

STATISTICS REVIEW (from page 24)

This correction factor may be the source of an overestimate of recreational fishing trips during 2008. At the workshop we were not able to determine exactly how this 2.01 was derived, but the NOAA staff will be looking into the derivation to see if there could be a problem.

Well if you followed that discussion, lets me continue by saying that there are many other factors involved with the total estimates that I will not go into in any detail because they appeared to follow the expected trends from other states or from past years. However, another correction factor that we identified as a possible issue in the estimates was for the party boat mode.

The Party/Charter boat uses another kind of survey call the For-Hire Survey which derives estimates using a registration of Party and Charter boats to estimate effort. There is a correction factor assigned to these data for under-reporting of trips. This factor, called the "reporting error adjustment factor" is determined by observers identifying boats away from their dock more frequently than trips are reported for those boats.

This correction factor may be overestimated due to night trips or multiple day trips. In 2009 this factor was 2.21 for RI party boats and lead to a direct multiplication of effort in the party boat sector by 2.21 over the reported data. This seems highly unlikely since there are so few party boats in the state (a total of five boats).

Because the catch of the party boat sector is less than 10% of the total catch, this potential error does not generate as large an error in the *total* data set as the "out-of-state correction factor"

discussed above, but is, none the less very significant for the party/charter mode.

So far, all of my discussion has been related to *effort* with nothing on *catch*. Well, we identified some issues with the catch data also.

For one, it appears that night fishing may be under-sampled. This under sampling could lead to a significant bias in the data in that the species that were caught largely on trips returning at night would be under sampled. In the end this leads, not only to an under sampling of these species, but also to an over-sampling of all other species because the total number of trips from the telephone surveys is multiplied by whatever catch data exists. If the night trips are not sampled the day trips would be weighted too heavily.

A NEW PROGRAM TO FIX THINGS?

Well, how about the new program, you know, the one that uses the new saltwater registry data – the **Marine Recreational Information Program** - MRIP? This will solve all of these problems - right? NO, it will not!

What will MRIP do? Why do we need it?

Well, the biggest change is that MRIP will take advantage of an improved database of the households that include at least one recreational fisher. Going back to the beginning of my discussion, I spoke about how MRFSS samples by calling all "coastal households" to find the effort in terms of recreational fishing trips per wave. (to page 31)



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