

Recreational Angler Survey of Sea Turtle Interactions Survey Design

Survey Goals:

- 1) To collect data on angler fishing practices, pier/fishing site characteristics, and sea turtle interactions with fishing gear to identify factors contributing to the interaction rates and mechanisms to reduce interactions from occurring.
- 2) Begin to estimate the level of sea turtle pier interactions that are occurring regionally and/or by state or local area.

Implementation and Survey Design Guidelines:

In order to create comparisons for fishing activities in various states and regions, the Survey should be implemented as follows. When developing a survey design for your state or region, please contact Melissa Cook (melissa.cook@noaa.gov for NC through TX) and Ellen Keane (ellen.keane@noaa.gov for ME through VA) to provide guidance on survey design and data collection based on our past experiences. Any data collected during your survey could be contributed to a larger database managed by NOAA. NOAA may be able to provide you with an Access database for data entry.

- Review the NOAA Site Registry for your state to identify your local Angler Fishing Sites: <https://www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/msd/html/siteRegister.jsp>
 - In considering what sites to prioritize, include: 1) those with high reporting rates, 2) those with low rates, and 3) those with a higher number of anglers.
- Review existing stranding and incidental capture data for your state to determine if there are fishing access sites with known sea turtle interactions.
- In selecting a site, consider the survey goals. Sites with prior reported interactions can be given preference over sites without reported interactions. Alternatively, some sites may have already been well surveyed for angler practices, pier characteristics, and sea turtle interactions. If there is sufficient data at certain sites, preference might be given to sites that have yet to be surveyed.
- Select a minimum of 2 sites, one with known captures and one low/no known captures, and no more than 10 sites per state.
- Survey time intervals - When surveying a site, we recommend the time interval at each site per survey should be at least 1 hour, no more than 3 hours.
- Based on your geographic location, we recommend that each site be visited at least once per month during your survey period with a target of 200 total surveys per site. In designing your survey, consider surveying weekdays, weekends, day and night to capture differences in fishing effort.