2009 Economic Survey of the Recreational For-Hire Fishing Sector in the U.S. Gulf of Mexico

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Introduction

- **Focus:** recreational for-hire captains in U.S. Gulf of Mexico
  - Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, West Florida
- **Data collected**
  - Captain and primary vessel characteristics, business structure, effort, policy & management
- **Administered every 10 years**
  - 1989 – Texas A&M University
  - 1999 – University of Florida
  - 2009 – Louisiana State University
- **Incorporates all vessel classes**
- **Payment for participation**
- **Postal and internet versions**
Background & Timeline

- **August 2008**
  - LSU, LA Sea Grant, and Center for Natural Resource Economics & Policy received NOAA funding for RFH survey of TX, LA, MS, AL, W. FL

- **November 2008**
  - LDWF announced intent to implement census of RFH in LA using cooperative research funds from hurricane recovery

- **January 2009**
  - LDWF agrees to merge LA census with NOAA RFH survey
  - Possible to pay all participants?
Background & Timeline

- **March 2009**
  - NOAA clearance to move forward with payment-based survey
  - Began collecting 2008 license contacts in 5 states

- **June 2009**
  - Secured additional $150K for LA portion of survey
  - Payment of $200 per respondent in LA
  - Payment of $100 per respondent outside LA

- **November 2009**
  - Draft survey completed after 10 months of revision
  - IRB approval via LSU
  - Panel: reviewed by 18 captains from 12 charter fishing organizations
Background & Timeline

- **January 2010**
  - Completed final postal version with captains’ input
  - Initiated development of an identical internet version
    (LSU Public Policy Research Laboratory)

- **February 2010**
  - Switch survey frame from 2008 to 2009

- **March 2010**
  - Final testing/completion of web-survey
Two Phases

- **Beta survey (n=100)**
  - March 12 – April 9, 2010
  - 34% response rate
  - TX: 40 captains & W. FL: 60 captains
  - 9 internet, 25 postal

- **Full survey (n=2205)**
  - April 16 – June 15, 2010
  - 22% response rate (as of May 24)
  - 103 internet, 382 postal
  - States surveyed simultaneously
  - Census – LA, MS, AL
  - 56% sample – TX, FL
Preliminary Observations

- *Internet responses only, n=112*

- **Ownership status**
  - 76% - captain & owned 1 charter vessel
  - 21% - captain & owned 2+ charter vessels
  - 3% - captain only
  - 0% - owned charter vessel only

- **87% of respondents owned business**
Preliminary Observations

- *Internet responses only, n=112*
- Years actively operating as captain
  - $\mu = 9.5$, $\sigma = 8.4$
  - Median = 8
- Trips
  - $\mu = 83.7$, $\sigma = 73.4$
  - Median = 57.5
- Primary vessel length (ft)
  - $\mu = 27.6$, $\sigma = 12.4$
  - Median = 24
  - Previous surveys focus: multi-passenger vessels
Applications of data

- C&E analyses
- Baseline economic information for future events (regulations and disasters)
- Attitudinal assessments
  - Stock assessments?
  - Catch share management?
  - Offshore petroleum exploration?
- RFH-specific hurricane damage curves
- Oil spill loss & damage assessment
Potential issues?

- Payment for participation
  - Incentive for everyone to take the survey

- Timing of the survey & oil spill
  - Beta survey – data collected before incident
  - Full survey – collecting data as events unfold
  - Beta vs. full survey? Early vs. late responders?
  - Focusing on 2009 data
Moving Forward

- **June 2010**
  - Conclude postal and internet survey
- **July - August 2010**
  - Coding data
- **December 2010**
  - Completion of preliminary analysis
Questions?