

# 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

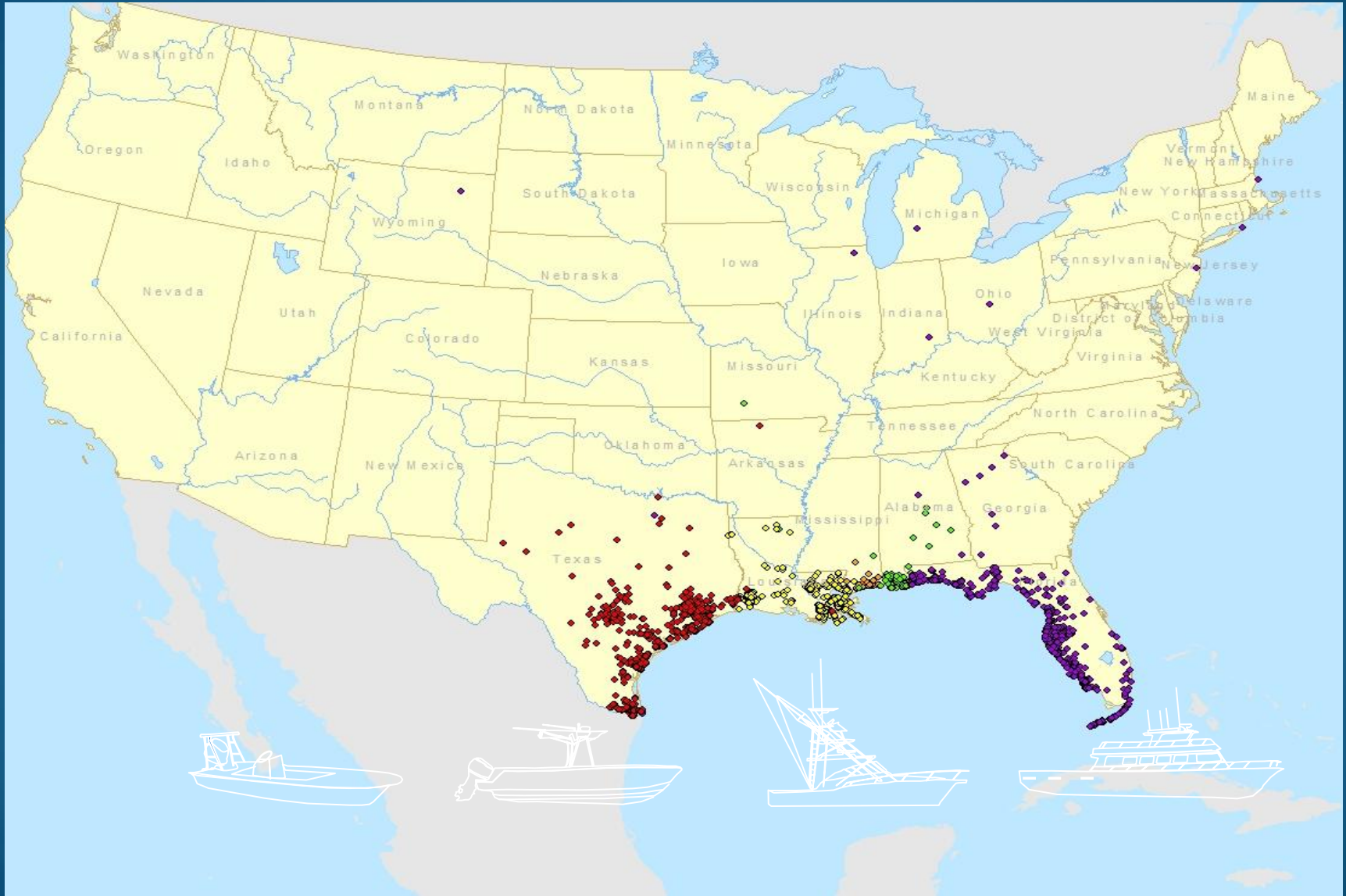
# Background & Timeline

- 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

# Distribution of Captains



# 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?