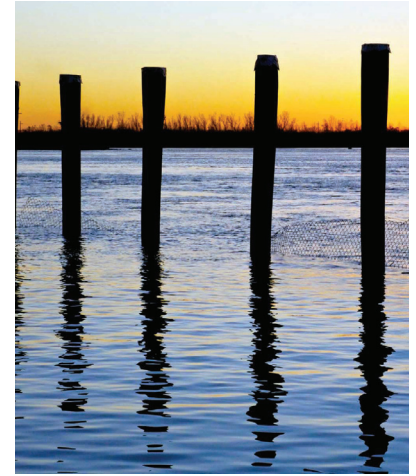


LA Creel Survey Key to Fisheries Management

SINCE THE EARLY 1980s, LOUISIANA HAS PARTICIPATED IN NOAA Fisheries' Marine Recreational Fisheries Statistics Survey (MRFSS) and its replacement, the Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP), which are federal surveys used to collect recreational landings data. Over time the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) realized these surveys, did not provide the information LDWF needed for management namely their inability to obtain reliable landings of individual species in a timely manner and separate landings by regions of the state. On January 1, 2014, Louisiana stopped participating in the MRIP survey and began its own survey, called LA Creel. On December 29, 2017, NOAA Fisheries announced the certification of the Louisiana Recreational Creel (LA Creel) survey design.



HOW WE COLLECT INFORMATION

LA Creel estimates recreational landings separately for private anglers and for-hire fishermen. The survey has two parts:

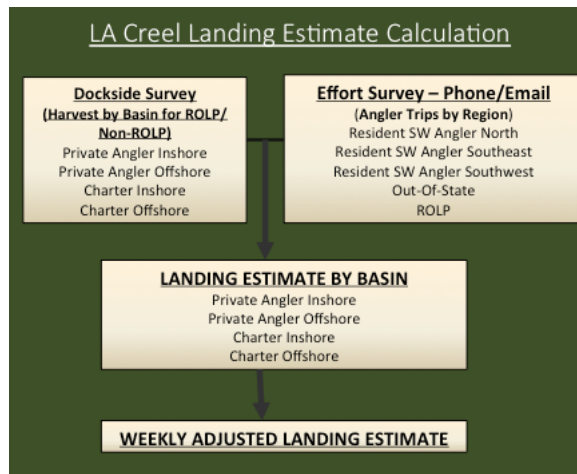
1 A weekly access-point survey, conducted by biologists interviewing anglers about their catch in the following areas:

- Pontchartrain Basin
- Barataria Basin (upper and lower)
- Terrebonne/Timbalier Basin
- Vermilion/Teche Basin
- Calcasieu/Sabine Basin
- Offshore

Survey sites are selected based on proportional probability—the areas that are most likely to have catch, depending on the time of year, get the most site assignments.

2 Weekly phone/email surveys are used to estimate total fishing effort.

• We call and email recreational saltwater fishing license holders from all parts of the state and out-of-state to see whether they went fishing in the previous week, and if they did, how often and in what region of the state (basin). We contact fishermen who hold Recreational Offshore Landing Permits (ROLP) more often during red snapper season.



• In addition, we contact licensed charter captains to interview them about their fishing activities from the previous week. We also contact captains at random, with a goal of reaching 30% of captains who fish offshore (those who hold a ROLP) and 10% who fish inshore (who do not hold a ROLP). During red snapper season, we contact 100% of captains who hold offshore permits.

For more information, visit www.wlf.louisiana.gov/lacreel

HOW WE USE THE DATA

LDWF uses data from LA Creel to make management recommendations for setting catch limits and season dates, and to assess the health of our fishery resources.

BENEFITS OF LA CREEL

- Separate inshore and offshore data provide more detailed and precise landings estimates.
- Basin-level landings estimates provide data for eventual management at the basin level.
- Weekly surveys provide near real-time estimates for timely management decisions.
- A flexible and efficient survey design engages fishermen in the management process.

LA Creel's purpose is to provide statistically significant recreational fishery information to aid in managing Louisiana's valuable fishery resources. It was designed to quickly estimate the number of recreational fishing trips and catch rates by area and species with a minimal burden on anglers.

