

Marine Resource Education Program (MREP)

Bridging the gap between fishermen, scientists & managers since 2001

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Council Coordination Committee Meeting

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**Gulf of Maine
Research Institute**

Science. Education. Community.



<https://mrep.gmri.org/about>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CzBZykhJl0>

History of MREP

2001

Started in New
England

By Fishermen, for Fishermen from the beginning.



Mary Beth Tooley,
future NEFMC member, &
John Williamson,
NEFMC member at the time

“Fishermen are trained to catch fish. Biologists, managers, and environmentalists are trained to save fish. We all need some type of education on how to work for the same goals in fishery management.”

- Rodney Avila, former Council member

“Too many fishermen do not understand scientific procedure and many people in management do not understand the fine scale aspects of fishing.”

- David Goethel, former Council member, MREP moderator



History of MREP

2001	Started in New England	By Fishermen, for Fishermen from the beginning.
2003	MREP partners with GMRI	GMRI administered MREP in 2003 on behalf of New England industry leaders, the beginning of a strong partnership.
2012	Expanded into Southeast (SAFMC + GMFMC)	Steering Committee concept was born to ensure regional guidance and uniqueness
2013	Expanded into Mid-Atlantic	Greater Atlantic Region is born to support NEFMC and MAFMC.
2014	Expanded into West Coast	GMRI staff capacity grew to meet growing program delivery demands
2015	Expanded into Caribbean	A new model: Puerto Rico in Spanish, USVI in English. Alternating workshops every other year.
2020	COVID – experimented with virtual programming	Virtual offerings showed challenges to achieve full comparable outcomes to in-person.
2020	Convened a National Steering Committee	GMRI convened MREP leaders from all regions, a body to support program durability amid expansion, evolution, and enable cross-pollination of ideas across regions
2022	West Coast 5-day workshop piloted	Pros/cons to delivery as a two-part series of 3-day workshops vs. a single 5-day workshop.
2023	Expanded into North Pacific	New critical elements added to curricula to meet regional needs. Successful first delivery of single 5-day workshop.
<i>Next:</i>	<i>Potential Pacific Islands scoping</i>	<i>Potential scoping in WPFMC region to see how MREP might partner with and support industry/the region. GMRI will hire additional staff capacity to support growth.</i>

A topographic map of a coastal region, likely the Gulf of Maine, showing contour lines and elevation markers. The map is partially obscured by the title and logo.

Industry advisors guide program development, ensuring it is catered to regional needs

- Regional Steering Committees
 - Curricula topics and objectives to meet regional industry needs
 - Target audience
 - Outreach and recruitment strategy
 - Presenter selection
 - Annual evaluation and evolution
- Additional regional advisors
 - GMRI consults MREP alumni and other industry leaders in ad-hoc conversations to ensure a wide range of perspectives are incorporated into program strategy and decisions

Industry advisors guide program development, ensuring it is catered to regional needs

	Steering Committee (SC)	Planning Team (PT) Subset of the SC
Composition	<p>Unique to each region</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most industry/stakeholders • 1 Council(s) • 1 NOAA regional office • 1 NOAA science center • Others as needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most industry/stakeholders • 1 Council(s) • 1-2 NOAA* • Others as needed. <p><i>*If 2, 1 is from the regional office, 1 from sci center</i></p>
# of seats	15-20	6-10
Background	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some experience in fisheries sci + mgmt. • Industry or sci/mgmt. leaders, respected by their communities. • Represent as many interest groups as possible across the diversity of the region. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experienced with MREP • Long standing experience with fishery sci and/or mgmt. • Leaders with capacity to advise
Commitment	Participate in annual 1-2 day in-person meeting	1-2 calls/month, each 1-2 hours
Additional commitments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aid in recruitment/outreach • Serve as mentors in leadership development to participants. • Attend workshops as possible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular contact with GMRI MREP team • Workshop attendance encouraged.
Term	3-4 years	Varies
Main Function	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Program development to ensure regionally relevant content for our target audience.</i> • <i>Outreach strategy to ensure we're attracting a diversity of participants</i> 	<p><i>In-depth curriculum development and refinement, and outreach efforts throughout the year in preparation for the workshop</i></p>

Facilitated and managed by GMRI since 2003, in partnership with regional fishermen



<https://mrep.gmri.org/mrep-industryleaders>



Who is MREP for?

Leaders and future leaders who want to make a difference

MREP has been for federal water fishermen/fishers and associated industry

- “Diverse” including: gear types, sectors, vessel sizes, states, ports, communities, perspectives, cultures, experience levels, etc.
- Those involved in and impacted by federally managed fisheries
- “Key informants” in communities

Outreach/recruitment

- Regionally unique
- Managed by GMRI, with SC and partners

“All fishermen who give a damn ought to take this seminar.”

– previous MREP participant

What is MREP?

Neutral and objective education

One 5-day workshop or a series of two 3-day workshops*

Fisheries Science & Management Concepts

Knowledge

Tools

Connections

*To empower participants to use their voice and knowledge,
and effectively play a role in the complex federal fishery
science & mgmt. processes*

What is MREP?

Fishery Science



- Fisheries independent and dependent data collection
- Population biology
- Surveys and statistics
- Cooperative research
- **How a stock assessment works**
- Uncertainty
- Socioeconomics
- Oceanography and climate drivers
- Hands-on activities & site visits

What is MREP?

- Magnuson Stevens Overview
- Other applicable laws
- **Fishery Management Council Process**
- Bridging Science and Management
- Role of advisory panels, SSC
- Negotiation tips
- Hands on activity (mock council process)
- Role of Law Enforcement

Fisheries Management



Impact of MREP:

Breaking down barriers &

Catalyzing effective collaborative fishery management

I believe it genuinely bridges the gap between “us” and “them,” even if we aren’t always on the same side of the aisle.



I enjoyed the diverse conversations that took place. It gives me hope to see people coming together to support this industry.



Impact of MREP:

Breaking down barriers &

Catalyzing effective collaborative fishery management

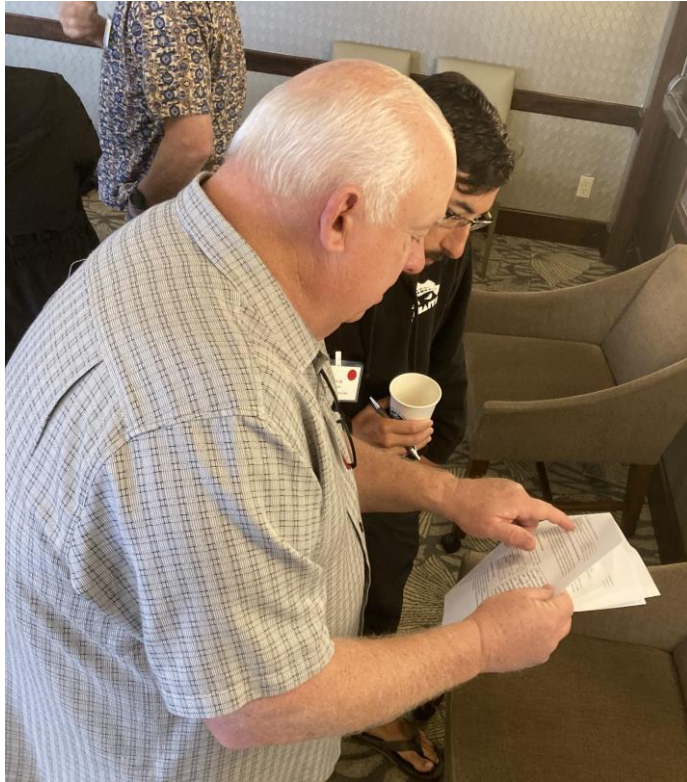
I feel 120% more comfortable engaging. More tools and more confidence.

The quality and content of this workshop blew away my expectations.



Impact of MREP: Breaking down barriers & Catalyzing effective collaborative fishery management

“Tremendously excited to contribute. MREP is a difference-maker.”



Impact of MREP:

Breaking down barriers &

Catalyzing effective collaborative fishery management

“I cannot overstate what a valuable, practical, and empowering experience this has been for me.”

“I will advocate for fleet-wide participation. Every fisherman should take this course.”



Impact of MREP: Breaking down barriers & Catalyzing effective collaborative fishery management

Coming into this, I had no idea how data collection was done, how the studies were designed, and how it was used. I was surprised how thorough the process of stock assessments are and how well it is managed.

I thought the council just pulled numbers from thin air. But now I know that there is an actual mathematic equation and data to back it up.

I came here concerned about the design of the scientific studies done to collect data that affect the management decisions. I am leaving encouraged knowing that the work being done is being done well and I am reassured knowing that our fishery is being properly assessed and cared for.



Impact of MREP:

Breaking down barriers & Catalyzing effective collaborative fishery management



I was reluctant to come, but this was an eye-opening experience. I was impressed by all of the people involved and the work that goes into fisheries science. I learned a lot and am happy I came.

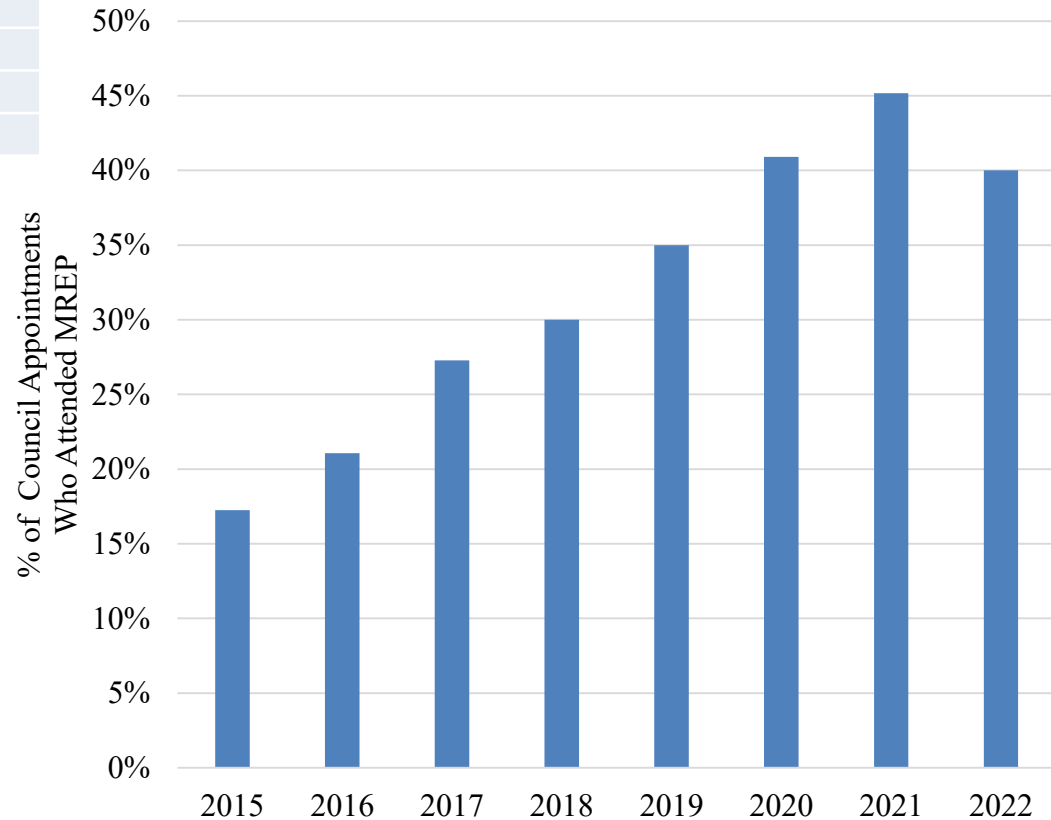
There is a lot of misinformation out in the community about what data is collected and how it is used. Getting a full understanding of the data collection process and how it is used completely changed my perspective on how the fishery is managed.

Tracking Impact

New council members who have attended MREP

Year	All Council regions	Council regions where MREP is offered
2015	17%	27%
2016	21%	50%
2017	27%	55%
2018	30%	60%
2019	35%	78%
2020	41%	53%
2021	45%	52%
2022	40%	53%

MREP Alumni Represent Just Under Half of All Council Appointments Nationwide



Regardless of experience level, **MREP** participants left more prepared and more likely to engage in the fishery management process

Before the workshop, how involved have you been in the Fishery Management Council meetings and processes?

	(Not involved) 1	2	3	4	5 (Extremely involved)	Weighted Average
GrA Sci	25%	25%	25%	17%	8%	2.58
GrA Mgmt	13%	7%	40%	20%	20%	3.27
SE Sci	50%	0%	0%	0%	50%	3.00
SE Mgmt	25%	0%	33%	0%	42%	3.33
WC Sci	59%	6%	12%	18%	6%	2.06
WC Mgmt	38%	13%	13%	21%	17%	2.67
WC Sci + Mgmt	31%	15%	31%	4%	19%	2.65
NP Sci + Mgmt	18%	12%	29%	18%	24%	3.18

Before the workshop, how prepared were you to participate in the Fishery Management Council process?

	(Not involved) 1	2	3	4	5 (Extremely involved)	Weighted Average
GrA Sci	10%	30%	20%	30%	10%	3.00
GrA Mgmt	20%	27%	33%	0%	20%	2.73
SE Sci	50%	0%	0%	0%	50%	3.00
SE Mgmt	25%	0%	42%	8%	25%	3.08
WC Sci	29%	18%	35%	12%	6%	2.47
WC Mgmt	35%	17%	22%	17%	9%	2.48
WC Sci + Mgmt	31%	12%	27%	12%	19%	2.77
NP Sci + Mgmt	12%	24%	18%	29%	18%	3.18

Regardless of experience level, **MREP** participants left more prepared and more likely to engage in the fishery management process

Are you more likely or less likely to engage with the fishery mgmt. processes?

	(Less likely)					5 (More likely)	Weighted Average
	1	2	3	4			
GrA Sci	0%	0%	0%	9%	91%	4.91	
GrA Mgmt	0%	0%	7%	43%	50%	4.43	
SE Sci	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	5.00	
SE Mgmt	0%	0%	11%	21%	68%	4.58	
WC Sci	0%	6%	18%	12%	65%	4.35	
WC Mgmt	0%	0%	20%	30%	50%	4.30	
WC Sci + Mgmt	0%	0%	21%	33%	46%	4.25	
NP Sci + Mgmt	0%	0%	33%	17%	50%	4.17	

As a result of this workshop are you more prepared to engage with the fishery management processes?

	(Less prepared)					5 (More prepared)	Weighted Average
	1	2	3	4			
GrA Sci	0%	0%	0%	25%	75%	4.75	
GrA Mgmt	0%	0%	0%	33%	67%	4.67	
SE Sci	0%	0%	0%	67%	33%	4.25	
SE Mgmt	0%	0%	5%	32%	63%	4.58	
WC Sci	0%	0%	18%	35%	47%	4.29	
WC Mgmt	5%	0%	14%	45%	36%	4.09	
WC Sci + Mgmt	0%	0%	17%	42%	42%	4.25	
NP Sci + Mgmt	0%	0%	22%	22%	56%	4.33	

MREP Workshops

- Held once per year in each region
- **Free** for participants to attend (we pay for travel, hotel costs, & food during the workshop)

[Apply today!](https://mrep.gmri.org/apply)

We accept rolling applications in all regions!

mrep.gmri.org/apply

The screenshot shows the website mrep.gmri.org/apply. The main banner features a blue ocean background with the text "Apply to MREP today" and "Seats are limited." Below this is a section titled "Upcoming Workshops" with the subtext "MREP is always free to attend." and a note: "Additionally, through our grant funding, we cover the costs for your travel to/from the workshop, and your hotel room and food for the duration of the workshop. This applies to all participants except federal employees. In other words, participants don't pay a penny. See our FAQs for more details." The workshop grid includes:

- West Coast:** Fisheries Science & Management Workshops, September 25 - 29, 2023, Santa Cruz, CA.
- Greater Atlantic:** Fisheries Science Workshop (TBD January 2023 | Falmouth, MA) and Fisheries Management Workshop (TBD March or May 2024 | Hanover, MD).
- Puerto Rico:** Fisheries Science & Management Workshop, August 25 - 27, 2023 | Humacao, Puerto Rico.
- U.S. Virgin Islands:** Fisheries Science & Management Workshop, TBD.
- North Pacific:** Fisheries Science & Management Workshop, TBD Fall 2023 - Spring 2024.
- Southeast:** Fisheries Science & Management Workshop, Nov. 13 - 17, 2023 | St. Pete Beach, FL.

MREP Workshops, July 2023 – June 2024



Region	Event	Dates	Location
Caribbean: Puerto Rico	Science & Mgmt Workshop	August 25-27, 2023	Humacao, PR
Pacific Islands	Scoping	Fall, Winter, TBD	Pacific Islands
Greater Atlantic	Steering	Sept 12	Portland, ME
National	Steering	Sept 18-19	Portland, ME
West Coast	Science & Mgmt Workshop	Sept 25-29	Santa Cruz, CA
North Pacific	Science & Mgmt Workshop	Nov 6-10, TBD	TBD
Southeast	Science & Mgmt Workshop	Nov 13-17	St. Petersburg, FL
Caribbean: Puerto Rico	Steering	Dec 7 or 8	San Juan, PR
Caribbean: St Thomas/St John	Steering	December	San Juan, PR?
Southeast	Steering	January 9-10	TBD
Greater Atlantic*	OPTION A: Science Workshop	January 16-18, TBD	Falmouth, MA
North Pacific	Steering	Jan? Feb? June?	TBD
West Coast	Steering	Jan? Feb?	Portland, OR? Seattle?
Greater Atlantic*	OPTION A: Mgmt Workshop	February 13-16, TBD	MD? DC? Gloucester?
Greater Atlantic*	OPTION B: Sci & Mgmt Workshop	February 12-16, TBD	Falmouth, MA
Pacific Islands	Exploratory Committee	Spring	Honolulu?
Caribbean: St Thomas/St John	Science & Management Workshop	May, TBD	St Croix, USVI

**The GrA Steering Committee is in the process of determining whether to hold one 5-day workshop or two 3-day workshops.*

Thank You



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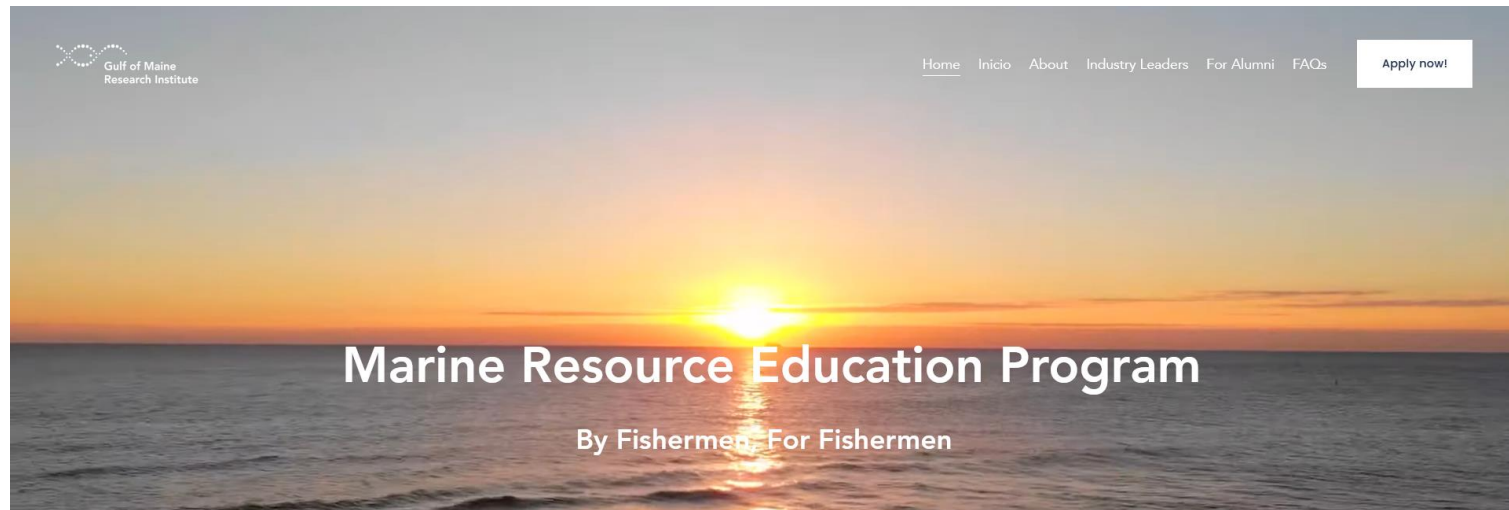
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By Fishermen, For Fishermen

<https://mrep.gmri.org/>

Tracking Impact

1. **New council members who have attended MREP**
2. **Change in “likelihood to engage” (self-declared)**
3. **Change in “preparedness to engage” (self-declared)**
4. AP members who attended MREP before taking their seat
5. MREP alumni who then went to the Council and had an impact (anecdotes)
6. Attendance at Fishery Management Council or AP meetings*
7. Collaborative research*
8. MREP alumni correcting fishermen who are misinformed (e.g. over the radio, at the dock, social media)*
9. Reduction of negative sentiment *
10. Other stories of alumni engagement in fisheries science and management *