

August 8, 2012

Dear Colleagues: More than two years ago we undertook an effort to share our experiences in developing *Electronic Fishery Information Systems (eFIS)*. We recognized the growing need for electronic systems to address opportunities and challenges in collection, analysis, and sharing of real time (RT) and near real time (NRT) fishery information. These real time needs included quota accounting, observer coverage, bycatch management, electronic logbooks, fish tickets, research/monitoring, spatial mapping, and product tracking/marketing. A number of us were developing eFIS systems and experiencing some of the challenges including data ownership, information sharing, cost effectiveness, redundancy/duplication, and security/privacy.

To address these issues and share our experiences we organized two workshops and a symposium. The attached joint proceedings summarizes results for two eFIS workshops focused on: 1) US West Coast Fisheries (May 3-4, 2011 Portland, Oregon) and 2) National/International Fisheries (American Fisheries Society eFIS Symposium Sept 8/e-FIS Workshop Sept 9, 2011 Seattle, Washington). More than 250 individuals participated in the symposium and workshops. We would like to thank the presenters, panelists, and participants for their hard work and active engagement. We also would like to thank our sponsors including: *Advanced Research Corporation, Archipelago Marine Research, Ltd., Coastal Oregon Marine Experiment Station, Environmental Defense Fund, Gulf of Maine Research Institute, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Oregon Sea Grant, Project CROOS (Collaborative Research on Oregon Ocean Salmon), and Real Time Research, Inc.*

The 76 page report can also be found at <http://fishtrax.org/> together with powerpoint presentations. The report provides summaries of 35 presentations, comments from 18 panelists, reports from seven breakout groups, and two wrap-up discussions. The report concludes with 18 major recommendations and guiding principles consistent with the findings from both workshops.

Two findings are particularly important for defining and developing next steps:

- ***Bottom up Approach:*** *In the United States, eFIS development will be most successful and efficient if it is industry-driven, that is, using a “bottom-up” incentivized approach, as compared to a “top down” government mandate. As this process plays out, national and state government fishery management agencies will become a “client” of industry that contracts for data that the “regulator” requires, while industry uses its own data to improve economic and management performance. Federal and state government, as well as the fishing and the seafood industry, must both contribute to developing efficient information systems. The challenge is determining what role government should play in encouraging entrepreneurial development that brings value to the industry and supports sustainable fisheries.*

- ***The Need for Standards:*** *Government and industry must work together to develop “standards” that support and catalyze entrepreneurial development of eFIS systems. We recommend that a national-level committee be established to clarify and/or establish critical standards that will advance development and use of eFIS systems.*

As members of the Steering Committees for both workshops we are interested in hearing your ideas and comments about the report and its findings. We would particularly like to hear from you if you are interested in advancing the principles and recommendations that would encourage development of successful e-FIS systems. Please forward your comments to Gil Sylvia ([gil.sylvia@oregonstate.edu](mailto:gil.sylvia@oregonstate.edu)).

### **Best regards, the eFIS Steering Committees**

eFIS West Coast Steering Committee: Jeff Feldner, Oregon Sea Grant; Nancy Fitzpatrick, Oregon Salmon Commission & Oregon Albacore Commission; Pete Lawson, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; Heather Mann, Community Seafood Initiative; Rod Moore, West Coast Seafood Processors; Brad Pettinger, Oregon Trawl Commission; Terry Smith, National Sea Grant/NOAA; Maggie Sommer, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife; Gil Sylvia, COMES/OSU.

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