

Press release – Commercial Fisheries Research Foundation

Date: October 7, 2013

Subject: Follow up report on the “International Collaborative Research Summit – How Members of the Commercial Fishing Industry Assist with Data Collection to Support Stock Assessments”

On October 1-2, 2013, an international collaborative research summit focused on the subject of how members of the commercial fishing industry assist with data collection to support stock assessments was held at the Village Inn in Narragansett, Rhode Island. The summit was sponsored by the Commercial Fisheries Research Foundation (CFRF), The Nature Conservancy, The Walton Family Foundation, and the NOAA NMFS Northeast Fisheries Science Center, and featured presentations by teams of scientists and commercial fishermen who are successfully working together collaboratively to collect data in support of stock assessments in Norway, Nova Scotia Canada, and the Falkland Islands.

The overall intent of the summit was to provide an opportunity for participants to learn about these case studies, ask questions, and discuss how the lessons learned might begin to be applied to the northeast USA region. Summit participants included members of the commercial fishing industry from the northeast, mid-Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico regions; researchers from private and academic institutions; fisheries managers from state/regional management agencies, and staff from environmental organizations working in the fields of fisheries research and management. NMFS NEFSC personnel were unable to attend the summit due to the federal government shut down.

Some of the key points raised during the summit included the following:

- There is a need to directly link cooperative fisheries research results with the stock assessment process;
- It is critically important to include members of the commercial fishing industry in all aspects of the stock assessment process including the setting of research priorities, on-the-water research, and the assessment itself, especially when key model assumptions are being made;
- It is important to lay a foundation for building trust and respect among all parties, and develop an ongoing communication process;
- It is essential to provide the necessary support for industry involvement as well as the appropriate incentives for engagement in collaborative research;
- Additional efforts should be made in the northeast to explore other U.S. examples of collaborative efforts for data collection and involvement in the stock assessment process.

To view summit presentations, go to the following link: <http://cfrfoundation.org/summit>

Additional information will be posted at this CFRF website in the coming weeks, including a summit summary that includes more details on the major questions/answers and discussion points, and possible next steps.