

Using field experiments to assess alternative mechanisms for distributing fish to the recreational sector

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Motivation

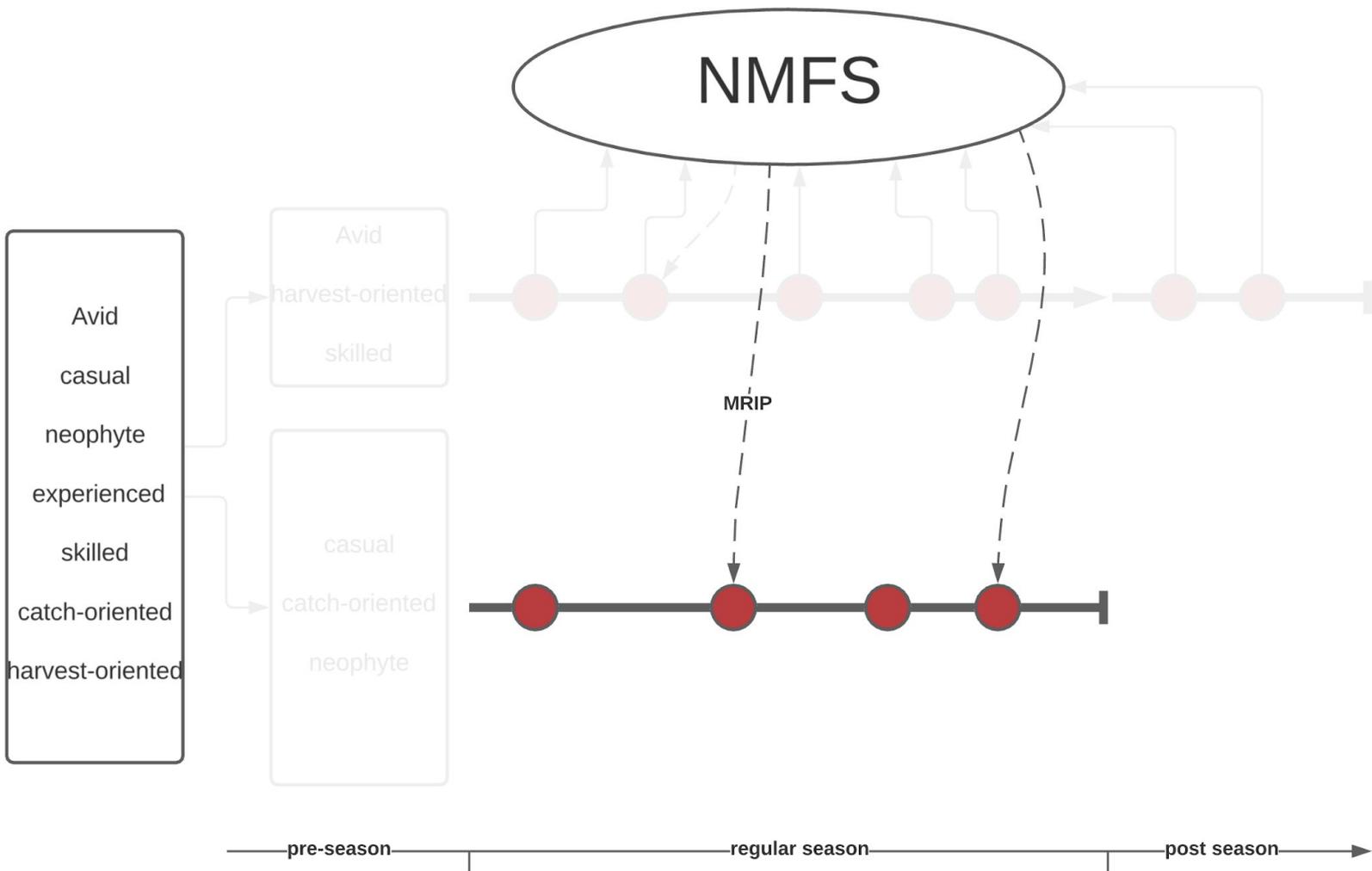
- S-G rec fishery sees high discards - welfare reducing
- This is caused in part by differential timing of existing regs
 - eg. Grouper opens in May/June, while Red Snapper is opened in July, and other co-occurring species are open year-round
- So, what options can address this?
 - Restricted, aligned seasons for co-caught species
 - Area closures
 - Multi-species day pass program

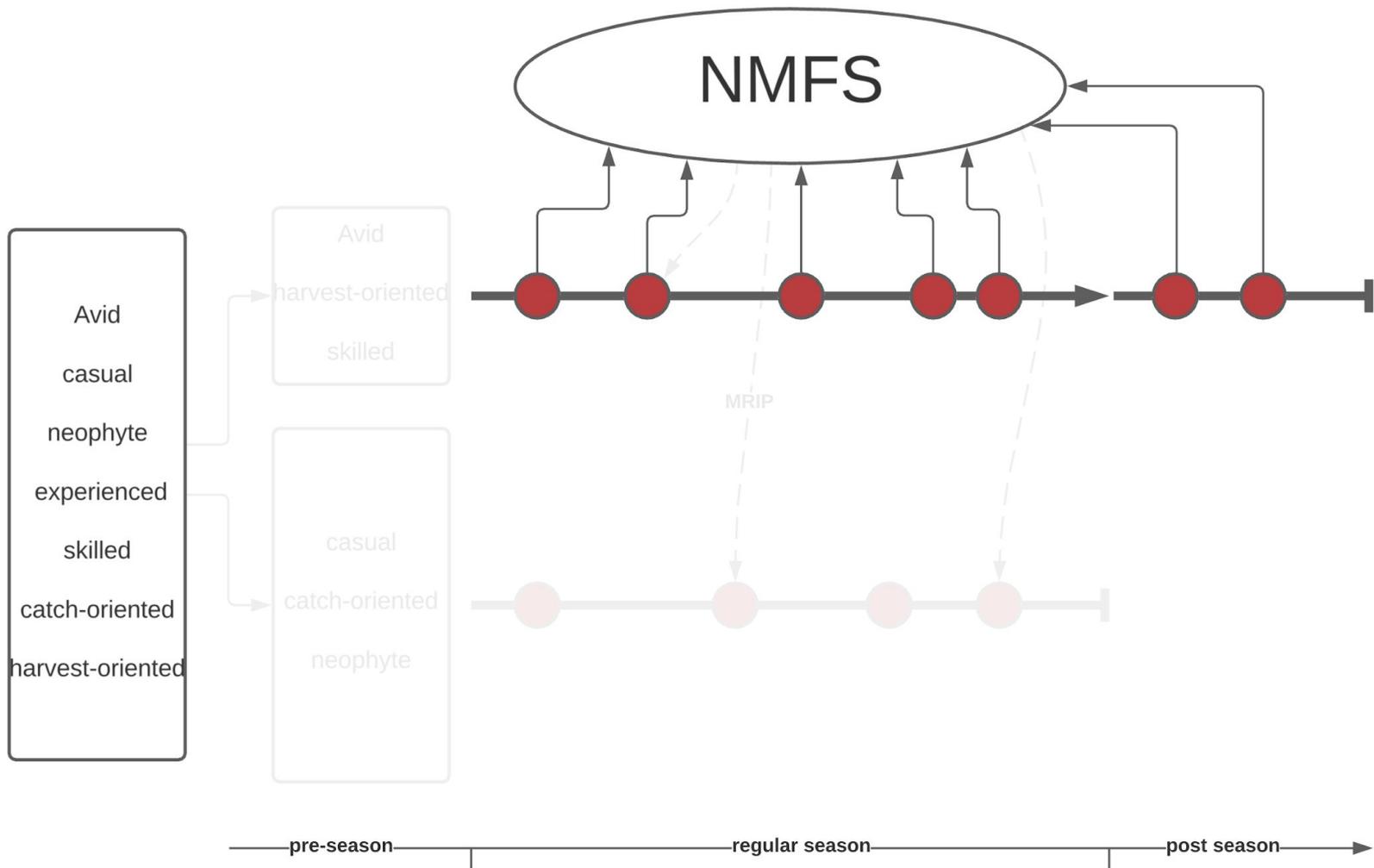
Proposed Pilot Program

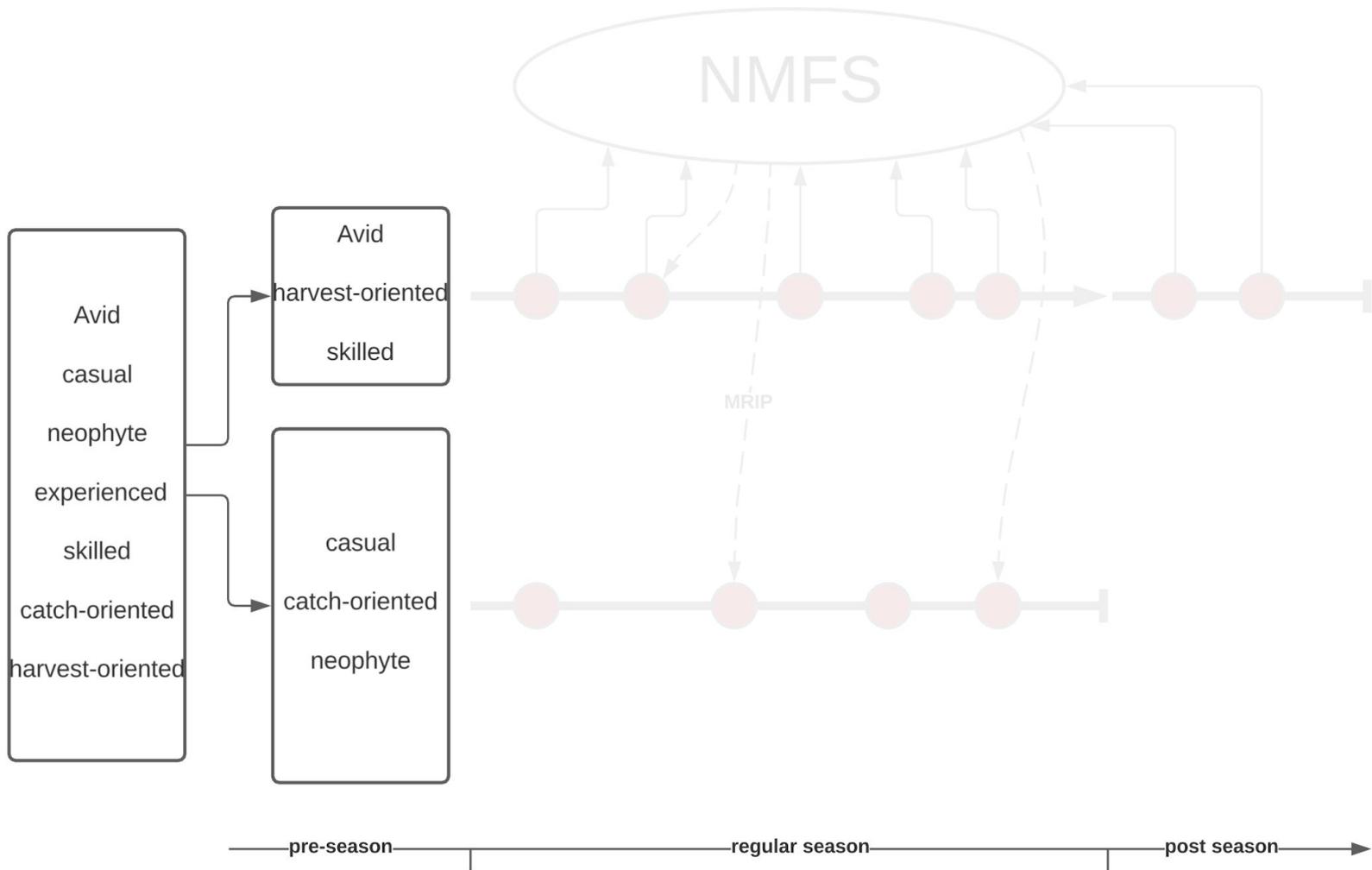
- Allow anglers to fish outside the regular season in exchange for data provision
 - Use lotteries to allocate out-of-season day passes, with the usual bag limit
 - Day pass usage conditional on logbook-style, app-based data collection

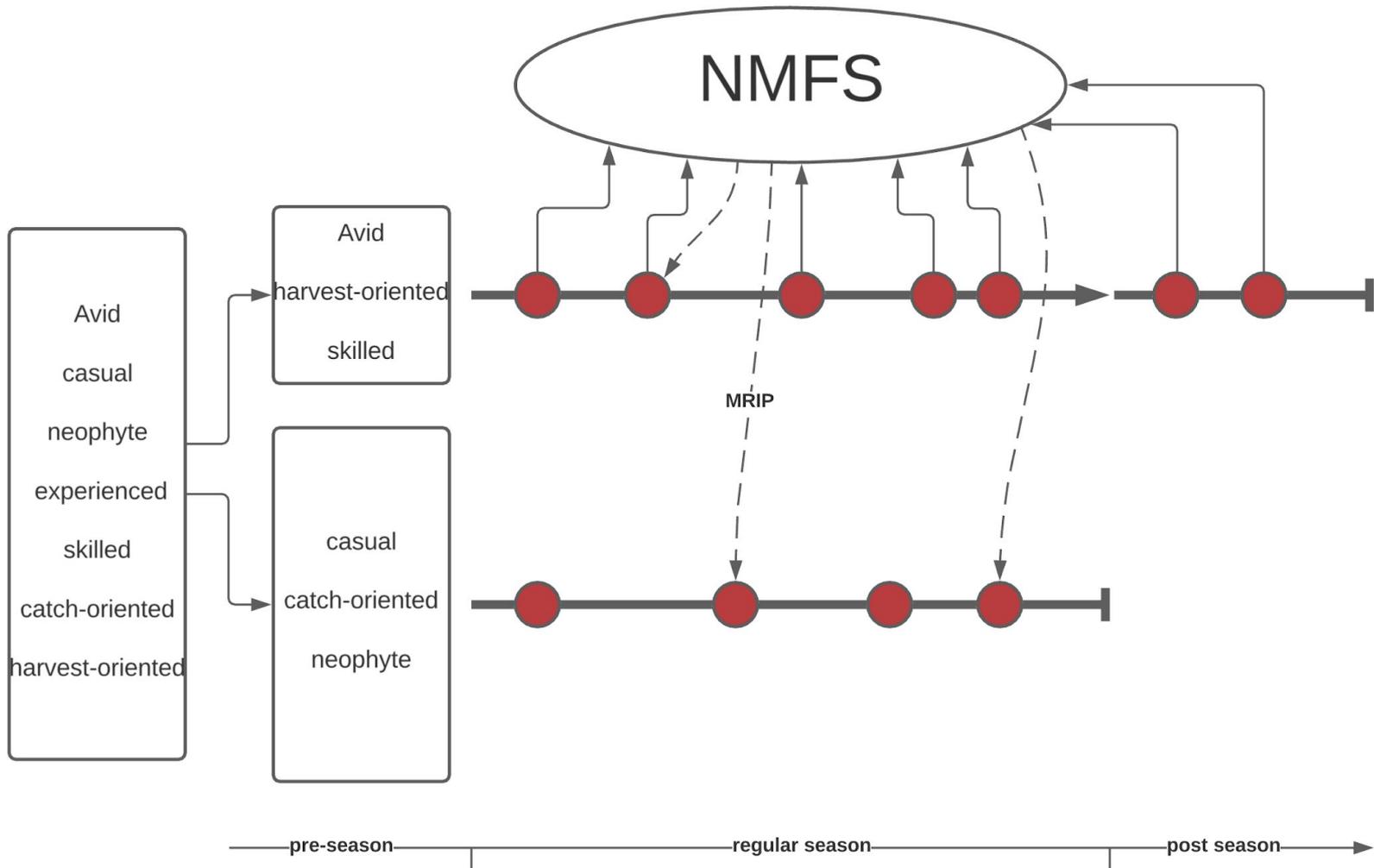
Important:

- Don't reduce opportunity (shorten season) for non-participants. Possibilities:
 - NMFS-retained quota could be used (quota bank?)
 - Some quota could be set aside when there are increases



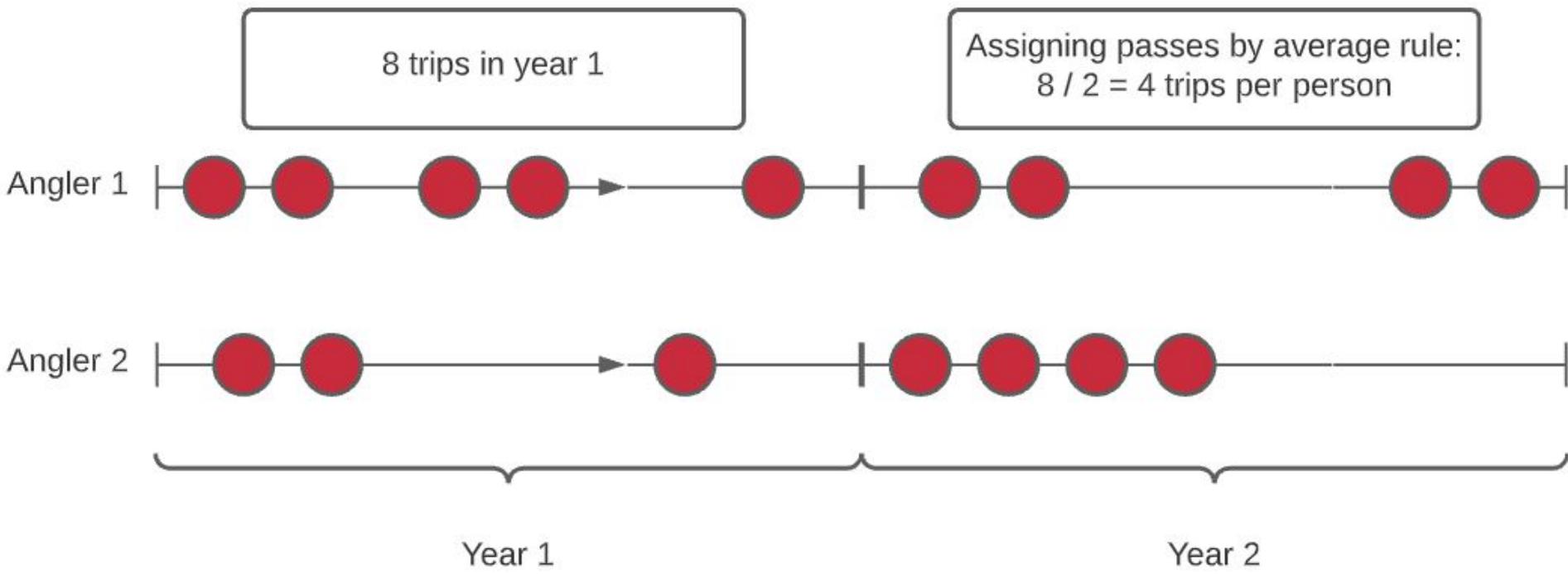






Expanding program across years: Scaling Up

- Treat pilot year data as catch histories
- Then award day passes in year 2 based on those catch histories
- Then award day passes in year 3 based on catch histories in years 1 and 2
- ...



What are some benefits/costs of this approach?

	Benefits	Costs
For an angler-trip	(1) increased flexibility in when to go fishing, (2) greater retention of catch	Reporting costs
For whole system	More precise measurement of catch/removals (ie. reducing uncertainty of discard mortality)	Monitoring costs (law enforcement / intercepts)

How can we *measure* benefits/costs?

	Benefits	Costs
For a particular angler	% of passes used outside conventional season	Time spent using app Help requests / IT complaints
For whole system	Reporting accuracy rate	Misreporting rate

Outstanding Issues

- Which species to include on a multi-species pass
- Bottleneck problems
 - I.e., if you hit the low bag limit of a species like Red Snapper or Greater Amberjack, what then?
 - Can we create stronger incentives to discover more specific targeting strategies?
- Enforceability
 - Trip tickets and reporting of observable harvest: relatively easy, see eg. MS Tails'n'Scales
 - Discard prohibition / reporting B1, B2 catch: may require more creative/expensive solutions
- Pilot considerations:
 - Avoiding program attrition, starting with focus groups
 - Ideal area/state/population to start with