SOUTH CAROLINA FOR-HIRE LOGBOOK VALIDATION PILOT PROJECT SYNOPSIS

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Project Sponsors: David Van Voorhees, NMFS; Mike Cahall, ACCSP

Project Objective: To have the SCDNR for-hire Logbook be accepted by NMFS MRIP Program as a viable data collection effort and use the data to derive recreational for-hire catch and effort estimates in SC.

Project Background: The South Atlantic Fishery Management Council are currently investigating options regarding for-hire logbook reporting requirements for vessels with federal charter permits. A Technical Subcommittee has been formed to look at data collection, reporting requirement options, and provide recommendations to the council. ACCSP and SCDNR will work closely with this group to ensure that the validation methodology developed in this project will meet MRIP certification and satisfy all requirements from the council for-hire logbook reporting initiative.

Project Description: As for-hire logbook programs are implemented, an opportunity exists to more fully utilize these logbooks for both effort and catch validation. However, previous MRIP projects on For-Hire Logbooks (Donaldson, 2013) noted the need for compliance monitoring, and further development of validation methodologies. Accurate and timely recording of catch and effort from all sectors of commercial and recreational fisheries is critical for proper management of fisheries resources. South Carolina has an ongoing charter boat logbook program consisting of trip level reports submitted monthly. SC charter logbooks contain records of catch, effort and discards at a trip level, submitted monthly from the charter boat sector of the industry. In cooperation with NOAA fisheries, South Carolina will determine if the current standardized logbook may be considered as an MRIP certified logbook program design with the APAIS serving as a validation data collection program. This project will use data from the existing SCDNR for- hire mandatory logbooks, in combination with additional APAIS site based intercepts of charter boats, to evaluate and recommend methods to match logbook reports to dockside intercepts. Expert consultants along with SCDNR staff will review logbook data, create procedures to match reports, and make recommendations on methodology and minimum amount of matching APAIS site assignments for validation and survey design purposes.