006**
$ 224,749	$ -0-

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Project Title: Portside Bycatch Sampling and Commercial Catch Sampling of the Atlantic

Herring and Atlantic Mackerel Fisheries

Project and Award Numbers: 3-ACA-259/NA06NMF4740135

Purpose: The objective of this grant is to establish an effective but low-cost method for the long-term monitoring of small pelagic species. By focusing on portside bycatch sampling, this program has the potential to observe at least 5 percent of the entire landed herring catch and a significant percent of the mackerel fishery. Samples will be collected in addition to the primary goal of the program. These samples will be obtained during bycatch monitoring trips.

Award Status: No reports have been received to date.

Contact: Kohl Kanwit
Agency: Maine Department of Marine Resources
Status: 1 year project – In Progress
Date Initiated: 2006

Current Year Cost:

2005	**2006**
$ -0-	$ 104,633

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Project Title: Interim Support for Mandatory Dealer Reporting in Maine

Project and Award Numbers: 3-ACA-260/NA06NMF4740128

Purpose: Complete commercial landings data are an essential part of fisheries management. The purpose of this project is to bring Maine's Commercial Landings Program (CLP) into compliance with ACCSP standards by continuing to implement mandatory trip-level data collection through a dealer reporting system. Maine began this process in 2004 for all of its dealers who buy from harvesters.

Award Status: No reports have been received to date.

Contact: Heidi Bray and David Libby
Agency: Maine Department of Marine Resources
Date Initiated: 2006

Current Year Cost:

2005	**2006**
$ -0-	$ 94,093

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MARYLAND

Project Title: Maryland Limited Entry for Fisheries Statistics

Project and Award Numbers: 3-ACA-124/NA16FG2422

Purpose: Funds were solicited by Maryland to implement a limited entry commercial fisheries management system for striped bass within the state. To achieve limited entry, Maryland must permit commercial fishermen by gear, issue permit cards, establish check stations, develop a system to receive data, and finally analyze that data in reference to trends.

Award Status: Maryland maintained this limited entry fishery at or below 1,231 participants. At the end of this award, 555 fishermen remain on the waiting list to enter this fishery. State officials certified gear, and collected harvest data by gear type through daily phone reports, SAFIS, weekly written log reports, harvest reports, end of the season totals, and total number of tags used. During the four years of funding, Maryland successfully monitored landings in reference to the quota. In an effort to keep fishermen updated on the fishery, Maryland maintained all pertinent information online with daily updates.

Contact: Harley Speir
Agency: Maryland Department of Natural Resources
Date Initiated: 2004

Current Year Cost:

2005	**2006**
$ 98,562	$ -0-
$ 10,371	$ -0-

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Project Title: Maryland Eel Population Study

Project and Award Numbers: 3-ACA-125/NA16FG2423

Purpose: Maryland proposed this grant to manage the American eel (*Anguilla rostrata*) stocks in Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries for optimum ecological, social, and economic benefit. Through this project, Maryland will work cooperatively toward monitoring the status of the stock; obtaining catch and effort information from fisheries targeting various markets; addressing research and monitoring needs; and developing habitat and water quality criteria necessary for a healthy American eel population.

Award Status: Maryland Department of Natural Resources staff has provided support to the

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) and fulfilled its reporting requirements to the ASMCF annually, detailing stock status in Maryland state waters. Biological data has been collected and tracked throughout the last decade, and biological reference points have been calculated to monitor the population. During each spring of funding, a Young of the Year survey was completed. Yellow eels were tagged with Passive Integrated Transponder (PIT) tags and growth was examined in selected non-tidal streams. Staff also contended with seasonal issues of examining the presence of parasites.

Contact: Harley Spier
Agency: Maryland Department of Natural Resources
Date Initiated: 2002

Current Year Cost:

2005	**2006**
$91,142	$76,204

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Project Title: Completion of a Trip Ticket System and Continued Implementation of SAFIS in Maryland Commercial Fisheries

Project and Award Numbers: 3-ACA-177/NA05NMF4741054

Purpose: The project for 2005 will have two objectives. The first is to complete the expansion of trip level reporting for commercial fisheries in Maryland. This was done by both continuing and refining trip-level reporting started in 2001and used by all of Maryland's 6,100 licensed crabbers, and by enlarging the population receiving the trip-level finfish logbook, so that all commercial license holders will be required to report all commercial activity on a trip-level basis. The second objective of this project is to continue the implementation of SAFIS in Maryland and expand its use by dealers of finfish, oysters, and clams. Use of these reports is an additional step in meeting the ACCSP commercial fisheries data standards and minimum data elements.

Award Status: No reports have been received to date.

Contact: Connie Lewis
Agency: Maryland Department of Natural Resources
Date Initiated: 2005

Current Year Cost:

2005	**2006**
$ 115,000	$ -0-

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Project Title: Maryland Limited Entry for Fisheries Management

Project and Award Numbers: 3-ACA-251/NA05NMF4741279

Purpose: The goal of Maryland's Limited Entry program is to continue to implement a limited entry system for commercial watermen who intend to harvest striped bass. This process includes determining fisherman eligibility, issuing permits, maintaining the waiting list, certifying pound nets and haul seines, monitoring the daily progress toward harvest, analyzing catch and effort, and recommending quota closures and reallocations.

Award Status: Maryland officials have monitored progress toward the quota for both the Chesapeake Bay and the Atlantic Coast striped bass fisheries. Over 35 percent of the pound-net and haul seine quota was reached in Chesapeake Bay and nearly 20 percent of the quota was landed for the Atlantic fishery. Additionally, 20 percent of the hook and line quota for Chesapeake Bay has been landed. DNR maintains and regularly updates a website to keep commercial fishermen informed of closures, regulation changes, and landings. Declarations for the 2007 commercial striped bass fishery were required in August, and 1,194 declarations were received for all gear types, just shy of the 1,231-license cap. Seven pound net sites were registered by seven watermen using GPS/GIS software, and 17 site transfers were also completed. Pound net fishermen had 64 pound nets certified during the reporting period, 16 of which did not pass initial certification and required a second inspection. Lastly, a total of 16 haul seine nets were certified for eight fishermen during the reporting period.

Contact: Harley Speir
Agency: Maryland Department of Natural Resources
Date Initiated: 2005

Current Year Cost:

2005	**2006**
$ 98,562	$ 111,384

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Project Title: Consolidation of Maryland's Biological Sampling Data for Inclusion in the ACCSP Biological Module

Project and Award Numbers: 3-ACA-261/NA06NMF4740269

Purpose: This project will consolidate all fishery-dependent biological sampling data in Maryland into a single database, with formatting to follow ACCSP standards. The objectives of this project are to: identify those databases within the MD DNR system that contain fishery-dependent biological data sampling; analyze the methods and circumstances of data collection to determine whether they are suitable for inclusion in the ACCSP Biological Module; create a database that will permit consolidation of fishery-dependent biological sampling data for

Maryland; and upload these data into the ACCSP data warehouse.

Award Status: The initial approval of this award was significantly delayed, consequently delaying the start date of the project. A hiring freeze in Maryland forced the Department to subcontract this grant to ACCSP to hire a person to conduct the work. The necessary documents were prepared and approved, and the contract with ASMFC was finalized. ACCSP/ASMFC is currently in the process of hiring an individual to conduct the work.

Contact: Harley Speir
Agency: Maryland Department of Natural Resources
Status: 1 year project – In Progress
Date Initiated: 2006

Current Year Cost:

2005	**2006**
$ -0-	$ 88,900

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MASSACHUSETTS

Project Title: Interstate Fisheries Management Support

Project and Award Numbers: 3-ACA-179/NA05NMF4741029

Purpose: The Commonwealth of Massachusetts, through the Division of Marine Fisheries, proposed to participate in the Atlantic Coastal Fisheries Management Act by providing funds for staff capabilities in the areas of Resource Assessment/Fisheries Dependent Investigations and Information Technology & Fisheries Statistics, and will support oversight and management of commercial and recreational fisheries. The Division also will disseminate these statistics using technology including the web, database, and GIS-based tools.

Award Status: Personnel participated in newly initiated cod potting experiments in collaboration with MIT and UMASS Dartmouth and initiated a project to develop a hydrodynamic scallop dredge. Underwater filming was conducted on the cod pots and is being analyzed and the scallop dredge is currently being built. Additionally, staff have lent their expertise to several other gear technology projects funded through different grant programs. Fisheries-dependent sampling efforts were focused on herring, lobster, cod, and northern shrimp, in addition to headboat surveys. The sampling biologist attended several workshops and trainings, and participated in Cod Conservation Zone Patrols and the ISB GOM Cod Survey. Data dissemination involved several large data inquiries. Manual data entry was required and therefore conducted to include federally reporting dealers into the Massachusetts system. Lastly, progress was made on several smaller projects, including: history-based effort control for Lobster Management Area 2, teaching of a workshop on R Statistical Software, development of

new GIS data layers, and updating and managing the database.

Contact: Thomas Hoopes
Agency: Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries
Date Initiated: 2005

Current Year Cost:

2005	**2006**
$ 225,382	$ 225,367

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Project Title: Continue Implementing Electronic ACCSP Compliant Dealer Reporting in Massachusetts

Project and Award Numbers: 3-ACA-253/NA05NMF4741284

Purpose: The objective of this grant is to continue implementation of electronic dealer reporting in Massachusetts during a 12-month period following receipt of funds. As in the first year's program funded by ACCSP, it would continue to fund two positions that would bring all remaining "state-only" primary buyers in Massachusetts into the electronic dealer reporting program that were not brought in the first year of the program. It will also provide for Oracle technical assistance to provide enhancements and help complete the registration tracking module for SAFIS.

Award Status: No reports have been received to date.

Contact: Thomas Hoopes
Agency: Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries
Date Initiated: 2005

Current Year Cost:

2005	**2006**
$ 165,064	$ -0-

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NEW HAMPSHIRE

Project Title: Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP) – Lobster Dealer Reporting System

Project and Award Numbers: 3-ACA-150/NA03NMF4740164

Purpose: The overarching goal of this award is to begin a multiphase process of implementing ACCSP standardized fisheries data collection programs in New Hampshire. In this year of funding, New Hampshire is proposing to: initiate a dealer-reporting module for its lobster fishery; update the dealer and lobster licensing databases; and update New Hampshire's lobster logbook/reports to meet ACCSP standards. Additionally, they proposed to establish a documented data transmission process between New Hampshire and the ACCSP data warehouse.

Award Status: A total of 125 dealers were contacted and required to submit monthly record detailing each lobster transaction occurring within each month. Reporting options consisted of paper medium, which 100 dealers elected to use, or electronic submission through data file transfers or use of SAFIS, which was used by the remaining 25 dealers. In total, 2,564,079 pounds of lobster was transacted, 94 percent of which was reported by wholesale lobster dealers. The majority of the landings were transacted in Newington and Portsmouth. The initial use of electronic reporting methods as an alternative to paper medium was successful for 23 lobster dealers.

Contact: Cheri Patterson and Doug Grout
Agency: New Hampshire Fish and Game Department
Date Initiated: 2005

Current Year Cost:

2005	**2006**
166,005	$ -0-

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Project Title: Law Enforcement of ASMFC Managed Species in New Hampshire

Project and Award Numbers: 3-ACA-240/NA05NMF4741119

Purpose: The overall objective of this grant, proposed by New Hampshire is aimed at funding law enforcement activities of ASMFC managed species. Specifically, the Fish and Game Department proposed to maintain an adequate level of law enforcement activities directed at enforcement of rules and statutes promulgated for compliance with Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) fisheries management plans.

Award Status: Conservation officers conducted high-visibility boat patrols, foot patrols, and dockside inspections, enforcing striped bass and lobster regulations. A 24-hour phone line was also staffed, which allows the public to make anonymous reports to law enforcement. Marine Conservation officer patrols dedicated to striped bass enforcement resulted in 1,004 inspections. A total of 10 summonses and two warnings were issued. Officers conducted 189 inspections of the lobster fishery, resulting in eight summonses and 36 warnings. Additionally, two search warrants were executed in connection with an investigation into numerous lobster violations. As a result, one lobsterman was convicted on 14 charges representing 78 violations of lobster fishing laws and regulations.

Contact: Martin Garabedian
Agency: New Hampshire Fish and Game Department
Date Initiated: 2005

Current Year Cost:

2005	**2006**
$ 38,337	$ 37,832

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Project Title: Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP) – Initiation of Metadata Module and Continuation of Lobster and Coastal Harvest Trip Level Reporting Module in New Hampshire

Project and Award Numbers: 3-ACA-241/NA05NMF4741164

Purpose: Through this grant, the State of New Hampshire will continue with the multiphase process of implementing ACCSP standardized fisheries data collection programs. In year three of this multiphase approach, New Hampshire is proposing to: initiate the collection of statutory and regulatory metadata with North Carolina's developed metadata program; continue supporting the harvest trip level reporting module for New Hampshire's lobster and coastal harvest fisheries so reporting continues to be collected either through a web-based design system (i.e. SAFIS), other prearranged electronic form of reporting, or paper reporting; and continue to supply support, in cooperation with NMFS, for the computerized web-based (SAFIS) reporting stations at New Hampshire's two primary fish cooperatives so fishers and/or dealers can fulfill report requirements for either New Hampshire or NMFS.

Award Status: A delay in starting New Hampshire's dealer and harvest trip level modules has postponed the development of the metadata module. As a result, the start of this project has been postponed until approximately January 2007. A no-cost extension has been granted, extending the period of the award through June 30, 2007.

Contact: John Nelson
Agency: New Hampshire Department of Fish and Game
Date Initiated: 2005

Current Year Cost:

2005	**2006**
$ 30,784	$ -0-

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Project Title: Programs Improving Management of ASMFC Managed Species in New

Hampshire

Project and Award Numbers: 3-ACA-244/NA05NMF4741209

Purpose: The state of New Hampshire proposed this project to collect marine recreational fishing statistics within the state that will be comparable with other state, regional, and coastwide estimates; to monitor the relative abundance of juvenile finfish utilizing the state's estuaries for nursery habitat; to enhance the fisheries dependent data collection for the state's commercial fisheries; and to identify potential horseshoe crab spawning and nursery habitat.

Award Status: During the first reporting period, 1,779 field intercepts of marine recreational fishermen were conducted. All completed interview data has been mailed to Marcro, Inc., for key entry and audit. Quality control visits were made for six interviewers. During the final month of the commercial shrimp season, three samples were collected and data has been entered into the appropriate database. Additionally, staff attended the Northern Shrimp Technical Committee meeting and began drafting the annual 2006 Assessment Report for Northern Shrimp. Lastly, nine horseshoe crab surveys were conducted in the Great Bay Estuary, and data have been collected and entered into a computer.

Contact: Clare McBane
Agency: New Hampshire Fish and Game Department
Date Initiated: 2005

Current Year Cost:

2005	**2006**
$ 106,334	$ 104,930

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Project Title: Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP) – Year 4

Project and Award Numbers: 3-ACA-258/NA06NMF4740116

Purpose: The objective of this project is to finalize the multiphase process of implementing ACCSP standardized fisheries data collection program in New Hampshire. In a multi-year approach, New Hampshire proposed to: continue the collection of metadata (other than statutory and regulatory data) with North Carolina's developed metadata program; continue supporting the harvest trip level reporting module for New Hampshire's lobster and coastal fisheries so reporting continues to be collected either through a web-based design (SAFIS), other prearranged electronic form of reporting, or paper reporting; and continue to supply support, in cooperation with NMFS, for the computerized web-based (SAFIS) reporting stations at New Hampshire's two primary fish cooperatives so fishers and/or dealers can fulfill report requirements for either New Hampshire or NMFS.

Award Status: No reports have been received to date.

Contact: John Nelson
Agency: New Hampshire Fish and Game Department
Date Initiated: 2006

Current Year Cost:

2005	**2006**
$ -0-	$ 67,781

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NEW JERSEY

Project Title: Implementation of Phase 2 of the Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program for the State of New Jersey

Project and Award Numbers: 3-ACA-173/NA05NMF4741094

Purpose: The goal of this project is to bring New Jersey's existing commercial fisheries data collection into compliance with Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program standards. New Jersey will continue to: provide trip-level data from the commercial blue crab fishery, including conch bycatch, to NMFS and transition fishermen trip reporting to SAFIS as the key entry application, so all data are immediately available in one database; implement SAFIS for all reporting by New Jersey's state-permitted dealers for quota-based management of key regulated species and ensure that the reporting dealers include ACCSP data elements; and hire a coordinator to work with dealers and ACCSP staff to implement SAFIS, monitor reporting compliance, and provide quality control and assurance for the data.

Award Status: ACCSP has received necessary information for inclusion in the SAFIS database, including: quality control measures, cleaning records, and removal of duplicates. SAFIS training is now available for New Jersey state dealers, resulting in successful data entry. Weekly monitoring is conducted. A biological sampling program has resulted in the 135 samples. A mapping system of the state water statistical areas is being developed. A SAFIS Coordinator was hired, and attended state, SAFIS, and ACCSP meetings, including an Internet Systems Committee meeting in April during which eVTR was discussed as an option to collect more detailed fisheries data. Several fishermen have volunteered to test this system when it is rolled out. New Jersey has made significant progress with their SAFIS commercial dealer electronic data entry. All dealers with a state or deferral permit have access and ability to use the system. All commercial blue crab harvest data from August 2005 through March 2006 have been completed. The ACCSP Coordinator is hoping to replace this system with eVTR. Monthly reports were checked for errors and provided to NMFS.

Contact: Peter Himchak

Agency: New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection
Date Initiated: 2005

Current Year Cost:

2005	**2006**
$ 89,180	$ -0-

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Project Title: Atlantic Coastal Fisheries Cooperative Management Program

Project and Award Numbers: 3-ACA-238/NA05NMF4741096

Purpose: Through this grant, New Jersey proposed to implement new fishery management planning activities to support interstate fishery management efforts of the ASMFC; to implement new activities to support and enhance state cooperation in the collection, management, and analysis of fisheries data;l and to enhance the enforcement of adopted regulations.

Award Status: Staff participated in committee conference calls and meetings pertaining to a number of species in New Jersey, including: Atlantic Menhaden, Atlantic Herring, Horseshoe Crab, American Lobster, American Shad, Summer Flounder, Scup and Black Sea Bass. Compliance reports were submitted as necessary, permits were issued, quotas were monitored, and a number of species-specific surveys were conducted. Conservation officers expended 1,491 hours enforcing regulations, resulting in 305 inspections of commercial fishermen and 5,077 inspections of recreational fishermen. A total of 456 summonses were issued.

Contact: Peter Himchak
Agency: New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife
Date Initiated: 2005

Current Year Cost:

2005	**2006**
$ 219,444	$ 271,929

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Project Title: Continuation of Phase 2 of ACCSP for the State of New Jersey

Project and Award Numbers: 3-ACA-262/NA06NMF4740252

Purpose: The goal of this project is to bring New Jersey's existing commercial fisheries data collection into compliance with Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program standards. New Jersey will continue to: provide trip-level data from the commercial blue crab fishery, including conch bycatch, to NMFS and transition fishermen trip reporting to SAFIS as the key entry application, so all data are immediately available in one database; implement SAFIS for all

reporting by New Jersey's state-permitted dealers for quota-based management of key regulated species and ensure that the reporting dealers include ACCSP data elements; and hire a coordinator to work with dealers and ACCSP staff to implement SAFIS, monitor reporting compliance, and provide quality control and assurance for the data.

Award Status: No reports have been received to date.

Contact: Peter Himchak
Agency: New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife
Date Initiated: 2006

Current Year Cost:

2005	**2006**
$ -0-	$ 81,264

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Project Title: Biological Characterization of Four NJ Commercial Fisheries

Project and Award Numbers: 3-ACA-263/NA06NMF4740254

Purpose: The purpose of this project is to secure funding from the Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP) to allow New Jersey to obtain biological characterization data on weakfish, American eel, American shad, and Atlantic croaker. The data will be included in the ACCSP database and used for ASMFC stock assessments.

Award Status: No reports have been received to date.

Contact: Peter Himchak
Agency: New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife
Status: 1 year project – In Progress

Current Year Cost:

2005	**2006**
$ -0-	$ 79,722
$ -0-	$ 59,986

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NEW YORK

Project Title: Interstate Management of Marine Fisheries in New York State

Project and Award Numbers: 3-ACA-236/NA05NMF4741086

Purpose: The goal this project, proposed by New York, is to fund the requirements of several interstate Fisheries Management Plans, including data collection, reporting, and administration. This three-part project will successfully administer fishery permits for fisheries managed under ASMFC and regional council fishery management plans and fisheries data management; support bureau of marine resources staff in the collection of fisheries data for species managed under ASMFC fisheries management plans; and provide fishery management planning, implementation, and enforcement to support interstate fishery management efforts.

Award Status: Although the permitting process was previously consolidated into one centralized office, permit staff continued to work to improve and upgrade the new permit issuance system. Funds were also used to purchase office supplies and computer software, and to cover the cost of printing. Fisheries data collection was supported by funding two DEC positions. These individuals combined to conduct the Long Island Haul Seine Survey, the American Eel juvenile recruitment survey, sea-sampling onboard commercial lobster vessels, and fishery-independent American Lobster surveys. Additionally, these staff members administer the commercial striped bass fishery and collect and manipulate commercial lobster harvest data. Due to increased salary for staff elsewhere, the budget for law enforcement equipment was reduced to zero and standardization of reporting of striped bass enforcement activities was discontinued.

Contact: Byron Young
Agency: New York Department of Environmental Conservation
Date Initiated: 2005

Current Year Cost:

2005	**2006**
$ 191,780	$ 189,879

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PENNSYLVANIA

Project Title: Bio-monitoring and Assessment of American Shad and River Herring in the Susquehanna River Basin, Pennsylvania

Project and Award Numbers: 3-ACA-242/NA05NMF4741199

Purpose: The overall objective of this grant is to restore American shad to the Susquehanna River in Pennsylvania. The current restoration approach involves egg collection, hatchery production, and monitoring of adult and juvenile populations in distinct regions of the river. In addition to providing specimens for otolith analysis, monitoring of adult and juvenile shad has also provided information on growth, migration, habitat utilization, distribution, and gross estimates of year class strength.

Award Status: Haul seining was completed in the Lower Susquehanna River on 15 separate days. A total of 23 juvenile American shad were captured, the third lowest on record. Lift netting in the Holtwood Dam Inner Forebay was conducted, resulting in 27 sampling events. In total, 200 out-migrating shad were collected.

Contact: Earl Myers
Agency: Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission
Date Initiated: 2005

Current Year Cost:

2005	**2006**
$ 112,005	$ 108,448

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POTOMAC RIVER FISEHRIES COMMISSION

Project Title: Compliance with Atlantic Coastal Fisheries Cooperative Management

Project and Award Numbers: 3-ACA-239/NA05NMF4741062

Purpose: Potomac River Fisheries Commission plans to bring their agency into compliance with the Atlantic Coastal Fisheries Cooperative Management Act through this comprehensive grant. Proposed activities include: monitoring of recreational fishing data through Marine Recreational Fishing Survey (MRFS) Add-On; monitoring elver migrations through mandatory monitoring and constructing a young-of-the-year database; designing, implementing, and maintaining an up-to-date public website; and funding the cost of publishing a recreational fishing information page that lists current fisheries information and is widely distributed to fishermen.

Award Status: Through a contract with Macro International, Inc., a total of 6,200 calls were completed in Virginia and 8,600 calls in Maryland. Due to the late approval of this award, PRFC fell short of their call targets. Both Virginia and Maryland are using the data obtained from these calls in calculating respective statewide information. Irish eel traps remained an effective gear for sampling YOY eels in this study. Catch per unit effort for YOY eels and elvers increased in 2006 as compared to 2005. Initial migration may be mediated by temperature, but there did not appear to be a consistent lunar effect. PI Computer Consulting continued to improve the design of the website, making it more user friendly while including accurate, up-to-date changes in regulations. Changes in the management plans of striped bass, black sea bass, and summer flounder required PRFC to adopt new regulations, which necessitated the printing and distribution of new recreational and charter fisheries season materials.

Contact: Kirby Carpenter

Agency: Potomac River Fisheries Commission
Date Initiated: 2005

Current Year Cost:

2005	**2006**
$ 101,523	$ -0-

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Project Title: Compliance with Atlantic Coastal Fisheries Cooperative Management

Project and Award Numbers: 3-ACA-257/NA06NMF4740101

Purpose: Potomac River Fisheries Commission submitted this proposal with the goal of bringing the Commission into compliance with Atlantic Coastal Fisheries Cooperative Management Act. Under this comprehensive grant, PRFC proposed to monitor recreational fishing data through Marine Recreational Fishing Survey (MRFS) Add-On; to monitor elver migrations through mandatory monitoring and constructing a young-of-the-year database; to design, implement, and maintain an up-to-date public website; and to fund the cost of publishing a recreational fishing information page that lists current fisheries information and is widely distributed to fishermen.

Award Status: A total of 6,200 calls in Virginia and 8,600 in Maryland were completed by a contractor over three waves. Data from one wave was determined to be acceptable, and testing is still occurring on the other two. Specific data has not yet been provided to PRFC. A separate consulting company continues to improve the design of the Commission's website, which is well-designed and up-to-date. Changes in the management plans of striped bass, black sea bass, and summer flounder required PRFC to adopt new regulations. Using funds from this grant, new recreational and charter fisheries season materials were printed and distributed.

Contact: Kirby Carpenter
Agency: Potomac River Fisheries Commission
Date Initiated: 2006

Current Year Cost:

2005	**2006**
$ -0-	$ 100,557

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RHODE ISLAND

Project Title: Continued Implementation of the Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program in the State of Rhode Island

Project and Award Numbers: 3-ACA-176/NA05NMF4741067

Purpose: With the assistance of these funds, Connecticut proposed to implement an electronic reporting program for non-federally permitted dealers via SAFIS, to continue a lobster catch and effort logbook program with the addition of a finfish catch and effort logbook, to continue to provide outreach and training for the fishing community relative to SAFIS and logbook implementation, and to train relevant personnel and develop a new quota-monitoring database based on data collected via SAFIS.

Award Status: During the last reporting segment, logbook compliance rates continued to be tracked, remaining at approximately 90 percent. Logbook data from 2004 was entered into the database and catch and effort statistics were calculated. Commercial lobster landings in 2004 were reported at 3,058,007 pounds, and this data was used to help determine Area 2 effort reduction. The 2005 logbooks were ordered and mailed to the 1,300 license holders. This segment witnessed an increase in outreach activities, at both meetings and hearings, and maintaining availability for walk-in and phone-call assistance. SAFIS performance evaluation and technical assistance were routine, and a procedure was developed to clean up records. It is hoped that this system will completely replace the IVR system by the end of the year. Preparations have been made to bring state-only dealers into the electronic reporting system. A variety of meetings were attended to solicit comments and provide outreach concerning general SAFIS operations and an upcoming regulation requiring mandatory electronic reporting.

Contact: Mark Gibson
Agency: Rhode Island Department of Fish and Wildlife
Date Initiated: 2005

Current Year Cost:

2005	**2006**
$ 95,365	$ 150,365

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Project Title: Interjurisdictional Fisheries Management Support Program

Project and Award Numbers: 3-ACA-176/NA05NMF4741155

Purpose: The goals of this project are to: implement dealer electronic reporting program via Rhode Island Fisheries Information System (RIFIS), continue lobster catch and effort logbook program with the addition of a finfish catch and effort logbook, provide outreach and training for fishing community relative to RIFIS and logbook implementation, monitoring of Rhode Island state quota managed species using Interactive Voice Response system (during RIFIS implementation), and continue biological sampling and age and growth sample processing of commercially important finfish species.

Award Status: No reports have been received to date.

Contact: Mark Gibson
Agency: Rhode Island Department of Fish and Wildlife
Date Initiated: 2005

Current Year Cost:

2005	**2006**
$ 37,160	$ -0-

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Project Title: Rhode Island Administrative Support to the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission Fishery Management Process

Project and Award Numbers: 3-ACA-237/NA05NMF4741141

Purpose: The goal of this project proposed by Rhode Island is to facilitate the involvement of fishery user groups, conservationists, and the general public in the interstate fisheries management process as mandated under the Atlantic Coastal Fisheries Cooperative Management Act. Through the hiring of two additional principal biologists, Rhode Island will address: coordination of public input, implementation of interstate fishery management plans, participation in FMP development, and general administrative support.

Award Status: The Division of Fish and Wildlife coordinated and provided technical support at five meetings of the Rhode Island Marine Fisheries Council. Additionally, time management recommendations were formulated for RIMFC consideration at 10 advisory panel meetings. The advice gathered from these meetings and a public hearing assisted the department in filing 20 amendments to marine fisheries regulations regarding SAFIS, tautog, summer flounder, scup, striped bass, black sea bass, river herring, and Atlantic herring. Additionally, staff time was expended preparing management recommendations, conducting advisory panel meetings, preparing mailings in support of management meetings, preparing legal notices of public hearings, preparing minutes of RIMFC meetings and public hearings, and preparing documentation for regulation filings.

Contact: Brian Murphy
Agency: Rhode Island Division of Fish and Wildlife
Date Initiated: 2005

Current Year Cost:

2005	**2006**
$ 176,282	$ 174,382

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VIRGINIA

Project Title: Virginia Enforcement of ASMFC Fishery Management Plans

Project and Award Numbers: 3-ACA-175/NA05NMF4741115

Purpose: The goal of this project is to ensure that the Virginia Marine Resources Commission maintains and enhances its finfish enforcement efforts, in particular the enforcement of those regulations promulgated to implement the fishery management plans of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission. Funds from this grant should result in 6,489 hours of enforcement.

Award Status: During the first year of this grant, new regulations were implemented for Summer flounder, Scup, Black sea bass, Black drum, Spiny dogfish, American lobster, Striped bass, Horseshoe Crab, and Sharks. Supervisors and staff attended meetings where FMP regulations were discussed, and passed that information on to the remainder of the Marine Police. In total, 15,457 hours were dedicated to the enforcement of finfish regulations. A total of 65 fish violations were cited, resulting in 55 convictions.

Contact: Lewis Jones
Agency: Virginia Marine Resources Commission
Date Initiated: 2005

Current Year Cost:

2005	**2006**
$ 201,965	$ 200,255

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SOUTHEAST REGION

FLORIDA

Project Title: ACCSP Recreational Fisheries Statistics Program

Project and Award Numbers: NA05NMF4741087

Purpose: To conduct an at-sea sampling survey of approximately 1.6 percent annual one-half to full-day trips made by Florida head boat. The sampling will result in the collection of information on discards as well as harvested fish and will enable the estimation of catch and release by head boat anglers. At-sea observers will record catch information.

Award Status: Extended end date to 3/31/07. The recipient obtained 3,090 completed angler interviews from 155 vessel trips. The number of angler interviews averaged 19.94 interviews/trip, which was slightly less than the 24 interviews per trip originally anticipated. The on-board samplers (usually two per vessel trip) attempt to sample all the anglers on board in this voluntary survey, and generally each sampler can observe the catches of 10 to 15 anglers per trip. Data were submitted to the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission (GSMFC) for scanning and computerization, and the data were sent back to the project scientists for review, corrections, and re-submittal back to the GSMFC. These data were sent by the GSMFC for inclusion in the national MRFSS data collection efforts and conform to the MRFSS data submission protocols and timelines.

Contact: Joe Ohop
Agency: Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
Date Initiated: 2005

Current Year Cost:

2005	**2006**
$ 83,845	$ 91,930

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GEORGIA

Project Title: Interstate Fisheries Management Planning and Implementation

Project and Award Numbers: NA05NMF4741002

Purpose: This project will provide observer coverage to increase the precision of finfish bycatch estimates for the commercial food shrimp and whelk trawl fisheries and experimental trawl fisheries in Georgia. Also the project seeks to obtain biological and catch/effort data from the Georgia commercial demersal and pelagic finfish fisheries using the NMFS Trip Interview

Program. Finally, recipient will conduct a survey for young-of-the-year American eels to supply data for the ASMFC American Eel Technical Committee.

Award Status: Four trips were reported during the 2006 season, with a total of 2,016 pounds of whelk harvested. Observers were able to log a single day onboard a whelk trawl, recording data from seven tows. Collectively, the six tows totaled 3.05 hours of trawl time, averaging 0.51 hours per tow. Star drum, spot, bay anchovy, weakfish, and Atlantic croaker appeared as bycatch most frequently.

A total of 1,010.32 kg of cannonball jellyfish were harvested in observed nets. As a result of larger mesh netting, bycatch continues to be minimal in this fishery. In six tows, a total of four fish and two spider crabs were observed in sampled nets. No interactions with sea turtles or other protected species were observed.

Sampling was conducted monthly in four of the 10 coastal Georgia estuarine systems (Wassaw, Ossabaw, Altamaha, and St. Andrews) using a naked (i.e., no BRD or TED installed) 20-foot Balloon trawl towed by the Department Research Vessel Parker. Trawl sites were in two geographic sectors (creeks/rivers and sounds) of each of the aforementioned estuarine systems and included both random and pre-established fixed stations sampled during the 1977–1985 study. Biological information—including weights, lengths, and number of individuals observed—were collected for each species. At each station, GPS coordinates, tow duration and speed, depth, and tide information were recorded, as were hydrological data (water temperature, salinity, and dissolved oxygen). During this reporting period, 136 tows were conducted.

Contact: Ron Michaels
Agency: Georgia Department of Natural Resources
Date Initiated: 2005

Current Year Cost:

2005	**2006**
$ 151,238	$149,005

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Project Title: ACCSP Cooperative Blue Crab Trap Survey

Project and Award Numbers: NA06NMF4740071

Purpose: A cooperative survey utilizing commercial and recreational fishers to obtain catch, effort, bycatch, and biological information in the Georgia blue crab fishery. Observers will be placed onboard commercial crab fishing vessels on a monthly basis to ensure adherence to sampling protocols and to collect more detailed information on catch, effort, and water quality.

Award Status: Data collection has begun. No results are available at this time.

Contact: Ron Michaels
Agency: Georgia Department of Natural Resources
Date Initiated: 2006

Current Year Cost:

2005	**2006**
$ -0-	$ 46,068

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NORTH CAROLINA

Project Title: Interstate Fisheries Management Program Implementation for North Carolina

Project and Award Numbers: NA05NMF4741003

Purpose: To enhance the processing, availability, and dissemination of North Carolina commercial harvest statistics.

Award Status: Gag grouper landings in North Carolina's General Canvas and Trip Ticket data sets were analyzed. Landings were then adjusted at the workshop to account for any misidentifications of gag grouper as black grouper and to determine the percent that gag grouper composed of all unclassified grouper landings. The adjusted landings of gag grouper show that the fishery expanded in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Landings since then have declined overall, with a large decrease from 1989 to 1991 and another large decrease from 1998 to 2000. Likewise, the total number of trips, participants, and vessels have declined overall since 1994.

A non-baited shrimp trap consisting of two stacked pots (18 x 18 x 36 inches of 5/8-inch mesh rigid galvanized hardware cloth) and two wings (leads) was tested from Carteret County to Brunswick County, North Carolina, to determine its potential as a recreational fishing gear. Bycatch mortality was extremely low, with only one mortality throughout the study. The shrimp trap is a relatively inexpensive gear, easy to set up and operate. The gear passively fishes for shrimp, so the bottom is not disturbed as in trawling. The gear nearly eliminates bycatch mortality and is size-selective based on the mesh size of the trap. Results indicate the possibility that this gear could be a viable alternative to the RCGL shrimp trawl. The gear also has potential for use by commercial fishermen. The results of this study offer insights to fishery managers developing Fishery Management Plans (FMPs) and may assist in the management of the shrimp fishery.

Contact: Brian Chevront
Agency: North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources
Date Initiated: 2005

Current Year Cost:

2005	2006
$ 210,076	$ 208,340

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Project Title: North Carolina Dealer Electronic Reporting

Project and Award Numbers: NA05NMF4741032

Purpose: To maintain and coordinate fish dealer electronic reporting in North Carolina to meet ACSP and NMFS data collection and submission standards.

Award Status: Data collection is progressing normally and the recipient is making progress to hire a data analyst.

Contact: Brian Chevront
Agency: North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources
Date Initiated: 2005

Current Year Cost:

2005	2006
$ 70,885	$ 34,695

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Project Title: North Carolina MRFSS Telephone Survey 2005

Project and Award Numbers: NA05NMF4741031

Purpose: To collect effort (trip) data needed to produce estimates of marine recreational fishing trips in North Carolina. Information will be collected using telephone interviews.

Award Status: The telephone survey conducted 1,736 calls to anglers and 524 For Hire Survey Captains calls. Target species were identified from these calls. Striped bass, *Morone saxatilis*, was most often identified (84.8 percent) followed by Atlantic bluefin tuna, *Thunnus thynnus* (7.8 percent); blackfin tuna, *Thunnus atlanticus* (2.5 percent); and sea trouts, *Cynoscion sp.* (1.6 percent). During the report period, 72,359 striped bass were landed weighing 1,395,318 pounds.

Contact: Brian Chevront
Agency: North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources
Date Initiated: 2005

Current Year Cost:

2005	2006
$ 15,400	$ -0-

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Project Title: NCMRFSS Telephone Survey 2006

Project and Award Numbers: NA06NMF4740182

Purpose: To collect effort (trip) data needed to produce estimates of marine recreational fishing trips in North Carolina. Information will be collected using telephone interviews.

Award Status: Based on phone survey currently completed it is estimated that there were 180,121 head boat, charter boat, and private boat trips made during Wave 1 of 2006.

Contact: David Taylor
Agency: North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources
Date Initiated: 2006

Current Year Cost:

2005	2006
$ -0-	$ 16,215

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Project Title: Socio-economic Analysis of Commercial Fisheries of the Core Sound Area North Carolina

Project and Award Numbers: NA06NMF4740284

Purpose: To collect longitudinal follow-up socioeconomic information of commercial fisheries of Core Sound area, North Carolina. Specifically, the purpose is to compile changes in demographic data on fishing communities, update information on commercial fishing costs, and assess the industry's current perceptions of fishery management practices.

Award Status: A central database of fishermen was created. A total of 530 potential respondents have been identified using the same criteria as previous surveys (at least $1,000 worth of landings in the designated area). Of these, 286 met the criteria for both the current and previous surveys, 137 met it in 2001 but not in the most recent year (2005), and 107 are new to the group. Every effort will be made to find these fishermen, particularly those who may have left commercial fishing. Interviewing will be done primarily over the phone but will include fieldwork for respondents who are difficult to find. The interviewer began surveying in January 2007.

Contact: Brian Chevront

Agency: North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources
Date Initiated: 2005

Current Year Cost:

2005	**2006**
$ -0-	$ 20,835

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SOUTH CAROLINA

Project Title: Continuation of ACCSP Commercial Module in South Carolina

Project and Award Numbers: NA17FG1234

Purpose: Collection of commercial fisheries production and related data and data entry and editing of this data in accordance with ACCSP standards.

Award Status: Commercial fishing data is currently being collected and backlogged information for 2005 has been entered.

Contact: Nan Jenkins
Agency: South Carolina Department of Natural Resources
Date Initiated: 2006

Current Year Cost:

2005	**2006**
$ -0-	$ 60,990